

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop



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WORK RAMPS UP ON NORTH EAST LINK PROJECT

The first part of Melbourne's first dedicated busway is taking shape – with major works this winter on the fast-tracked Bulleen park and ride, part of the Andrews Labor Government's North East Link project.

The North East Link is not just a tunnel – it's the biggest ever investment in the north east. It will give local roads back to local residents, deliver a dedicated bus way, complete the Ring Road in Greensborough and build more than 34 kilometres of walking and cycling paths.

There will be intermittent lane closures and reduced speeds on Thompsons Road, Bulleen until October as builders continue to construct the second level of the commuter car park before works start on the 5000 square metre green roof and community park.

North East Link's \$69 million Bulleen Park & Ride will have parking for up to 370 cars, bike storage and pick-up and drop off bays – making it easier for people to use the fast, frequent bus services to and from the city.

As works ramp up, the second level of the car park is now taking shape. Crews have excavated more than 13 Olympic sized swimming pools of dirt (34,000m³), drilled a massive 626 piles and poured more than 3,200m³ of concrete for the car park foundations.

The new bus station is first part of Melbourne's first dedicated busway – which will allow buses to travel uninterrupted along an overhauled Eastern Freeway, cutting commute times for the 17,000 passengers that use Eastern Freeway buses each weekday. New bike and walking paths will connect the new park and ride with Koonung Creek Trail and Thompsons Road.

More than 1,000 bus services will use the facility each week, providing direct access for passengers from Bulleen, Doncaster, Doncaster East and Templestowe.

The Bulleen Park and Ride will open by the end of 2022 - four years ahead of schedule – and will be used by Eastern Freeway bus services operating along Thompsons Road before the dedicated busway along the Eastern Freeway opens in 2028.

As the project prepares for tunnelling, two giant tunnel boring machines (TBMs) have been ordered to build North East Link's 6.5 kilometre road tunnels. The mammoth machines – from German supplier Herrenknecht – will be among the biggest in the southern hemisphere and will each be 90 metres long, 15.6 metres in diameter and weigh around 4000 tonnes.

It will take around 18 months for the design, manufacturing, testing and transportation of the TBMs, which will arrive in Melbourne via ship. They will then be transported to site in Watsonia, lowered piece by piece into an excavated box, assembled, and launched on their journey south toward Bulleen.

Throughout Winter significant work will be underway to get ready for tunnelling. The project will switch on the new Yarra East Main Sewer which has been moved to make way for North East Link, set up construction compounds along Greensborough Road and at Winsor Reserve.

More than \$18 billion is being invested in Melbourne's north-east to improve the road and rail network, including North East Link, the Hurstbridge Line Upgrade, Fitzsimmons Lane Upgrade and removing 15 level crossings.

The North East Link Project is delivered in partnership with the Albanese Government.

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Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

“North East Link isn’t just Victoria’s biggest road project – it’s the largest ever investment into Melbourne’s North East. It is fantastic to see the massive progress being made on Bulleen Park & Ride, which is set to open by the end of the year - four years ahead of schedule.”

“These massive tunnel boring machines are an impressive feat of engineering – they’ll be able to cater for all ground conditions and will tunnel up to 40 metres underground, well below homes and the Yarra River.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Public Transport Ben Carroll

“It’s exciting to see such great progress on the Bulleen park and ride and we look forward to seeing buses driving through at the end of the year.”

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Metropolitan region Sonja Terpstra

“This is one of many transport infrastructure projects happening in the area, all aimed at making travel quicker and easier for people in the north east.”