What is NorthConnex?

NorthConnex is a nine kilometre tunnel which will link the M1 Pacific Motorway at Wahroonga to the Hills M2 Motorway at West Pennant Hills, removing around 5,000 trucks daily off Pennant Hills Road.

The nine kilometre tunnel motorway includes interchanges to the north and south to accommodate connections at either end of the project. When complete in 2019, it will link Sydney’s north to the Orbital road network and enable travel from Newcastle (M1) to Melbourne without a single set of traffic lights.

NorthConnex will also boost the state and national economies by providing more reliable journeys and shorter travel times for the movement of freight.

Day time lane closures on M1 Pacific Motorway in Wahroonga

Following a number of trials, approval was granted in August for day time lane closures on the M1 Pacific Motorway in Wahroonga, north of Alexandria Avenue. These closures are now in operation and will allow a significant amount of work to take place during regular construction hours, reducing the impact of night time work on residents who live near the M1 Pacific Motorway.

The day time lane closures will be during off-peak hours:

- Monday to Thursday
  - Northbound between 6am and 2pm
  - Southbound between 10am and 4pm.

The work in this area includes construction of the northern ventilation buildings. The building work is so close that the lane closures provide a safety zone for both the vehicles using the road and the NorthConnex construction workers. To ensure the safety of workers and motorists, work in the median needs to be carried out behind safety barriers and on occasion with a reduced speed in the adjacent lanes.
Tunnelling update – NorthConnex truck haulage

Excavating Australia’s longest road tunnel will generate around 2.5 million cubic metres of spoil from the four main tunnel sites located between West Pennant Hills and Wahroonga.

Throughout the life of the project, spoil from the tunnels will be taken to various locations to be reused across Sydney, for example for residential developments and the Hornsby Quarry.

The Hornsby Quarry will take about one million cubic metres of spoil once it becomes available to be used in early 2017.

Spoil excavated by the roadheaders will mostly consist of sandstone and shale, which is the predominant rock and soil feature encountered by the team underground.

The main haulage routes between the construction sites, spoil sites and quarries are on major arterials including the M1 Pacific Motorway and the Hills M2 Motorway. Trucks will leave the main tunnelling sites via temporary access ways purposely built or via lanes which go directly from the site onto Pennant Hills Road and the M1 Pacific Motorway. The purpose built access points minimise the need for trucks to use local roads and reduces the impact on local residents.

The project intends to run trucks on the approved roads 24/7. Not all sites can accept spoil 24/7, for example Hornsby Quarry will only take spoil between the hours of 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm Saturdays. The approved haulage roads are listed in the Traffic Management Plan and Safety Management Plan which is publicly available on the project website under the Construction Environment Management Plans tab.

Mount Ku-ring-Gai Concrete Batch Plant

Approval has been granted to establish a concrete batch plant to supply material to the tunnel construction sites. The batch plant will be built at 5 Beaumont Road, Mount Ku-ring-Gai within a waste management depot leased from Hornsby Shire Council.

The plant will be used to produce concrete for the tunnel, road pavement and kerbing.

The location was approved by Hornsby Shire Council and the Department of Planning and Environment due to its proximity to the project’s construction activities. It will ensure a high quality, steady supply of concrete at the northern end of the project.

Northern Compound receives Indigenous blessing

A sacred smoking ceremony has been held by local Indigenous Elders at the Northern Compound to welcome the project to the area and mark the start of underground work. The member for Ku-ring-gai, Alister Henskens, attended the event.

New crane at Darling Mills Creek Compound

In late June, the project installed a 84 metre high tower crane at the Darling Mills Creek Bridge worksite, as part of the Hills M2 road widening work for the M2 Integration. The crane, equivalent to a 24 storey building, was lifted in segments into the worksite using a smaller crane located on the motorway. This work was carried out over three nights, which minimised the impact on traffic and ensured the safety of workers and road users.

The tower crane can lift up to 24 tonnes (24,000 kilograms). The tower crane was chosen for this location due to the steep terrain, limited space and the proximity of the creek bed. This crane will operate for approximately 18 months during the bridge widening work.
What's happening across the project

