

## Geotech investigations and potholing work underway

Over the past few months we've started drilling at Shephards Lane, Roberts Hill and Gatelys Road tunnel, and the two twin bridges over the North Coast Railway and Shephards Lane overbridge, testing the hardness of the rock in preparation for tunnel building and to assess the distribution and movement of groundwater in the soil and rocks. So far the tests are positive, with the rock quality good for the tunnel design.



Geotechnical investigation is vital preparation work.

The geotechnical investigations are a normal part of any project development in preparation for the construction.

We recently started potholing to find and check the underground utilities' horizontal and vertical locations. To do this we use a water vacuum excavator to dig potholes, using high-pressure water to reduce and loosen the soil. The wet soil and mud slurry is removed to a spoil tank using a powerful vacuum. A hole, typically 300mm square or 150-200mm in diameter, is common and backfilled within 24 hours.

The geotechnical tests and potholing have been taking place in areas that will not impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage or sensitive environmental areas.



Testing rock hardness in preparation for tunnel building.