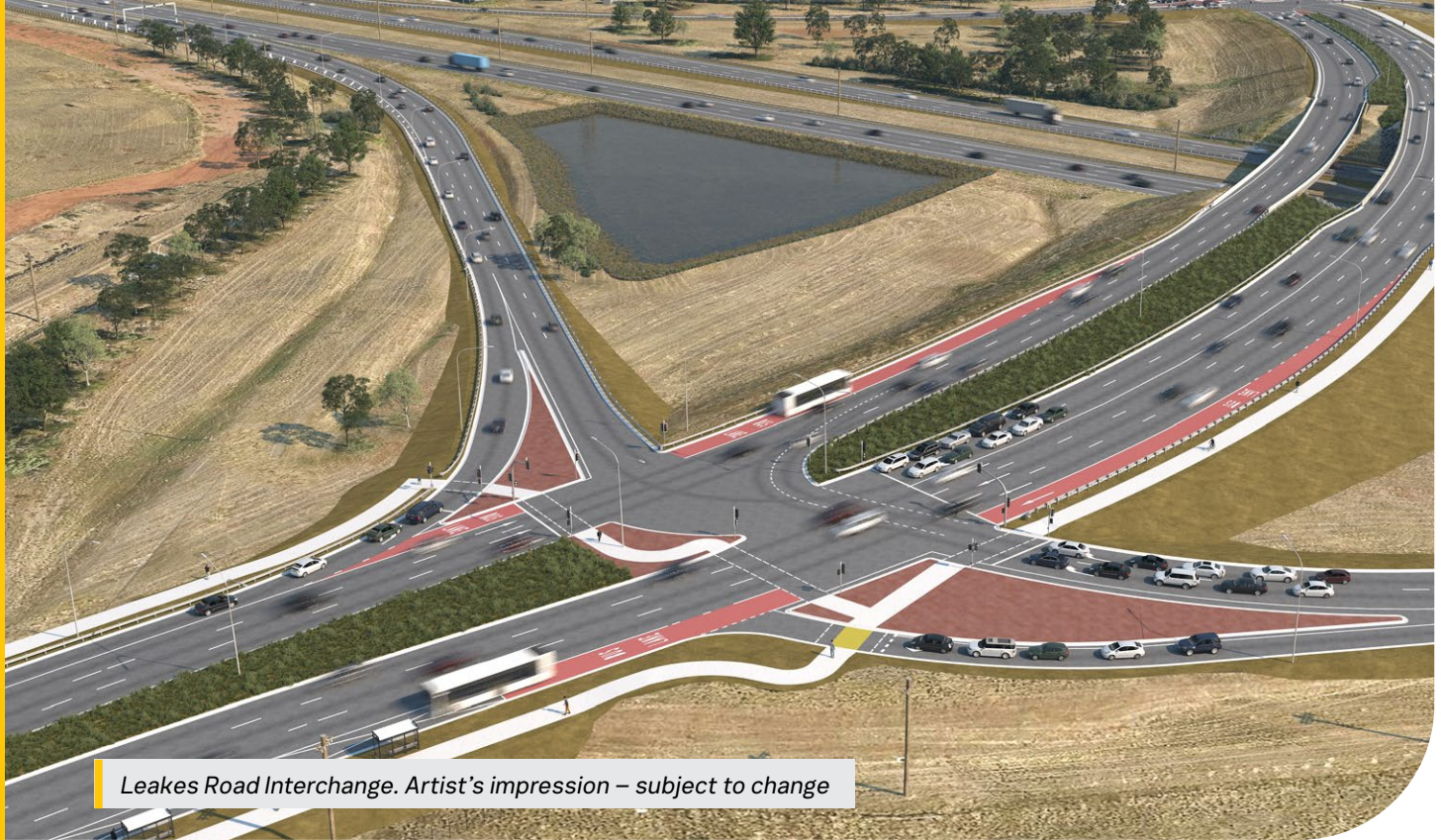




Leakes Road Interchange. Artist's impression – subject to change

WESTERN FREEWAY UPGRADE

BETWEEN MELTON AND CAROLINE SPRINGS

SEPTEMBER 2026



We're upgrading the Western Freeway between Melton and Caroline Springs to improve safety, freeway access and road capacity to help accommodate growing demand.

The Western Freeway is a critical road link and every single day approximately 86,000 vehicles travel the stretch between Melton and Caroline Springs, with this figure expected to rise to approximately 142,000 by 2031.

The section between Ferris Road, Melton and Ballarat Road, Caroline Springs was identified in the program business case as the highest-priority section.

The upgrade will deliver:

- Three lanes in each direction on the freeway between Ferris Road and Hopkins Road.
- Four lanes in each direction on the freeway between Hopkins Road and Ballarat Road.
- A consistent 100km/h speed limit between Ferris Road and Ballarat Road.
- A new half interchange at Mount Cottrell Road, providing an overpass across the Western Freeway with Ballarat-bound exit and citybound entry ramps.
- An upgraded Ferris Road interchange, including a new bridge over the freeway to increase capacity to two lanes in each direction, and new traffic lights at the northern intersection of the interchange.
- An upgraded Leakes Road interchange, including a new bridge over the freeway to increase capacity to three lanes in each direction, with traffic lights on the northern and southern sides of the interchange.
- An upgraded Hopkins Road interchange, including an additional lane across the bridge to Neale Road, improved citybound connections from Neale Road and new traffic lights on the northern side of the interchange.

Ahead of this work, temporary traffic lights will be installed at Leakes Road Interchange. The traffic lights are expected to be operational by early 2027.



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WESTERN FREEWAY UPGRADE — MELTON TO CAROLINE SPRINGS

PROJECT OVERVIEW MAP





Ferris Road Interchange. Artist's impression – subject to change

Pre-construction and next steps

The upgrade is currently in the pre-construction phase.

Key activities include:

- refining the project design and construction approach
- site investigations to further assess ground conditions
- detailed flood modelling to understand how the design impacts may affect existing water flows
- environmental investigations to further understand local flora and fauna
- preparing a Cultural Heritage Management Plan
- progressing work to secure planning and environmental approvals.

Following these key activities, the project will move into the procurement phase to appoint a construction partner to deliver the upgrade.

Construction timelines will be confirmed as the pre-construction and procurement phases progress.

Benefits



Improve capacity to accommodate growing demand



Improve freeway access



Improve road safety



Reduce traffic congestion



Improve cycling and walking connections

Project timeline



Late 2022

The Australian and Victorian governments each committed \$10 million to complete a program business case



Early 2023 to Dec 2024

Program business case planning and development



March 2025

The Australian Government committed \$1 billion to upgrade the freeway



September 2026

The Victorian Government committed \$550m to upgrade the freeway



Current

Pre-construction underway



Early 2027

Traffic lights to be installed at Leakes Road Interchange

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