18 December 2008

Temporary closure of East Malvern Pedestrian Bridge part of M1 upgrade

The East Malvern Pedestrian Bridge over the Monash Freeway will be closed to pedestrian and bicycle traffic from Monday, 12 January 2009 until the middle of the year to allow critical works to proceed on the M1 Upgrade project.

The bridge will be demolished and a new bridge constructed as part of the $1.39 billion project to transform one the state's busiest roads.

M1 Project Director John Cunningham said the closure was necessary to ensuring the safety of the local community, road users and site crews while the Bridge is rebuilt and extra lanes created on the Monash Freeway near East Malvern Station.

"As part of the M1 upgrade a new bridge will be completed by mid-2009 which will be significantly wider to improve access for cyclists and create a more attractive profile over the Monash Freeway," he added.

Crossing over the freeway near East Malvern Station, the bridge is used by local pedestrian traffic, with the highest number on weekends when walkers and cyclists are enjoying parklands and trails along Gardiners Creek.

"On the weekend of 16-18 January 2009, the bridge structure, apart from the south ramp, will be demolished under full freeway closure," Mr Cunningham said. "The south ramp will remain operational throughout the works program for access to East Malvern Station platforms."

Diversion route

Mr Cunningham said a detour route via Winton Road has been developed in consultation with Bicycle Victoria and the City of Stonnington.

"Signs will be erected at strategic points along the Anniversary, Gardiners Creek and Scotchmans Creek trails to advise cyclists and other users of the endorsed route," he said.

"Extra traffic controls will also be in place, such as programmed traffic lights at Malvern Road and Winton Road intersections to provide safe crossing points for cyclists. This will complement the existing dedicated bicycle lanes along Malvern Road.

"At the commencement of the diversion, traffic controllers will be on duty during peak periods at key crossing locations along the route."

For pedestrians, Bus Route 612 Box Hill-Chadstone operated by Driver Bus Lines connects Glen Iris and East Malvern train stations via Wills Street, Albion Road, Winton Road, and Solway Street.

Mr Cunningham acknowledged that the temporary closure of the bridge would mean longer travel time for users.

"For some, the bridge closure may mean allotting extra time for their journeys. We apologise for the inconvenience to the community. We're doing all we can to keep disruptions to a minimum and to reinstate the bridge as soon as possible," he added.

Full freeway closure

On Friday 16 January and Saturday 17 January 2009, the bridge's removal will require full overnight lane closures of the Monash Freeway between Warrigal Road and Burke Road. Further works on the Sunday night will be contingent on weather.

"On both nights progressive lane closures for inbound and outbound traffic will commence from 8pm, with full lane closures in both direction from 11pm until 8am," Mr Cunningham said.

Motorists should consider alternative routes and allow extra time to get to their destinations. A fully signed detour route will be in place via Dandenong Road (Princes Highway).

"Critical works to be undertaken through this section will require further full closures of the Monash Freeway over the next six months," Mr Cunningham added.

Mr Cunningham said motorists could find out more about this closure, including a map of the detour route and information about other works on the project website at www.mcwupgrade.com.au or by phoning the project hotline on 1300 881 137. He

said by subscribing to the website motorists could receive regular updates regarding works and information which would help them plan their journeys.

The Monash Alliance of VicRoads, Abigroup and Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM), is responsible for project works between Glenferrie Road and Warrigal Road.

Ends

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