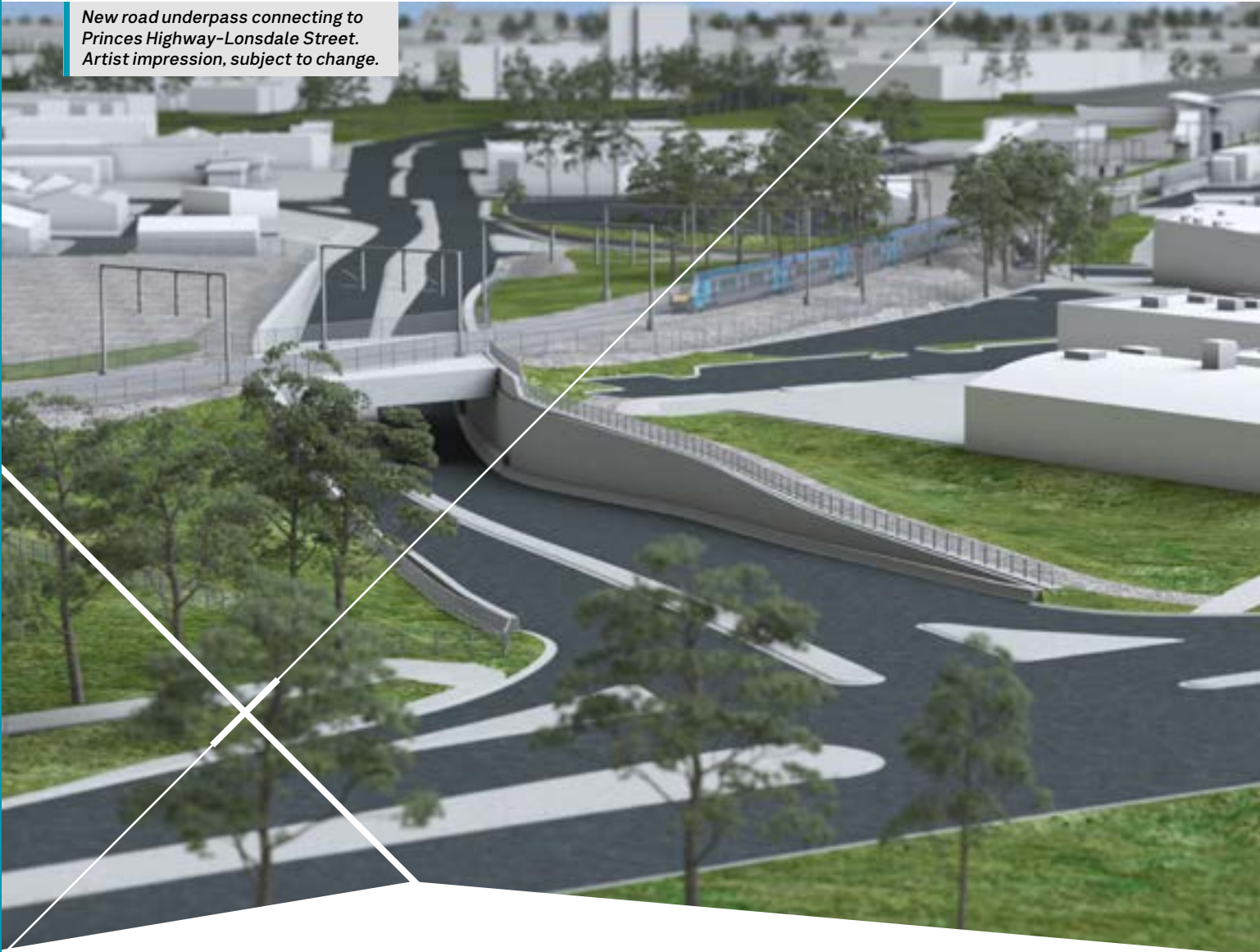


*New road underpass connecting to  
Princes Highway-Lonsdale Street.  
Artist impression, subject to change.*



**Webster Street, Dandenong, November 2023**

# Understanding the Webster Street level crossing removal



Aerial view of the Webster Street Level Crossing Removal Project. Artist impression, subject to change.

