

# Ousedale Creek Koala Underpass Project

## Frequently Asked Questions

July 2025



Transport for NSW acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways on which we work and pays respect to Elders past and present.

### What is the Ousedale Creek Koala Underpass project?

The Ousedale Creek Koala Underpass Project (formerly known as Brian Road Intersection Upgrade) will deliver a koala underpass and other mitigation measures to protect local koala and wildlife populations.

Transport, on behalf of Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI), will improve koala safety on Appin Road as part of the Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan (CPCP). We will install the koala underpass near the Appin Road and Brian Road intersection, and koala exclusion fencing on both Appin and Brian Roads.

Combined with koala feed tree replanting, that will be undertaken by the DPHI, along the Ousedale Creek corridor, these measures will improve the connectivity of the koala habitat across Appin Road between the Nepean and Georges Rivers.

Appin Road is a major arterial road supporting travel to and from the south-west Sydney region and the Wollongong area.

### What is involved in the project?

- a koala underpass under Appin Road approximately 35 metres south of the intersection of Appin Road and Brian Road that will include refuge poles and tree logs at the animal underpass entrances and in the underpass
- safety barriers and koala exclusion fencing along Appin Road and Brian Road with escape structures so animals that get on the roadside can get back into a safe area near the underpass

- koala grids across property driveways along Appin Road and Brian Road to stop koalas entering the road
- new vegetated animal path that will connect to the new underpass leading to existing mature vegetation within the project boundary
- relocation and installation of utilities such as drainage, roadside furniture, pavement markings, street lighting and signs in the project area
- establishment of a site compound during construction including site offices and to store equipment and construction materials.

### What are the benefits for koalas and other wildlife?

The project aims to reduce koala and wildlife injury and mortality rates by limiting access to the road and providing a safe passage underneath Appin Road.

The new underpass will improve connectivity of koala habitat between the Nepean and Georges Rivers through the Ousedale Creek corridor. The fencing and grids should also reduce koala vehicle collision by limiting access to the road and improve connectivity.

Transport acknowledges the growing issue of koala vehicle strikes on Appin Road. To reduce vehicle strikes three separate projects will be delivered. This includes continuous koala exclusion fencing between Rosemeadow and Appin township and three koala underpasses at Noorumba Reserve, Beulah Reserve and Ousedale Creek.

### Has the project received planning approval?

Yes, the project has now been determined and feedback received has been responded to in a Submissions Report which is now available to view at [www.transport.nsw.gov.au/ousedale-creek](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/ousedale-creek)

### **What consultation has occurred?**

The Review of Environmental Factors was on public display between 25 January 2023 and 24 February 2023 and two community information sessions were conducted. Feedback was received and responded to in a Submissions Report. This report is available on the Transport project website [www.transport.nsw.gov.au/ousedale-creek](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/ousedale-creek). The project has now been determined.

Transport would like to thank the community for their feedback, which has been considered as part of the planning approval process.

### **What changes were made to the original project design?**

Following consultation, the proposed single lane roundabout at the intersection of Appin Road and Brian Road was removed from the project scope. As the project no longer involves changes to the intersection the project was renamed the Ousedale Creek Koala Underpass project to reflect the project scope.

Other changes include reduction in the project footprint, changes to the underpass design (a reinforced box culvert now replaces the original pipe design and the western approach to the culvert has been made more amenable to koalas), new escape poles and hatches, additional koala grids and additional fauna furniture.

### **Why was Ousedale Creek corridor selected for an underpass?**

The vegetation along Ousedale Creek was identified as an important east-west koala habitat corridor. The vegetation along Ousedale Creek, is the widest and most intact koala habitat corridor between the proposed national park along the Georges River and the Nepean River. The underpass aims to improve the functionality of the Ousedale Creek koala habitat corridor.

### **Will Koalas use the underpass?**

Studies show that underpasses, when used in conjunction with other mitigation measures such as fencing, are readily used by koalas. Mitigation measures such as fencing will lead koalas to the underpass.

### **Will the koala fencing connect across the other projects north of the project?**

Yes, koala fencing will connect to minimise koala strikes along Appin Road from Rosemeadow to Appin. This will be delivered by three separate projects that will provide continuous koala exclusion fencing between Rosemeadow and the Appin township including three koala underpasses at Noorumba Reserve, Beulah Reserve and Ousedale Creek.

### **Are koala protection measures in line with the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer's advice?**

Koala strike mitigation measures throughout NSW follow the requirements set by relevant conservation plans that have been developed by leading experts and the advice by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer.

Transport's approach to the environmental assessment considered the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer's reports delivered in 2020 and 2021, and the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (DPHI) Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan (CPCP) and their respective recommendations regarding koala protection and connectivity. We worked closely with experts in koala ecology as well as key stakeholders, such as DPHI, to ensure our designs meet best practice to preserve the local koala population and minimise vehicle strikes.

Studies show that the type of culvert being used has been installed on many roads in Australia and successfully reduced the number of vehicle strikes in that area.

