

## Environment and sustainability

The Victorian Government and Transurban are committed to a sustainable and environmentally sensitive approach to the planning, design and construction of the West Gate Tunnel Project.

Environmental management is a critical part of any major project. A number of statutory requirements are in place to protect the environment and ensure unavoidable impacts are well managed.

### Understanding the existing environment

The Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the West Gate Tunnel Project has detailed information about how the project could affect people and the environment and how the impacts will be managed.

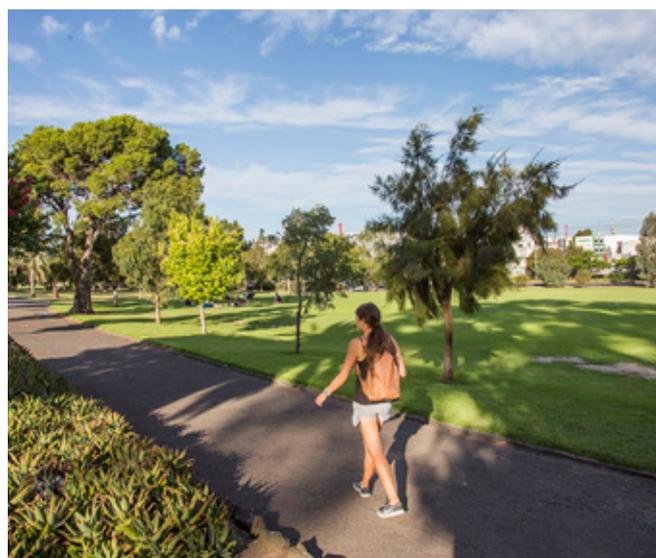
Specialist studies have been carried out in the project corridor – along the West Gate Freeway and throughout the inner west – to help build our understanding of the existing environment, places of heritage value and social uses and assess any impacts from the project.

The EES has assessed potential impacts in 17 areas including transport, air quality, noise, landscape and visual, vibration, business, ecology and human health. To view the EES visit [www.westgatetunnelproject.vic.gov.au/EES](http://www.westgatetunnelproject.vic.gov.au/EES).

#### What we've heard so far

Through consultation during 2015 and 2016, some of the feedback received included:

- ensure the local environment is preserved or improved through the project
- preserve areas such as waterways, existing trees and native vegetation
- carefully consider a number of floodplains
- manage and treat contaminated soils and consider groundwater movement and potential impacts
- protect public open space, parks and facilities.



## What we know

### Aboriginal cultural heritage

Areas of potential Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity have been identified at the Maribyrnong River, Kororoit Creek, Stony Creek and Moonee Ponds Creek.

As part of the EES, desktop assessment, field studies and consultation with traditional owners and Aboriginal Victoria will inform the development of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan.

The plan will outline how to manage potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Aboriginal Victoria will evaluate the Cultural Heritage Management Plan to ensure Aboriginal cultural heritage that is identified is protected and any new discoveries are carefully managed.

### Contaminated land

The Footscray and Yarraville areas have been a centre of industrial activity for around 150 years. As a result, there is a history of land contamination. A number of sites in this area have been investigated and cleaned up in recent years. There are also a number of sites the Environment Protection Authority Victoria currently monitors.

Dealing with contaminated land is a common part of building major projects. Construction companies are well-equipped and experienced in safely managing contaminated land and spoil and the EES details how this will be managed.

### Ecology

Qualified ecologists have provided advice on any significant flora, fauna and native vegetation that could be affected by the West Gate Tunnel Project.

Because of the long history of intensive disturbance caused by industrial and residential development within the project corridor, much of the native vegetation and species habitat has been removed. Very small patches of regenerated native vegetation do exist, including:

- Kororoit Creek – woodland line the creek to the north of the West Gate Freeway
- Stony Creek – coastal saltmarsh line the creek between Anderson Reserve and the Stony Creek Backwash, where mangroves are also found
- Moonee Ponds Creek – brackish wetland line the creek south of Dynon Road.

No significant habitat for threatened flora or fauna has been identified within the project corridor.

### Historical heritage

There are a number of historical heritage sites within the corridor of the project, particularly around the Maribyrnong River. Many of these



sites are linked to the area's strong industrial and maritime history, including Footscray Wharf, Sims Street Timber Slipways, Lyons Street Explosive Store and a historic swimming area.

As part of the EES, a historical heritage impact assessment has been undertaken which has been informed by existing records and site inspections, in addition to consultation with local councils and Heritage Victoria.

