

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program – Katoomba to Lithgow

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)
Consultation Report
June 2022

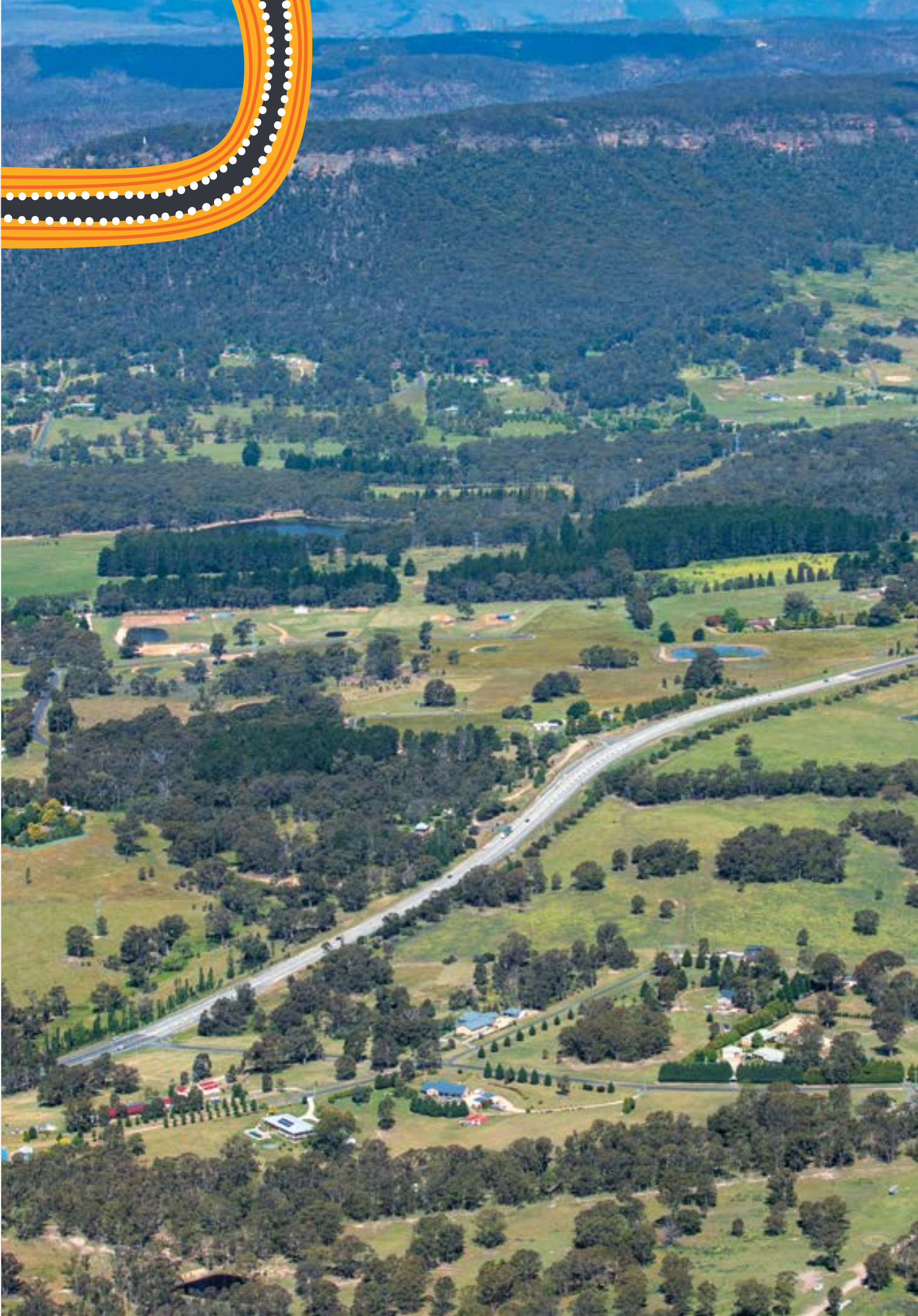


Australian Government



Transport
for NSW





Contents

Executive summary	2
Purpose of this report	3
Program context	4
The Great Western Highway Upgrade Program	4
Delivering benefits for all road users	5
The essential transport role of the Great Western Highway	5
Highway capacity	7
The Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade	8
History of the upgrade	8
Benefits	9
Little Hartley to Lithgow concept design	10
What does the concept design include?	10
Design map	10
Consultation	12
Values	12
Communication objectives	12
Consultation method	13
How consultation took place	14
Consultation summary	18
Overview	18
Next steps	20
Appendices	21

Executive summary

Together, the Australian and NSW Governments have committed more than \$2.5 billion towards the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway Upgrade, between Katoomba and Blackheath, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow, respectively.

The Katoomba to Lithgow duplication will provide major economic and safety benefits. It will improve the connection between Central West NSW and Sydney, reduce congestion, improve resilience and freight productivity, and provide a safer and more reliable journey for thousands of residents, commuters, tourists and freight operators who travel in, around and through the Blue Mountains.

In November 2019, the strategic corridor for the proposed upgrade of 34 kilometres of the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow was released to the community for feedback. This included the previously reserved corridor from Mount Victoria to Lithgow and a new corridor between Katoomba and Mount Victoria.

A summary of feedback from the 2019 consultation period can be found at nswroads.work/gwhd

The Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow is mostly a two-way undivided carriageway with one lane in each direction. The highway services freight, tourist and general traffic with volumes of about 11,000 vehicles per day near Lithgow and traffic growth is expected to continue.

Transport proposes to upgrade around 14 kilometres of the Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow to a four lane divided highway.

The proposed upgrade would use modern design standards to improve safety by separating carriageways, improving gradients and straightening curves as much as possible.

The Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section) Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design was publicly displayed and feedback was sought from the community from 23 November 2021 until 16 January 2022.

This report provides a summary of the consultation process implemented during the REF display and outlines the next steps in the progression of the Great Western Highway Upgrade Program.

Submissions to the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF have been categorised and formally responded to in the Submissions Report, which is now available on the project website.



River Lett is a very sacred site to the Aboriginal people. If we don't keep these sacred sites, we have nothing to hand on to our kids.

Feedback received during consultation



I can't express how needed it is to improve connectivity, safety, travel time and experience along with the economic benefits it will bring.

Feedback received during consultation



Consideration must be made to the environmental impact on the River Lett and its platypus population.

Feedback received during consultation

Purpose of this report

This Consultation Report summarises the community engagement activities undertaken during the display of the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF.

Between Tuesday 23 November 2021 and Sunday 16 January 2022, Transport carried out public consultation on the REF and concept design for the upgrade of the Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow.

Consultation was widely promoted within the Blue Mountains, the Central West and Western Sydney and all interested stakeholders were invited to provide formal feedback.

The insights and feedback received are taken into account as part of the environmental assessment process.

The project team will use the knowledge gained to enhance the design to minimise impacts on, and create added benefits in, the proposal corridor.

We will continue to build and maintain relationships with the community and stakeholders throughout all phases of the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade and the wider Great Western Highway Upgrade Program, and will continue to update the community as the program progresses.



Artist's representation of Jenolan Caves Road bridge, looking towards the new highway from Jenolan Caves Road (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

Program context

The Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

The Great Western Highway Upgrade Program (the Program) proposes to deliver 34 kilometres of four lane carriageway between Katoomba and Lithgow.

Together, the Australian and NSW Governments are investing \$4.5 billion towards upgrading the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow.

Within that overall funding commitment, the Australian and NSW Governments have committed more than \$2.5 billion towards the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway Upgrade, between Katoomba and Blackheath, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow, respectively.

The Katoomba to Lithgow duplication will provide major economic and safety benefits. It will improve the connection between Central West NSW and Sydney, reduce congestion, improve resilience and freight productivity, and provide a safer and more reliable journey for thousands of residents, commuters, tourists and freight operators who travel in, around and through the Blue Mountains.

The NSW Government has progressively upgraded sections of the Great Western Highway to make it

safer and more reliable for all road users. There has been a 77 per cent reduction in fatal crashes and a 28 per cent reduction in casualties between Leura and Warrimoo since this section of the highway was duplicated and upgraded.

