

# MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 26 February 2021

## AIRCRAFT STATION WORK TAKES OFF

Major works have kicked off to build a brand-new underpass for commuters, pedestrians and cyclists in Laverton, connecting both sides of the rail line and making it easier and safer to reach the platforms.

The package of works – which also includes 100 extra parking spaces along with new shade, seating and landscaping – follow on from the removal of the Aviation Road level crossing in 2019.

Currently, passengers need to walk across one set of tracks to reach the station's single island platform, meaning they need to wait for safety gates to open every time a train passes through. This outdated arrangement will be replaced by a spacious, well-lit and modern walkway under the tracks.

Large earthworks machinery has now kicked off construction of a temporary freight track, the first step in major construction. This piece of rail, known a 'slew' track, will allow essential freight operations to continue – including the delivery of fresh produce from farms in Victoria's south west through to Melbourne.

Excavation under the tracks will then start in the second quarter of 2021, following a design configured to allow for expansion of the rail corridor for the Geelong Fast Rail project. This future project will add dedicated new tracks for regional services between Werribee and Laverton.

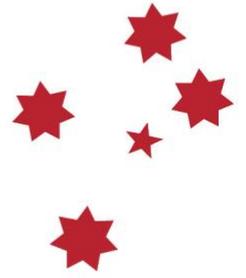
The brand-new Aircraft Station underpass will benefit local businesses by providing direct access across the rail line from RAAF Williams-Laverton to the Aviation Road shops. On a typical day, around 1900 people are on the RAAF base.

In the second half of 2021, construction will start on 100 new parking spaces, to be delivered as part of the \$150 million *Car Parks for Commuters Program*. The upgrade will nearly triple the current formal capacity, making life easier for commuters and easing pressure on local streets used for spill-over parking.

All upgrades at Aircraft Station will be complete by the end of this year.

Across Melbourne, the Victorian Government has already removed a total of 45 level crossings and delivered 20 new or upgraded stations, with 22 more sites in construction or planning for removal by 2025.

Along the Werribee line, works continue to remove the dangerous and congested level crossing at Cherry Street, Werribee by Easter, following the opening of a brand-new rail bridge at Werribee Street, Werribee. Yet another crossing at Old Geelong Road, Hoppers Crossing will be gone for good by 2022.



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**Quotes attributable to the Member for Altona District Jill Hennessy**

*“We’ve already removed the notorious Aviation Road level crossing, and local commuters tell me it is making a world of difference to how they get around the area.”*

*“These works will take the hassle out of catching a train from Aircraft Station, and make it much, much easier to find a park.”*