

### Ventura Road track - Response to community feedback

---

The Hills M2 Upgrade team is seeking approval to temporarily use the vehicle access fire track at the end of Ventura Road (known as the Ventura Road track) during work to widen Darling Mills Creek Bridge.

On Monday 14 March 2011 we wrote to 120 local residents and bush care groups seeking feedback on our proposal.

We received 34 submissions during the consultation period.

In summary, the following issues were raised by the community:

- Preference that the track used for construction of the original bridge be used again.
- Concern regarding permanent use of the existing Ventura Road access track for ongoing maintenance of the bridge.
- Loss and damage of quality bushland and ambiance of the existing walking track due to permanent widening of the track and noise pollution.
- Disturbance to native animals.
- Disturbance of creek banks due to regular flooding in the area.
- The proposal contradicts Hills Shire Council policies and practices.
- Public safety and disturbance from heavy vehicles using Ventura Road.
- Concern that community comments will not be considered.
- The track is over top soil and requires considerable upgrade to cope with heavy equipment to prevent soil erosion to deflect stormwater.
- Communication of pedestrian access closures and detours

These issues and our response will be included in the proposal to the Department of Planning. We will notify the community once the Department of Planning has made a decision regarding the proposal.

The following questions and answers address the issues raised by the community and provide further information the proposed temporary use of the Ventura Road track.

#### Questions and answers

**Q: What does the proposal involve?**

**A:** The Hills M2 Upgrade team proposes to use the Ventura Road track for the following activities during the widening of Darling Mills Creek Bridge:

- Vehicle and plant movements to establish a construction compound and access tracks to each pier underneath Darling Mills Creek Bridge, see attached map. This will take approximately 4 weeks.
- Limited ongoing light vehicles movements for the duration of the project (until late 2012) to deliver small miscellaneous equipment too heavy to carry down the staff access ramp on the eastbound carriageway of the bridge.
- Emergency use.



**Hills M2 Upgrade  
breakdown safety**

**In the case of breakdown:**

- Stay in your vehicle
- Switch on your hazard lights
- Call **1800 196 266**
- Wait for assistance

**Q: How often would the track be used as part of the M2 Upgrade work?**

A: During the initial set up of the construction compound and pier work areas underneath Darling Mills Creek Bridge, the Ventura Road track would be used for 2 one-off vehicle movements to take an excavator and a piling rig in and out of the area and approximately 10 light vehicle (ute and small truck) movements per day for a period of around 4 weeks.

Ongoing light vehicle access would be limited to 10 movements per day (five vehicles in and five vehicles out) while the bridge widening work is completed. These vehicles would be used to deliver small miscellaneous equipment that cannot be carried by hand.

All other material and large equipment would be lifted to and from the site using the tower crane near the bridge.

**Q: Why can't the track used to construct the bridge be used again?**

A: Parts of the track used for construction of the Darling Mills Creek Bridge still exist, however it would require a significant upgrade. The attached map marks the location of the original bridge construction track.

The areas around the bridge abutments are steep and unstable. Extensive earthworks and vegetation clearing would be required to establish a safe vehicle access track. This would result in increased environmental impacts, including the removal of at least 20 mature trees.

The proposed use of the Ventura Road track would require the removal of one black wattle and trimming of some overhanging vegetation.

**Q: Would the existing Ventura Road track need to be upgraded?**

A: The track would require some minor filling works to make it more stable. Pot holes and wheel ruts would be filled in. The track would not be widened for this proposal.

During the upgrade project, the track would be well maintained and appropriate erosion and sediment control measures would be installed. Any filling material used on the track would be free from contaminants and in line with the DECCW Waste Classification Guidelines (2009).

**Q: What is the Ventura Road track currently used for?**

A: The track is mainly used by bush walkers but is also used infrequently by Sydney Water, the NSW Fire Brigade/SES and Hills M2 maintenance vehicles to inspect underneath Darling Mills Creek Bridge.

**Q: How much vegetation clearing would be undertaken?**

A: The proposal would involve the removal of one black wattle and trimming some overhanging vegetation. Adjoining vegetation would be fenced off to ensure it is protected.

The project team assessed the environmental impact of using the original bridge construction track for vehicle access to the compound site and pier work areas underneath Darling Mills Creek Bridge. The environmental impacts of this option would be greater because significant earthwork and clearing of approximately 20 mature trees would be required to make the original bridge construction track safe for vehicles.

**Q: Would the proposal impact on native animals?**

The vegetation clearing in this proposal (removal of one black wattle and trimming of some overhanging vegetation) is not expected to have a significant impact native animals.

To minimise the risk to native fauna, a pre-work survey would be carried out by an ecologist to check for native animals and nests in the area where vegetation clearing would be undertaken. The vegetation clearing would be conducted by an arborist with an ecologist also in attendance.

**Q: Would the proposal impact on the creek bank?**

A: The project team are aware of the flooding issues along Darling Mills Creek. Due to the limited proposed use of the track, disturbance to the creek banks is not expected. Any damage to the creek bank as a result of construction activities would be repaired in consultation with the Hills Shire Council.

**Q: How would public safety on the Ventura Road track be maintained?**

A: Escort vehicles will accompany the excavator and piling rig along the Ventura Road track to ensure public safety. Safety staff will manage traffic pedestrian movements in the area

All vehicles using the track would be restricted to 5 kilometres per hour.

**Q: Will pedestrian access be impacted?**

A: Over the next two years, the public walking track underneath Darling Mills Creek Bridge will be closed for safety reasons when construction activities are underway. On occasions, when it is safe to do so, the walking track will be re-opened for public use. The walking track will be opened on weekends and public holidays.

Notifications advising of these closures have been distributed to local residents and bush walking groups. Signs with detour maps have now been installed. Refer to the attached map for further information.

**Q: Would damage be caused to the surface of Ventura Road and the underground services?**

A: No impacts to the road surface or any underground services are expected.

Apart from the initial delivery and setting up of the excavator and piling rig all other large equipment and material deliveries to the site would be made by the tower crane directly from the motorway.

A pre construction condition survey of Ventura Road would be undertaken to record its condition before any vehicles associated with the M2 Upgrade start using it. If an unexpected impact to the road surface or underground services occurs due to construction activities it would be repaired in consultation with the Hills Shire Council.

**Q: Was the council consulted?**

A: Yes, consultation with the Hills Shire Council regarding this proposal has been undertaken and the Council has given land owners / managers consent. We will now seek approval from Department of Planning.

**Q: What happens next?**

**A:** The comments received through the consultation process and the responses will be submitted to the Department of Planning for consideration.

**Keeping the local community informed**

The project team will keep the community informed as work proceeds. This communication will be via household letters, resident meetings, phone calls, community information sessions and the project website. For more information please contact us on [enquiries@hillsm2upgrade.com.au](mailto:enquiries@hillsm2upgrade.com.au) or 1800 196 266.



**M2 Upgrade project**

A team consisting of The Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW, The Hills Motorway Limited and Hills Motorway Management Limited (as trustee of the Hills Motorway Trust)

**Go to:** [www.hillsm2upgrade.com.au](http://www.hillsm2upgrade.com.au)

**Live traffic:** <http://www.livetrafficnsw.com.au/>

**Email:** [enquiries@hillsm2upgrade.com.au](mailto:enquiries@hillsm2upgrade.com.au)

**Call:** 1800 196 266 (free call)

**Post:** Locked Bag 2215, North Ryde BC NSW 1670