We now propose to upgrade and duplicate the highway between Katoomba and Lithgow, completing and realising the potential of decades of work in upgrading the Great Western Highway across the Blue Mountains.

In February 2020, the Program was listed by Infrastructure Australia as a priority initiative. This means that it is officially recognised as a priority infrastructure investment which Australia needs in order to secure a sustainable and prosperous future.

77 per cent
drop in fatal crashes

28 per cent
drop in casualties
for all vehicle types.

Demonstrated duplication safety improvements for all vehicles between Leura and Warrimoo

Figure 1 Once the Great Western Highway Upgrade Program is complete, the Great Western Highway will be at least two lanes in each direction from Broadway to Wallerawang



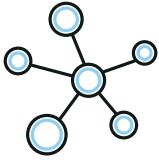
Delivering benefits for all road users

The Great Western Highway Upgrade Program from Katoomba to Lithgow aims to deliver the following benefits:



Improved safety:

reduced safety risks along the corridor for all road users



Enhanced network performance:

improved congestion and travel time reliability



Improved and promoted

regional economic development and productivity, and increased freight efficiency



Enhanced liveability and amenity:

maintained and improved local amenity and character, and protected environmental cultural assets



Improved resilience and future proofing:

a dependable and adaptable transport network which enables continuity of transport and essential services.

The essential transport role of the Great Western Highway

The Great Western Highway acts as the key road transport route across and along the Great Dividing Range for all vehicles, including emergency and essential services, local commuters, through commuters, tourists and freight. Those travelling into and through the Blue Mountains largely choose to travel by road.

Local residents use the highway every day to get to work, do their shopping, take children to and from school, and enjoy the area's natural attractions and recreational opportunities.

The Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade design keeps much of the old highway as service roads to safely separate local traffic from through traffic and provides safer intersections along the highway for residents.

Tourism in the Blue Mountains and Central West is growing. Tourists rely on the highway to visit some of the world's most beautiful National Parks and World Heritage areas and to travel through to tourist destinations on either side of the mountains.

This increase in tourism provides economic benefits for those communities and NSW as a whole, but is contributing to the congestion experienced through the Blue Mountains.

The Great Western Highway plays a key role in tourism in the Blue Mountains and beyond



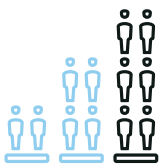
More than 95 per cent

of people travelling through the Blue Mountains between Katoomba and Lithgow for non-freight trips choose to travel by road

As a state highway, the Great Western Highway's role as a transport corridor is critical for NSW.

The Great Western Highway Upgrade Program can unlock the potential of the Central West and Orana, home to more than 300,000 people and the State's third largest regional economic contributor.

An improved, reliable connection between regional NSW and Sydney will attract more investment and help to create jobs. A better connection will make it easier for regional communities to access essential services, jobs and education. This will make our regions more attractive places to live, work and invest.



The Central West and Orana is home to more than

300,000 people

The Great Western Highway is part of the National Land Transport Network and a crucial freight corridor between Sydney and the Central West.

Around half of all freight in the Blue Mountains is carried on the road network, and around 40 per cent of that freight begins or ends its journey on or nearby the highway, supporting the local economy.

The Great Western Highway is one of four major regional freight connections into Sydney, but is the only one currently limited to 19 metre B-double and 20 metre Performance Based Standards (PBS) vehicles.

To meet future demand, the upgraded highway will be designed to carry more productive modern PBS heavy vehicles which are essential to helping NSW meet its growing freight needs. PBS vehicles have the highest safety standards and, because they can carry more, can move more freight with fewer trips.

Future customers will continue to rely on both road and rail along the Katoomba to Lithgow corridor.



More than half of the freight moved between Katoomba and Lithgow is transported by road

Highway capacity

The Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow has a higher average traffic volume than other duplicated highways.

There are more than 15,000 vehicle movements per day in Blackheath, more than 19,000 at Medlow Bath, and more than 20,000 at Katoomba.

Traffic peaks and congestion are common both during the week and weekends with journey times increasing by at least 20 minutes at peak times.

Congestion is especially restrictive during special events and the school holiday periods. Breakdowns and other unexpected traffic events can also cause significant delays along the highway which can result in up to an additional 90 minutes of travel time.

Traffic on the Great Western Highway is projected to grow and the upgrade is being planned to deliver long term resilience and capacity.

The upgrade will improve congestion and safety, and cater for future growth beyond 2036.



The Great Western Highway Upgrade Program will

support growth in key industries

in the Central West and Orana



The upgrade will increase the highway's capacity from 750 vehicles per hour between Katoomba and Lithgow, to 2000 vehicles per hour

The Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade

Transport proposes to upgrade around 14 kilometres of the Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow to a four lane divided highway.

Without the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade, the performance of the highway is expected to deteriorate and approach operational capacity within the next fifteen years. Drivers would face congestion along the highway and delays at intersections, with few opportunities to overtake slower vehicles.

Providing a four lane divided carriageway between Little Hartley and Lithgow would increase the capacity of the highway, reducing congestion and improving intersection performance. This would allow traffic to flow smoothly, reducing travel time for motorists.

The proposed upgrade follows the general alignment of the existing Great Western Highway as much as possible, however it does diverge in places to ease tightly curved sections. It also provides new junctions and retains sections of the existing highway as local service roads to safely separate local traffic from through traffic.

History of the upgrade

The NSW Government first announced an upgrade from Mount Victoria to Lithgow in May 2008.

Transport worked closely with the community from 2008 to 2013 to develop the concept design for the upgrade of the Great Western Highway between Mount Victoria and Lithgow. The local community was involved in consultation sessions, workshops and field surveys to help determine a preferred upgrade route.

As part of the concept development, a corridor through Newnes Plateau was investigated but was ruled out as it required land needed by the Department of Defence at Marangaroo. Other alignments to the north and south were also considered, but were much longer and the terrain more challenging than the preferred option through the Hartley Valley.

A concept design was completed in 2013 and the selected road corridor has been reserved in the Local Environmental Plans for the Blue Mountains and Lithgow City councils.



Artist's representation of Old Bathurst Road, Hartley Historic Village, next to the Hartley Courthouse building, looking north-east (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

In March 2019, the NSW Government committed \$2.5 billion towards upgrading the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow. Transport consulted with the local community along the entire corridor in November and December 2019.

In the 2021 Federal budget, the Australian Government committed \$2.03 billion towards the delivery of the eastern and western sections of the upgrade, including the section between Little Hartley and Lithgow.

Throughout 2020/21 the project team consulted with residents living near major intersections on the highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow to further refine and improve elements of the concept design.

Consultation primarily focused on improving road safety and intersection treatments, ensuring a high level of local access for residents, and early engagement with affected property owners. This consultation resulted in improvements to the concept design completed in 2013.

The broader community and other stakeholders throughout NSW were invited to provide comment on the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF and concept design from 23 November 2021 to 16 January 2022. Feedback provided is summarised and responded to in the Submissions Report and will be used to refine and improve the design further.

Benefits

The proposed Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade would use modern design standards to improve safety by separating carriageways, reducing gradients and straightening curves as much as possible.

Two lanes in either direction would provide opportunities to overtake safely and allow installation of median treatments, which help prevent head on collisions. A third westbound lane on River Lett Hill would provide opportunities to overtake slower vehicles safely.

Intersections with local roads would be upgraded to include deceleration and acceleration lanes for safer entry and exit from the highway. Additional local access and service roads would be provided, reducing the need for local traffic to travel along the highway. The number of right turn movements across the highway, which increase the risk of an accident, would be reduced from approximately 50 to seven.

Crash reduction analysis indicates the upgrade would reduce the number of crashes on the Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow by 57 per cent.



Artist's representation of Great Western Highway, near the intersection with Old Bathurst Road, looking south (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

Little Hartley to Lithgow concept design

What does the concept design include?

The concept design is developed in sufficient detail to allow an assessment of likely environmental, social and economic impacts so that stakeholders can consider the proposed project and provide feedback.