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| Hornsby Quarry | Work for the Hornsby Quarry Road Construction Spoil Management project started on 27 June with early work along Bridge Road and Old Mans Valley. This work included vegetation clearing, potholing and service investigation. | Site establishment work started in August once approvals were received for the Construction Environmental Management Plan and Construction Compliance Tracking Program. This work includes: 
  • The upgrade of Bridge Road and Old Mans Valley access track 
  • Clearing and earth work in Old Mans Valley 
  • Construction of a conveyor to take spoil from the stock piles to the quarry. Tunnel spoil haulage into Hornsby Quarry will start in early 2017. |
| Pearces Corner | Site establishment was completed in June 2016. The site compound will provide amenities and a car park for up to 80 personnel.                                                                                      | Relocating existing services including gas, water, communications and power will start in September 2016. |
| Northern Compound | Site establishment completed in July 2016. Work completed includes:  
  • Traffic light installation on M1 to allow trucks to haul spoil onto M1  
  • Completion of truck access and exit from site onto the M1  
  • Completion of shaft excavation for tunnel.                                                                 | Excavation of tunnels using road headers  
  • Tunnelling work occurring 24/7. |
| M1 Southbound | Construction of the new two lane southbound road bridge. A recently completed barrier wall will allow daytime construction of the road bridge. Work included creating 30 piles using a piling rig to support the wall. | Continuing construction of the road bridge which will connect motorists travelling southbound on the M1 to Pennant Hills Road. |
| Sewer and creek realignment M1 east | Sewer work between Burns Road, Bareena Avenue and Lochville Street has continued with two new sewer pits being built between Burns Road and Bareena Avenue. | Tree clearing will continue against the M1 noise wall  
  • Creek realignment work. |
| M1 Pacific Motorway widening | Day and night work continues on the M1 median work area the site has been extended south toward Alexandria Parade.                                                                                       | Further drainage and pavement work will continue between Edgeworth David and Alexandria Parade preparing for the traffic switch towards the end of the year. |

Tiny Tunnellers school holiday program

During the school holidays NorthConnex invited local school children to a hands-on educational program at the community display centre on Yarrara Road, Pennant Hills. More than 20 primary school children and their parents and carers enjoyed a range of activities teaching valuable lessons around tunnelling, safety and environment.

If you are interested in having your child participate in the next Tiny Tunnellers school holiday program, please email enquiries@northconnex.com.au.
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| Northern Ventilation Facility | Work on the Northern Ventilation site started mid-July with further tree clearing, earthwork and services work for the site. A new driveway for the residents at 43 Barenna is being built off Woona Avenue. | • Site amenities and parking installation  
• Hoarding installed along the site perimeter. |
| Junction Road Compound | Junction Road compound site establishment has been continuing. This includes vegetation removal and commencement of a more permanent (for construction) creek crossing. | • Hoarding to be installed  
• Site shed and amenities installation. |
| Trelawney Street Compound | Site was established in July 2016 with hoardings, acoustic shed and parking completed. Work moved to 24/7. | • Completion of the shaft using rock hammering and controlled blasting by late September  
• Installing road headers to start tunnelling. |
| Pioneer Avenue | Site established with 320 car spaces. | • Staff transfer facility active 24 hours a day, seven days a week. |
| Wilson Road | Excavation of the shaft is now being carried out 24 hours a day. We are currently at a depth of approximately 65 metres (out of 90). | • Completion of the shaft by late September  
• Installing road headers to start tunnelling. |
| Southern Interchange | Excavation of the shaft and tunnel entry/exit is continuing. | • Stage two of the Pennant Hills Road realignment to allow for the construction of the southern tunnel exit onto Pennant Hills Road. |
| M2 Integration | Westbound bus lane and cycle lanes are closed between Pennant Hills Road and Windsor Road. A detour route for cyclists is in place. Installation of the intelligent transport systems along the motorway. Rock breaking work is continuing at various location along the motorway. Vegetation removal, earth work, relocation of drainage. | • Eastbound cyclist facilities will be removed between Pennant Hills Road and Windsor Road  
• Modification of noise walls along the motorway. |
| Barclay Road | Scaffold has been erected underneath Barclay Road bridge in preparation for bridge lengthening work. | • Concrete work to the bridge  
• Deck extension. |
| Hills M2 Pennant Hills Road westbound on-ramp | Continuing day and night work in preparation for the tunnel exit. | • Intelligent Transport Systems service installation work. These are underground conduits and cables that support the operation and control of the Motorway. |
| Hills M2 Pennant Hills Road eastbound off-ramp | Installation of the temporary noise walls. Excavation work in preparation work for the tunnel entry. Completion of the access track from the southern compound to work site. | • Construction of the new eastbound cycleway structure  
• Retaining walls work for the tunnel entry structure. |
| Darling Mills Creek Bridge | Tower Crane has been installed at Darling Mills Creek to allow bridge widening work to be carried out. | • Darling Mills Bridge site establishment  
• Constructing bridge wall  
• Pouring of pier footings and columns. |
| Yale Close Bridge | Vegetation clearing to the Hills M2 corridor. | • Yale Close Bridge site establishment  
• Concrete work to bridge columns. |

If you require the services of an interpreter, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS International) on 131 450 and ask them to call the NorthConnex Project Team on 1800 997 057 – the interpreter will then assist you with the translation. TIS International business hours are 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.