

Ballarat line upgrade to ease load on western metro rail services

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Work has begun to duplicate the rail line between Deer Park and Caroline Springs, making way for an upgrade to the Ballarat corridor that is designed to improve regional and metropolitan train services.

The work coincides with the construction of the new Caroline Springs railway station - built to accommodate booming population growth in Melbourne's outer west. It is scheduled to open next year.

The Andrews government has allocated more than \$500 million to upgrade the Ballarat line. The work is set to begin next year and be completed in 2019.

Under the Ballarat line upgrade, the track will be duplicated down to Melton. An additional three kilometres of single track will also be built west of Warrenheip.

Melton has been forced to rely on a single-track line with a V/Line service that has been overwhelmed by demand from the surrounding population.

In February *The Age* revealed that Public Transport Victoria had [bid for funds](#) to duplicate the line from Melton to Deer Park to enable an increase in train services.

Public Transport Minister Jacinta Allan said the "transformation" of the Ballarat train corridor would provide more reliable and frequent services to Melbourne's western suburbs, Melton and regional stops along the Ballarat line.

The Ballarat line upgrade includes three additional "crossing loops" at Bacchus Marsh, Ballan and Bungaree. They will allow trains to pass each other and help avoid severe congestion caused by unexpected delays.

New stabling will also be built at Melton and Rowsley to house extra carriages while second platforms will be added to Bacchus Marsh and Ballan stations.

At Rockbank station the current platforms will be extended and a sealed car park will also be built. There are no delays expected as a result of the current works, although some replacement buses are expected for the broader Ballarat line upgrade.

This story was found at: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/ballarat-line-upgrade-to-ease-load-on-western-metro-rail-services-20160809-gqo2fv.html>