



Underground land divestment for SRL East tunnelling

General information for landowners

Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) is a city and State-shaping project that will transform Victoria's public transport system, connecting our suburbs and delivering more homes and jobs where they are needed. Construction of SRL East from Cheltenham to Box Hill is well under way, creating up to 8,000 direct local jobs, with tunnelling to start in 2026 and trains running in 2035.

What is underground land divestment?

Construction of major public transport infrastructure often requires the government to acquire or divest land (known as strata), including privately-owned land. Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) needs to secure underground land for the construction of the 26km SRL East twin rail tunnels.

Following an extensive range of technical studies and investigations, community consultation and rigorous planning approvals, the SRL East tunnel alignment has been confirmed.

SRLA is now conducting a formal process to divest underground land to enable construction of the twin tunnels.

The divestment of underground land and tunnels construction is not expected to affect the property at surface level, including existing structures such as pools, car parks or basements.

This fact sheet provides information on how the underground land will be divested, key steps and how compensation is assessed.

Frequently asked questions

How does underground land divestment work?

Before any formal process begins, SRLA sends letters to landowners advising that their property is in an area of interest for underground land divestment and that the tunnels could travel underneath, or in the vicinity of, their property.

If land underneath your property is required for tunnels or associated infrastructure, it will be divested by the publication of a Divestment Order in the Victoria Government Gazette. The Order is published under the *Major Transport Project Facilitation Act 2009* (Vic) (MTPF Act).

Once the Divestment Order is published, the specified portion of underground land will vest in SRLA and it will become available to enable the construction and operations of SRL East. It is important to note you will no longer own that portion of the underground land.

Will I be eligible for compensation?

In some circumstances, you may be entitled to compensation for loss of market value due to the divestment.

The MTPF Act provides a right to compensation for divestment of underground land that is less than 15m below the surface of the land.

You can submit a claim for compensation for any potential loss of market value in your land to SRLA via the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). The claim must be submitted within two years from the date the Divestment Order is published.

You are not entitled to claim compensation under the MTPF Act for any legal, valuation or other professional expenses.

If you choose to engage a lawyer, valuer or other professional to advise you, you will be responsible for paying their fees.

Under the MTPF Act, you are also not entitled to compensation for the divestment of underground land at a depth of 15m or more below the surface of the land.

Will my home be affected by underground land divestment?

Only the underground land required to safely construct the tunnels and provide for their long-term protection will be divested by SRLA.

What if my property is impacted by construction of the tunnels?

Your property at surface level is not expected to be affected.

Cities around the world regularly build underground rail systems in densely populated urban areas, including Melbourne's own Metro Tunnel, demonstrating that engineering and construction challenges are routinely overcome with careful planning and smart construction, as well as proven mitigation measures.

SRLA is committed to minimising the impact of works to surrounding properties and communities. In addition to stringent requirements under the project's Planning Approvals, SRLA has comprehensive measures in place to minimise and manage any risks during construction.

This includes:

- offering pre-construction and post-construction condition surveys of potentially affected properties on a proactive basis
- engaging with nearby residents and businesses about activities planned in their area, what to expect and how any disruptions will be managed.

What is an existing depth limitation and how do I know if it applies to my property?

Details of existing depth limitations can be found on your property Title diagram. This means that you own the land down to a particular depth.

In many cases, the area in which we need to construct the SRL East tunnels is located below the depth of your property boundary. If your property has an existing depth limitation, this will be detailed in the letter enclosed with this fact sheet.

When will the underground land divestment occur?

SRLA sent letters to relevant landowners in mid 2021 and again from mid 2024 to advise that land under their properties was in an area of interest and that SRLA would be in contact again before any formal underground land divestment process began. Divestment of underground land for SRL East will be carried out in tranches in 2025 and 2026 in line with the project's tunnelling program.

Can I contest the divestment?

No, underground land divestment is a compulsory process under the MTPF Act. Affected landowners cannot contest the process.

How is compensation assessed?

If a landowner is entitled to compensation for loss of market value, that compensation is assessed as the difference in the market value of their interest in land before and after the divestment.

