

# Rock blasting trial

In mid-2025, Melbourne Airport will begin early and preliminary works ahead of the start of construction of the third runway.

To build the third runway, we will excavate around five million cubic metres of material – that's three MCGs! This material needs to be excavated so that we can create the flat platform required for the runway, and it will then be re-used onsite.

The area where the future runway is located also contains rocky regions. While much of the material can be removed using earthworks equipment, some will require different methods – including blasting.

## What does rock blasting involve?

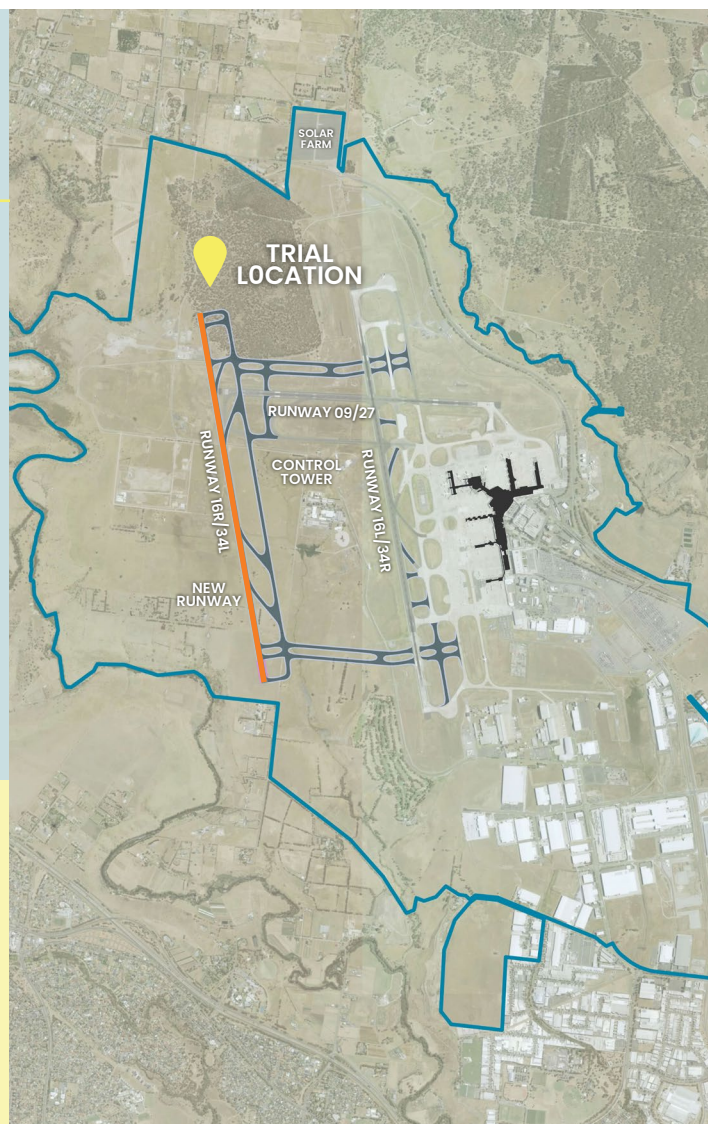
We will be undertaking a small-scale blasting trial in October 2025 to check our proposed methodology. The results of this trial will then inform our main works when they commence in 2026.

The runway will be constructed in areas that have hard rock – granodiorite and basalt rocks – that can only be practically removed by blasting. We will need to remove around 0.8 million cubic metres of rock using blasting.

Blasting is an efficient way to excavate large amounts of rock with minimal environmental impacts, compared to prolonged excavations using mechanical equipment. Because of the nature of the rock that we need to remove, this is the best way to do the work.

## Did you know?

We'll be able to use the rock that is excavated as fill material when we build the third runway. Re-using material means we can reduce the volume of additional fill required from outside. This drastically reduces truck traffic and emissions.



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## What can I expect?

We will be undertaking a blasting trial in October. This will involve two blasts on two separate days, which will take place during the daytime.

Blasting is a carefully controlled process. It involves placing small, precisely timed charges at ground level across the rocky area. Rather than a single, large explosion, the result is a series of low-impact vibrations across the surface. There is minimal dust and no flame or smoke – just a series of muffled sounds and minor surface movement. Noise levels from blasting will be lower than typical airport operational noise levels and general traffic noise.

The blasting site is inside the airport boundary, more than 1.4 kilometres from the closest resident in Bulla.

It's possible that some residents may hear the blast or notice minor vibrations. Local residents that might notice the trial are being door-knocked and given airport contact details should they need further information.

It is unlikely that passengers and staff in the airport terminals will hear or feel the blast.

The blast sites will be watered prior to the trial to help suppress any dust, and air quality monitors will be on site to monitor emissions.

During main construction works (2026 onwards), there could be up to two blasts per week for one to two years. Further information will be provided to nearby residents and other stakeholders closer to those works.

## How will the blasting work be done safely?

Ensuring this work is done safely is of utmost importance. All appropriate controls will be put in place to ensure the airport and our neighbours remain safe throughout the blasting test.

We have worked closely with Airservices Australia (the government agency that staffs the Air Traffic Control tower), the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and other stakeholders to agree safety procedures during the trials.

Regulation of the handling and use of explosives by persons conducting blasting operations is

under immediate authority of WorkSafe Victoria. The Authority requires all blasting activities comply with state and national regulations, acts, codes and standards, and that shotfirers hold a current WorkSafe-issued license to use blasting explosives.

Melbourne Airport's runways will be closed during the blasting trials, which will last around 20 minutes each. Safety teams will be on standby to inspect the runways and all equipment to ensure they are safe to use after each trial.

## Do you have a question?



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Scan or click on this QR code to find out more.

You can email us at [newrunway@melair.com.au](mailto:newrunway@melair.com.au) or call 03 9297 1597.  
We're happy to answer your questions.

For further information contact [newrunway@melair.com.au](mailto:newrunway@melair.com.au) or call 03 9297 1597