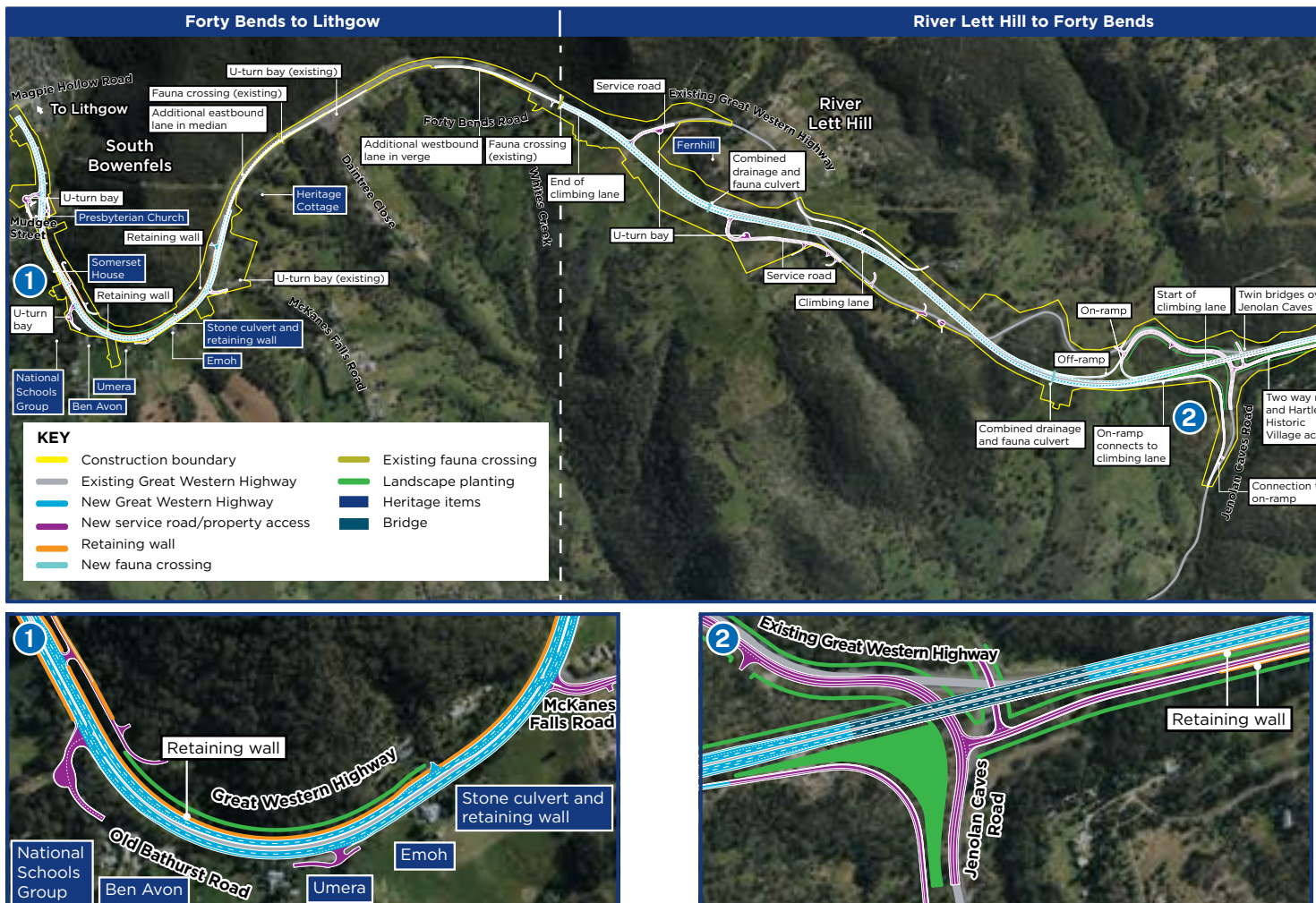
The Little Hartley to Lithgow concept design was developed in response to feedback received during community consultation from 2008 to 2013 and more recently in 2019, with additional refinement undertaken as a result of consultation and design workshops over the course of 2020/21.

Key features of the concept design featured in the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF include:

- Upgrade of around 14 kilometres of the Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow to a safer four lane divided highway
- Provision of service roads for local traffic
- Safer, controlled access onto the highway
- Provision of two heavy/light vehicle rest areas
- New bridges to allow safer, separated intersections for local traffic
- Upgrade of the existing bridge over River Lett
- Provision of a westbound climbing (third) lane on River Lett Hill

Design map

Figure 2 Little Hartley to Lithgow concept design displayed during the consultation period



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To provide flexibility for development and delivery, the concept design was presented in four sections:

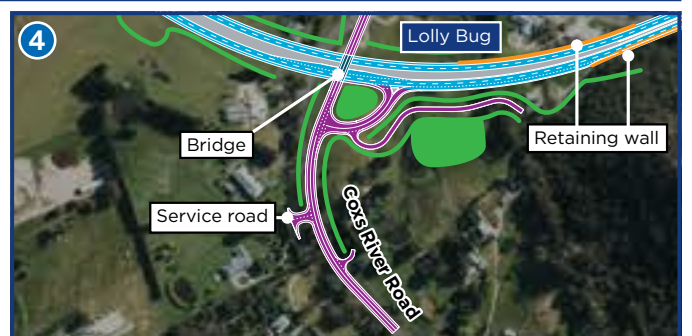
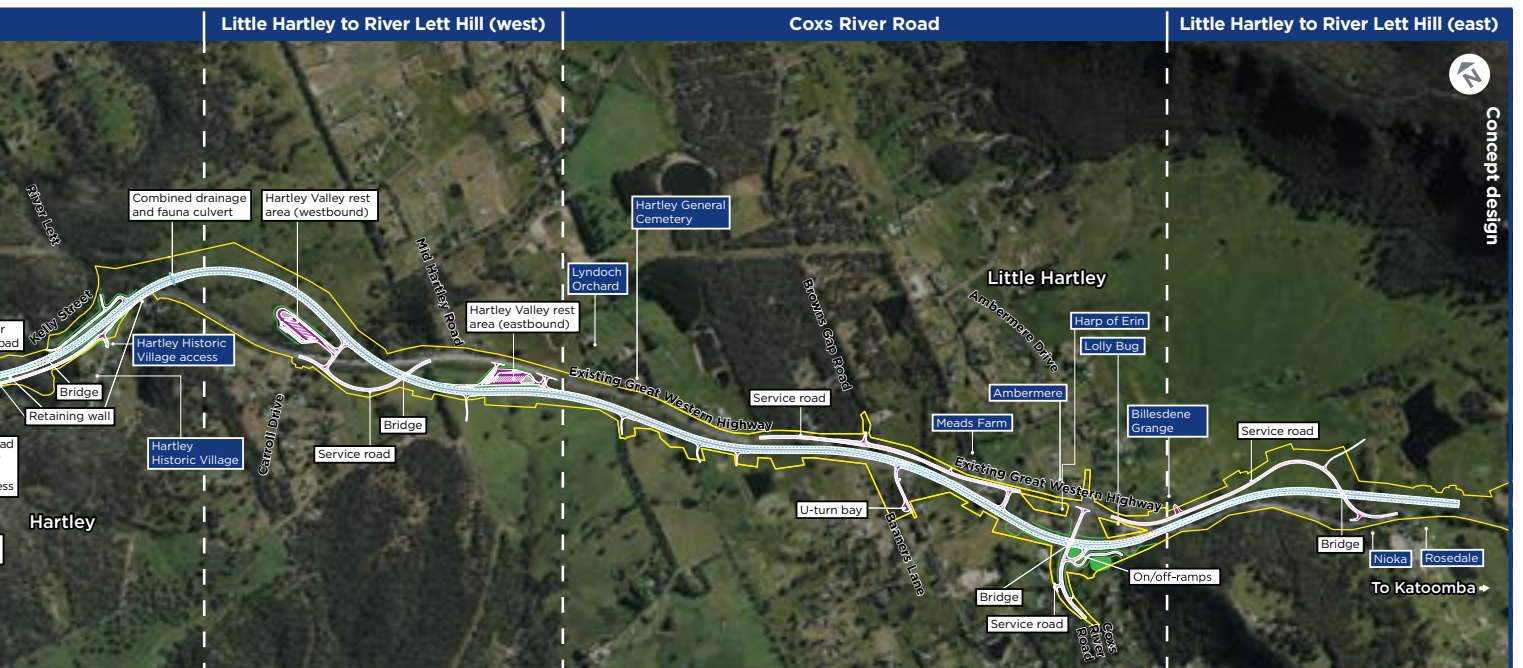
- Little Hartley to River Lett Hill (east)
- Coxs River Road
- River Lett Hill (west) to Forty Bends
- Forty Bends to Lithgow

We have been concerned re the possible increased noise levels as a result of the further development of the highway.

