

Vegetation Clearing - Northern Interchange Compound



Image shows native Australian Kookaburras.

NorthConnex will deliver significant benefits to local communities by easing congestion on Pennant Hills Road, putting more than 5,000 trucks a day underground and returning local streets to local communities. It will also boost the state and national economies by providing more reliable journeys and shorter travel times for the movement of freight.

Construction of NorthConnex involves the clearance of some native vegetation including sections of the Blue Gum High Forest. These impacts were assessed as part of the Environment Impact Statement and permission to remove the vegetation was granted on 13 January 2015 as part of the NSW Minister for Planning's Conditions of Approval. An environmentally responsible approach to construction has been taken by the project team, including careful planning and detailed design to ensure the disturbance and clearance of established vegetation will be minimised as much as possible.

In order to remove vegetation that is classified as Endangered Ecological Community (EEC), the project is required to offset the impacts by developing and implementing a biodiversity offset package. This package ensures that, for example, if an area of native vegetation is cleared for development, another similar area of native vegetation is protected from future development, balancing the loss of biodiversity due to clearing.



Image shows an example of a nest box.

Initiatives to mitigate environmental impact

The Project team is implementing a number of initiatives to lessen the impact on the local environment. These initiatives have been developed in consultation with Kuring-gai Shire Council and include:

- Re-using the timber for local environmental projects
- Installing at least 72 nest boxes (on public land) for possums, bats and native birds in trees nearby the cleared areas, to provide habitat for those affected species under the guidance of the Project ecologist
- Timbers with naturally occurring hollows will be set aside for re-use in alternate locations to be determined in co-operation with local government environmental teams
- Native bee-hives will be removed safely by apiarists and used by Bushcare groups to inform research about natural Australian bee genetics.

At project completion, the Northern Interchange Compound site will be decommissioned and the area rehabilitated and landscaped.

The specific methods of rehabilitation will be adapted to suit the location and will generally incorporate native flora. Rehabilitation work includes a combination of the following:

- Stabilising embankments
- Spreading of topsoil across area
- Contour the ground to maximise potential for seed growth
- Spraygrass which includes a combination of seed, fertiliser, mulch, water and a binder, to optimise potential for seed growth
- Hand seeding
- Planting native species to regenerate fauna habitats.

The project team will continue to work with government agencies, councils and the community to reduce impact on the local environment.



Image shows examples of custom-built nest boxes..

Community contribution

The possum and native bird nest boxes have been constructed with care by the not-for-profit Hornsby Woodworking Men's Shed. The Men's Shed is a community group whose mission is to create an environment in which people can commence or improve their woodworking skills through access to equipment and the free exchange of knowledge and assistance.

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.

Translator



131 450

For more information:



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