

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Minister for Transport Infrastructure



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

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DRILLING UNDERWAY TO SHAPE AIRPORT LINK

Soil testing to help inform the detailed Business Case for Melbourne Airport Rail Link has begun as preliminary planning works ramp up.

Geotechnical drilling is the latest stage of preparatory work for the project that will boost connectivity between Melbourne and the regions.

Geotechnical investigations are used to establish ground conditions and soil quality, and involve drilling boreholes up to 25 centimetres in diameter and 45 metres deep to collect soil and rock samples.

Rail Projects Victoria, which will oversee delivery of the Melbourne Airport Rail Link (MARL), is assessing ground conditions across several locations to enable detailed planning.

These investigations are being conducted at six sites around the M80 Ring Road in Tullamarine and near the Maribyrnong River to guide further planning of the preferred Sunshine route. Each investigation takes around two weeks to complete.

The works will inform the design of the new rail line and how it will be built, with a further phase of testing to occur later this year.

The investigations are a crucial element of the full Business Case process, which is assessing design options for the long-awaited rail link to Melbourne Airport.

Expert technical advisors started initial environmental investigations in late 2018, with ecological surveys to identify any protected flora and fauna.

Construction of Melbourne Airport Rail Link is scheduled to start in 2022, subject to required approvals. Construction is expected to take up to nine years.

The Andrews Labor Government has committed up to \$5 billion to build this vital project, which will run from the CBD to Melbourne Airport via Sunshine and form the north-western section of the Suburban Rail Loop. The Commonwealth has also committed funding to make the Link a reality.

The total cost of the project will be determined in the full Business Case and is estimated in the range of \$8-\$13 billion.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

“Whether it’s the Airport Rail Link, the Metro Tunnel, removing level crossings or planning for the Suburban Rail Loop – we’re getting it done.”

“We’ve made sure the Airport Rail Link will benefit all Victorians – delivering a new super-hub at Sunshine and paving the way for fast rail to the regions.”

“It will deliver wider benefits beyond simply moving tourists and business people between the CBD and the airport. It will help us transform the way people live, work and travel right across Victoria.”

Media contact: Hayley Bester 0424 753 775 | hayley.bester@minstaff.vic.gov.au