How do I know if my property will be tunnelled under?

Before any formal process begins, SRLA sends letters to landowners advising that their property is in an area of interest for underground land divestment and that the tunnels could travel underneath, or in the vicinity of, their property.

A map is enclosed with this letter, detailing the location of the SRL East tunnel alignment in relation to your property.

If you would like further information on the tunnel alignment in relation to your property, please get in touch with the team using the contact details overleaf.

I was planning to renovate my home, what does this mean for me?

This does not change your ability to renovate your home. If you need a planning permit to renovate or rebuild your property, you should apply for a planning permit through the relevant responsible authority (which will usually be your local Council).

The responsible authority will refer relevant applications to SRLA for assessment, including any properties affected by the Special Controls Overlay 15 (SCO15), which has been in place since 2022.

SCO15 is a planning control to protect the underground tunnel infrastructure from development that, if not designed appropriately, could damage SRL East's infrastructure, such as developments with deep foundations or multi-level basements.

A decision will not be made on the planning application until SRLA's assessment has been undertaken.

We recommend contacting us for pre-planning advice before you lodge a planning permit to construct a building or carry out works on land affected by SCO15.

SRLA will provide a response to SCO15-related enquiries within 30 days of receiving all information. More information about SCO15 and planning applications is available on our website at suburbanrailloop.vic.gov.au/planning-applications, or contact the team at infrastructure.protection@srla.vic.gov.au.

What does tunnelling involve? How deep will it be?

Tunnelling under Melbourne's south east will involve using the latest technology including custom-built tunnel boring machines (TBMs).

At their deepest point, the tunnels will be approximately 60m below ground, the equivalent depth of a 16-storey building. On average, the SRL East tunnels will be approximately 26m deep – that's about 6 storeys below ground.

Read more about tunnelling on the website at bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/suburban-rail-loop

The tunnel is more than 15m below my property – why am I not eligible for compensation?

SRLA is bound to comply with the relevant legislation when divesting underground land – in this case, the MTPF Act. This legislation does not contain any provisions for compensation for divestment of underground land 15m or more below the surface.

Contact us

If you have any questions, call us on **1800 105 105** or email contact@srla.vic.gov.au, available 24 hours a day.

When calling, quote **'STRATA'** to ensure your call is directed to the right team.

Please be ready to provide:

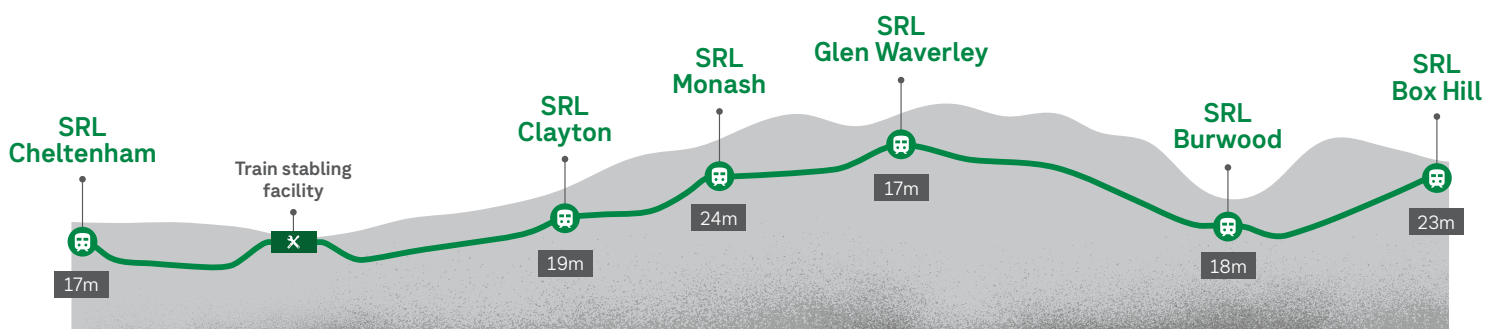
- your property address in relation to your query
- the unique reference number on your pre-divestment letter (found on the top of the first page)

Key legislation applying to SRL East

The two key Victorian Acts of Parliament referred to in this fact sheet are the *Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009 (Vic)* and the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986 (Vic)*:

- The *Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009 (Vic)* provides that certain government authorities can divest underground land that is included in an area which has been formally designated as the 'project area' for the SRL East Project.
- The *Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act* and parts of the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act* guide how compensation is assessed where underground land is divested and the process for making a claim.