The larger size of the culvert being used is expected to benefit koala connectivity and the furniture inside the culvert will help koalas avoid predators.

## Why isn't koala connectivity provided at Mallaty Creek?

Koala strike mitigation measures throughout NSW follow the requirements set by relevant conservation plans that have been developed by leading experts and the advice by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer.

The Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE) has prepared two reports addressing koala management relevant to the CPCP which includes comprehensive advice on koala management along Appin Road.

Based on the minimum average koala habitat corridor widths recommended by the NSW Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer, the vegetation along Mallaty Creek is considered too narrow and fragmented to provide effective koala connectivity between Georges River and the Nepean River.

The CPCP recognises that important native vegetation within the Mallaty Creek corridor should be protected for its biodiversity and amenity values. As such, the CPCP specifically excludes future development from the Mallaty Creek corridor, mapping it as avoided land, applying planning controls that exclude koalas from the corridor and protect the corridor's biodiversity and amenity values over the long term.

## How effective are koala measures?

The most effective way to decrease koala vehicle strikes is to stop koalas from going on the road. The measures to be implemented include installing:

- fauna underpasses (culverts) at Noorumba Reserve, Beulah Reserve and Ousedale Creek connecting koala habitat along Appin Road
- koala fencing along both sides of Appin Road
- koala grids across non-fenced gaps such as driveways to further deter koalas from going on the road
- escape poles and hatches should koalas find themselves in the road corridor to allow them to return back to the safe side of the fence.

These measures align with those provided by adjacent projects are fit for purpose solutions to

maximise protection of the local koala population.

Studies show that the type of culvert being used has been installed on many roads in Australia and successfully reduced the number of vehicle strikes in that area.

The larger size of the culvert being used is expected to benefit koala connectivity and fauna rails inside the culvert will help koalas avoid predators.

## What will the impact be on the vegetation and trees?

To enable the safety improvements, there will be some tree and vegetation removal. All clearing will be undertaken in accordance with Transport for NSW [Biodiversity Management Guidelines](#). The project team has consulted and continues to investigate ways to minimise this impact including log and hollow salvage and native seed collection.

Transport will also implement a tree and hollow replacement plan which would include details of hollow replacement and a revegetation strategy. The revegetation strategy will be prepared in consultation with Wollondilly Shire Council and the DPHI.

## What is going to be done with the trees removed?

We have reached out and are in communication with government agencies and conservation groups who are interested in using the tree hollows, logs and seed for conservation and wildlife activities.

## How is this project funded?

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure are funding the Ousedale Creek Koala Underpass project.

## When will construction start?

Transport is planning to start construction in mid-2026. Construction would largely be carried out in accordance with the standard construction working hours which are:

- 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday
- 8am to 1pm Saturdays

- There will be no work on Sundays or public holidays.

There will be some work outside of standard hours to minimise the traffic impact in the area, particularly during peak periods, to remove the trees, as well as pavement and line marking work.

Every effort would be made to minimise any construction impacts to the local community. We will keep the community informed prior to any activities taking place.

## **How long will the project take to construct?**

Construction is expected to take approximately two years.

## **What will the traffic impacts be during construction?**

During construction, road users may experience impacts such as:

- temporary partial lane closures
- speed limit changes
- an increase in heavy vehicle movements, particularly in and out of the site compound.

We will notify the local community before the start of any work and outline potential impacts. Road user access along Appin Road will be maintained.

## **Where will the site compound be located?**

There are two site compounds at 275 Appin Road and at 375 Appin Road that will be used.

## **How are you going to manage air quality and dust?**

Dust and air quality will be managed during construction by the mitigation measures and safeguards outlined in the REF, Submissions Report and Addendum REF. These will be

included in the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) for the project.

## **What will the impact of construction, noise, light and pollution be on Koalas?**

Considering the existing levels of noise and vibration on Appin Road and Brian Road by vehicles, habitats surrounding the proposal site are already impacted. It is unlikely there would be a significant increase in noise and vibration during operation of the road from marginally increased traffic flow that would result in any increased impacts to biodiversity within the study area. While temporary dust impacts may arise during construction, these would return to previous levels once construction and revegetation/landscaping has been completed.

A temporary fence will be installed around the construction area to restrict animal movements into the worksites.

## **Will the work involve property acquisition?**

Yes, acquisition would be required for properties on either side of the underpass. Properties would be both temporarily leased and permanently acquired. The acquisition process is being conducted in consultation with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI).

## **How will the community be kept informed of the next steps?**

We will keep the community informed by updating the project webpage and sending out email notifications.

If you wish to be added to our Ousedale Creek Koala Underpass project email distribution list, please send a request to [projects@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:projects@transport.nsw.gov.au).

## **How can I contact the project team?**

For questions relating to Ousedale Creek Underpass project, contact us via email [projects@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:projects@transport.nsw.gov.au) or call 1800 684 490.