

Risks of east-west tunnel face assessment

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Ground vibrations from construction machinery, reduced air quality and the relocation of vulnerable social groups are just a handful of the risks associated with the construction of the east-west road tunnel, according to the state government.

The state government has released the scope for its comprehensive impact statement, which will assess all the risks associated with the 18-kilometre road.

The document, which was gazetted by Planning Minister Matthew Guy on Monday night, says emissions from the tunnel vents are one of the risks associated with the multibillion-dollar project.

The state government will investigate "localised increases in emissions affecting residential areas, users of public open space

or other sensitive receptors during project construction or operation".

It will also look at whether "localised reduction in air quality from tunnel vents and altered traffic conditions during project operation exceeds relevant standards".

The state government will also investigate whether vibrations from construction machinery will affect heritage properties.

The document said there could be changes to groundwater movement during the project's construction and "possible contaminated groundwater".

The state government said in this month's budget that work on the road would begin late next year. But so far it has given few details about the route, design, funding model and expected traffic flows.

One of the draft evaluation objectives will be to minimise the displacement of "land use

activities". But one of the key risks outlined in the document is the "permanent displacement or temporary disruption of public open space (including recreational activities), community facilities, businesses or dwellings, or access to these, by project works".

Another risk is the "reduced wellbeing of residents, particularly from vulnerable social groups, who need to relocate or who have diminished access to open space".

Last week Mr Guy said the comprehensive impact statement was "a clear, transparent planning and assessment process that involves community feedback on this important project for all Victorians".

The state government has begun the formal planning process for the project and will hold a series of community meetings in coming weeks.