

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Leader of the House
Minister for Transport Infrastructure
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SEE YOU LATER SURREY HILLS AND MONT ALBERT LEVEL CROSSINGS

Major construction is ramping up this month as the Government fast tracks the removal of the dangerous and congested level crossings at Surrey Hills and Mont Albert, and passengers are asked to plan ahead as crews work around the clock.

Passengers are asked to plan ahead as crews work around the clock preparing the corridor for the new rail trench while local roads are shut and buses replace trains on the Lilydale line.

Work on the project will ramp up in March and April, with Mont Albert Road currently closed at the level crossing between 8.30pm and 6.30am until Thursday 24 March, when it will also be closed during the day. Union and Mont Albert roads will also be closed at the level crossing between 9pm Friday 25 March and 6am Monday 4 April.

To allow crews to safely work along the rail line, buses will replace trains between Camberwell and Box Hill stations from Friday 25 March to Friday 1 April, and between Camberwell and Ringwood stations from 8:30pm Friday 1 April until last service Sunday 3 April. Express services to and from the city will be provided.

More changes to train services are expected mid-year, with information to be provided to passengers closer to the time.

The Union Road and Mont Albert Road level crossings will be removed by building a 1.3-kilometre-long trench between the two suburbs, lowering the rail line beneath the roads, and replacing the existing stations with one, premium station with better facilities and more train services.

Following community feedback, and requests from the local member for Box Hill Paul Hamer, the project designs have been further refined and will now include a widened Union Road bridge in Surrey Hills, which will connect with open spaces on either side of the rail line.

Located over the rail trench, the space will better connect communities living on either side of the rail line, currently separated by three sets of train tracks.

The deck will include new seating, lighting, pedestrian paths and a flexible, multi-use space for public events and community celebrations, with the City of Boroondara also contributing funding.

This follows the enhanced designs for the Mont Albert open space announced last year, which will include a wider pedestrian bridge that will form a plaza connecting Beresford Street and the Hamilton Street shopping village.

In more good news for locals, 'Union Station' has been chosen as the new name for the new modern station which is close to Union Road servicing both Surrey Hills and Mont Albert commuters, with the unique name reflecting the coming together of two existing stations to form one premium station with modern, state-of-the-art facilities for locals.

Combining the two stations into one will allow for more train services, more often and has reduced the amount of excavation and tree removals required during the project and prevented homes and business having to be destroyed.

More than 52,000 trees, plants and shrubs will also be planted in the project area and new paths and cycling links through Lorne Parade Reserve will be installed, revitalising the heart of Mont Albert and Surrey Hills and providing brand new community spaces.

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Two women died at the dangerous Union Road level crossing after a train struck their car struck in 2016, while the two sites have had a combined eight recorded near misses since 2005.

With their boom gates down for up to 40 per cent of the morning peak, when 61 trains pass through, these congested level crossings cause traffic chaos for more than 22,000 vehicles a day.

The Andrews Labor Government's massive investment in the Belgrave and Lilydale line has seen six level crossings already gone and another six to be removed, which means every level crossing from the city to Lilydale and Ferntree Gully will be gone by 2025, changing the way people live, work and travel.

The Labor Government is removing 85 level crossings by 2025, with 58 already gone for good.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

"These dangerous and congested level crossings were the site of two tragic deaths and cause havoc for drivers every day and we'll be thrilled when we finally see them gone for good."

"Not only are we removing these two-level crossings and making the suburbs safer for commuters, we're also building a new state-of-the-art Union Station and adding new open space at both Union Road and Mont Albert that will benefit locals for years to come."

Quote attributable to Member for Box Hill Paul Hamer

"I have advocated strongly for a deck over the rail line at Surrey Hills and the Government has listened to the community. We are delivering a plaza at Mont Albert, and now we're transforming the heart of Surrey Hills to provide better connectivity either side of the rail line at Union Road to create new open space that will bring people to local shops and boost the suburb's economy."

Quote attributable to Member for Burwood Will Fowles

"We are proud to be removing these dangerous and congested level crossings from our suburbs, making the Lilydale line level crossing free by 2025 and creating room for more train services, more often."

Quote attributable to Member for Hawthorn John Kennedy

"The new rail trench will make the dangerous level crossing a thing of the past, clearing up congestion for drivers and providing faster, safer access to the Union Road shopping village."