

Ring Road revamp

The Western/Metropolitan Ring Road is the latest Melbourne freeway to be getting a major upgrade.

Work has begun on widening the road for its entire length of 38km between Laverton and Greensborough. But the road – officially known as the M80 – is also getting reconfigured interchanges and ramps, plus a new intelligent transport system (ITS) to improve traffic flow and help to make the road safer.

The first section being treated is the Western Ring Road between the Tullamarine Fwy and Sydney Rd.

The road carries up to 142,000 vehicles a day, with up to 16% of this being freight. With Melbourne's growing population, capacity is often exceeded during peak periods.

Widening will be to a minimum of three lanes in each direction, with

extra lanes between some interchanges to reduce current merging and weaving problems.

The ITS, consisting of ramp signals, variable message signs and variable speed limit signs, will help to manage traffic flow.

New landscaping and urban design will also be incorporated into the works.

The project is expected to take more than five years and is costing \$2.25 billion, which is being jointly funded by the Victorian and Australian governments.

For more information, go to www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/m80upgrade.

The Ring Road upgrade does not include construction of the North East Link between Greensborough and the Eastern Fwy, for which planning has been announced under the Victorian Transport Plan.



Photo: CHRISTIAN PEARSON / MISHVEY