



Artists' impression of the new wetlands near Valda Avenue.
Design subject to further development.

An improved wetlands design

Fact sheet
September 2025



We're working to improve the design of the wetlands near Valda Avenue and Heyington bridge to enhance community benefits and environmental outcomes.

As part of the upgrades to the Eastern Freeway, the wetlands will be reconfigured and expanded, featuring a rebuilt Koonung Creek and a new Heyington bridge.

From speaking with local community and Whitehorse City Council, we know the local value of the wetlands and returning them as a place people can visit and enjoy is important.

In response to feedback received when the design was exhibited in 2023, we've continued to work with Council to further improve the design for the wetlands. These improvements create a more natural look and feel and more opportunities for people to experience the area and enjoy views of the wetlands.

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Design improvements

The improvements to the wetlands create more space and opportunities for the community to experience and connect with nature. Key improvements include:

- 1 reducing hard structures in the wetlands by replacing concrete retaining wall along the Koonung Creek Trail with landscaped slopes (batters) for a more natural look and feel
- 2 introducing new viewing platforms through the wetlands for the community to pause and rest as they explore the wetlands
- 3 creating a space where the community can get closer to the wetlands and immerse themselves in the surrounding environment
- 4 improving pedestrian and cycling connections along Koonung Creek Trail and within the wetlands to make it easier and more enjoyable to move in and around the area
- 5 providing a gentler curve on the Heyington bridge ramp to allow for safer pedestrian and cyclist movements
- 6 increasing flood storage within the wetlands to provide even better flood protection for local residents.

To make space for these changes, a section of the Koonung Creek Trail will be realigned and some vegetation removed.

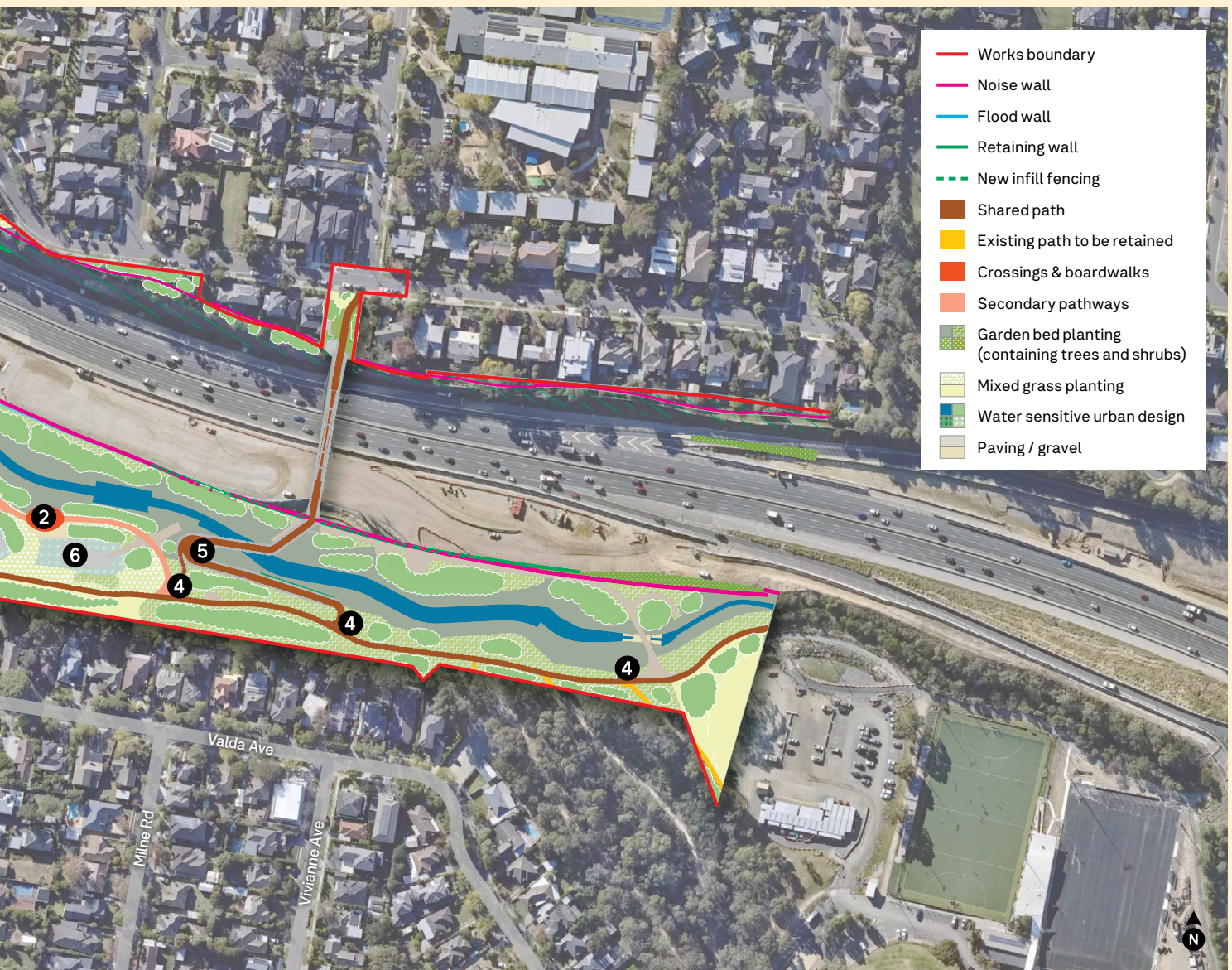
We recognise green open spaces, trees and the habitat they provide are important to the community

We've minimised vegetation removal to keep as many trees as possible and we'll continue to monitor this throughout construction.

We'll replant in and around the wetlands in consultation with Whitehorse City Council as the public land manager, and Melbourne Water. We'll use a mix of indigenous and native plants with varying growth rates to allow the existing canopy to be reinstated as quickly as possible.

As part of the Eastern Freeway Upgrades from Burke Road to Tram Road, we're delivering more than 1.8 million new plants, including over 10,000 trees, as well as extensive planting to reinstate Koonung Creek Reserve and Valda Wetlands, to shade walking and cycling paths, and to filter views of noise walls.





Artists' impression of retaining walls replaced with landscaped batters. Design subject to further development.



A crane lifts the new Heyington bridge into place

Building your new Heyington bridge

In early September 2025, we demolished the old Heyington bridge and installed a new bridge. The new Heyington bridge is straighter and wider than the old bridge and will provide a more direct connection across the freeway.

We're working to complete the finishing touches to the new bridge, as well as building the connections to shared paths and surrounding landscaping at each end. We've redesigned the ramps leading onto the bridge to make them more user-friendly and added seating to allow people to pause and look over the wetlands.

When your new Heyington bridge opens in late 2025, it will connect to the realigned Koonung Creek Trail, providing improved access across the freeway.

Keeping in touch

We'll be out talking to nearby residents about these works in more detail, access restrictions and how we'll be managing any local impacts.

If you have any questions, please call us on 1800 105 105.

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Construction timeline



Mid 2025

Demolition of the old Heyington bridge
Installation of the new Heyington bridge



Late 2025

Realignment of site fencing
Tree removal in some areas
Temporary closure of the shared path with diversions in place
New Heyington bridge and shared path connections open



Early 2026

Works continue on freeway widening
Noise wall and retaining wall works underway
Bulk excavation for new wetland ponds



Late 2026

New noise wall panels installed
Landscaping underway

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1800 105 105 (call anytime)



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