

# Tanami Road Upgrade Project Great Northern Highway to WA Border



The \$542.8 million project which is jointly funded by the Australian and WA Government has awarded over \$125 million worth of work packages to businesses.

## Tanami enters third year

The Tanami Road Upgrade Project enters its third year of construction with plans to complete the sealing on the 40 km long Stage 1 section from Great Northern Highway to Ruby Plains homestead by the end of 2025.

Work crews re-started works on Stage 1 following the wet season in April, which involved:

- completing clearing and constructing sidetracks
- excavating existing hills to improve vertical and horizontal alignments
- hauling fill materials to build road embankments
- carting away rock to the quarry for re-use
- installing pipe culverts and end treatments

**Fact:** the road has been shortened by over one kilometre through the hills through geometrical improvements.



## Built by Kimberley Locals

In April this year, 104 people were working on site, of which 73 reside in the Kimberley Region, achieving 70% local personnel involvement. Eighty per cent of contractors (21 in total) engaged on the project are from the Kimberley.

The project team is actively working to retain high engagement of local businesses and workers to showcase the Kimberley's local capacity and capabilities.

73

- Local Workers from Kimberley

70%

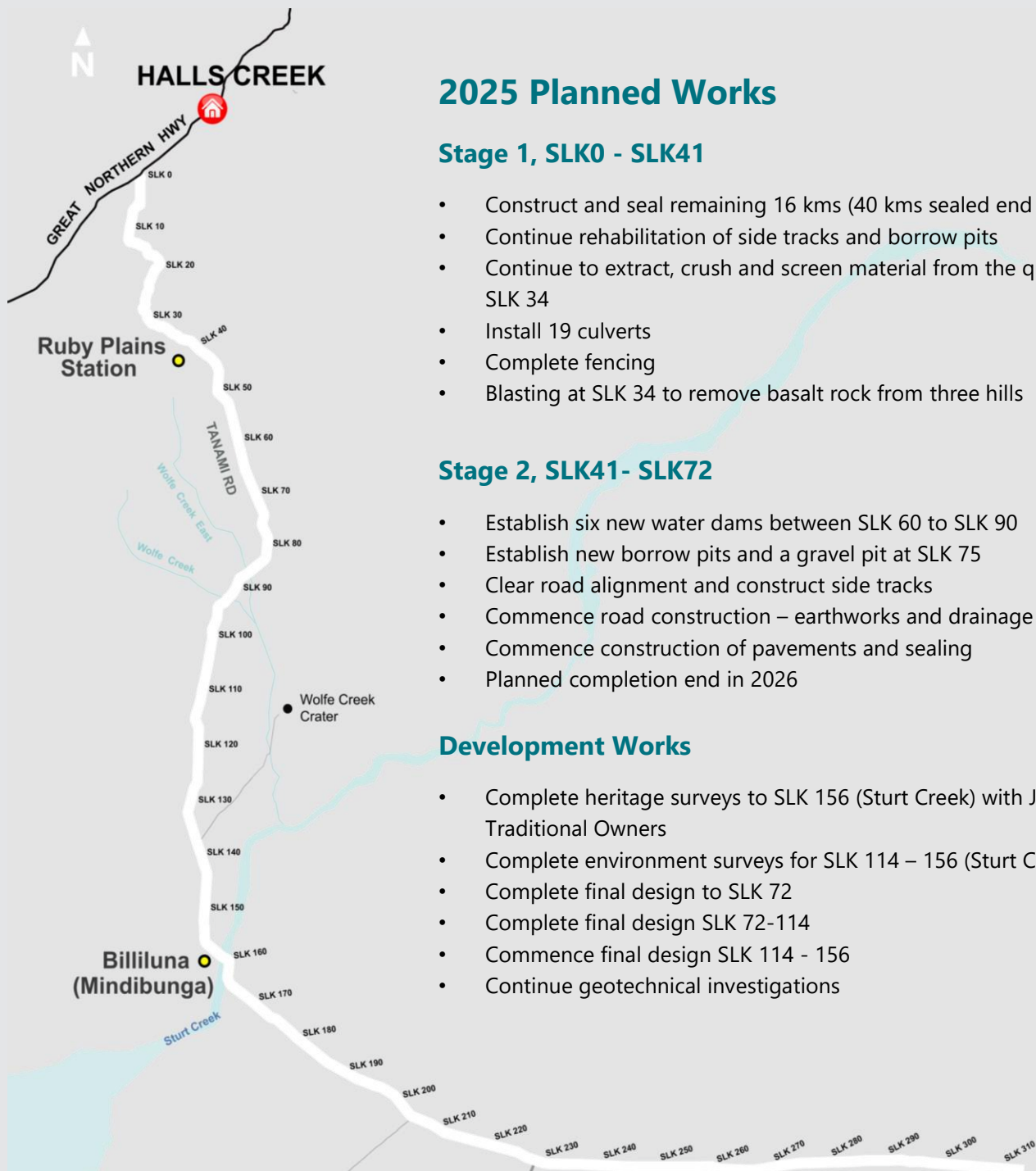
- Local Workers from Kimberley

21

- Local Kimberley Businesses

80%

- Local Kimberley Businesses





## Pre-Construction Works

As part of the Tanami development works, Main Roads has established six new water sources and six material pits including the quarry at SLK 34.

