

BELL STREET, COBURG AND
MORELAND ROAD, BRUNSWICK

REMOVING A LEVEL CROSSING

JULY 2018

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Community feedback will be an important consideration in developing the design for the removal of these level crossings.

We want to hear from you about what is important in your community and what you would like to see in the area.

Drop-in sessions

Come along to one of our community drop-in sessions to find out more about the project and see the designs under consideration.

You will have an opportunity to speak to the project team, provide feedback on the designs and share your ideas about how we can make it easier for people to move around the area.

Thursday 19 July

5pm - 7:30pm
Coburg Primary School (Junior School)
81D Bell Street, Coburg

Saturday 21 July

10am - 12:30pm
Coburg Primary School (Junior School)
81D Bell Street, Coburg

Online hub

If you can't make it to a session, you can provide feedback through the online engagement hub at your.levelcrossings.vic.gov.au. Online feedback closes on Thursday 9 August 2018.

Stay up to date

More information about the project is available on our website at levelcrossings.vic.gov.au.

You can also sign up for email updates at levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/subscribe

To get in touch with the team, send an email to us at contact@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au or call 1800 105 105.



CONTACT US

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Victorian Government is removing 50 dangerous and congested level crossings across Melbourne. This includes the level crossings at Bell Street in Coburg and Moreland Road in Brunswick.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority has been established to oversee this important infrastructure project.

Removing these level crossings will improve traffic flow, ease congestion and enhance safety.

Over 55,000 vehicles drive through these two level crossings each day. The boom gates are down for up to half an hour at each crossing during the 7-9am morning peak.

The Bell Street and Moreland Road level crossings will be removed together as part of one project – both will be gone in 2020.

Project benefits

The Bell Street and Moreland Road Level Crossing Removal Project will deliver significant benefits.



Improved safety

The area will be safer for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.



Reliable travel times

No more waiting at the boom gates.



Better connected communities

Making it easier for people to get where they need to be.



Boosting the economy

Creating jobs during construction and improving opportunities for local traders.

Project timeline

- ✔ **2017**
 Site investigations
- **2018**
 • Community consultation
 • Design development
 • Finalise design
- **2019**
 Works proposed to start
- **2020**
 Boom gates removed

Please note that the timeline above is subject to change.

WHAT'S BEEN DONE SO FAR?

Each location is unique and a design that works in one area might not suit another. Planning and technical studies help to identify the designs that would work best in each location.

A number of considerations are taken into account when selecting a design, including technical feasibility, minimising disruption, future-proofing the area and creating safe spaces for people who live, work and play there.

Planning is underway for the removal of the Bell Street and Moreland Road level crossings. We've been conducting site and technical investigations to better understand the area. These include:

Geotechnical investigations: testing water and ground conditions to help inform design development and construction approach. Our investigations found a hard basalt rock layer located from approximately one metre below ground level and groundwater from about 10 metres deep.

Feature surveys: measuring the topography and ground levels of the area. Our assessments show that the ground has an upward incline to the north of Bell Street. The rail corridor along the Upfield line is also narrow and built-up.

Utility services assessment: locating where water, sewerage, electricity, gas and telecommunications service pipes are located around the level crossings. Major underground drains and sewerage systems run parallel to Bell Street and Moreland Road, which service a large portion of the community.

Noise monitoring: measuring existing noise levels along the rail line and surrounding area.

Stakeholder meetings: meeting with a range of stakeholders, including local council and other transport agencies, to understand how the project will integrate with future planning for the area and ensure it does not preclude other projects from happening.

Heritage assessment: identifying heritage assets in the area and working with Heritage Victoria and other relevant stakeholders to ensure they are managed appropriately. Both Coburg and Moreland stations are heritage listed, as well as a signal box located near Moreland Station.

The design for the Bell Street, Coburg and Moreland Road, Brunswick level crossing removals will consider many elements, including:

- the narrow width of the rail corridor
- the close proximity of the rail line to residential properties
- major underground drains and sewerage systems
- the long-term impact on other transport modes, including cycling, trams and buses
- impact on local traders
- future local revitalisation plans for the area
- the hard rock layer found below the surface in the area
- the impact to adjacent level crossings due to their close proximity
- the heritage-listed Coburg and Moreland stations and signal box

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT DESIGNS

Designs that have been ruled out

We have considered and assessed a range of designs to remove the level crossings at Bell Street and Moreland Road.

Our investigations and early planning have led us to rule out road-based designs, including:



Road under rail: lowering Bell Street and Moreland Road under the rail lines.



Road over rail: raising Bell Street and Moreland Road over the rail lines.

Designs under consideration

Initial investigations show there are two feasible designs for the removal of the Bell Street and Moreland Road level crossings.

The two designs we are considering are:



Rail over road: raising the rail line over Bell Street and Moreland Road onto an elevated rail line



Rail under road: lowering the rail line below Bell Street and Moreland Road into an open trench

Why have these designs been ruled out?



