

## **The fauna bridge on Mona Vale Road East – will it be a bridge to nowhere?**

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A proposed change of zoning for land in Ingleside could jeopardise the future operation of a planned fauna corridor, including a fauna bridge and underpass on Mona Vale Road East.

This could isolate threatened fauna in Ingleside Chase Reserve, leading to long term decline and possible local extinction.



**Fauna bridge on Mona Vale Road East. Ingleside Chase Reserve is on left. Photo David Palmer**

The land is a critical element in the pathway for native fauna populations in Ingleside Chase reserve to cross Mona Vale Road east and disperse through bushland in Ingleside to Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

The land was set aside in the 2016 Ingleside Precinct Structure Plan, and marked as a fauna corridor. This was part of an agreement between Transport for NSW, (then RMS) and the NSW Department of Planning to create a corridor, fauna underpass and fauna bridge over Mona Vale Road East which would link Ingleside Chase Reserve with Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

However, in the new Local Environment Plan for the Northern Beaches this land has been zoned C3 which allows housing. If houses are built on it, then native animals which cross the fauna bridge or use the underpass will have nowhere to go.

Pittwater Natural Heritage Association secretary David Palmer is calling for action by the Department of Planning to remedy the situation.

“Whilst RMS kept their side of the bargain and built the fauna bridge, the Department of Planning didn’t keep their promise to zone the land for conservation. So now we have a situation where sometime in the future housing could appear on this land and the fauna Bridge over Mona Vale Road would lead into residential back yards and fences, rendering it a useless waste of money.

“We would like Northern Beaches Council to ask the Planning Department for a solution to this problem,” he said.

Cr Miranda Korzy will put a motion to Northern Beaches Council calling on Council to liaise with the Department of Planning, which owns the land, and other agencies to identify ways to protect it.

PNHA hopes that her motion will be supported by other Councillors as the long-term viability of native fauna populations in Ingleside Chase Reserve, which is under Council’s control, will be affected.

PNHA President, Marita Macrae says Pittwater Natural Heritage Association has been advocating for protection of native fauna in Ingleside Chase Reserve since 1994 when much of it was privately owned and threatened by a plan to subdivide it.

“Our campaign spurred Pittwater Council to take action to protect it which resulted in the creation of the nature reserve. We thought that with the creation of the fauna corridor and crossings over Mona Vale Road, our campaign would be over, but sadly our vision seems to have been thwarted,” she said.

PNHA member Jacqui Marlow has been involved in rescuing native fauna in the area for many years. She says that protection of the fauna corridor land is critical for the long-term survival of native animals.

She explained that “If native animals are not able to move between habitats, they will face gradual population decline leading to local extinction. We have many threatened mammals and birds in Ingleside Chase reserve including Eastern Pygmy Possums, which are listed as vulnerable in NSW. They depend on being able to move safely through the landscape to find food, shelter and mates.”



**Eastern Pygmy possum near the fauna bridge on Mona Vale Road East Photo David Palmer**

The map below shows recorded sightings of Eastern Pygmy Possums on both sides of the fauna bridge and underpass on Mona Vale Road East.



**Eastern Pygmy Possum sightings near the fauna bridge and underpass on Mona Vale Rd east.  
Image: Atlas of living Australia 2025**

Native animals have been photographed using the fauna bridge, showing that it is working, and as the vegetation on and around it grows thicker, more animals will use it. But if, after crossing the fauna bridge, animals encounter back yards, fences and domestic pets, then it will prove to be a bridge to nowhere.

PNHA has commissioned Pittwater Pathways to produce a three minute You Tube video titled “A Bridge to Nowhere?” explaining the issue. Click on this link to watch it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qz6CcpmJcY>