

Transforming Bulleen Road interchange in 2026

Fact Sheet
May 2026

BIG BUILD
EASTERN FREEWAY

We're upgrading the Eastern Freeway with new express lanes, new traffic management technology and Melbourne's first dedicated busway.



Artist's impression of the new Bulleen interchange

What we're building

As part of building a massive new interchange at Bulleen Road, we'll seamlessly connect an upgraded Eastern Freeway to the new North East Link tunnels. Along with slashing travel times to the airport and northern suburbs, we'll take thousands of trucks a day off local roads, freeing up Bulleen Road for people who live and travel locally. Melbourne's first express busway will connect Bulleen and Doncaster park and rides to the city via 11 kilometres of dedicated bus lanes, for faster, more reliable trips.

New walking and cycling connections will make it easier to move through Bulleen, including two new underpasses beneath Bulleen Road and a dedicated bridge over the Eastern Freeway for safer, more direct access.

Bulleen Road bridge will also see significant changes in 2026, with works to widen the existing bridge from six to 10 lanes well underway.

Bridge connections with crane lifts

You've likely seen our giant T-shaped structures standing next to the freeway in Bulleen that we started to build in 2025. These will form the base for our elevated roads we need to lift into place this year.

Each elevated ramp is being built by delivering and installing large beams, using a number of specialised crane lifts over the Eastern Freeway, Thompsons Road and Bulleen Road. With a total of 188 beams being installed, these new elevated ramps will transform the Bulleen Road interchange creating a gateway to the M80 Ring Road and Melbourne Airport.

Disruptions

Building several interconnected ramps over one of Melbourne's busiest freeways is a complex task that requires careful planning to ensure the safety of road users and minimise disruption.

Freeway closures and other disruptions will continue throughout 2026 to lift structures into place and to build these elevated ramps. Whenever possible, works are scheduled during off-peak periods to reduce traffic impacts.

We also carefully coordinate with other planned works and maximise each closure by completing multiple activities at the same time, helping to minimise the overall time the freeway needs to be closed.

Managing impacts

During any freeway closure we'll manage impacts by:

- monitoring noise, dust and vibration levels
- directing lighting away from homes where possible
- scheduling noisier works earlier in the night
- using traffic controllers, signage and detours to guide motorists.

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The first of a series of mega lifts successfully completed over the Eastern Freeway

A massive construction milestone

We've hit a major milestone on the Eastern Freeway, completing the heaviest crane lift for a road infrastructure project in Australia.

During a planned full weekend closure of the Eastern Freeway, crews lifted and installed a 100-metre-long structure weighing 1080 tonnes over the freeway, east of Bulleen Road.

This structure will form part of the future elevated ramp that connects the new North East Link Tunnels to the Eastern Freeway, heading towards Ringwood. Throughout 2026, teams will continue installing the remaining large beams as construction of the interchange progresses.

Weather plays a critical role

These large crane lifts are highly weather dependent. For safety reasons, the lifts cannot proceed if:

- wind speeds exceed safe limits
- lightning is detected in the area.

Fast facts – The first mega lift

Cranes: Two 800-tonne crawler cranes

Structure: 12 giant beams spliced together on site prior to the lift

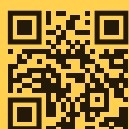
Weight: 1080 tonnes (approx.)

Length: 100 metres

Width: 16 metres

Location: Eastern Freeway, east of Bulleen Road

If weather conditions change suddenly, crews may need to pause or cancel the lift, even if preparations are complete. If this happens, the works may need to be rescheduled to another suitable time, meaning additional freeway disruptions may be required. We'll keep the community informed if plans change.



Scan the QR code to find out more about Melbourne's first dedicated busway

Construction timeline milestones at Bulleen



Q3 and Q4 2025

- New Bulleen Road bridge opened to traffic
- First large beams are delivered and installed along the freeway at Bulleen
- First concrete super T's installed for tunnel connection bridge



Q1 2026

- Building the second side of the shared underpass at Bulleen begins
- First mega lift successfully completed!



Q2 2026

- Bulleen Road citybound entry ramp realigned to its permanent position
- Concrete super T beams installed as part of Bulleen Road bridge widening
- Koonung Creek bridge structure concrete beams installed



Q3 & Q4 2026

- Start connecting the Eastern Busway to the Bulleen Park & Ride
- Shared underpass break throughs at both Bulleen Road citybound entry and exit ramps
- Bulleen Road walking and cycling bridge opens over freeway



2028

- Upgraded Eastern Freeway, North East Link and completed M80 Ring Road opens

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