

MEDIA RELEASE



LOCATION OF EASTLINK SHARED USE PATH THROUGH MULLUM MULLUM VALLEY RESOLVED AT LAST

More than five years after work started on finding a route through the Mullum Mullum Valley for a shared use path, the final route has now been resolved.

The EastLink project parties said that minimising the environmental impact of the path was a key consideration when selecting the final route, with much of the path to be built on established tracks in the valley.

The decision involved extensive consultation with local government, environmental groups, State Government agencies (including the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Parks Victoria) and Bicycle Victoria.

The path is 2.75 km in length from Deep Creek Rd, Mitcham to Park Rd, Donvale. It is a 3 metre wide concrete path, which narrows for a short section near the Chaim Court bushland to avoid the removal of trees.

SEITA spokesman Matt Phelan said two general routes were reviewed during the design process - the southern route (the chosen route) and the northern route, each of which skirted around the main areas of sensitive bushland. For the section west of Huggins Rd, the southern route has less impact, utilising existing paths and only requiring the removal of only 380 m² of vegetation compared to 1,830 m² on the northern route (that is 80% less than that of the northern route).

“The shared use path on EastLink will be a tremendous asset for the entire community,” Mr Phelan said.

“The section through the Mullum Mullum Valley provides the ‘missing link’ in the path network connecting the existing Eastern Freeway trail with the rest of the EastLink trail all the way to Seaford.

“We get an enormous number of requests from the community for details of the walking and cycling path to be built as part of EastLink and we are pleased that the final route for the Mullum Mullum section has been decided.

“The shared use path will enhance community amenity and provide a safe, user friendly path to allow all members of the community - families, pedestrians and cyclists - to enjoy this fantastic area.

Thiess John Holland spokesperson Megan Kirk said every effort had been made to minimise the impact on the environment.

“Our designers have worked extremely hard to come up with a design that is both enjoyable for users of the path and sensitive to the local environment,” Ms Kirk said.

“By building large sections of the new trail on established walking tracks we have greatly reduced the impact on the environment.”

Ms Kirk said the chosen widths and surfacing would minimise maintenance as well as assist in avoiding conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. Advisory signage will provide directions and advice on grade and speed.

The path is on the boundary of the forest and does not pose a barrier to animals. It also stays out of the sensitive bushland in Yarran Dheran. The route includes six timber bridges constructed to Parks Victoria standards (5 shared path bridges and 1 pedestrian bridge).