

Works in Yarra Bend Park

Fact Sheet
June 2026

BIG BUILD
EASTERN FREEWAY

Artist impression of new walking and cycling bridge over the Yarra River, Kew



We're establishing a safe construction area in Yarra Bend Park, between Merri Creek and Yarra Boulevard, to support future upgrades to walking and cycling connections, including building a bridge over the Yarra River.

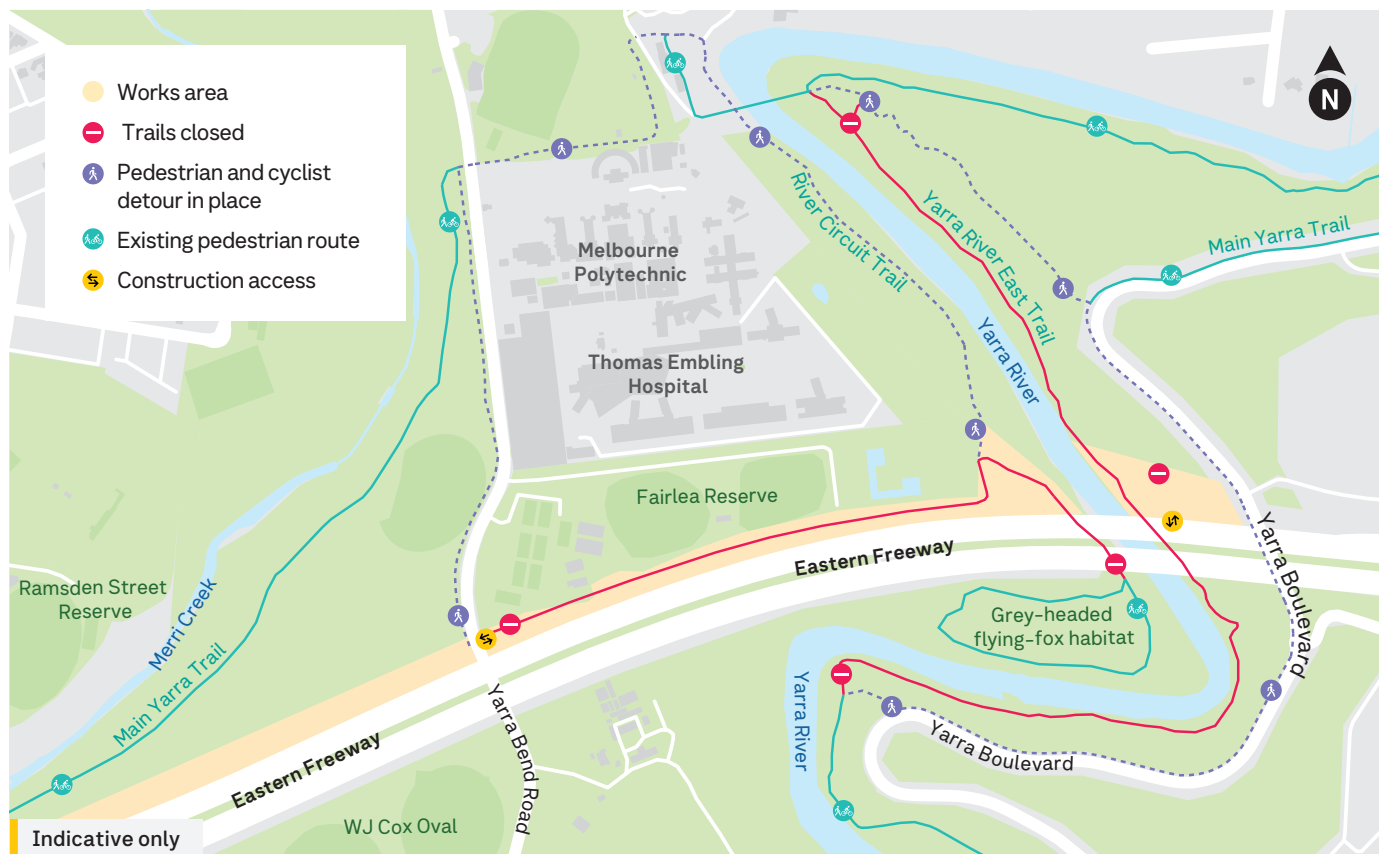
From May, we'll start works to establish a safe construction area in Yarra Bend Park, including building construction access tracks, a temporary construction compound and hard working platforms to support heavy machinery needed to build the new bridge of the Yarra River.

