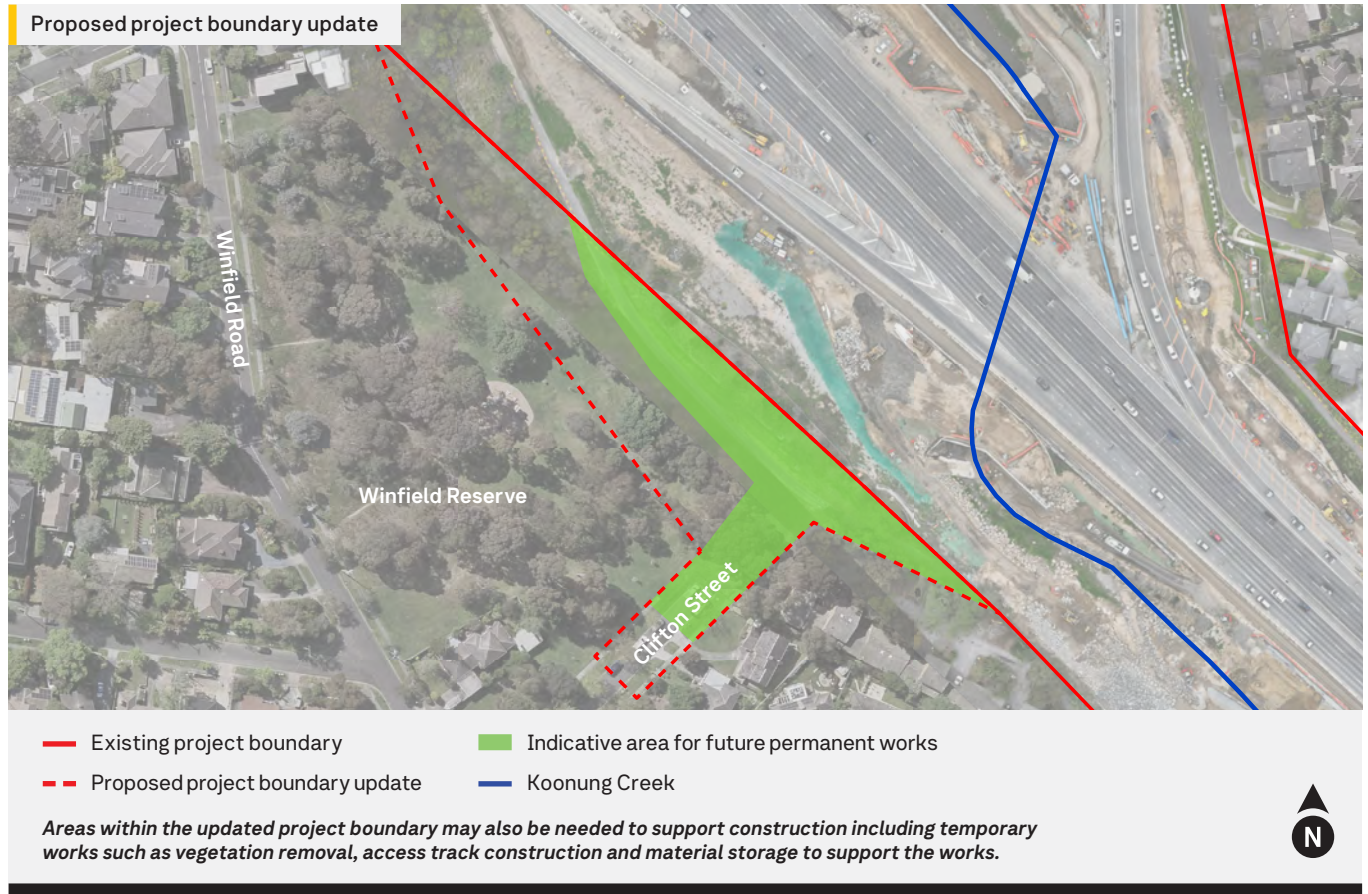


Planning Scheme Amendment GC271

BIG BUILD

EASTERN FREEWAY

Fact Sheet — Winfield Reserve, Balwyn North
May 2026



We're upgrading the Eastern Freeway with a connection to North East Link, new express lanes, smart traffic management technology, Melbourne's first dedicated busway and more than 18 kilometres of new and upgraded walking and cycling connections.

To help deliver these upgrades, we're proposing to update the project boundary through a Planning Scheme Amendment. This will allow further design development and construction planning for essential project works.

About the proposed project boundary changes

Project boundary changes at Winfield Reserve, Balwyn North are needed to improve flood and water management in parklands surrounding Koonung Creek. This includes measures to increase storage capacity and drainage upgrades to meet Melbourne Water and stringent environmental performance requirements.

A section of Koonung Creek Trail will also need to be modified and upgraded.

Need further information?

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Why the amendment is needed

The amendment will bring this area into the approved project boundary so it can be used to help deliver the project. It will also mean stringent requirements already in place for other areas of the project will also apply here.

The requirements cover design, construction and operation and were developed with input from the community for the project Environment Effects Statement (EES) in 2019.

The Environmental Performance Requirements (EPRs) set out how impacts are to be avoided, minimised or managed.

The Urban Design Strategy (UDS) outlines the project's design vision

and quality expectations, including how the final design should look and feel.

Applying these requirements provides a consistent approach for the Eastern Freeway Upgrades.

What the amendment includes

The amendment has:

- an overview of the project approvals
- a map showing the proposed boundary change
- site information and a high-level description of potential works
- an assessment of the project's existing requirements.

The amendment does not include detailed designs or construction plans.

These will be developed after the Minister for Planning has decided whether to approve the amendment.

Project boundary changes are needed at this location and seven others along the Eastern Freeway. The amendment is structured by local council area to make information easier to find.

Written submissions will be considered as part of finalising the amendment before it is submitted to the Minister for approval.

Written submissions will also be provided to the Minister and considered when deciding whether to approve the amendment.

You can view the amendment and make a submission from 7 May to 27 May 2026 at engage.vic.gov.au/psagc271

Managing future design and construction planning

Once the Minister has decided whether to approve the amendment, work to develop the project design and construction plans will progress. Some of the key EPRs that will apply in this area will include:

Minimising tree and vegetation removal

To deliver future works some trees and vegetation will need to be removed. The EPRs include stringent requirements to protect trees and vegetation, including native vegetation. They set out how removal is to be avoided and minimised wherever possible, and how replacement planting is to be managed.

Keeping as many existing trees as possible will be a priority during design and construction planning. This will include minimising areas needed for construction, and putting plans in place to protect trees that can be kept in or near work areas.

For every tree removed, at least two will be planted. As we deliver the Eastern Freeway Upgrades, North East Link and M80 Ring Road Completion, more than 30,000 trees will be planted. More than 3,000 trees have already been planted early, with more planned.

Temporary traffic, walking and cycling access changes

Some temporary changes to traffic access, as well walking and cycling access for Koonung Creek Trail, are anticipated to support construction. These will be managed in line with traffic and safety requirements in the project EPRs. This will include preparing traffic and transport assessments and management plans so vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians can move safely and efficiently around the area.

Key project dates

- May 2026**
 - Planning Scheme Amendment available for review and written comments
- Mid-2026**
 - Planning Scheme Amendment finalised and submitted to Minister for Planning
- Late 2026**
 - Minister for Planning decision expected
 - Design and construction planning
- Early 2027**
 - Construction
- 2028**
 - Upgraded Eastern Freeway open to traffic



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