

Sunrise at the new Union Station.



Mont Albert and Surrey Hills, August 2023

# Surrey Hills and Mont Albert level crossing free, new Union Station open



The two dangerous and congested level crossings at Union Road, Surrey Hills and Mont Albert Road, Mont Albert are gone for good, and the new Union Station is open. Traffic is now flowing along the two boom gate free roads.

More than 22,000 vehicles that travel along these roads every day can now enjoy safer and less congested journeys.

The new Union Station is now open, with more trains stopping more often. The new timetable includes three additional services during morning and afternoon weekday peaks, providing passengers with more travel options.

The station has improved accessibility and security for commuters with platform access via lifts and stairs, as well as improved lighting and CCTV cameras. Other features include a climate-controlled waiting room and a sustainable station precinct.

The southern station car park opened in late June. In the spring, a new northern station car park will open. We will also open a Parkiteer for cyclists to safely secure their bikes.

New pedestrian and cycling connections will make the station area and surrounds more accessible.

Removing these two level crossings will help create a level crossing-free Lilydale Line by 2025, changing how locals live, work and travel. With no level crossings on the train line, journeys will be faster and local roads safer.

The Belgrave Line will also be level crossing free from the city to Ferntree Gully.

## Why these level crossings needed to go



22,000 vehicles travelled through these two level crossings each day



Boom gates were down for 40% of the morning peak



61 trains travelled through these crossings during the morning peak



No level crossings between Ringwood and the city means fewer train delays



Two fatalities and at least eight near-misses at these former crossings since 2005



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BIG BUILD**



Members of the project team with Emily Floyd (centre) and the beginnings of the sculpture.

## Something to tweet about!

### King Parrots to greet commuters

As part of a unique integrated art installation, the station's main entrance will feature two eye-catching 1.5 metre King Parrot sculptures by renowned local artist, Emily Floyd.

Emily was inspired by the local landscape and the bird and insect life of the area. She has fond memories of catching the train from Surrey Hills and Canterbury, where her parents ran a toy-making business.

The sculptures are crafted from monumental bronze and are playfully designed to be interacted with by commuters and locals enjoying the open spaces around the station.

Using robotic design and digital fabrication, Emily's sculptures were created to remind viewers of the

precarious but ultimately life-affirming nature of native birds in the urban environment, along with their connection to the ecosystems around them.

**'It is an honour to create the artworks for the new station. I especially hope the King Parrots will encourage visitors to consider the values of ecology, biodiversity and care for the environment.'**  
– Emily Floyd



Partially completed King Parrot sculpture.



King Parrot petals taking shape.



Locals capture the first trains stopping at Union Station.



## Union Station open

The new Union Station opened to commuters on Monday 22 May with the first trains running through the new 1.3km rail trench in the early hours of the morning.

Locals, rail enthusiasts and commuters visited throughout the day to explore the new station.

Plenty of our favourite four-legged friends stopped by as well!



Early morning commuters visiting the new Union Station.



Watch cars travel along the level crossing free roads for the first time

Scan the QR code or visit [levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/uma-roadsopen](http://levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/uma-roadsopen)



Find out what locals thought of their new station on opening day

Scan the QR code or visit [levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/union-station-opening](http://levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/union-station-opening)



Station master Richard welcomes passengers to their new Union Station.



Local furry friend enjoying the new Union Station.



Works underway during a three-month construction blitz to build the new rail trench.



Excavation works, east of Mont Albert Road.



Works during the three-month construction blitz on the eastern concourse and Mont Albert Road.

## The Big Dig in numbers

Across 93 days from February to May, our teams worked around the clock to remove the level crossings, dig the 1.3km trench and build the new Union Station.

Works included removing 80 Olympic swimming pools worth of soil and installing 60km of signalling cables to ensure trains can run safely and smoothly through the new Union Station.

### We also



lifted 76 massive concrete beams into place to support the Union Road open space, both station concourses and the new Mont Albert heritage plaza



installed 1,242 piles to form the walls of the rail trench



placed 25,000 tonnes of ballast in the rail trench



excavated a 1.3km rail trench



worked over 500,000 hours



installed 438 micro-piles to stabilise the concrete slab at the bottom of the trench



Works near the Union Road bridge.



## Seeing green

### The new Union Station is designed with sustainable features.

The Union Station roof features a 70-kilowatt solar panel system spanning both concourses, producing carbon-neutral power and reducing energy demand from the grid. This solar panel roof is one of the largest on the Melbourne metropolitan train network.