Property acquisition

To lower or raise the road would require significant compulsory property acquisition. We estimate that these designs would involve the compulsory purchase of up to 20 homes and 40 businesses across both locations.



Transport impacts

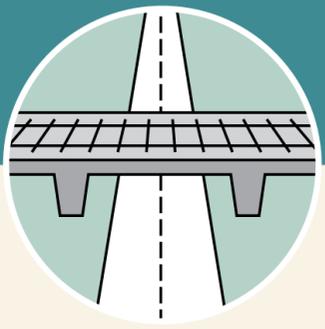
These designs would affect access for the tram depot on Moreland Road and create major impacts to potential future transport upgrades in the area.



Trader impacts

There would be significant impacts to the shopping strips on Bell Street and Moreland Road including permanent changes to access for some businesses.





Rail over road

LEGEND

- █ Elevated rail
- █ Intersecting roads
- █ Existing Upfield bike path

A rail over road design involves elevating the rail line over Bell Street and Moreland Road.

Preliminary planning and design development has indicated that due to the close proximity of Munro Street to Bell Street, the level crossing at Munro Street would also need to be removed as part of this design.

This would be in addition to the Bell Street and Moreland Road level crossings.

Right: Bell Street, Coburg level crossing
Far right: Upfield Bike Path

Benefits and challenges of this design

This design would involve constructing an elevated rail bridge using concrete and steel beams called a 'viaduct'. There will be various cross-over points for pedestrians under the elevated rail line.

Benefits

- Opportunities to create new open space and community areas underneath the elevated structure.
- Allows potential improvement and expansion of the Upfield Bike Path to enable better cycling and pedestrian access and promote sustainable transport modes such as cycling.
- Promotes better east-west connectivity in the area, including a potential at grade pedestrian connection on Victoria Street.
- Preserves heritage assets, including the retention of the existing Moreland and Coburg stations.
- Allows for the potential removal of other level crossings along the Upfield Line and planning for the future.
- Less vegetation and tree removal required.

Challenges

- Developing a design that blends in with the existing area and creating activated spaces while maintaining the unique character of Coburg and Brunswick.
- Ensuring ongoing maintenance and incorporating measures to deter graffiti and enhance safety in the area.

What it means in construction

- Less disruption to train services and a smaller construction area required.
- The structure can be partially built off-site, meaning shorter road and rail closures.
- Less noise, dust and trucks during construction.



Above: Artist's impression of a rail over road design at Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena.

Where has a rail over road design been done before?

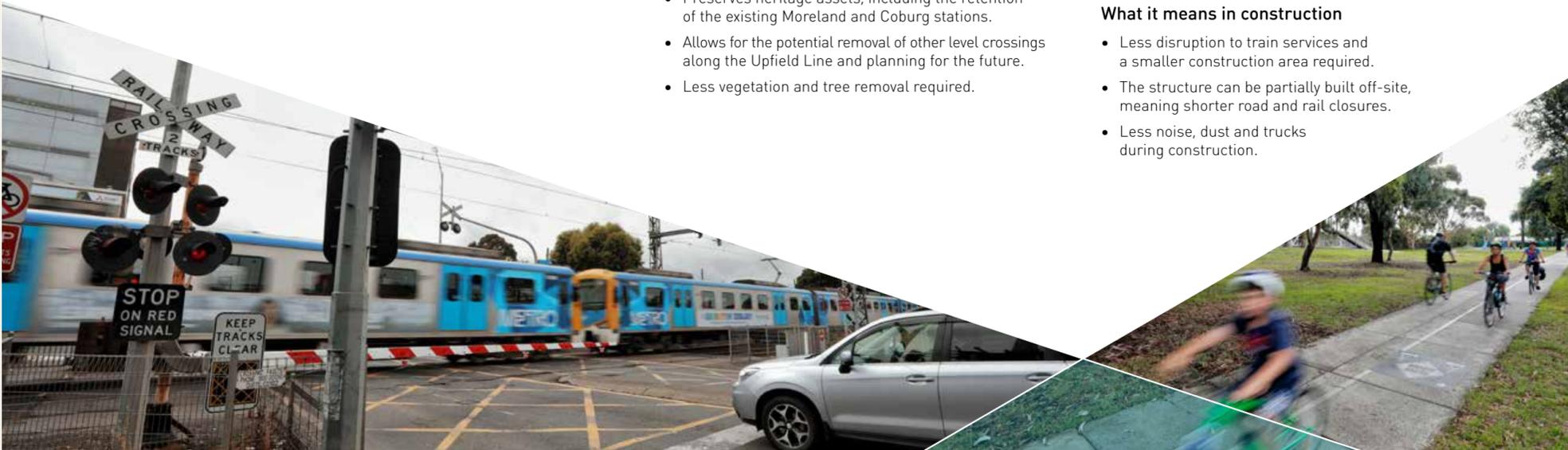
A rail over road design is the most common method of separating the road and rail network across Melbourne and in other major international cities.

