

Gold Coast Infill Stations

Project Description Report

April 2021

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe the background, objectives, and high-level scope of three new infill train stations being planned on the Gold Coast to Brisbane rail line, at Pimpama, Helensvale North and Merrimac.

2. Project Background and relationship with Cross River Rail

The rail line connecting the Gold Coast to Brisbane (Gold Coast Line) is located inland with six existing Gold Coast stations at Ormeau, Coomera, Helensvale, Nerang, Robina and Varsity Lakes. As it provides a public transport trunk route north to Brisbane, the Gold Coast Line is amongst the busiest in South East Queensland.

The Cross River Rail Project is a 10.2km north-south rail line connecting Dutton Park to Bowen Hills with 5.9km of tunnel under the Brisbane River and Central Business District. The Cross River Rail Project also includes new stations at Boggo Road, Woolloongabba, Albert Street, and Roma Street, with upgrades to the existing Exhibition Railway Station and stations from Fairfield to Salisbury.

The Cross River Rail Project is to be designed and operated to connect with the wider system (including other infrastructure, economic activity, population hubs and movements, flows of resources, materials, goods and people). This includes integration with the regional rail network to ensure seamless operations between the Cross River Rail Project and the broader system in which it functions.

The Cross River Rail Delivery Authority's function under the *Cross River Rail Delivery Authority Act 2016 (Qld)* is to facilitate the efficient delivery of the Cross River Rail Project and transport-related projects.

A transport-related project is a project prescribed by regulation:

- that involves providing transport infrastructure in South East Queensland; and
- that the Minister, after consulting the Transport Minister, is satisfied relates to the operation of rail transport infrastructure provided, or to be provided, as a result of the Cross River Rail Project.

The Cross River Rail Business Case (August 2017) identifies the connection between the Cross River Rail Project and rail network development opportunities for the Gold Coast region as being that:

- the Cross River Rail Project will release the capacity of the entire rail network, forming a regional spine for fast, frequent rail services and bringing relief to the region's most crowded rail services
- the Cross River Rail Project will double the rail capacity across the Brisbane River and through the Brisbane CBD from the south, supporting other network expansion projects
- around 80 per cent of future population growth in South East Queensland will be outside Brisbane, with more than 1.2 million new residents forecast to settle in areas such as the Gold Coast, Ipswich, Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay and Logan. Conversely, much of the employment growth is expected to remain within Brisbane
- public transport provides a key role in supporting longer distance travel from outer areas such as the Gold Coast to Brisbane

Passenger demand pressure across the SEQ network will initially be concentrated on the southern (Brisbane-Gold Coast) and northern (Brisbane-Sunshine Coast) corridors.

In November 2017, the Queensland Government announced that it would deliver three new Gold Coast infill stations on the Gold Coast line as part of the Cross River Rail project. In October 2019 the Government announced the location of the three new stations would be Pimpama, Helensvale North and Merrimac.

The Cross River Rail Project will enable high growth areas, such as those proposed to be serviced by the three new stations, to utilise the capacity created in the South East Queensland rail network and be serviced by Cross River Rail trains.

This will reduce overcrowding and dwell times at existing stations, provide improved access between Brisbane and the northern Gold Coast and relieve constraints to the South East Queensland rail network.

Consistent with the Cross River Rail Business Case (2017), the Gold Coast infill stations project (GCIS project), will improve access to public transport for residents in those areas of the Gold Coast where there is increasing development and high population growth.

The Gold Coast Infill station locations are shown in *Figure 1*.



Figure 1 Gold Coast infill station locations

3. Project Objectives

The strategic objective of the GCIS project is to improve access to high capacity public transport for residents in those areas of the Gold Coast where there is increasing development and high population growth, by building infill stations and associated facilities on the Gold Coast Line. This strategic objective for the GCIS project relates to the Cross River Rail objective of relieving constraints to the South East Queensland rail network particularly for the Gold Coast Line.

The rationale for undertaking the GCIS project is to:

- prioritise transport network upgrades to maximise customer benefits
- encourage mode shift to sustainable transport options
- improve integrated access to the rail network with other modes
- facilitate integrated land use and transport planning.

At a project level, the objectives are to deliver stations that:

- are safe, comfortable and accessible for passengers and staff
- are efficient and cost effective to construct and maintain
- integrate effectively with the surrounding urban environment
- facilitate high quality connections to other transport modes.

4. Project Scope

The general scope of works for the three stations is comprised of the following:

- two new 160m long side platforms with 220m space allowance for extension to accommodate a 9-car train
- station building (typically) on the inbound platform
- an overhead footbridge connecting both sides of the station and platforms, including the provision of passenger lifts from each side
- stair access to be provided to the footbridge, for both access and egress from the site
- replacement of overhead electrical gantries throughout the new station
- station facilities including kiss 'n' ride, taxi ranks, bus interchange (where appropriate) and park 'n' ride infrastructure co-located (where possible) on one side of the station
- shared paths within the station precinct to allow for cycle and active transport access
- all associated passenger shelters, fencing, closed circuit television (CCTV), signage and passenger information systems
- ticketing gates and associated equipment.