Feedback received during consultation



Artist's representation of Great Western Highway, near the intersection with McKanes Falls Road, looking west (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)



Consultation

Values

Transport's values underpin our decisions and behaviours when working with customers, stakeholders, partners and colleagues. They include:

- **Customer focus** – We place the customer at the centre of everything we do
- **Collaboration** – We value each other and create better outcomes by working together
- **Solutions** – We deliver sustainable and innovative solutions to NSW's transport needs
- **Integrity** – We take responsibility and communicate openly
- **Safety** – We prioritise safety for our people and our customers.

Communication objectives

The communication objectives for this Program are to:

- Provide clear, consistent and timely information to communities, stakeholders and customers on the Program
- Build relationships and a database of contacts of interested and concerned community members with whom Transport will continue to engage with throughout the development and delivery of the Program

- Provide meaningful opportunities for the community to provide feedback
- Listen to community and stakeholder views to help shape the design of the Program
- Raise awareness of the Program and its benefits and impacts throughout all phases including planning and construction
- Establish relationships and build trust with the local community, particularly local stakeholder groups, businesses and any directly impacted residents/landowners
- Provide clarity to the local community on the Little Hartley to Lithgow concept design
- Actively accept and respond to feedback and input from the local community on elements of the concept design, including within the period of consultation.

The Program aims to minimise impacts to the unique natural and cultural qualities of the Hartley Valley, and local consultation is a vital part of that process.



Artist's representation of Great Western Highway, east of Baaners Lane, looking south-east (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

Consultation method

Consultation launched on Tuesday 23 November 2021 and was initially scheduled to close on Wednesday 22 December 2021. Following requests from the Little Hartley to Lithgow community and other stakeholders, the consultation period was extended to Sunday 16 January 2022, to provide more opportunity for community members to consider the REF and provide feedback.

The REF was published on the Little Hartley to Lithgow project interactive web portal at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult and made available for download.

During the display period, hard copies of the REF were available for viewing at Lithgow City Council and Lithgow Library Learning Centre, through the Hartley District Progress Association, and provided via mail upon request.

The REF and concept design consultation was widely promoted within the Blue Mountains, the Central West and Western Sydney through print and radio advertisements, social media, print and electronic newsletters, and static displays.

Six public consultation sessions were held between 23 November and 11 December 2021. These were a mixture of online and COVIDSafe face-to-face sessions.

Two general online sessions and two targeted online sessions were held. The targeted online sessions focused on the design features around Coxs River Road/Baaners Lane and Jenolan Caves Road/River Lett Hill.

Two face-to-face consultation sessions were held at Lithgow and at Hartley. Bookings were essential to ensure compliance with COVID restrictions on venue numbers.

Local Aboriginal community members were invited to a consultation session focused on Aboriginal cultural heritage, held during the Hartley face-to-face consultation.

Local knowledge holders have also been consulted, following Transport's Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI) process.

Phone consultations were offered for anyone unable to engage either online or in person.

Transport sought to make the information in the REF accessible to the community through its virtual consultation room and interactive web portal, which provided access to the REF in separate chapters and technical papers, an interactive map, fact sheets highlighting key issues in the REF, answers to frequently asked questions, videos and images.

Formal feedback was welcomed through the interactive web portal, email or mail during the consultation period.

The community was able to contact the project team on the details below:

- 1800 953 777
- gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au
- PO Box 334, Parkes NSW 2870
- nswroads.work/gwhd

Stakeholders and community members were encouraged to provide feedback on the REF, including the following items and impacts:

- concept design
- landscape character and visual impact
- biodiversity
- Aboriginal heritage
- non-Aboriginal heritage
- noise and vibration
- property and land use
- traffic and transport
- construction
- connections
- flooding, surface and groundwater
- socio-economic
- project justification
- timing.



The concept designs so far have integrated great ideas from previous consultation.

Feedback received during consultation



The Little Hartley to Lithgow REF interactive web portal will continue to be updated as the project progresses

How consultation took place

Tool/Activity	Description
Communications material	
Community update Appendix A	<p>An eight-page community update with four-page map of the concept design was developed and delivered to residents from Little Hartley and Oberon to Lithgow. The distribution zone for the community update is included as Appendix I.</p> <p>The community update was made available on the project web portal at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult</p> <p>Contacts registered to the Program database were sent an eNewsletter advising that consultation on the REF was open and providing a link to the community update online.</p> <p>Hard copies of the community update were available at the static displays and at face-to-face consultation sessions.</p>
Concept design fact sheet with reply paid feedback feature Appendix B	<p>An eight-page concept design fact sheet including a reply paid submission form which could be completed by hand and posted to the project team, was developed and delivered along with the community update to residents from Little Hartley and Oberon to Lithgow.</p> <p>The concept design fact sheet was made available on the project web portal at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult</p> <p>Hard copies of the concept design fact sheet were available at the static displays and at face-to-face consultation sessions.</p>
Fact sheets Appendix C	<p>Fact sheets that highlighted how the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF had considered and addressed key themes from previous consultation including landscape character and visual impacts, biodiversity, cultural heritage, and property were developed. These were available as individual fact sheets that could be downloaded from the project web portal at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult</p> <p>A 12-page booklet of the fact sheets which included a reply paid submission form which could be completed by hand and posted to the project team was also compiled and printed. The fact sheet booklet was available at the static displays and at face-to-face consultation sessions.</p>
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Appendix D	<p>A four-page Frequently Asked Questions document was compiled and made available on the project web portal at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult</p> <p>Hard copies of the FAQs were available at the static displays and at face-to-face consultation sessions.</p>
Poster Appendix E	<p>A poster promoting the REF display and consultation sessions was provided at the static displays at Lithgow Valley Plaza, Lithgow City Council and Lithgow Library Learning Centre.</p>
Static displays	<p>Static displays with communications material were provided at Lithgow Valley Plaza, Lithgow City Council and Lithgow Library Learning Centre.</p> <p>Hard copies of the REF were available for viewing at the Lithgow City Council and Lithgow Library Learning Centre displays.</p>
eNewsletters	<p>Contacts registered to the Program database were sent eNewsletters highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opening of consultation – 23 November 2021 • update on static displays – 26 November 2021 • invitation to additional targeted consultation session on Aboriginal cultural heritage at Hartley – 6 December 2021 • consultation extended – 13 December 2021

Tool/Activity	Description
Consultation sessions and community meetings	
Consultation sessions	<p>Community consultation sessions were a mixture of general and targeted online sessions and COVIDSafe face-to-face sessions.</p> <p>General online sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 30 November: 6.30pm–8.00pm • Saturday 11 December: 12.30pm–2.00pm <p>Targeted online sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coxs River Road/Baaners Lane – Thursday 2 December: 6.30pm–8.00pm • Jenolan Caves Road/River Lett Hill – Thursday 9 December: 6.30pm–8.00pm <p>Face-to-face sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 4 December: 1.00pm–3.15pm Lithgow Civic Ballroom – Tony Luchetti Showgrounds, George Coates Avenue, Lithgow • Tuesday 7 December: 4.00pm–7.45pm* Hartley Community Hall, Corner Great Western Highway and Mid Hartley Road, Hartley <p>Face-to-face consultation sessions were divided into 45 minute time slots with bookings essential to ensure compliance with COVID restrictions on venue numbers. QR code sign in and proof of double vaccination status was required, in line with COVID requirements in place at the time.</p> <p>* Included a targeted consultation session from 4.00pm–5.00pm focused on Aboriginal cultural heritage.</p>
Stakeholder group meetings	<p>The following stakeholder group meetings were held, including a number of additional meetings organised after the close of the formal exhibition period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lithgow City Council administration, 10 November 2021 • Hartley District Progress Association, 25 November 2021 • Hartley Trust Land Reserve – Crown Lands Management Board, 29 November 2021 • Hartley Historical Society Advisory Committee, 20 December 2021 • Lachlan Shire Council, 21 December 2021 • Regional Development Australia Central West, 13 January 2022 • National Trust of Australia (NSW), 21 January 2022 • Lithgow City Council, 8 February 2022 • Heritage NSW, 17 February 2022