Full versions of these Acts are available at legislation.vic.gov.au.



Indicative, subject to change. Station depths reflect the distance of the station platforms to ground level.



Building Rail Tunnels

SRL East will feature twin 26-kilometre rail tunnels to minimise impacts at surface level.

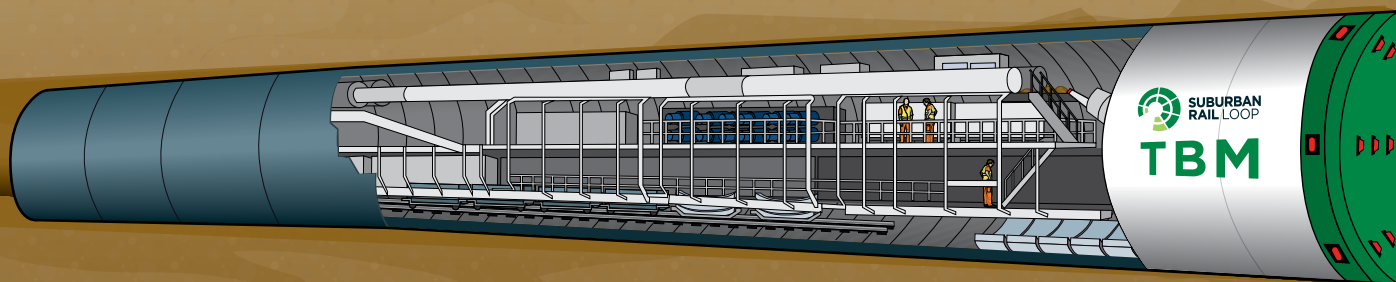
Tunnelling will involve the latest technology including custom-built tunnel boring machines (TBMs). The depth of the SRL East tunnels will vary depending on the topography. Tunnels will sit about 60 meters below ground at the deepest point, which is the equivalent of a 16-storey building.

TBMs are proposed to be launched in Clarinda and Burwood, with sites built to support tunnelling activities.

Different machines and excavation techniques will be used to support tunnelling works, with a focus on minimising disruption for local residents and businesses.

Hundreds of geological investigations are being undertaken to inform the alignment for SRL East.

This information is being used to understand local ground conditions, to determine the tunnels alignment, and to select the preferred construction methodology for different elements of the project.



Tunnel Boring Machines

The giant TBMs are lowered underground in sections to be assembled and launched. Powerful rotating cutterheads at the front burrow through soil and rock to create the new tunnel. The excavated material is either carried through the machine via a conveyor and transported above-ground or pumped out through a pipe to the surface for disposal. Soil will be safely disposed in line with Environmental Performance Requirements.

Hydraulic jacks push the TBM forward. As it moves forward, thick segments of pre-cast concrete are progressively installed behind the cutterheads. These concrete segments form a reinforced ring and are designed to fit together to create a permanent lining for the tunnel.

TBMs are controlled by an operator and maintained by a crew of up to 20 people. The machine will continue boring underground 24/7 until it 'breaks through' at its destination where it is retrieved. Once boring is complete and the lining is installed, the complex task of fitting out the new tunnel with services, rail tracks and other equipment can begin.

contact@srla.vic.gov.au | 1800 105 105 (call anytime)
suburbanrailloop.vic.gov.au

Please contact us if you would like this information in an accessible format.
If you need assistance due to a hearing or speech impairment, please visit relayservice.gov.au



For languages other than English please call 9209 0147

如需非英语信息，请拨打 9209 0147

如需使用英语以外的其他语言，请致电 9209 0147

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