

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Leader of the House

Minister for the Coordination of Transport – COVID-19

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Priority Precincts



Thursday, 9 April 2020

MORE PROGRESS ON THE NORTH EAST LINK

People whose homes and businesses are needed for the North East link will be able to stay in their properties longer if they want to, in recognition of the difficult and uncertain circumstances coronavirus has created.

Minister for the Coordination of Transport – COVID-19 Jacinta Allan announced today that the formal acquisition process on the project has been extended until the middle of the year.

The announcement means people can either start the acquisition process now – if that best suits their personal circumstances – or they can wait a few months and start the process in the middle of the year.

Residents and business that decide to start the acquisition process later in the year will have the same amount of time to find a new property. Importantly, the extra time being provided for the acquisition process won't have any impact on the overall project timeline.

After almost two years of planning work the project has managed to almost halve the number of homes that will be acquired from 75 to 36 homes in the reference design – and 100 businesses in the Bulleen Industrial Zone. Work is continuing to reduce the number of properties that are needed even further.

Project teams have already started working with individual tenants and property owners on the best options for each case – acknowledging that property acquisition is challenging especially in the current environment.

Early works on the project are continuing and include protecting and moving more than 34 kilometres of gas, water and sewer pipes and drains, and over 95 other utilities, ahead of major construction starting next year.

A Voluntary Purchase Scheme (VPS) has also been implemented for property owners located in Borlase Street, Yallambie due to impacts from the early work program and future major construction.

A VPS will also be available for residents affected by the final project design, with eligibility to be finalised once detailed design is known later this year.

The North East Link will deliver a massive upgrade to the Eastern Freeway, which is forecast to allow traffic speeds to double in peak hour.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

"We're allowing local residents and businesses more time given the uncertainty coronavirus has created."

"This won't change the timelines for this massive project, but it will people the space they need to make the decisions that are right for them."

"We'll continue to work closely with residents and business owners as we get on with this vital project – which will slash travel times and take 15,000 trucks off local roads every day."