

# Cape York Region Package: Peninsula Developmental Road

## Environmental Obligations

## October 2015

### About the project

The Australian Government committed \$208.4 million to the Cape York Region Package from 2013-14 to 2018-19, with the Queensland Government contributing \$52.1 million.

The package will upgrade infrastructure including significant works on the Peninsula Developmental Road. These works will improve accessibility to Cape York, support the growth of the local industry and secondary economies and strengthen local and Indigenous communities.

It is expected that \$200 million from the available funding will be allocated to the Peninsula Developmental Road, which is the main transport link within the Cape York Peninsula.

### What process has Transport and Main Roads followed when planning for new work?

When planning a new road construction project, Transport and Main Roads has a Duty of Care to assess the impacts on environmental values and to identify activities to avoid, mitigate and minimise potential impacts.

To do this, Transport and Main Roads carries out a Review of Environmental Factors Assessment under relevant legislation, the two main pieces being the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Any actions needed to avoid, mitigate and minimise potential impacts are documented in contracts to highlight important issues and ensure workers use appropriate behaviours. Any identified issues are also considered in the design phase of the works to address potential environmental impacts.

For example, 'Endangered', 'Vulnerable' and 'Near Threatened' species have been identified adjacent to road works for the Mein Deviation project. In response, designs have been modified so as to avoid these species.

These areas have been identified as requiring segregation, thereby avoiding impacts from construction. Transport and Main Roads conducts regular audits of these activities to ensure all contractors are compliant.

### What kind of environmental issues has Transport and Main Roads found on the Peninsula Developmental Road in the past?

Weed management is a high priority for Transport and Main Roads, particularly in areas where nature refuges and National Parks are in pristine condition. Previous road projects carried out on the Peninsula Developmental Road have shown gravel extraction to have the main impact.

Once gravel has been extracted, areas are rehabilitated and allowed to rejuvenate using proven techniques identified in the Transport and Main Roads Gravel Pit Guideline.

For example, Transport and Main Roads has successfully stabilised and rehabilitated numerous borrow pits on a section between Kalinga and Healey. Seed-rich topsoil was spread and fertiliser used to allow natural grass communities to regenerate and quickly establish. This has provided good ground cover, despite a failed wet season, as well as food for foraging species such as the Endangered Golden Shouldered Parrot found in the local area.



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## What mitigating actions does Transport and Main Roads recommend to address potential impacts on fauna and flora?

In undertaking planning studies for roadworks, Transport and Main Roads identifies flora and fauna of conservation significance and puts measures in place to avoid or minimise impacts.

For example, a spotter catcher is employed in areas where clearing is to occur to ensure fauna are allowed to move from the site or cared for appropriately, prior to release to its habitat. Land that contains particularly rich biodiversity, such as that along creek lines or within wetlands, is avoided for establishing works.

Transport and Main Roads is currently undertaking studies to establish the distribution of protected flora (*Cajanus mareebensis* and *Stemona angusta*) that have been found in the vicinity of works to provide greater clarity with respect to resilience of these species to potential impacts.

### Further information

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