## Understanding the site

### We're removing the dangerous and congested level crossing at Webster Street, Dandenong.

We're closing Webster Street at the level crossing and building a new road under the rail line, connecting Cheltenham and Hammond roads to Princes Highway-Lonsdale Street, changing how people travel around Dandenong for the better.

The new road underpass, combined with closing Webster Street to vehicles at the level crossing will remove heavy traffic off local roads, making it quieter and safer for residents.

During the design and development of this project we looked at a range of road and rail solutions and assessed the benefits to the local community and wider transport networks.

Based on engineering assessments, traffic modelling and site investigations, we found that closing Webster Street at the level crossing and building a new road underpass is the best way to meet the needs of the local road network as well as modern rail and road safety and accessibility standards.



This brochure explains the designs that were ruled out and the criteria we used to assess designs.



Rail line over Dandenong Creek near the Webster Street level crossing

# Key considerations for level crossing removal planning

Each level crossing site has its own set of unique characteristics to consider when planning a major project.

These include:

- traffic movements
- site constraints, such as low rail bridges and waterways
- construction impacts to the community
- technical aspects of how a solution can be built
- community feedback
- disruption to train services and road users
- requirement for land and property acquisition
- impacts to surrounding residential, commercial, and industrial areas
- land required within the project area
- impacts to utilities and services
- ground, surface water and environment conditions
- land features and surfaces
- environmental and cultural heritage impacts of the design
- future proofing the design for growth and transport needs.



## Cultural heritage assessments

To ensure we manage Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Dandenong area, we engage archaeologists, heritage advisors and the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP), which in this area is the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, to identify Aboriginal places or objects in the project area.

In collaboration with the RAP we conduct ground investigations to determine likelihood of finding artefacts.

We then assess the extent to which our proposed design and construction approach could potentially impact on Aboriginal objects, and explore how any impacts can be avoided, minimised or mitigated.

This information then helps us prepare a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) in accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Protection Act 2006.

The CHMP helps us manage and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage.

# What we considered



## Arterial and local road network

Webster Street is next to Central Dandenong, Melbourne's second largest CBD which is home to numerous food, retail, and service businesses.

The level crossing is about 110 metres from Princes Highway–Lonsdale Street, a main road that has an average of 45,000 vehicles per day.

As such, Webster Street is a critical east-west connection for traffic travelling to and through the area.



## Regional and local rail network

Three sets of rail tracks go through the Webster Street level crossing, servicing the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines, V/Line and freight trains.

Dandenong Station is about 530 metres from the level crossing. Between the station and the level crossing, the three tracks travel over two existing rail bridges over Cheltenham Road and Dandenong Creek.



## Dandenong Creek

Dandenong Creek flows from the foothills of Dandenong Ranges into the Patterson River, including through Dandenong Park and alongside Webster Street through Woodcock Reserve. The creek's water level can fluctuate quickly. Its banks are home to wildlife, community recreational areas and green spaces.

The Dandenong Creek Trail also travels alongside the creek through Dandenong and is an important connection for cyclists and pedestrians in the area.

Where Princes Highway–Lonsdale Street crosses over Dandenong Creek is the heritage-listed Peace Memorial Bridge.



## Keeping trucks and freight moving

Wider Dandenong area hosts a large number of industrial and manufacturing businesses. This means large volumes of vehicles and freight travel through and to the area each day.

A key objective for this project is to keep trucks and freight moving, while also moving trucks away from Dandenong's CBD and off residential streets.



## Underground utility services

A vital gas line that helps gas reach millions of homes in Melbourne travels under the ground below Thomas and Webster streets and Dandenong Creek.

Due to the importance of this gas line, there are strict requirements around what can be built on top or below the pipeline, and how and when it can be relocated to ensure any disruption to gas supply is minimised.



## Revitalising Central Dandenong

There are exciting plans for the Dandenong area, including the Revitalising Central Dandenong Masterplan.

