NorthConnex is a nine kilometre tunnel which will link the M1 Pacific Highway at Wahroonga to the Hills M2 Motorway at West Pennant Hills. It has been two years since NorthConnex first broke ground on the corner of Pennant Hills Road and the Hills M2 Motorway. Nine million worker hours later and the project has started the transition from tunnelling to fit out.

Around 20km of 21km of mainline tunnel and ramps have been excavated with our tunnelling crews closing in on the last breakthrough to connect the M1 and M2 motorways.

To follow our progress, visit www.northconnex.com.au

Breaking through to the other side

In December 2017, NorthConnex celebrated the first underground breakthrough, between the Southern Interchange in West Pennant Hills and the Wilson Road compound in Pennant Hills. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian were on site to radio to the roadheader operator the all clear to cut through.

The project has since celebrated multiple breakthroughs between all four of the tunnelling compounds.


New M1 bridge at Wahroonga

A significant traffic switch was successfully carried out in October 2017 with a new 50-metre-long southbound bridge opened to motorists on the M1 Pacific Motorway at Wahroonga, on approach to Pennant Hills Road. This allowed excavation to continue beneath the bridge without disrupting motorists travelling above (photo at top of page).

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- Tunnelling progress
- Hills M2 Motorway upgrades opened ahead of schedule
- Construction updates
- Meet a tunneller
**Hills M2 Motorway upgrades opened ahead of schedule**

Motorists and bus users are benefiting from a quicker journey down the Hills M2 Motorway with upgrades to the motorway’s westbound carriageway completed and opened one month earlier than expected.

With the works now finished, the speed limit west of the Pennant Hills Road intersection has been returned to 100 km/h. A new third westbound general traffic lane and a dedicated bus lane have already substantially improved the westbound evening peak period. Bus passengers can now save around 10 minutes on a trip between Lane Cove Tunnel and the Windsor Road Interchange.

Widening of the M2 between Pennant Hills Road and Windsor Road was completed in May 2018. The extra capacity will accommodate traffic exiting the NorthConnex tunnel when it opens, allowing westbound motorists to safely merge with traffic on the M2.

The integration works involved excavating sandstone embankments up to 11 metres high, widening Darling Mills Creek Bridge and Yale Close Bridge, as well as lengthening Barclay Road Bridge.

Work continues to build new tunnel entry and exit points, where the speed limit remains 80 km/h.
Spoil haulage to Hornsby Quarry nears completion

Around 900,000 cubic metres of spoil excavated from the NorthConnex tunnel has now been deposited into the void at the former Hornsby Quarry, 90 per cent of the total amount that will be transported here from the project. Around 1 million cubic metres of spoil will fill the quarry void to a level that will allow Hornsby Shire Council to start rehabilitating the site to a public recreation area.

Using Hornsby Quarry has saved around 3.7 million kilometres worth of truck travel, delivering economic savings, improved environmental outcomes and reduced congestion on Sydney roads.

After haulage to the site comes to an end this year, the site will be returned to Hornsby Shire Council.

Tiny Tunnellers

The one hour session for pre-school aged children includes an introduction to machinery used on NorthConnex, a safety demonstration, an environmental experiment and a craft activity where kids get to build their own tunnels. Nearly 600 kids have received their ‘qualifications’ so far!

Find out more about our free Tiny Tunnellers program www.northconnex.com.au/community/school-holiday-program
Richie Marshall—delivering tunnelling excellence

Richie Marshall spends 12 hours of his day deep underground. As a roadheader operator, he’s got a pivotal role in building Australia’s deepest road tunnel.

Richie joined NorthConnex in 2016 as a general labourer and rock bolt operator. With a background in mining in Australia and overseas, the project is Richie’s first road tunnel and he eagerly sought an opportunity to make the most of it.

He trained to become a qualified roadheader operator at the NorthConnex Hub, a $10 million investment which will deliver training to over 3000 workers. Already, more than 1500 people have been trained.

After 15 months working the roadheader, Richie says a highlight of his time has been the first underground breakthrough in December 2017. He also had a starring role in February as he operated the roadheader at the second breakthrough, deep underground beneath Loreto School in Normanhurst.

Richie prides himself on getting the job done and has high praise for the team around him which includes mechanics, electricians and engineers.

“Given we spend 12 hours down inside the tunnel, the team is very important to keep my morale boosted and maintain motivation,” he said.

Want to see how it’s done? Head to our website www.northconnex.com.au to see how a roadheader works.

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 underground motorway includes interchanges to the north and south of the road tunnel. When complete, 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.

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.

More questions? Contact us
The NorthConnex project team is committed to working closely with you to inform you of upcoming work over the course of the project and to minimise impact from our construction activities. For further information on NorthConnex please don’t hesitate to contact members of the project team by: Phone: 1800 997 057 Email: enquiries@northconnex.com.au Website: www.northconnex.com.au Mail: Locked Bag 1001, West Pennant Hills NSW 2123 Visit: NorthConnex community information centre, 118 Yarrara Road, Pennant Hills. Monday to Wednesday from 9am to 1pm.