Yarra Bend Park is one of Melbourne's most significant inner urban parks and is valued for recreation, commuting, connection to nature and environmental protection. We know this area is well used by walkers, cyclists, dog walkers and river users, and we're carefully planning our works to keep people safe and maintain access where possible during construction.

Construction timeline

- Mid 2026**
 - Building construction vehicle access tracks
 - Tree removal, excavation and earth works
 - Closure of some trails in the works area
- Late 2026**
 - Building foundations of the new walking and cycling bridge
- 2027**
 - Bridge beam installation
 - Pouring bridge decks and installing barriers
 - Bridge finishing works
 - Upgrades to the River Circuit Trail
- 2028**
 - Pouring bridge decks and installing barriers
 - Landscaping and replanting
 - Project complete

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Changes to walking and cycling paths

From May 2026, the River Circuit Trail will close between Yarra Bend Road and the Yarra River. Signed detours will be in place to guide pedestrians and cyclists around the work area and connect to surrounding paths, including the Main Yarra Trail and Merri Creek Trail. Please follow all signage and directions from traffic controllers when moving through the area.

We know this network is an important connection for commuters and recreational users, and we'll keep disruptions to the shortest possible duration while works are underway.



Pedestrian closure signage at Yarra Bend Park

Works in Yarra Bend Park

We'll close sections of the park and a section of the River Circuit Trail as we build a safe construction zone.

Works include:

- installing temporary fencing to secure work areas
- building temporary construction access tracks
- trimming and removing selected trees and vegetation under the supervision of an arborist
- installing worker facilities, including site offices, dedicated workforce parking, and storage areas
- building hard working platforms for future bridge foundation works.

Construction vehicles will primarily access the site from Yarra Bend Road, reducing impacts on local streets and park users. Limited access will also occur from the Eastern Freeway Ringwood-bound shoulder, behind traffic barriers, for specific activities close to the freeway.

You'll notice workers, construction vehicles and machinery in the area, including excavators, trucks and cranes. There may be increased noise, dust and visual changes at times, particularly during earthworks and tree removal.

We'll closely monitor noise, vibration and dust levels and comply with the project's strict Environmental Performance Requirements.

We thank the community for their patience while these important works progress.



Grey-headed Flying-fox habitat

Supporting plants, animals and the river environment

Yarra Bend Park is a highly sensitive environmental area, located alongside the Yarra River, supporting important wildlife habitat. Protecting the environment is a key part of how we plan and deliver our works.

Measures in place include:

- clearly marked environmental no go zones to protect retained habitat
- pre works fauna inspections and wildlife relocation if required
- supervision by qualified ecologists during vegetation removal
- specific protections for the grey-headed flying-fox, including exclusion zones around the colony and monitoring noise and vibration during works
- erosion and sediment controls to protect the water quality of the Yarra River and riverbank stability including installing a silt curtain on buoys
- regular inspections and environmental monitoring during works.

Some trees will need to be removed to safely deliver these works. All removals have undergone a detailed approval process involving independent ecologists and government regulators. As part of the project's commitment, two trees will be replanted for every tree removed, and where possible, logs and mulch will be reused to support habitat restoration.

The Yarra River will remain open for watercraft activities such as boating, rowing and paddling.

