

Project update

Newcastle Inner City Bypass – Rankin Park to Jesmond

January 2026



Lookout Road and McCaffrey Drive intersection at New Lambton Heights, November 2025

The Australian and NSW governments are investing in the Rankin Park to Jesmond section of the Newcastle Inner City Bypass to improve traffic flow, safety and connectivity. This update highlights achievements over the last 18 months and notable upcoming works as we move closer to delivering this project.

Project overview

The project involves building a 3.4 kilometre four-lane divided road including:

- A northern interchange at Newcastle Road
- An interchange providing access to the John Hunter Health precinct
- A southern interchange at New Lambton Heights
- Structures to improve connectivity in the bushland for people and animals
- Off-road provisions for pedestrians and cyclists.

In this update

Find out about:

- Hospital interchange progress
- Updates on the northern and southern interchanges
- Protecting microbat habitats
- Community engagement
- Project timeline.



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

Progress update

Northern interchange –at Jesmond

Key progress includes:

- Traffic now running on the new northbound on-ramp
- Shared user path westbound on Newcastle Road complete and open to pedestrians and cyclists
- Bridge pier protection work complete
- Median barriers and kerb and gutter currently under construction
- Drainage work at Newcastle Road and Blue Gum Road intersection currently under construction
- Final wearing course and line marking started
- Noise walls infrastructure around 80 per cent complete
- Shared user path bridge deck pours started.

Southern interchange - at New Lambton Heights

Key progress includes:

- Bridge complete with traffic travelling over the new structure at the Lookout Road and McCaffrey Drive intersection
- Piling for slope stability wall complete
- Excavation of the future Lookout Road southbound carriageway complete
- Retaining wall structures underway
- Final pavement footprint for bypass under construction approaching sealing and asphalt.

The evolution of the northern interchange

The project hit a major milestone in May 2024 with the first of the project's 42 precast bridge girders lifted into position over the historic Jesmond roundabout.

Super-T concrete bridge girders, long concrete beams in the shape of a T, were used. The girders were manufactured locally and the 750 tonne crane used to lift them into place is one of the largest in Australia.

The bridge provides long spans for multiple lanes of traffic to pass beneath and allows for the construction of the bypass over Newcastle Road. In December 2024 the Jesmond roundabout was successfully converted to an interchange. The completed work involved the realignment of multiple lanes to facilitate traffic flow under three separate spans of the bridge.

Changes included multiple traffic switches, installation of traffic lights, as well as changed line marking and barriers, with the last switch completed in May 2025.

The last switch provided the new signalised intersection, additional lane length for westbound



Concrete girder lift at Jesmond, May 2024

traffic on Newcastle Road turning right onto the bypass, and removal of the second set of lights.

This has helped improve traffic flow and reduce congestion in the area.

The shared user paths surrounding the northern interchange are also starting to take shape, with the opening of the shared path along Newcastle Road and installation of the steel arch shared path bridge in July 2025. When the bypass opens to traffic, this new bridge will connect the shared user paths on Newcastle Road and Illoura Street, providing pedestrians and cyclists an uninterrupted journey over the on and off ramps and under the bypass.



Northern interchange looking west, showing new steel arch pedestrian and cyclist bridge, November 2025

Facts & Figures: Pedestrian and cyclist bridge

- The bridge weighs 47 tonnes
- The bridge matches the earlier shared path bridge on Newcastle Road, and was made by the same manufacturer
- The bridge was installed at 1am on a Monday morning to minimise traffic impact.
- The bridge came from the steel fabrication yard in Kurri Kurri under police escort.



Hospital interchange with Super T girder bridge, October 2025

Hospital interchange progress

The project team successfully completed the installation of a multi-span Super - T girder bridge in April 2025. The bridge features two concrete piers with uniquely curved shapes that needed specially designed formwork to construct.

The bridge will connect John Hunter Hospital to the bypass, with artwork installed towards the end of the project. A shared path for pedestrians and cyclists will also be incorporated into the design, providing safe and convenient access for all users.

Facts & Figures: Hospital interchange bridge

- The bridge is 70 metres long
- Volume of concrete – 1050m³
- Tonnes of steel – 50 tonnes
- Total work hours – 14,000 hours.

Artwork installation

The artwork on the bridges is being installed using an innovative hydro blasting technique. Each individual art element is created using a stainless steel template, the specialist hydro blasting equipment blasts away the top layer of concrete to reveal the aggregate below. This will be covered with a layer of protective paint.



Hospital interchange bridge with hydro-blasted artwork, September 2025

Completion of blasting

The sixth and final low impact controlled blast was successfully completed in mid-June 2024. This blasting was carried out to safely remove dense rock located northwest of John Hunter Hospital. With the hospital within 500 metres of the blasting, the project team undertook detailed inspections of hospital facilities and installed vibration monitors in theatres, imaging, and forensics areas, at the perimeter of the blast zone, and over the gas main along the alignment to maintain safe and uninterrupted hospital services.

The use of low impact controlled blasting helped to reduce the overall duration of the excavating work, with blasts spread over several weeks to minimise disruption. The majority of the rock was crushed and reused within the project, supporting sustainability and reducing the need for additional material deliveries.

Facts & Figures: Low impact blasting

- Number of drill holes – 1412
- Drill metres – 10,433m
- Volume of rock and material removed – 71,759m³
- Bulk explosive used – 45.7 tonnes.



Fulton Hogan team building formwork for noise walls, September 2025

For more details on our planned out of hours activities and project notifications, please visit caportal.com.au/tfns/rankin-park-to-jesmond/



Construction of the southern interchange

In July 2025, road users were switched to travel over the new bridge at the Lookout Road and McCaffrey Drive intersection and use what will be the final northbound off ramp.