Static display at Lithgow Library Learning Centre with copies of communications material and hard copy REF available for viewing

Tool/Activity	Description
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Media and advertising

Advertisement

Appendix F

An advertisement about the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF and concept design display was published in:

- 25-Nov-2021 Bathurst Western Advocate
- 25-Nov-2021 Cowra Guardian
- 25-Nov-2021 Forbes Advocate
- 25-Nov-2021 Mudgee Guardian
- 25-Nov-2021 Oberon Review
- 25-Nov-2021 Parkes Champion Post
- 26-Nov-2021 Lithgow Mercury
- 27-Nov-2021 Dubbo Daily Liberal
- 27-Nov-2021 Orange Central Western Daily
- 01-Dec-2021 Blue Mountains Gazette
- 03-Dec-2021 Penrith Western Weekender

An advertisement to advise the extension of the consultation period was published in:

- 22-Dec-2021 Bathurst Western Advocate
- 22-Dec-2021 Blue Mountains Gazette
- 23-Dec-2021 Oberon Review
- 24-Dec-2021 Lithgow Mercury

An advertisement to advise consultation was closing soon was published in:

- 05-Jan-2022 Blue Mountains Gazette
- 05-Jan-2022 Bathurst Western Advocate

Radio

A thirty-second radio advertisement about the REF display was aired on four radio stations covering Sydney, the Blue Mountains and Central West NSW.

Station	Number of radio spots				Total spots
	26–30 Nov	1–7 Dec	8–14 Dec	15–21 Dec	
WS FM (Western Sydney)	5	7	7	2	21
2LT (Lithgow/ Katoomba)	10	10	13	9	42
2BS (Bathurst)	10	10	13	9	42
Radio 1089 (Orange)	10	10	13	9	42

Media releases

Appendix G

Two media releases were distributed via the Program website and through engagement with local media:

- Little Hartley to Lithgow REF display period announced – community invited to have their say (23 November 2021)
- Extension of the Little Hartley to Lithgow consultation period (13 December 2021).

Media releases are available at nswroads.work/gwhd

Tool/Activity	Description
Digital tools and social media	
Website and interactive web portal	The Great Western Highway Upgrade Program - Katoomba to Lithgow website, nswroads.work/gwhd , pointed to the project interactive web portal at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult which provided information about consultation, including an online interactive map, booking form for consultation sessions, and online submissions form.
Facebook Appendix H	Facebook was used to provide information about the consultation period with four posts on the NSW Roads page staggered to appear over eight weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post 1 – 24 November to 2 December 2021 • Post 2 – 6 to 11 December 2021 • Post 3 – 14 – 20 December 2021 • Post 4 – 10 – 16 January 2022
Direct contact channels	
Email	The Program’s email address was publicised for the community to contact the project team directly with queries, concerns and to make formal REF The project email address is gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au
Phone	The project hotline was advertised for the community to contact the project team directly with queries and concerns, and to book phone and online consultations. The hotline number is 1800 953 777 .



The virtual engagement room on the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF interactive web portal

Consultation summary

Overview

During the consultation period, we received 203 formal submissions from 188 members of the community and stakeholders. Of this feedback, 123 were online submission forms, 55 were email submissions and 25 were sent in via the post.

Reply paid submission forms were included with the community update and concept design fact sheet distributed to all residents along the corridor. Twenty-three reply paid submissions were received.

Ten per cent of submissions were in support of the proposal, 75 per cent objected to the proposal, and 11 per cent were partially supportive of the proposal. The remaining four per cent of submissions offered no position on whether they supported or objected to the proposal.

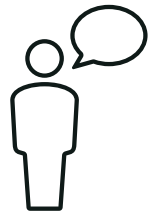
4936 individuals visited the interactive web portal during the REF display period, with a total of 12,522 page views and 1953 video plays.

The four social media ads collectively reached 137,302 Facebook users across the Blue Mountains, Central West, Orana and Western Sydney. The posts, which promoted the consultation period and process, attracted 310 reactions, 249 comments, and 55 shares.

Six community information sessions were held and collectively attended by 154 people, with some people attending two or more sessions.

Community consultation sessions were a mixture of general and targeted online sessions and COVIDSafe face-to-face sessions. Thirty-six people attended general online sessions and 23 people attended targeted online sessions. Seventy-five people attended the face-to-face session at Hartley and 20 people attended the face-to-face session at Lithgow.

For those unable to attend an online or face-to-face session, phone consultations were offered and encouraged.



203

formal submissions from **188** members of the community and stakeholders

123

were online submission forms, **55** were emailed and **25** were posted in

154

people attended **six** consultation sessions

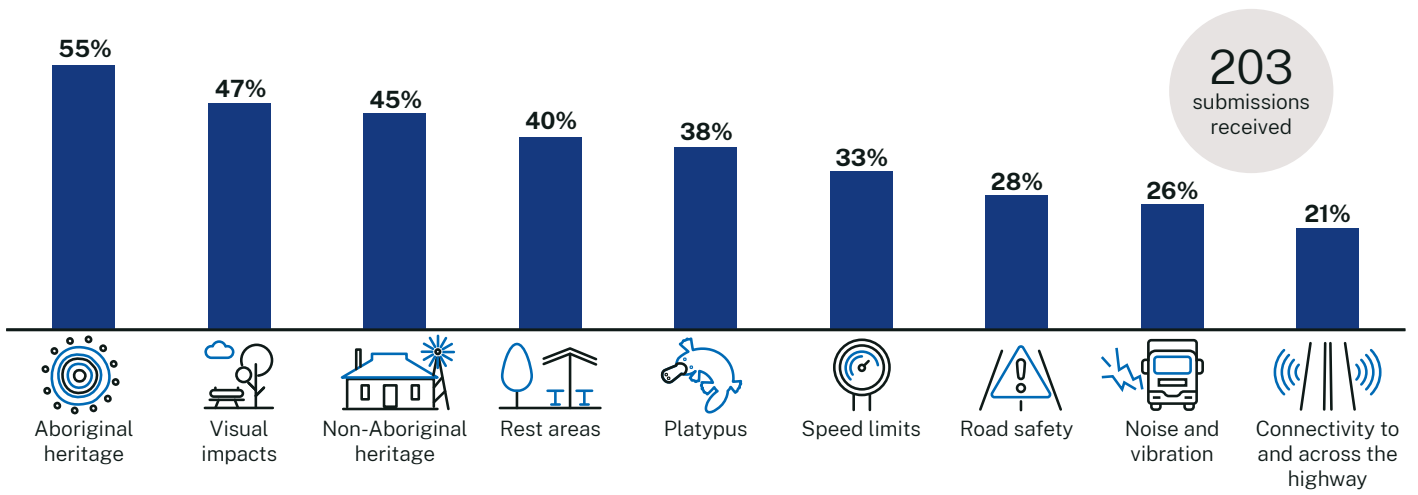
4936

people visited the interactive web portal, with **12,522** page views and **1953** video plays

310

reactions, **249** comments, and **55** shares were received on four social media posts

Key issues raised in REF submissions



Transport is committed to minimising impacts during construction of the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade

Next steps

Construction on the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade is expected to start in early 2023 with works at Coxs River Road. We will continue to update the community about construction plans in the coming months.

The REF for the East Section of the Program, between Katoomba and Blackheath (excluding Medlow Bath) will be exhibited for public consultation in the first half of 2022.

The determination of the Medlow Bath REF has been deferred. Transport will determine the East Section and Medlow Bath REFs together to capture all potential impacts of the upgrade between Katoomba and Blackheath.