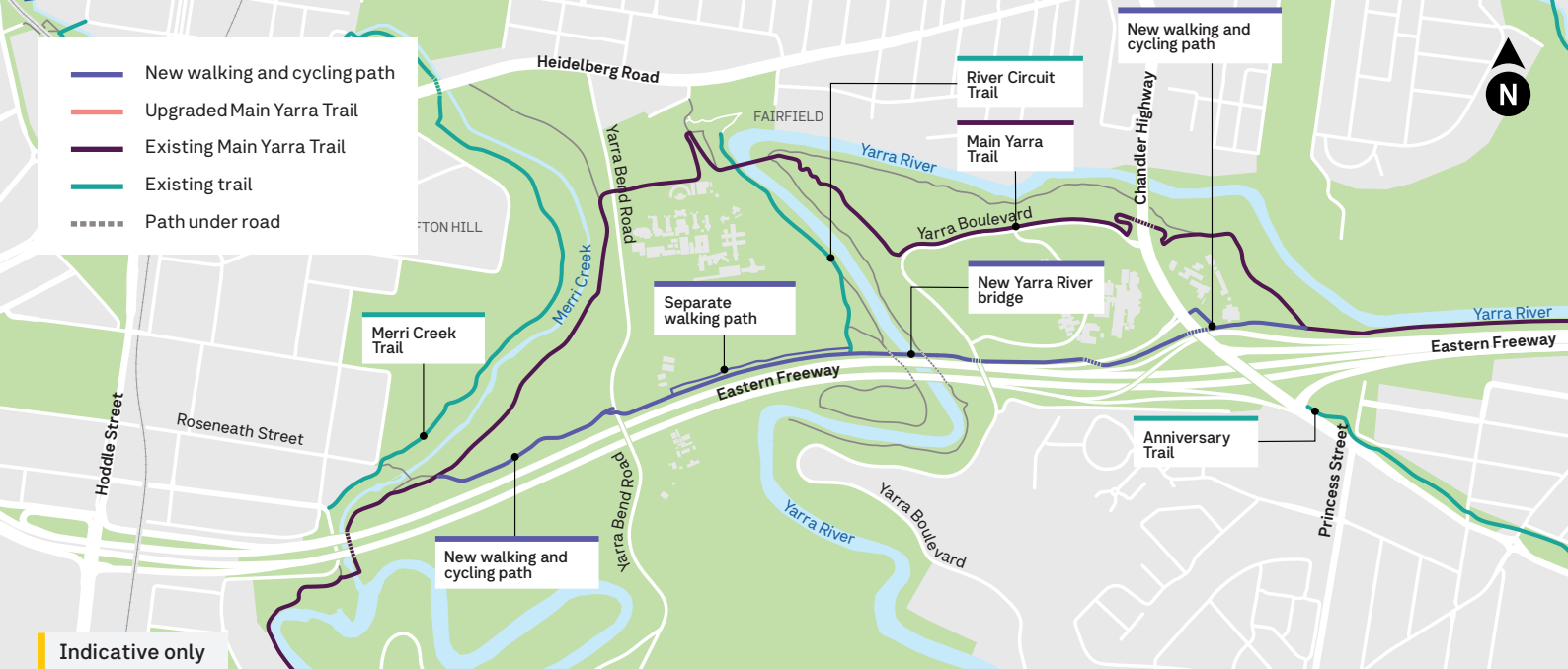
Where works are close to the river, temporary safety controls such as exclusion zones or stop and hold procedures will be used. These measures will only be in place when required and removed as soon as it's safe to do so.



Yarra River



Artist impression of new walking and cycling bridge over the Birrarung viewed from the River Circuit Trail



Fast facts

How are special wildlife species protected?

Yarra Bend Park supports species such as the Grey-headed Flying-fox and fish including the Australian Grayling. Works are planned around strict no go zones, supervised by qualified ecologists, with monitoring, fauna inspections and stop work procedures in place to protect habitat, wildlife and the river.

What is piling and how are impacts managed?

Piling is used to build strong foundations for bridges by installing deep supports into stable ground. These foundations will support the new walking and cycling bridge and ensure its long-term safety and durability. Modern piling methods, monitoring and strict controls are used to manage noise, vibration and environmental impacts, with works undertaken during standard hours where possible.

How will the new bridge improve walking and cycling connections?

The new bridge and walking and cycling connection will close a missing link in Melbourne's walking and cycling network, improving east west connections and providing a safer, more direct route through Yarra Bend Park for everyday travel and recreation.

What plantings will you use to reinstate the area following works?

We'll plant fast-growing indigenous and native trees across the project, designed to provide a net gain in tree canopy cover by 2045. Plants next to a waterway such as a river are referred to as riparian. These plants help to stabilise the ground, reduce erosion and filter runoff before it reaches the river. Riparian planting also provides essential food and habitat for insects, birds and other animals.

When we'll be working

We'll generally work during the day:

- Monday to Friday: 7am to 6pm
- Saturday: 7am to 1pm

Some night works will be required for activities near the Eastern Freeway. We'll notify nearby stakeholders ahead of time and have strict controls in place to manage impacts.



Yarra River

bigbuild.vic.gov.au/roads

contact@bigbuild.vic.gov.au



1800 105 105 (call anytime)



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