

Managing the environment

We're removing the level crossings at Maddox Road and Champion Road in Newport as part of the Victorian Government's commitment to make the Werribee Line level crossing free by 2030.

The Maddox Road level crossing will be removed by building passenger and freight rail bridges over the road. The rail bridges will start to rise near Blenheim Road and return to ground near Challis Street.

We'll close Champion Road at the level crossing. A new link road, connecting Maddox Road to Champion Road via Akuna Drive, will open before the Champion Road level crossing is closed in 2026.

We're also building a new pedestrian and cycling bridge over the rail line at Champion Road that will link to existing local connections and encourage active transport within the community.

To build the new rail infrastructure and pedestrian and cycling bridge, we will need to remove some trees and vegetation mainly within the rail corridor. There will also be some tree trimming at certain locations to allow workers and machinery to access the rail corridor for construction purposes.

As part of the project, we'll plant:



230 native trees



Up to 30,000 large plants, shrubs and grasses

Caring for the environment and community

We heard how important trees and greenery are to the local community and every effort has been made to minimise the impact of our works on local vegetation.

We work with arborists and sustainability specialists across all our projects to minimise vegetation removal and manage the impacts on flora and fauna.

On this project, some vegetation removal is required for:

- constructing the new rail bridges and pedestrian and cycling bridge
- relocating and installing essential cables and services
- fitting the new infrastructure around the numerous critical oil and gas pipelines
- maintaining safety clearance requirements
- providing temporary space for construction offices, machinery and equipment.



Example of initial landscaping and planting under the rail bridges at Skye Road, Frankston in late 2018.

How did the project team determine which trees will be removed?

As part of our planning process, independent arborists and environmental experts have assessed all trees and vegetation in the project area to determine:

- the structural integrity, size and location of tree roots
- health and life expectancy of trees
- amenity and environmental value
- location of utility services in proximity to trees
- presence of wildlife and habitat.

These assessments are used to identify trees that pose a safety risk. These trees will be trimmed (where possible) or removed.

Any trees and shrubs that can be safely retained will be clearly marked and protected during construction.

Reuse and environmental initiatives

We'll work closely with Hobsons Bay City Council (HBCC) and local community groups to ensure that removed vegetation is repurposed for new uses or environmental initiatives.

Some of the opportunities we're exploring include:

- providing logs and mulch for use in gardens and parks
- donating timber for use to local council, community groups and schools.

Managing waste removal

Removing waste material, including asbestos, is a common and necessary part of delivering major projects—especially when working with older infrastructure. All removal works are carried out in line with strict health and safety guidelines, using licensed removalists to manage asbestos-containing materials safely and in accordance with regulations. We're committed to restoring the land and surrounding area to ensure it is safe for the community once works are complete.

Replanting and landscaping

We'll plant 230 native trees and up to 30,000 large plants, shrubs and grasses as part of landscaping in and around the project area once major works are completed in 2026.



We've increased the number of native trees we are planting in the area from 90 to 230 to restore and enhance the local environment.

This includes 85 trees along Akuna Drive and the Maddox Road/Champion Road intersection.

As there is limited space to plant within the project area due to overhead utilities, pipelines and the new rail infrastructure, some trees will be planted outside the project site, increasing tree canopy in the community. We will work with HBCC to identify suitable locations for these trees.

We'll use indigenous and native trees, plants and shrubs that are suited to the local environment and climate, which need less water, and can provide habitat for native animals.

We'll share more information about landscaping plans, what will be planted in your neighbourhood, and how you can be involved, as the project progresses.

Looking out for wildlife

We work with qualified wildlife handlers who inspect trees and vegetation and safely rehome any wildlife before tree removal. These specialists will be on site during any vegetation removal works to safely relocate any wildlife that we may encounter unexpectedly.

To support local biodiversity, we'll install up to 20 nest boxes to provide comfortable nesting opportunities for native birds and wildlife in locations selected by wildlife experts, away from construction activities. We'll also establish no-go zones to protect habitats and help keep local wildlife safe during works.

Train noise and operations

Once the two level crossings are gone for good and trains begin running on the new rail bridges, some of the noise currently heard—such as train horns and warning bells at level crossings—will no longer be needed. The new tracks and concrete sleepers are also designed to reduce noise and vibration compared to older rail infrastructure. However, trains will continue to operate, and for residents living close to the rail corridor, general train movement and operational sounds will still be heard.

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