Station rainwater tanks will collect up to 15,000 litres of rainwater from the station canopies to be used in the station toilets and for cleaning. The station is designed to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> by 141 tonnes per year – equivalent to 47 cars being taken off the road annually.

The original palm tree, which previously sat alongside the old Surrey Hills Station near the stationmaster's house, has been stored offsite and will return later this year.

We've increased the number of trees, plants and shrubs, identifying opportunity for an additional 13,000 plantings from our original commitment of 52,000, taking the total to

more than 65,000 plantings across the local area.

The new plantings will contribute to the leafy neighbourhood character of Surrey Hills and Mont Albert. The trees will be a variety of deciduous and native evergreen trees that complement existing street trees and provide shade, habitats and screening.

There will also be a mixture of native, indigenous and exotic shrubs, with grasses and ground cover plantings that celebrate the garden heritage of Surrey Hills and Mont Albert.

When planting is complete, as an added environmental benefit, all the plant pots and tubes will be returned to the nursery to be reused or recycled.

More information about the types of plants planned in each area can be found here: [levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/UMA-landscaping](https://levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/UMA-landscaping)

## Mont Albert Station building returns

### The Mont Albert Station building has returned to Mont Albert where it will take pride of place at the new heritage plaza.

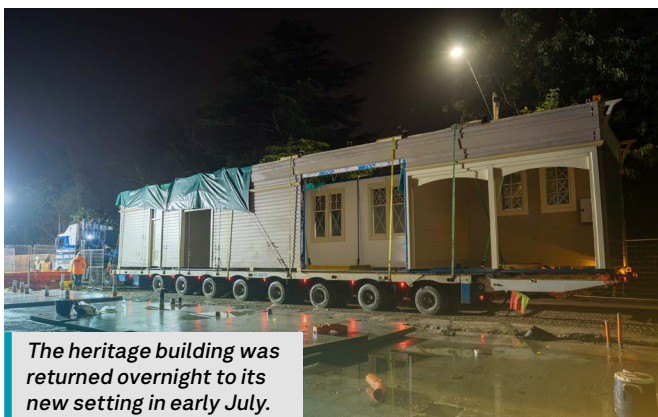
In February this year, the historic station building was carefully dismantled in sections before being transported to a storage facility in Moe, where it was maintained during the three-month construction blitz.

While in storage, our teams constructed a brand-new steel frame as the old wooden one had been eaten away by termites. Sections that had been damaged were carefully replaced.

The building was then carefully reassembled and original materials and finishes incorporated before it was returned to Mont Albert and installed on the northern side of the heritage plaza. It now sits close to its original position as part of the old Mont Albert Station and has been rotated 180 degrees to help retain its historic relationship with the rail line.

Community feedback and input from Whitehorse City Council has helped shape the design of the plaza, which will include a central grassy area, seating, colourful garden beds and a community garden to the north-east.

The Mont Albert heritage plaza will open to the public in spring. Future use of the old Mont Albert Station building will be determined by Whitehorse City Council.



The heritage building was returned overnight to its new setting in early July.



Positioning the heritage building as part of a new Mont Albert heritage plaza.



Passengers at the new Union Station.

# Thank you

Thank you to the Mont Albert and Surrey Hills communities for your patience while we worked to remove the level crossings, dig the rail trench and build your new station.

Finishing works are well underway and will continue into spring 2023 as we work to complete the remaining commuter car park, landscaping and deliver new and upgraded open spaces at Union Road and Montrose Street, the Mont Albert Road drop-off area, a rejuvenated Lorne Parade Reserve and the Mont Albert heritage plaza.

With the level crossings now gone for good and the new Union Station open, finishing works will be complete by the end of this year.



Cars travelling on the level crossing-free Union Road.

## Project timeline

- ✓
**Early 2021**
  - First phase of community consultation completed
- ✓
**Mid 2021**
  - Updated designs released
  - Ongoing community engagement
  - Design enhancements released
  - Contract award announced
  - Early works begin
- ✓
**Early 2022**
  - Major construction begins
  - Final designs released
- ✓
**Early 2023**
  - Big Dig commences
- ✓
**May 2023**
  - Level crossings gone for good
  - Union and Mont Albert roads reopen
  - New Union Station opens
- **Mid 2023**
  - Southern station car park opens
  - Mont Albert heritage station building returns
- **Late 2023**
  - Parkiteer opens
  - Northern station car park opens
  - Open spaces at Union Road, Lorne Parade Reserve, Montrose Street pocket park, Mont Albert drop-off area and Mont Albert heritage plaza completed

\* Timeline subject to change.

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