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'A schoolkid will be hurt': Cross River Rail trucks fear

Furious Annerley residents and a local councillor say a plan to funnel Cross River Rail trucks, 24 hours a day, through a narrow southside street could risk lives.

Brendan O'Malley, City South News

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Plans to detour huge B-double trucks through a narrow suburban street could run the risk of school students and commuters being hurt or killed, the local councillor claims.

The Cross River Rail Delivery Authority (CRRDA) has applied to vary the conditions of its environmental impact statement (EIS) so trucks can operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. At the moment they must stop by 10pm.

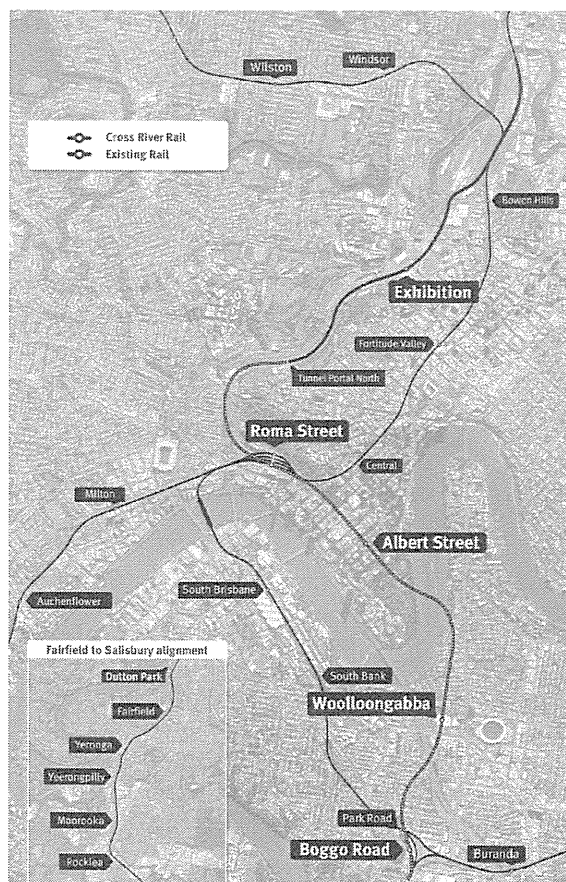
It currently uses O'Keefe St or streets around Boggo Road Gaol, Dutton Park, as a haulage route.

But the CRRDA has asked for heavy vehicles to be allowed to enter the work site's "southern portal" at Kent St, via Annerley Rd and Cornwall St.

The portal is halfway between the Boggo Road and Dutton Park CCR stations.

The authority conceded in its application that Kent St was so narrow a median strip would have to be removed and the road widened.

But the CRRDA said it was working with council to improve pedestrian safety and that residents would notice only a minor increase in traffic and noise.



Cross River Rail Satellite Alignment Map. Picture: QLD Government

eastern side of the rail corridor, rather than having to rely on O'Keefe Street and the Boggo Road busway as previously proposed.

"While residents may notice a minor increase in traffic, the predicted increase in traffic noise is less than one decibel – well below both the project's noise goals and levels most people can detect," he said.

"We are working closely with Brisbane City Council to ensure pedestrians and cyclists have a safe crossing location and, where practical, segregated pedestrian and cycling paths."

Tennyson ward Councillor Nicole Johnston, who has campaigned to improve safety in the area for years, disagreed.

"I fear a child walking to school or a commuter will be hurt as there is no safe crossing point," Cr Johnston said.

"Already, we are seeing trucks queued up waiting on Annerley and Fairfield roads. What will it be like when they operate 24 hours a day?"

"We are talking about 10 trucks an hour, or 240 a day, seven days a week. It never gets less, these movements always end up being more."

She said the 240 daily figure did not count concrete truck movements.

Noise mitigation in place was "a joke", she claimed.

And many of the residents who would be kept awake by noise and vibrations worked at nearby Princess Alexandra Hospital.

Cr Johnston said there was no safe pedestrian or cycle crossing point on Kent St, despite her efforts over the years to make Council install a zebra crossing.

The street is currently used by Dutton Park State School students walking to school and commuters using the busway or the existing Dutton Park railway station.

Already, they sometimes had to dodge trucks which mounted the kerb while turning corners.

To make matters worse, she said the State Government's new Inner South State Secondary College, several hundred metres away, would open next year.

"Allowing movement of more heavy vehicles along this stretch is unconscionable," Cr Johnston said.

"It's completely unacceptable for B doubles, semis and trucks."

Cr Johnston said she had raised noise and safety risks in 2017 when she lodged a submission on the EIS.

She has now written to Council chief executive officer, Colin Jensen, and the Co-ordinator-General, urging them not to approve the application.

Submissions on the EIS closed on October 2 but a decision has not yet been announced.

Boggo road to become major hub

Cross River Rail jobs up for grabs

Cr Johnston said she understood Council must authorise the works to the Kent St intersection. "Facilitating road widening changes without putting in place appropriate pedestrian and cycling safety facilities for local residents is negligent," she said in her letter to Mr Jensen.

"The proposal fails to acknowledge the existing road conditions, including congestion along Cornwall St during peak hour, making the turn from Annerley Rd difficult for long and heavy vehicles.

"The change proposal estimates that traffic volumes from Annerley Rd into Cornwall St are expected to increase by up to 23 per cent, further limiting safe pedestrian egress.

"Some of these heavy vehicles are 19m long. They are simply too big for the intersection and the tight turns required to enter, and exit, Kent St.

"In addition, there is a lack of safe queuing facilities on Annerley Rd for trucks and other vehicles waiting to turn right into Cornwall St, and a lack of turning time given the operation of the nearby intersection at Noble St/Cornwall St and Annerley Rd.

"Increased turning movements at this location will adversely impact on pedestrians' time and ability to safely cross Cornwall St, to get to and from Dutton Park Station and beyond to local schools, shops and homes."