

Rationale for Rapid Delivery of the New East-West Link Road and Burnside Road Upgrades in Bannockburn Victoria, 3331 due to draft amendment C107gpla Golden Plains Planning Scheme

Introduction

Bannockburn is experiencing sustained population and development growth, placing increasing pressure on its existing road network. The proposed new east-west link road, as outlined in the Bannockburn South East Precinct Structure Plan, together with urgent upgrades to Burnside Road, are critical infrastructure projects that should proceed without delay. This document details the key reasons for accelerating these projects before congestion and safety issues escalate.

1. Anticipated Traffic Growth and Congestion

- **Rapid Local Growth:** Bannockburn's population and housing stock are expanding, with traffic volumes projected to increase significantly as new residential and commercial developments are completed^{[1][2]}.
- **Current Road Capacities:** Existing arterial and local roads, including Burnside Road, are already nearing their operational limits. For example, daily volumes on High Street and Geelong Road are around 9,200 vehicles, while Burnside Road carries 1,800 vehicles per day but is expected to see dramatic increases under all future growth scenarios^[2].
- **Future Projections:** Traffic modelling predicts that, without intervention, High Street could see up to 30,000 vehicles per day and Burnside Road up to 22,000 vehicles per day under certain growth options^[3]. Such volumes will overwhelm the current infrastructure, resulting in severe congestion and delays.

2. Safety and Amenity Concerns

- **Heavy Vehicle Traffic:** Approximately 10% of vehicles passing through Bannockburn's centre are heavy vehicles, including B-doubles. This mix increases the risk of accidents, especially where local and freight traffic intersect^[2].
- **Crash History:** A significant proportion of recent crashes have occurred on key arterial roads, including the C143 and Midland Highway, highlighting existing safety deficiencies^[2].
- **Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety:** There is a marked lack of safe crossings and continuous paths for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly on Burnside Road and at major intersections. Increased traffic without infrastructure upgrades will exacerbate these risks^[3].

3. Network Efficiency and Economic Growth

- **Bypass and Freight Efficiency:** The new east-west link will serve as a bypass for heavy vehicles, diverting them from the town centre and improving freight movement efficiency while reducing noise and air pollution in residential and commercial precincts^[2].
- **Supporting Development:** Timely road upgrades are essential to support planned residential and commercial growth, ensuring that Bannockburn remains attractive for investment and that local businesses are not hampered by accessibility issues^[1].
- **Avoiding Induced Congestion:** Delaying the road project risks a scenario where congestion becomes entrenched, making future interventions costlier and less effective. Early delivery allows for proactive traffic management and the integration of active transport options before car dependency is further entrenched.

4. Strategic Planning Alignment

- **Consistent with Growth Plans:** Multiple strategic assessments, including the Bannockburn Growth Plan and the Integrated Transport Assessment, have independently concluded that a new arterial road and Burnside Road upgrades are necessary to maintain network performance and safety as the region grows^{[3][2]}.
- **Hierarchy and Connectivity:** Upgrading Burnside Road and constructing the new link will reinforce the road hierarchy, provide vital east-west connectivity, and ensure that the transport network remains fit for purpose as traffic patterns evolve^[3].

5. Community and Environmental Benefits

- **Reduced Town Centre Traffic:** By providing an alternative route for through-traffic and trucks, the new link will help preserve the amenity of Bannockburn's town centre, making it safer and more pleasant for residents, shoppers, and visitors^{[3][2]}.
- **Active Transport Opportunities:** Early integration of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along the new and upgraded roads will encourage sustainable travel modes, reducing future car dependency and associated environmental impacts^[3].

Conclusion

Delivering the new east-west link road and upgrading Burnside Road ahead of projected congestion is essential for Bannockburn's sustainable growth. These projects will:

- Prevent severe congestion and safety issues before they arise
- Support the economic and social vitality of the town
- Enhance safety for all road users
- Enable the integration of sustainable transport options

Accelerating these infrastructure projects now will ensure Bannockburn remains a live able, accessible, and prosperous community as it continues to grow^{[3][1][2]}.

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1. <https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/UPDATED COVER FINAL TRAFFIC MODELLING REPORT 02092019.pdf>
2. <https://vpa-web.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Bannockburn-South-East-PSP-Integrated-Transport-Assessment-Stantec-December-2024.pdf>
3. <https://vpa-web.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Bannockburn-Growth-Plan-Traffic-Network-Assessment-VPA-August-2020.pdf>