Development Victoria is working in partnership with the City of Greater Dandenong to deliver this project to rejuvenate the city centre and create an exciting future for central Dandenong.

# The best design to remove the Webster Street level crossing

Technical and engineering assessments have determined that the best design is to close the Webster Street level crossing and build a new link road under the rail line.

## This design:

-  enhances safety in the area
-  provides a more reliable and efficient transport network
-  delivers better, more reliable connections and travel times reducing road congestion
-  removes heavy vehicles from residential streets and Dandenong CBD
-  builds a direct and unrestricted route for heavy vehicles, keeping industry moving
-  improves cycling and pedestrian connections
-  paves the way for future transport upgrades and more trains more often
-  supports the area for future development and aligns with the Revitalising Central Dandenong Masterplan.

The project team has worked to minimise the impact of works on nearby Dandenong Creek and Dandenong Park. Every effort has been made to ensure residents and businesses won't be negatively impacted, however some land acquisition will be required.

The project team is working directly with affected businesses and property owners to assist them through this process.

## The new link road opens 2028

We will remove the Webster Street level crossing by closing it to vehicles in 2025.

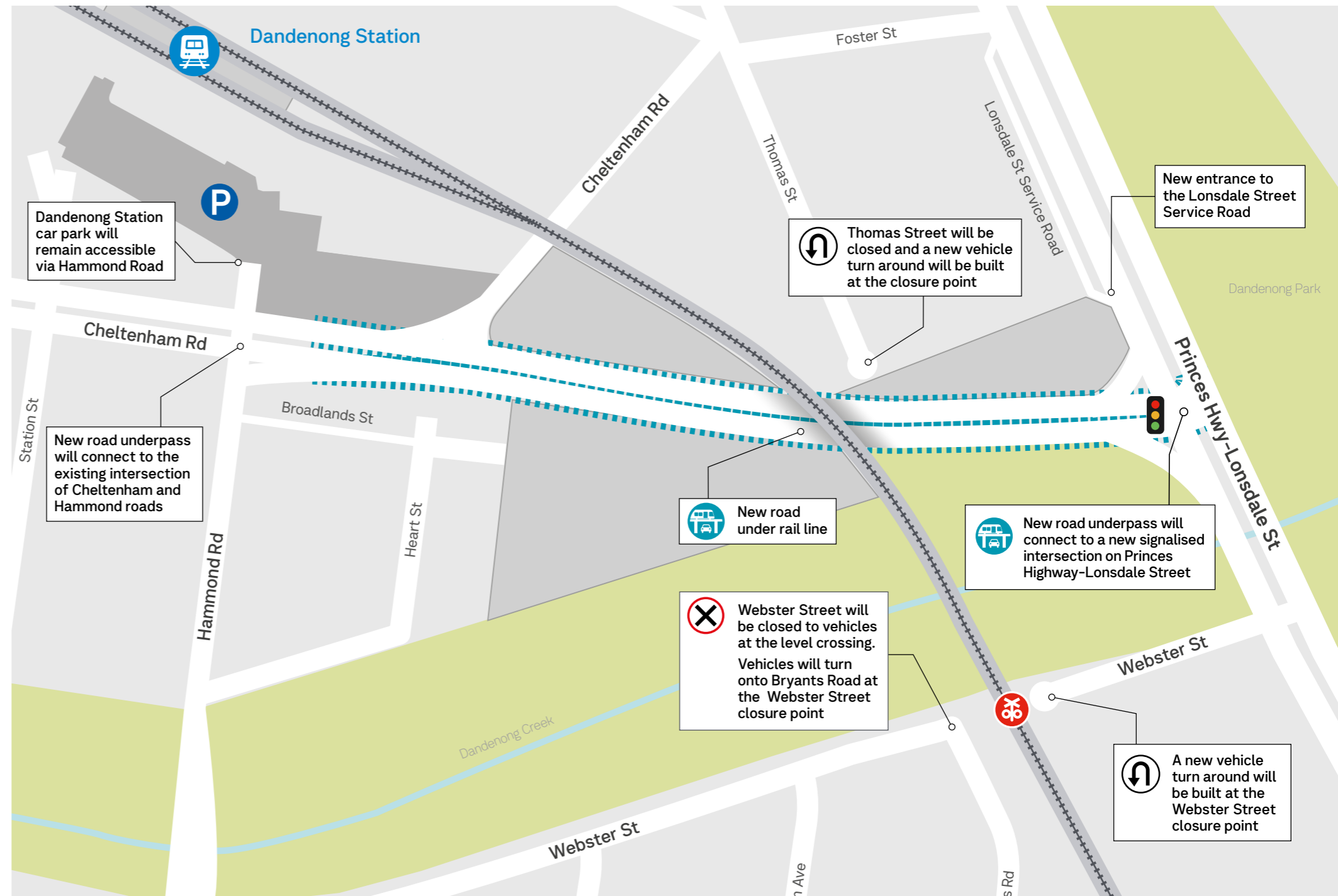
Before we can build the new road underpass, we need to relocate extensive utilities and services under the ground.

