MR J KELLY ASKED DEPUTY PREMIER, TREASURER AND MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARTNERSHIPS (HON J TRAD)—

QUESTION:

Will the Deputy Premier provide an update on the progress with the Cross River Rail Project?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Greenslopes for the question. Cross River Rail is a project that will reshape Brisbane and deliver many benefits for the wider region and residents in the Member's electorate.

Cross River Rail is happening. Early works have started and as this Government's highest priority infrastructure project, the $5.4 billion project is fully funded.

Cross River Rail will create thousands of jobs, drive economic growth and increase capacity across the rail network for years to come.

By unlocking the bottleneck at the core of the transport network, Cross River Rail will allow more trains to run more often with nearly 18,000 extra seats on the network by 2036.

Residents will be able to access a turn-up-and-go public transport system that will keep South East Queensland moving by integrating with future transport investments and through improved services to take pressure off the road network.

Early Works started in August 2017 and will continue until the end of 2019. This has so far seen underground investigations such as drilling 58 boreholes at locations along the Cross River Rail corridor and the demolition of the Goprint building opposite The Gabba.

Works to remove the adjacent Landcentre and the old South Brisbane Dental Hospital will start later this year.

Once fully cleared, the Goprint site will become the staging area for the tunnel boring machines and roadheaders used to build the 5.9 kilometre twin tunnels and ultimately, the site will house the new high-capacity underground Woolloongabba Station. The new station is expected to see up to 18,000 commuters daily, with thousands more on game days.

The Queensland Government announced the shortlisted companies for Cross River Rail's two major works packages – Rail, Integration and System Alliance and the Tunnel, Stations and Development Public-Private Partnership in February this year.

A strong field of national and multinational companies are now preparing detailed bids with major works scheduled to start in early 2020.

When complete, Cross River Rail will deliver five new high-capacity train stations (Boggo Road, Woolloongabba, Albert Street, Roma Street and Exhibition) with each new station to create multiple opportunities for urban regeneration and economic development.

Cross River Rail will transform Brisbane above and below ground. By 2036, for example, Boggo Road will be South East Queensland's second busiest transport interchange. The investment opportunities created by Cross River Rail will allow for the enhanced development of this precinct as a world leader in Health, Science and Education. This means jobs for Queenslanders and pathways from education to employment and taking Queensland know-how around the world.

The Member for Greenslopes will be pleased to know that Cross River Rail will provide easy connectivity for patients, visitors and staff to the Princess Alexandra Hospital from the new Boggo Road station, as well as year-round access to the Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital from the upgraded Exhibition Station.

The Queensland Government has also committed $5 million for a business case to investigate the development of a new 17,000-seat arena, Brisbane Live, at Roma Street.

Brisbane Live is a very exciting proposal that will deliver decades of economic and employment opportunities in what is an underused part of the city.

It is also a transformative project for SEQ and the whole of Queensland, drawing in tourist dollars, ensuring Queensland doesn't miss out on major events and increases the City's ability to develop new events.

Cross River Rail is critical to the future development of South East Queensland's transport network. This Government has promised to deliver the project and despite Canberra's reluctance to invest in the project, that is exactly what we are doing.