The environmental assessments for the Central Section of the Program from Blackheath to Little Hartley are progressing, with the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) expected to be on public display in late 2022.



Coxs River Road would be the first section of the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade to be constructed (visualisation indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

Appendices

Appendix A – Community update



Artist's representation of Great Western Highway, east of Baaners Lane, looking south-east (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

Together, the Australian and NSW Governments have committed more than \$2.5 billion towards the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway Upgrade, between Katoomba and Blackheath, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow, respectively. The Great Western Highway Upgrade will reduce congestion, deliver safer, more efficient and reliable journeys for those travelling in, around and through the Blue Mountains, and better connect communities in the Central West.

Transport for NSW (Transport) is proposing to upgrade around 14 kilometres of the Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow to a four lane divided highway.

The proposed upgrade would use modern design standards to improve safety by separating carriageways, improving gradients and straightening curves as much as possible.

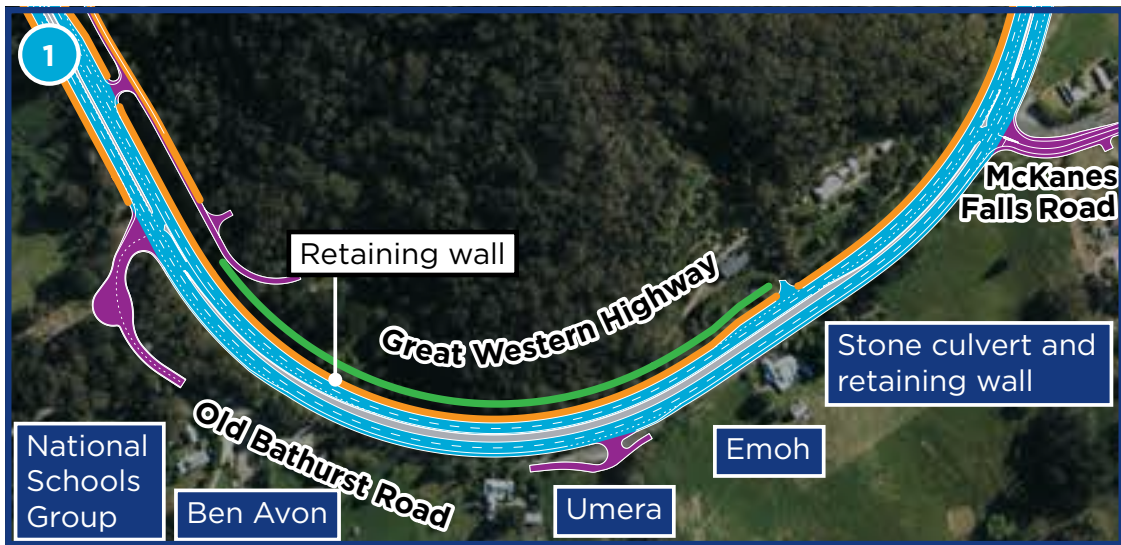
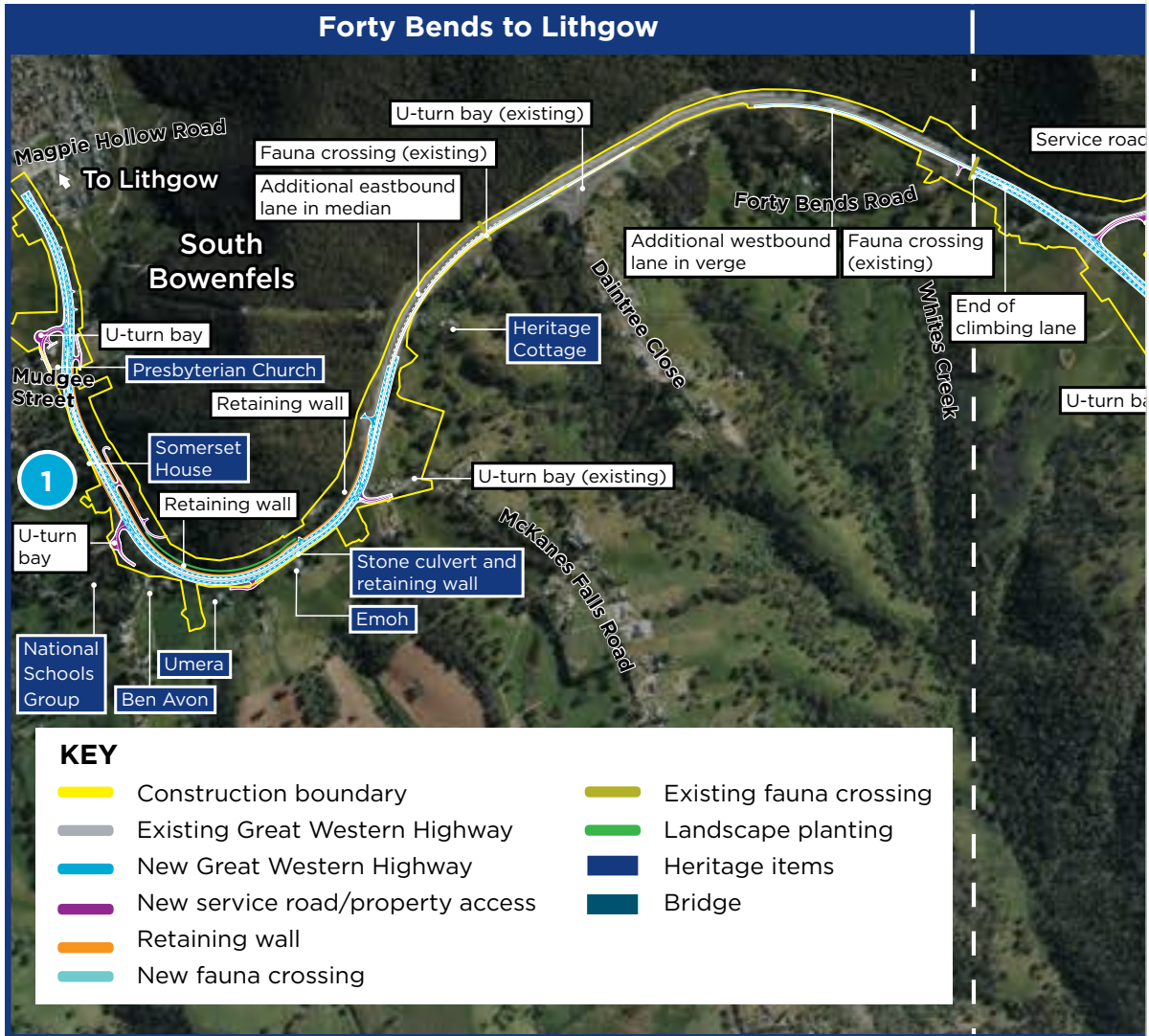
Transport is now seeking your feedback on the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design for the proposed Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade.



Your input is important in helping Transport to design the best upgrade we can between Little Hartley and Lithgow. We invite you to review the proposed design, understand the environmental impacts and have your say.

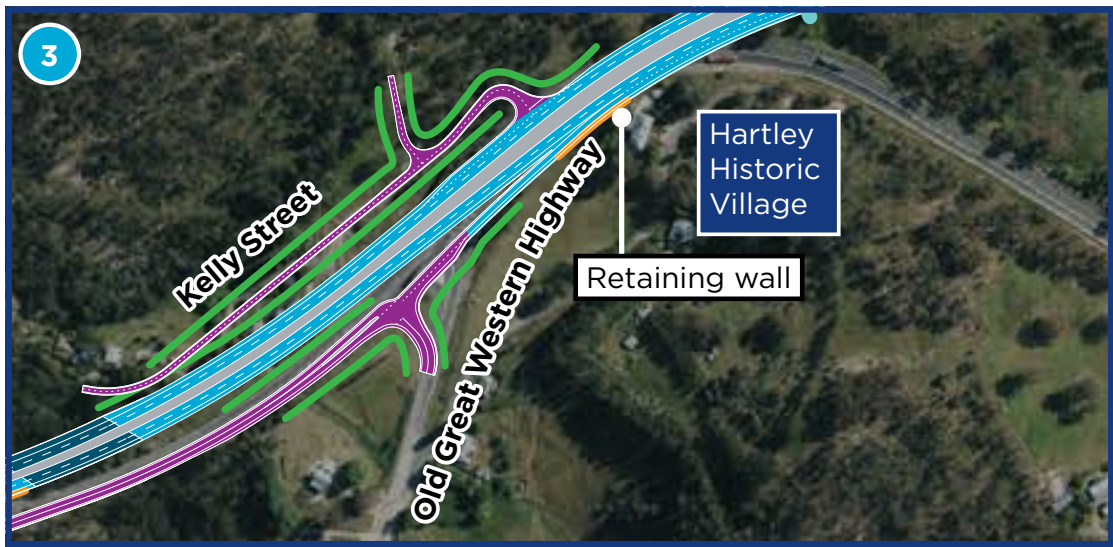
Feedback on the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF and concept design is invited from **Monday 22 November to Tuesday 21 December 2021**. Visit our virtual consultation room at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult or talk to staff at one of our consultation sessions to find out more.