This important milestone allowed construction of the bypass to continue. Work was completed across three weekends due to the complexity of construction and road realignment, with both roads requiring excavation and / or fill between one and four metres.

Thank you for your patience while this vital stage of bypass construction was completed.

Next steps in this area will be construction of the southbound on ramp lanes and laying the final wearing course of asphalt in the area.



Lookout Road and McCaffrey Drive new intersection at the southern interchange, October 2025

Environment

Creating new habitats at Dark Creek

We've made a lot of changes to the Dark Creek culvert passing under the northern interchange. The new culvert units connect Dark Creek on the northwest of the intersection through to Jesmond Park underneath Newcastle Road.

Two types of microbats were found living in the old, now-closed Dark Creek culvert: the Little Bent-winged Bat (*Miniopterus australis*) and the Large Bent-winged Bat (*Miniopterus orianae oceanensis*).

To reduce the impact on the microbats, their habitat was carefully closed off before work started, ensuring no microbats were present.

As part of building the new section of the Dark Creek culvert, microbat habitat has been installed into the culvert pieces to create future homes for the tiny creatures.

Helping our local nurseries

Transport for NSW and Fulton Hogan have partnered with Hunter Region Landcare Network and Trees in Newcastle, who attended the project site on multiple occasions to collect seeds, cuttings, and other plant material to grow at their nursery. A total of 16 different species of trees were collected.



Trees In Newcastle team harvesting cuttings for propagation, May 2023

Facts & Figures: Some of the plant species harvested from site

- Forest Oka (*Allocasuarina torulose*)
- Red Bloodwood (*Corymbia gummifera*)
- Spotted Gum (*Corymbia maculata*)
- White Mahogany (*Eucalyptus acmenoides*)
- Brown Stringybark (*Eucalyptus capitellata*)
- Broad-leaved Red Ironbark (*Eucalyptus fibrosa*)
- Grey Ironbark (*Eucalyptus paniculata*)
- Sydney Peppermint (*Eucalyptus piperita*)
- Small-fruited Grey Gum (*Eucalyptus propinqua*)
- Grey Gum (*Eucalyptus punctata*)
- Red Mahogany (*Eucalyptus resinifera*)
- Sydney Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*)
- Northern Grey Ironbark (*Eucalyptus siderophloia*).

Community Partnership

The Fulton Hogan project team is proud to work with John Hunter Hospital and the Hunter New England Local Health District to keep the Yallarwah walking trail in top shape. By teaming up with Landcare Australia - who've been brilliant at rallying volunteers from local businesses - and providing our specialist Sustainability team's know-how and resources, we've helped upgrade and maintain this important trail. The result is a safer, more accessible space for hospital staff, patients, and the local community to enjoy.

The team have rolled up their sleeves at three working bees, digging into weed removal, installing erosion controls, and native planting with trees sourced from Trees In Newcastle in close coordination with hospital staff, Landcare and many local helpers.

Alana Stoeger - Hunter New England Local Health District Sustainability Project Officer says "A big thankyou to the team at Fulton Hogan for their expertise and ongoing commitment to Yallarwah Place. This project is more than just restoring the landscape – creating nature positive spaces on health campuses is a vital component of optimising health outcomes for our patients, our staff and our community. We're grateful for the ongoing partnership with Fulton Hogan to preserve this special site."



Volunteers at Yallarwah Trail working bee, March 2025

Sustainability

Sustainability has been a core focus throughout the project, with several initiatives implemented to minimise environmental impact and support the local community.

By reusing soil and materials sourced directly from our work on site, we have significantly reduced the number of vehicle movements and external deliveries, lowering emissions and decreasing traffic disruption in the area.

We are planting 300,000 native and hardy plants across the site, selected specifically for their suitability to the surrounding environment. This greening initiative will improve air quality, promote biodiversity, and contribute to a healthier, more vibrant local environment.

By choosing plant species adapted to local conditions, we're ensuring long-term ecological resilience, minimising water usage, and providing important habitat for local wildlife – demonstrating our commitment to sustainable land management and future-proofing the site for generations to come.



Newly planted trees on the Newcastle Inner City Bypass October 2025



Keep up to date

For more information about the project visit nswroads.work/rp2j

Scan the QR code on the following page to visit our interactive portal and learn more about the project as well as register for e-updates.

Thank you for your patience during this important work.

Project timeframe



Early work to build the Shared Path Bridge at Jesmond started
2019 November



Property demolition and site clearing at New Lambton Heights started
2021 February



Shared Path Bridge at Jesmond completed
2021 March



Southern utilities early work at New Lambton Heights started
2021 June



Contract awarded to Fulton Hogan Construction Pty Ltd for main bypass
2022 June



Southern utilities early work completed
2022 August



Site establishment for main bypass started
2022 August



Fauna habitat installation started
2022 December



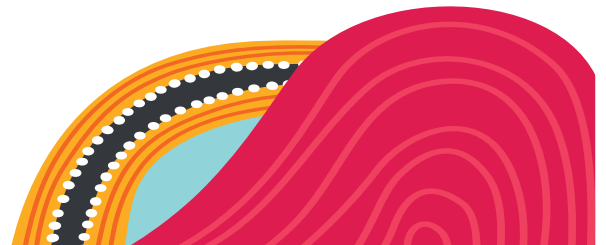
Hollywood camp salvage started
2023 January



Major construction started
2023 March



Rankin Park to Jesmond opens to traffic
Early to mid 2026



Contact us



24-hour Construction Response Line
1800 818 433



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<https://nswroads.work/rp2j>



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