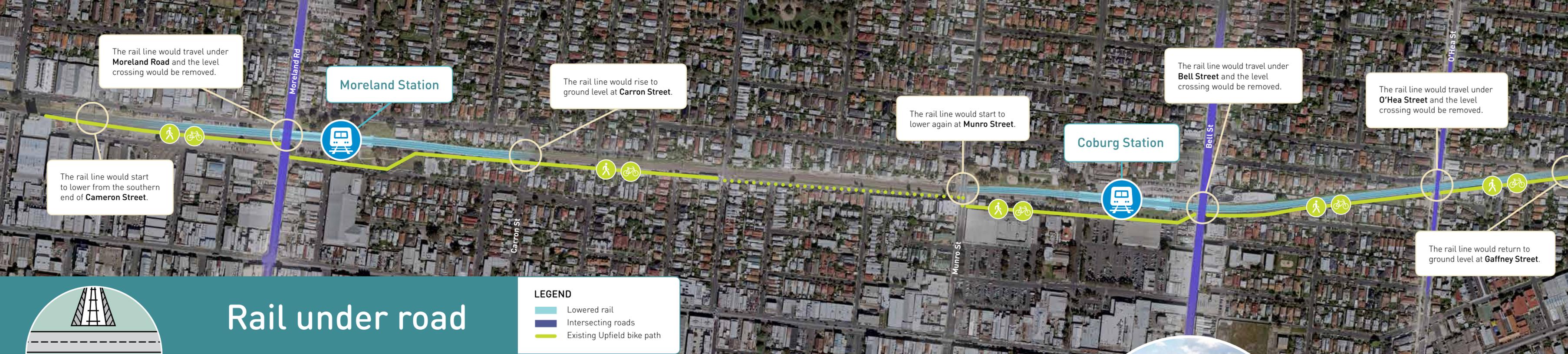
Over 100 grade separations in Melbourne have been built using this design, including at:

- Murrumbeena Rd, Murrumbeena
- Lower Plenty Road, Rosanna
- Clayton Road, Clayton
- Skye/Overton Road, Frankston

The Level Crossing Removal Authority is currently building a rail over road design at:

- Kooroit Creek Road, Altona
- Abbots Road, Dandenong South





Rail under road

LEGEND

- Lowered rail
- Intersecting roads
- Existing Upfield bike path

Benefits and challenges of this design

This design would involve digging a large open trench under the road, with vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian cross-over points at Bell Street, O'Hea Street and Moreland Road.

Benefits

- Typically less visible for homes, businesses and other facilities immediately next to the rail line.
- Existing pedestrian and cycling paths would be retained where possible, depending on the width of the corridor.
- Preserves heritage assets, including the retention of the existing Moreland and Coburg stations.
- Allows for the potential removal of other level crossings along the Upfield Line and planning for the future.

Challenges

- A large open trench will be approximately 15-20 metres wide and has the potential to divide the local area.
- Safety impacts will need to be addressed, such as the inclusion of approximately two metre high safety screens and anti-throw screens.
- Limited opportunities to create new open space and parkland.
- More trees and vegetation may need to be removed.
- Limited opportunities to upgrade the existing pedestrian and cycling paths.
- Limited opportunities to improve east-west connectivity.
- May create additional challenges and impact future transport projects.

What it means in construction

- Requires complex relocation of underground drains and sewerage systems, resulting in considerable disruption to residents and businesses in both the immediate area and beyond.
- Greater disruptions to the rail and road network, including a longer closure of the rail line.
- The presence of hard basalt rock beneath the surface will cause greater noise, dust and vibration during construction. It will also involve heavy truck movements in the area and take much longer to dig.



Above: Artist's impression of a rail under road design at Scoresby Road, Bayswater.

Where has a rail under road design been done before?

A rail under road design is one method of separating the road and rail network across Melbourne.

Over 80 grade separations in Melbourne have been built using this design, including at:

- Main and Furlong Roads, St Albans
- McKinnon Road, McKinnon
- Grange Road, Alphington
- Camp Road, Campbellfield

The Level Crossing Removal Authority is currently planning to build some rail under road designs in additional areas, including:

- Balcombe Road, Mentone
- Charman and Park Roads, Cheltenham

A rail under road design involves lowering the rail line into an open trench under Bell Street and Moreland Road.

The natural incline of the land heading towards Upfield presents some challenges to ensure a lowered rail line rises gradually.

In order to meet the required gradient levels, the level crossing at O'Hea Street (north of Bell Street) would also be removed as part of this design, in addition to the Bell Street and Moreland Road level crossings.

Right: Bell Street, Coburg level crossing