More water dams and fences will be constructed this year. Works continue in material pits to stockpile materials to cart to site.



Water dam at SLK41



Dozer working in gravel pit at SLK39

## Learn about Tanami Crews

The following sections share how the crews work together to build and seal the road including:

- Project team
- Plant operators
- Culvert installation crew
- Traffic management crew
- Materials team
- Quarry contract
- Camp staff
- Heritage monitors

All these crews' activities will progress the construction of the sealed road.

## Project Team

Main Roads leads the works, with the Project Team lead by Project Manager Neville Walters directly managing and supervising the works. This diverse team engage and pay contractors; instruct and supervise work activities; record and report information; look after worker's safety and wellbeing, ensure compliance with environmental and heritage requirements, manage supply of materials and provide leadership to the many work crews.

## Plant Operators

Plant operators are active at various locations across the project including in material pits pushing up gravel. While some crews cut into the hills, the material is carted to other areas where other crews build the road embankment through the gullies and further ahead near Ruby Plains Station to lay, mix, water and compact carted material to form the road embankment, ready for base course construction ahead of the sealing crew.



Constructing road embankment at SLK 38



Cutting and removing hill at SLK 34

## Culvert Crew

Once the embankment is high enough, trenches are dug and the crew prepares the base, lays the steel pipes, then backfills the trenches with stabilised material. After the road embankment is completed, the culvert crew return to build end treatments including concrete headwalls and aprons.



Apron formwork ready for concrete pour with completed road embankment.



Forming concrete apron after pour

## Traffic Management Crew

The traffic management crew is responsible for ensuring safe interaction between work crews, light vehicles, and public traffic. They set up and maintain temporary traffic signs, spot for traffic, and communicate with all crews on-site.

Main Roads is working with Halls Creek's Bindiri Services to upskill their local traffic management personnel. A dedicated traffic management supervisor has been engaged to lead the crew and coordinate with the roadworks supervisors to implement traffic management plans.

## Materials Crew



Sampling of road's subgrade for testing

The materials crew is responsible for sampling and testing completed road layers to ensure the road works are compliant with specified standards.

## Camp Crew



Aus Civil camp crew, L-R: Ferguson Balfour, Ash Hinze, Joemar Peregrino, Sandra Deegan, Hannah Davidson and Lucas Clark, April 2025.

Good team morale is key to working in remote areas and retaining workers. The friendly camp staff caters for everyone with good cheer, good food, clean rooms and a tidy camp and mess hall.

## Blasting Rock

Hard rock is being encountered in the large cuttings, which need to be blasted. Blasting activities are planned in June and July, with the rock being removed for crushing and used elsewhere. All traffic will be stopped during blasting for worker and public safety.

## Quarry Contract

A crushing and screening contract has been tendered to produce aggregates and rock spalls for the project at the new quarry. This will avoid the need to import materials from other distant quarries to reduce costs.

## Participation is great

Tanami Project continues to meet and exceed Aboriginal targets across all key indicators.

**Main Roads' project team is working to attract, train and retain Aboriginal people.**

## Meet Sandra Deegan



Sandra describes herself as 'a Jaru girl from Halls Creek' and has been working at the camp since July 2024. Her main duties are washing, preparing meals and cleaning rooms starting at 5.30am.

through to dinner time with a two-hour midday break.

Sandra tells us "This job has helped my family a lot with the cost of living, especially in Halls Creek".

## Heritage



Jaru cultural monitors, sisters Trisahlia, Jamiesha and Zianna with their father James Gordon, May 2025

Jaru cultural monitors often check that works do not impact any areas of cultural significance and install 'no-go zone' flagging.

Jaru Aboriginal Corporation and Tjurabalan Native Title Lands Aboriginal Corporation (TNTLAC) are collaborating on heritage matters to agree on cultural surveys to speak for country within the undetermined native title area of Carranya Station. A Heritage Protection Agreement is being entered into with TNTLAC to progress heritage approvals beyond Carranya Station.

## Environment

In May, biological surveys took place from SLK 73 to SLK 159. It took 12 days for 10 environmental scientists to survey the road alignment and identify species that occur or may not occur in the area to identify and protect significant flora and fauna.





Biological surveyor identifying species

### **Further information**

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