November 2021



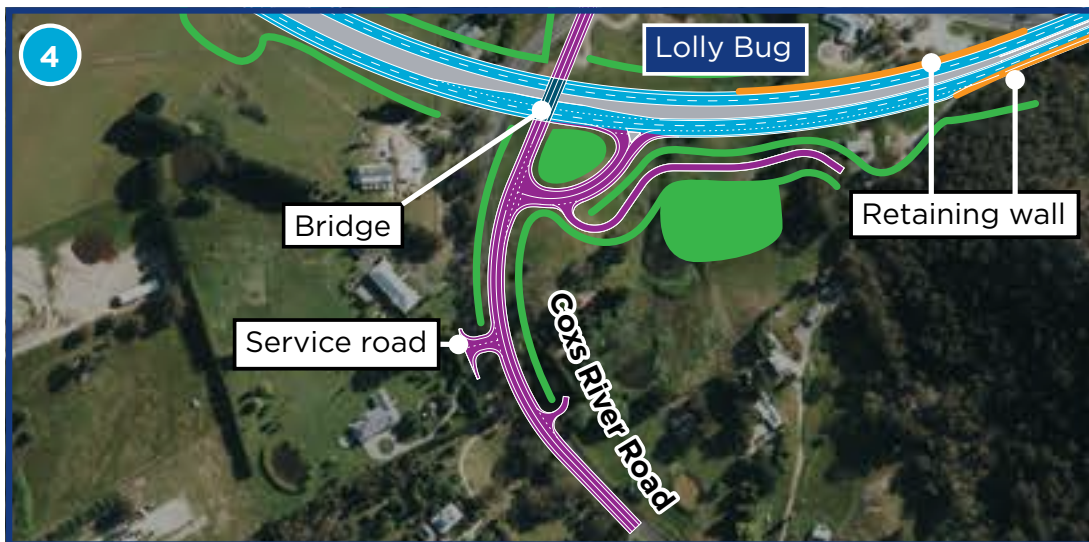
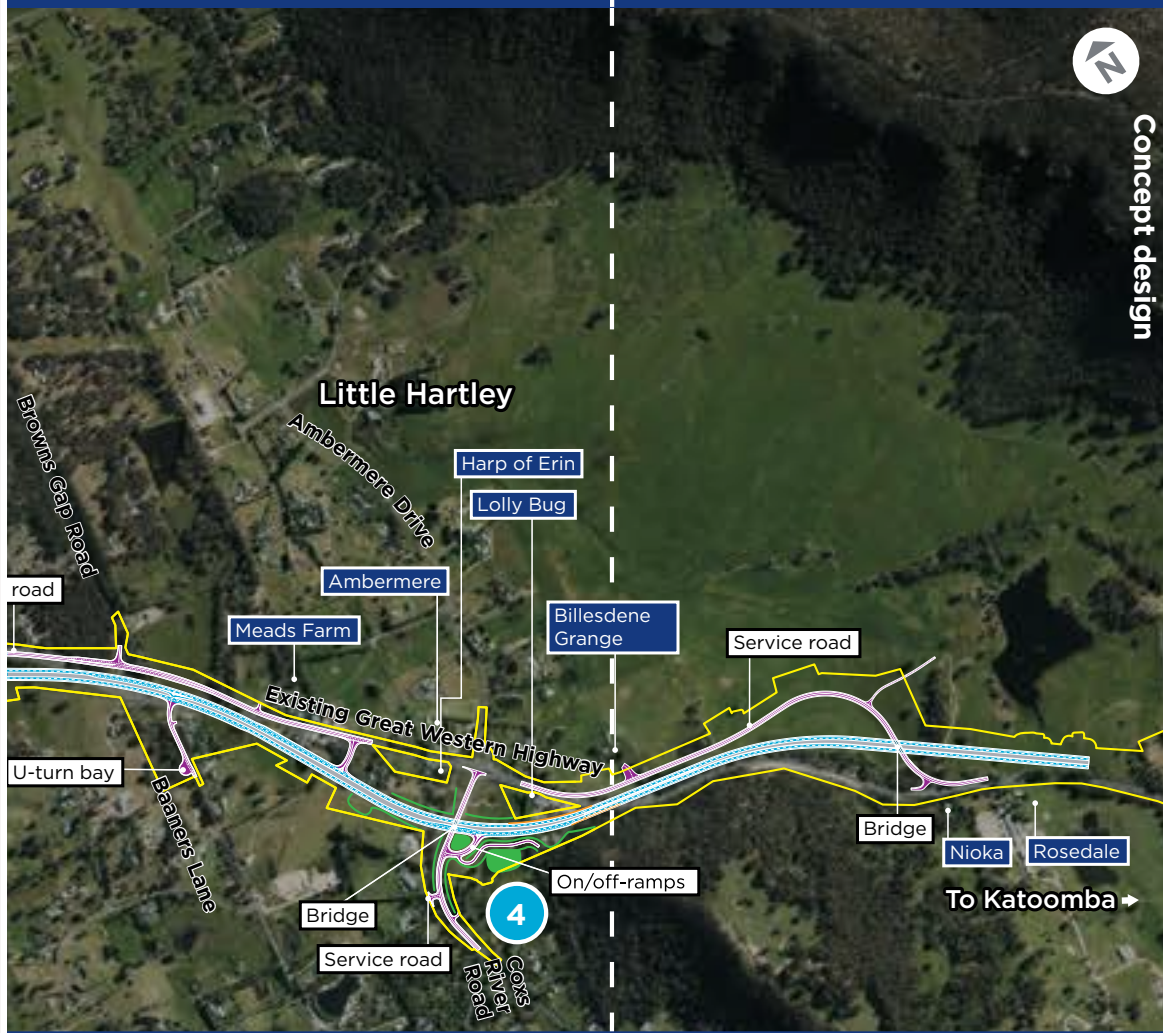
River Lett Hill to Forty Bends





Coxs River Road

Little Hartley to River Lett Hill (east)



Overview

The Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow is mostly a two-way undivided carriageway with one lane in each direction. The highway services freight, tourist and general traffic with volumes of about 11,000 vehicles per day near Lithgow and traffic growth is expected to continue.

Without the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade, the performance of the Great Western Highway is expected to deteriorate and approach operational capacity within the next fifteen years. Motorists would face congestion along the highway and delays at intersections, with few opportunities to overtake slower vehicles.

Providing a four lane divided carriageway between Little Hartley and Lithgow would increase the capacity of the highway, reducing congestion and improving intersection performance. This would allow traffic to flow smoothly, reducing travel time for motorists.

The proposed upgrade follows the general alignment of the existing Great Western Highway as much as possible, however it does diverge in places to ease tightly curved sections. It also provides new junctions and retains sections of the existing highway as service roads to property accesses.

The speed limit would be 100 km/hr from Little Hartley to Forty Bends, 90 km/hr from Forty Bends to McKanes Falls Road, and 80 km/hr from McKanes Falls Road to Lithgow.

Lanes would be 3.5 metres wide, with shoulders of about 2.5 metres and a maximum grade of 6.75 per cent on River Lett Hill. The central median would be from three metres to 11 metres wide depending on the location, and would be either paved or landscaped.