4.1 Pimpama Station

The Pimpama station will provide the local community with greater access to convenient rail services, expanding the options for easy travel within the Gold Coast as well as to Brisbane.

Pimpama has been identified as one of the fastest growing suburbs in Queensland. The new station will reduce existing pressure on Ormeau and Coomera train stations and support future growth in the area.

The announced site for the station is located between the Old Pacific Highway, Pimpama City Shopping Centre, Mebbin Street and the existing rail corridor. Major residential developments, including Gainsborough Greens, The Heights, Pimpama Village and The Meadows are located within the vicinity of the proposed station site as well as King's

Christian College and a shopping complex (Coomera Square) 3.8 kilometres to the south of the site on the corner of Days and Old Coach Roads. The proposed station site is located approximately 2.6 kilometres south of the existing Ormeau Station and approximately 4.4 kilometres north of the existing Coomera Station, east of the Pacific Motorway and close to the Pimpama district centre.

The footprint of the planned Pimpama station comprises existing rail corridor owned by the State and privately owned land south of the Pimpama City retail precinct. As a result of construction site access requirements or design development refinements additional land may be required outside the indicative footprint shown at *Figure 2*.



Figure 2 Planned Pimpama station location

Components of the station facilities will include:

- on-site parking and passenger drop-off facilities
- connections to pedestrian and cycle paths
- integration with the public transport network
- intersection improvements
- station building adjacent to the inbound platform
- 160m 6-car platforms with provision for 220m 9-car platforms
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) accessible paths and platforms including DDA lift and stair access
- pedestrian overpass.

The concept design (2019) layout for Pimpama station is shown in *Figure 3* below.



Figure 3 Pimpama station concept design (2019)

4.2 Helensvale North Station

The Helensvale North station will provide the local community with greater access to convenient rail services, expanding the options for easy travel within the Gold Coast, as well as to Brisbane.

The planned site for the station is located next to Mangrove Jack Park, north of Hope Island Road and south of the Coomera River, approximately 16 kilometres north of surfers Paradise and 55 kilometres south of Brisbane. The existing railway has been constructed on a bridge structure, from the south side of Saltwater Creek to the north side of the Coomera River. The natural surface is generally flat and low lying.

The footprint of the planned Helensvale North station comprises the existing rail corridor owned by the State Government and parkland owned by Gold Coast City Council.

As a result of construction site access requirements or design development refinements additional land may be required outside the indicative footprint shown at *Figure 4*.



Figure 4 Planned Helensvale North station location

Components of station facilities will include:

- two new 175m-long rail station side platforms, for both northbound and southbound commuters. The required platform length is 160m (6-car train) but as the platform will be at the same height as the existing rail bridge, the total platform length will be 175m due to the 25m bridge pile spacing.
- provision of a new high capacity passenger lift on each platform
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) accessible paths and platforms including DDA lift and stair access
- multiple stair access to be provided to the lift towers, for both access and egress from the site
- a new park 'n' ride and bus lay-down facility connected directly to the west of the station.

The concept design layout for Helensvale North station is shown in *Figure 5*.



Figure 5 Helensvale North concept design (2019)

4.3 Merrimac Station

The Merrimac station will provide the local community with greater access to convenient rail services, expanding the options for easy travel within the Gold Coast, as well as to Brisbane. It will service the growing residential population in Merrimac, Worongary and Carrara.

The proposed station is located approximately 3 kilometres north of the existing Robina station and 6.3 kilometres south of the existing Nerang station in a largely residential area. It is bounded by Gooding Drive to the north with the station facilities located east of the railway line.

The land impacted by the concept design is existing rail corridor owned by the State and park land owned by Gold Coast City Council. As a result of construction site access requirements or design development refinements additional land may be required outside the indicative footprint shown at *Figure 6*.



Figure 6 Planned Merrimac station location

Components of station facilities will include:

- two new 160-metre-long side platforms, with 220 metre space allowance for extension to accommodate a nine-car train
- an overhead footbridge connecting both sides of the station and platforms, including the provision of passenger lifts from each side
- stair access to be provided to the footbridge, for both access and egress from the site
- space allowance for signalling to incorporate the new station within the current network alignment
- a new park ‘n’ ride connected directly to the east of Merrimac Station with a bus stop facility to the north on Gooding Drive
- new signalised three-way intersection provided at the junction of Gooding Drive.

The concept design layout for Merrimac station is shown in *Figure 7* below.



Figure 7 Merrimac station concept design (2019)