Some of these utilities, such as an important gas line, will take considerable time to relocate and can only be done in warmer months when demand is lower.

We understand how important it is for motorists in the area to have a reliable east-west road connection.

We are working closely with key government and transport bodies to determine detours for all vehicle types, including heavy vehicles.

More information about detours and expected impacts will be available soon.



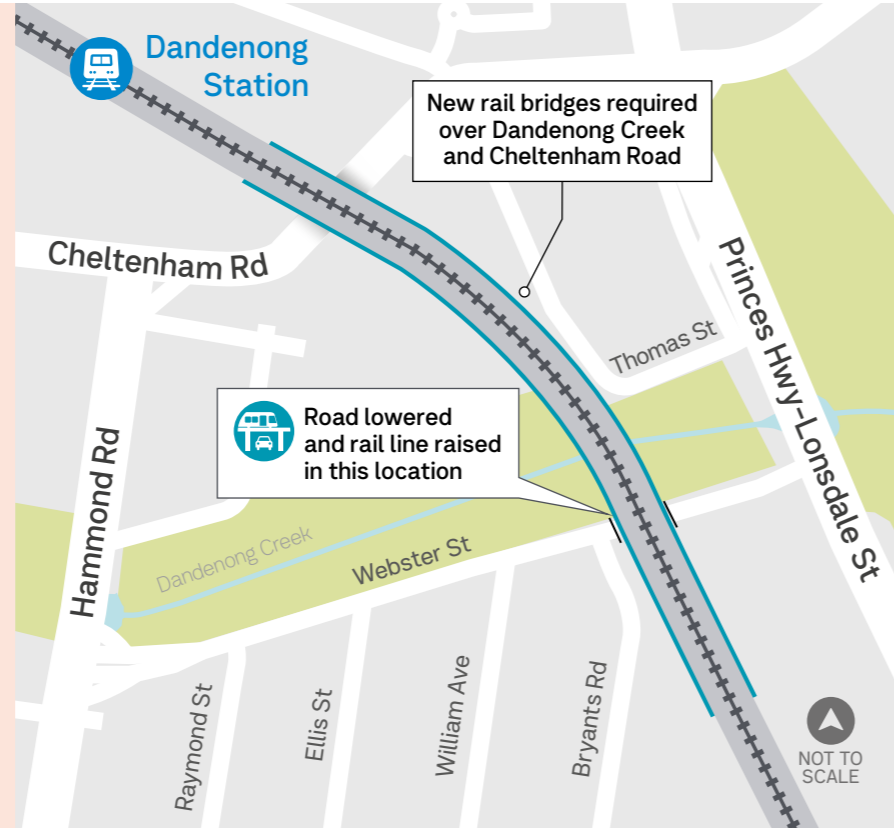
# Designs that were not feasible

We investigated multiple options to remove the level crossing at Webster Street.

