



The Place To Be

Media release

From the Minister for Roads and Ports

Friday, 13 June, 2008

EARLY OPENING OF EASTLINK TRAIL WIN FOR COMMUNITIES

Minister for Roads and Ports, Tim Pallas, today announced a major section of the EastLink Trail between Ringwood and Dandenong would open to the community this weekend, ahead of the EastLink Community Open Day on Sunday 15 June.

Mr Pallas said the early opening of the 27 kilometre section of the EastLink Trail between Maroondah Highway in Ringwood and Greens Road in Dandenong was a major win for local communities and would allow people to walk or ride to the Open Day.

“The EastLink Trail is a 35 kilometre shared pedestrian and bicycle path from Donvale to Dandenong South, the largest sealed pedestrian and bicycle path in Melbourne,” said Mr Pallas.

“The Trail is a \$26 million investment as part of the EastLink project and using connections to existing pathways will eventually allow people to ride from the centre of Melbourne to Carrum on a series of connected bike trails.

“The partial opening of the EastLink Trail well ahead of schedule and prior to the EastLink Community Open Day is a massive win for communities, who will benefit from increased recreational opportunities in their local area.”

Mr Pallas said the EastLink Trail provides a magnificent journey through this unique area of bushland that has been preserved as a result of the Government’s decision to build the Melba and Mullum Mullum tunnels.

“The pathway follows long established paths through the Mullum Mullum Park avoiding disruption of natural vegetation and fauna, with six new timber bridges built through the area allowing views to wetlands and swamps,” Mr Pallas said.

“The opening of the Mullum Mullum section of the Trail later this month will be the final piece in a jigsaw that will see one of the biggest ever addition to Melbourne’s walking and cycling paths.”

Mr Pallas paid tribute to ConnectEast and Thiess John Holland for their work in constructing the bicycle path in consultation with the Government, Bicycle Victoria and local councils.

“This is an extremely unique walking and bicycle path for Melbourne, featuring a range of pedestrian overpasses and eventually housing around \$1 million in public artworks,” he said.

“We want to ensure communities have easy access to the EastLink Trail and we will be delivering several additional pedestrian bridges along the trail, including bridges over Dandenong Creek at Ferntree Gully Road, High Street Road, Maroondah Highway and Burwood Highway.”

Mr Pallas thanked Bicycle Victoria for its involvement in the development of the EastLink Trail and for its role in working with Government to improve cycling facilities in Victoria.

The section of the EastLink Trail through the Mullum Mullum Valley will open on 29 June 2008 due to a range of quality inspections still being undertaken. More information about the EastLink Trail is available by visiting the EastLink website at www.eastlink.com.au or the SEITA website at www.seita.com.au.

Media contact: Fiona Macrae 9651 5799 / 0412 693 182 www.vic.gov.au