The EES outlines management strategies to avoid, manage or mitigate any adverse impacts to historical heritage sites associated with the construction or operation of the project.

### Water

The project crosses four key waterways – the Maribyrnong River, Kororoit Creek, Stony Creek and Moonee Ponds Creek.

As part of the project's EES, technical specialists have carried out surface water and groundwater investigations including testing the depth and quality of groundwater and surface water modelling to understand the movement of water across the waterway (including the floodplain areas).

In order to protect the health of these waterways a key design objective is to ensure no adverse effects would occur in the floodplain of these waterways. Careful consideration for the location of bridge piers in or near waterways is necessary to manage the risk of flooding.

The EES has assessed various water impacts such as groundwater, surface water, drainage and wastewater disposal. The assessment will help develop the design further and inform plans and strategies to manage any adverse impacts.

## Designing to avoid impacts

To ensure that the environment is considered throughout the decision making process, the West Gate Tunnel Project design process will outline a number of objectives, which include criteria to protect environmental and social assets, values and uses.

A holistic approach allows a safe, functional design that also aims to complement land use, different transport modes, local values (social, historical and environmental) and future local community development strategies.

Examples of this include:

- completing thorough research and technical assessments to identify high value areas in order to manage impacts through design and construction
- protecting the environment by avoiding or minimising impacts
- improvements and considerations to noise and air quality
- using existing road space or road reserve where possible
- minimising adverse impacts to creeks and rivers
- minimising impacts to parklands
- appropriate management of contaminated materials
- ensuring environment management plans and best practice construction techniques are used.

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### A sustainable design

Sustainability will be integrated into the development, design and delivery of the West Gate Tunnel Project to bring economic benefits to the Melbourne region, provide value to the Victorian community and mitigate project environmental impacts, while reducing congestion and travel times on the Melbourne transport network.

To achieve a design that meets the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia's excellence rating we will embed sustainability initiatives and decision making at all steps throughout the project lifecycle, including:

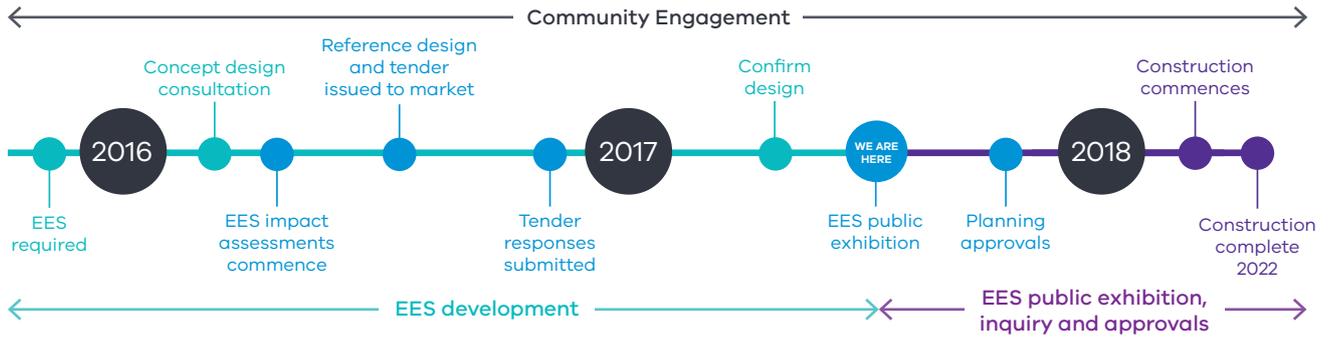
- better managing resources by reducing waste, reusing materials or using materials with a lower environmental footprint
- finding new ways – including smart technologies – to reduce energy use during design, construction and operations
- reducing the project's impact on the local environment
- supporting economic development in the project corridor by purchasing and hiring locally.

Credit: Chris White



Moonee Ponds Creek

## Timeline



## Construction from early 2018

Construction will begin after we have planning approvals - expected later this year - with works to be completed by the end of 2022.

In the meantime, we'll continue to work on the design and planning for construction. This may involve some investigation works such as geotechnical (ground) testing, monitoring and surveying.

We will communicate any activities to nearby residents in advance and ensure information is available on our website.

### Find out more and stay involved

- Sign up for email updates or ask a question through our website
- Follow us on Facebook and Twitter
- Talk with your local Community Liaison Group member
- Look out for updates from the team via newsletters, email, project website and local events

### Contact us

Do you have a question about the project? If you need more information or would like to provide feedback, please get in touch.



[westgatetunnelproject.vic.gov.au](http://westgatetunnelproject.vic.gov.au)



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