## ❌ Hybrid solution

A hybrid solution with the road lowered and the rail raised would:

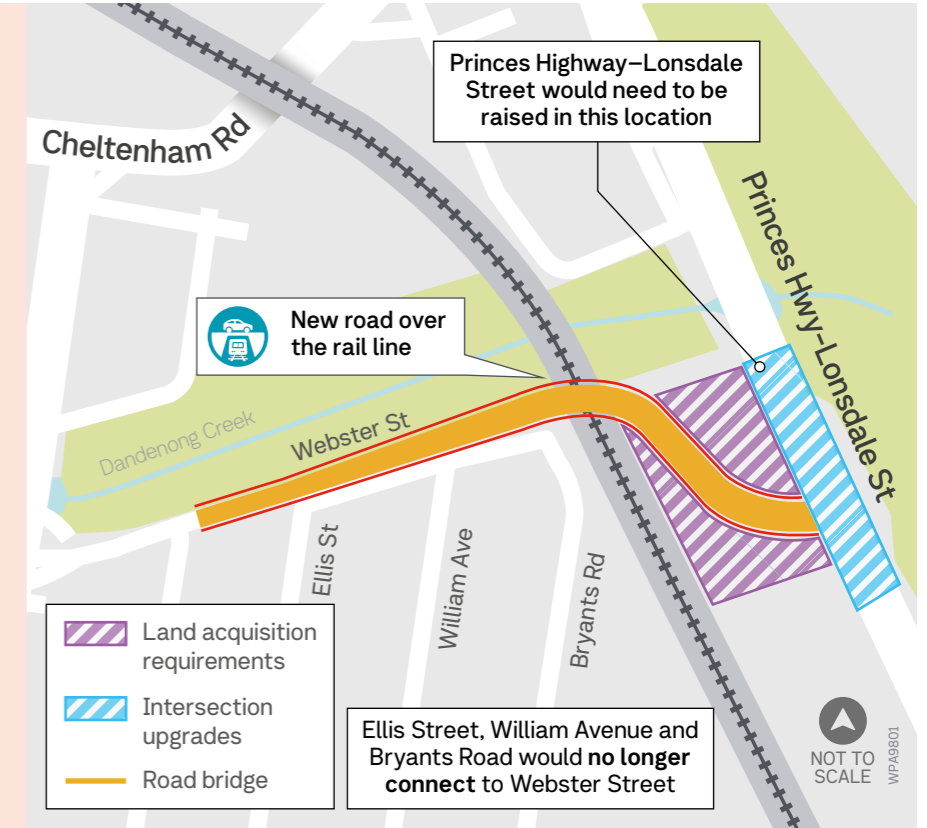
- cause lengthy and highly impactful disruptions to commuters on the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines
- require significant works at Dandenong Station to raise the platforms to meet the higher rail line
- mean building new higher rail bridges over Dandenong Creek and Cheltenham Road to replace the existing bridges at these locations
- require acquisition of several commercial properties east of the rail line.



## ❌ Road bridge

A new road over the rail line would:

- impact the community with highly disruptive works to raise Princes Highway-Lonsdale Street where it intersects with Webster Street
- close Ellis Street, William Avenue and Bryants Road from connecting to Webster Street
- require acquisition of commercial properties to make way for the location of the new road
- require the new road bridge to be built in a new location south of Webster Street.



## ❌ Closure of Webster Street without new link road

Closure of Webster Street with upgrades on the existing road network would:

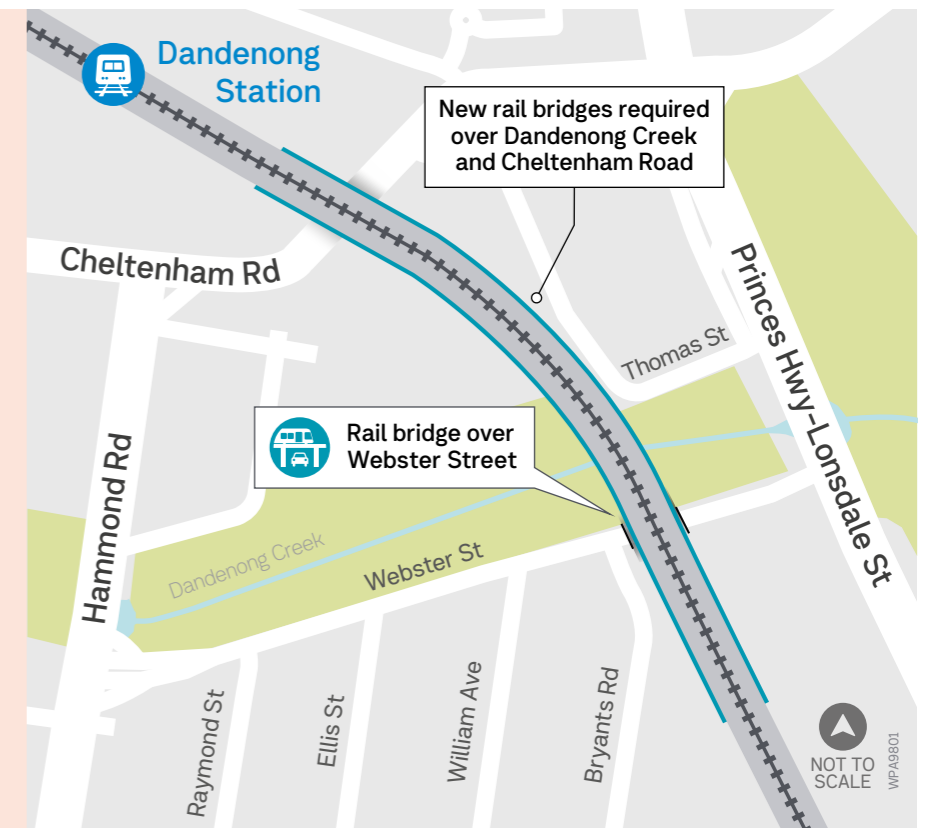
- impact the community with highly disruptive upgrade and widening works on Foster Street and Cheltenham Road
- require acquisition of commercial properties to make way for the widened road
- result in increased travel time for heavy vehicles and detour them away from the area
- provide no safety improvement for pedestrians and cyclists at the level crossing.



## ❌ Rail bridge

A new rail bridge over Webster Street would:

- cause lengthy and highly impactful disruptions to commuters on the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines
- require significant works at Dandenong Station to raise the platforms to meet the higher rail line
- mean building new higher rail bridges over Dandenong Creek and Cheltenham Road to replace the existing bridges at these locations.



## Project timeline


- 2018**
  - Level crossing removal project announced
- 2022 to late 2023**
  - Site investigations, traffic surveys and planning works
- November 2023**
  - Concept designs released
  - Community consultation
  - Site investigations continue
- 2024**
  - Final designs released
  - Further community engagement
  - Initial construction work
- 2025**
  - Major construction starts
  - Level crossing removed
- 2028**
  - New road underpass opens

\* Timeline subject to change.


## Next steps


We still need to complete further technical assessments and gather community input to refine the design.


### To do this we will:

 use feedback from the community to refine the design

 continue working with other authorities

 focus on ways to manage and minimise the impacts of construction on the community and the local environment

 continue our technical, engineering, and environmental assessments

 gather information about local traffic volumes and movements.

## Stay informed

Sign up for email updates at [levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/subscribe](https://levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/subscribe)

For SMS alerts, text **WEBSTER** to **0427 840 967** to keep informed of major traffic and construction impacts.

## Major road and rail projects across the Greater Dandenong area

The Victorian Government is delivering the rail and road projects that will keep Victorians moving in the decades to come.

By removing all 8 level crossings in the City of Greater Dandenong, we're making journeys safer for all road users and eliminating 5.6 hours of boom gate down time each day in the morning peak.

We're also removing 27 level crossings on the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines and creating room for 121,000 passengers every week on these train lines when the Metro Tunnel opens.

See the map below of some projects in the Greater Dandenong area that are complete or underway.

You can find out more about projects in your area by visiting [bigbuild.vic.gov.au](https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au)







NOT TO SCALE

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