Transport respects the unique natural environment and cultural heritage of the upgrade corridor. We have adopted an integrated design approach to ensure the design responds to the existing landscape, vegetation and heritage features.

As a result, urban design has directly influenced key engineering aspects of the road design and bridges to seek the best possible outcomes.

We welcome community feedback on further improvements to integrate the design into its surrounding context and minimise impacts on heritage and cultural values.

Project benefits



Key features

- Upgrade of around 14 kilometres of the Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow to a safer four lane divided highway
- Provision of service roads for local traffic
- Safer, controlled access onto the highway
- Provision of two rest areas
- New bridges to allow safer, separated intersections for local traffic
- Upgrade of the existing bridge over River Lett
- Provision of a westbound climbing (third) lane on River Lett Hill

The upgrade has been designed in four sections:

- Little Hartley to River Lett Hill (east)
- Coxs River Road
- River Lett Hill (west) to Forty Bends
- Forty Bends to Lithgow

Subject to planning approval, construction would commence at Coxs River Road in late 2022.

Recent traffic modelling indicates that the complete Great Western Highway Upgrade Program, including the proposed tunnel between Blackheath and Little Hartley, could halve the projected 2036 peak travel time between Katoomba and Lithgow on busy weekends from one hour to thirty minutes.

Have your say on the upgrade

You are invited to have your say on the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF and concept design.

An REF is undertaken to assess the potential impacts of a proposed development or activity on the environment, to ensure compliance with the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and any other relevant state and national laws.

It includes investigations into all environmental impacts, and includes ways the project proposes to identify, mitigate and manage those impacts.

We have developed fact sheets that highlight how the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF has considered and addressed key themes from previous consultation, including:

- Concept design key features
- Landscape character and visual impacts
- Cultural heritage
- Biodiversity
- Property

The fact sheets will give you an overview, however, we encourage you to read the full REF document to gain a complete understanding of all impacts, before you make a submission on any issue.

The concept design has been developed in response to feedback received during community consultation between 2008 and 2013 and more recently in 2019, with additional refinement undertaken as a result of consultation and design workshops over the course of 2020/21.

Transport welcomes community feedback on how the design can be further developed and enhanced to deliver the best upgrade possible between Little Hartley and Lithgow.

To view the full REF, the concept design, fact sheets, and answers to frequently asked questions please go to nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult

To have copies of documents posted to you, please contact the project team at gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au or **1800 953 777**.



Artist's representation of Old Bathurst Road, Hartley Historic Village, adjacent to the Hartley Courthouse building, looking north-east (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

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PO Box 334, Parkes NSW 2870



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November 2021
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Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Review of Environmental Factors – Concept design fact sheet

November 2021



Coxs River Road will be the first section of the upgrade to be constructed (visualisation indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

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The NSW Government first announced an upgrade from Mount Victoria to Lithgow in May 2008. The local community was consulted to help determine a preferred upgrade route and a concept design was completed in 2013.

Transport for NSW (Transport) consulted with the community on the concept design again in November and December 2019.

We are now presenting a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade for community consultation from **22 November to 21 December 2021**.

We invite the community and other interested stakeholders to submit feedback to help inform next steps for the proposal.

How has Transport developed the proposed upgrade?

Transport worked closely with the community from 2008 to 2013 to develop the concept design for the upgrade of the Great Western Highway between Mount Victoria and Lithgow. The local community was involved in consultation sessions, workshops and field surveys to help determine a preferred upgrade route.

As part of the concept development, a corridor through Newnes Plateau was investigated but was ruled out as it required land needed by the Department of Defence at Marangaroo. Other alignments to the north and south were also considered, but were much longer and the terrain more challenging than the preferred option through the Hartley Valley.

A concept design was completed in 2013 and the selected road corridor reserved in the Local Environmental Plans for the Blue Mountains and Lithgow City councils.

In March 2019, the NSW Government committed \$2.5 billion towards upgrading the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow. Transport consulted with the local community along the entire corridor in November and December 2019.

In the 2021 Federal budget, the Australian Government committed \$2.03 billion towards the delivery of the eastern and western sections of the upgrade, including the section between Little Hartley and Lithgow.

Consultation since 2019

Throughout 2020/21 the project team has consulted with residents living near major intersections on the highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow to further refine and improve elements of the concept design.

Consultation has primarily focused on improving road safety and intersection treatments, ensuring a high level of local access for residents, and early engagement with affected property owners. This has resulted in improvements to the concept design completed in 2013.

The broader community and other stakeholders throughout NSW are now invited to provide comment on the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF and concept design. Feedback received will be used to refine and improve the design further.

Concept design

To provide flexibility for development and delivery, the concept design is presented in four sections:

- Little Hartley to River Lett Hill (east)
- Coxs River Road
- River Lett Hill (west) to Forty Bends
- Forty Bends to Lithgow



Hartley Valley Rest Area (eastbound), looking south-east (visualisation indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

Little Hartley to River Lett Hill (east)

Realignment of about three kilometres of the Great Western Highway with two lanes in each direction from the base of Victoria Pass to west of River Lett, excluding the Coxs River Road section.

Key features

- Two bridges over the new highway east of Coxs River Road and west of Mid Hartley Road to maintain the local road connections
- Improved alignment of the highway and provision of two lanes in each direction, with the existing highway becoming a service road
- Upgrade of the junction of Carroll Drive with the new highway
- Two rest areas (eastbound and westbound) for heavy, light and recreational vehicles near Mid Hartley Road and Carroll Drive, connected by a service road

How we've improved upon the 2013 concept design

- Improved, safer location for the Hartley Valley tunnel portal, which reduces property impacts
- Rest areas will cater for heavy, light and recreational vehicles with the addition of facilities like picnic tables, toilets and information boards to showcase the local area
- Rest areas set lower than previously to reduce visual impact, with urban design and landscaping used to further integrate these into their surroundings

Coxs River Road

Realignment of around 2.4km of the Great Western Highway with two lanes in each direction from east of Coxs River Road to near the Hartley Cemetery.

Key features

- Grade separated interchange at Coxs River Road, supplemented by new sections of connecting roadway to create a local service road network
- Realignment of the existing highway near Browns Gap Road to create a local service road
- Upgrades to the junctions at Browns Gap Road and Baaners Lane, including a U-turn bay on Baaners Lane
- Retaining wall on the highway eastbound adjacent to the Lolly Bug

How we've improved upon the 2013 concept design

- Provided three additional acceleration lanes from local roads to connect safely to the new highway
- Relocated the connection road near Harp of Erin further west to avoid acquisition
- Lowered the Coxs River Road overbridge
- Drainage improvements on the highway near the Coxs River Road bridge
- Junction improvements at Ambermere Drive



Artist's representation of Great Western Highway, east of Baaners Lane, looking south-east (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

River Lett Hill (west) to Forty Bends

Realignment and/or widening of about four kilometres of the Great Western Highway to at least two lanes in each direction between the River Lett and Forty Bends Road (eastern end).

Key features

- Twin bridges over Jenolan Caves Road and Blackmans Creek Road to form a grade separated interchange
- Twin bridges over River Lett, with the existing bridge retained as part of a local road connection to the new highway, including barrier upgrade works
- Realignment of the existing highway from Jenolan Caves Road to about 250 metres south of Forty Bends Road (eastern end) to improve the gradient of the road on River Lett Hill and provide for a climbing (third) lane westbound. The existing highway in this section would be converted to a local service road where feasible, including connection to the eastbound on and off ramps

- Upgrade to the junctions with Blackmans Creek Road and Kelly Street, including a realignment of Kelly Street
- Extension of the existing box culverts at Boxes Creek
- Three combined drainage and fauna crossing culverts

How we've improved upon the 2013 concept design

- Addition of a westbound climbing (third) lane for heavy/slow vehicles, improving road safety and travel time



Artist's representation of Jenolan Caves Road bridge, looking north-east (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

Forty Bends to Lithgow

Widening about 4.5 kilometres of the Great Western Highway to two lanes in each direction from Forty Bends Road (eastern junction) to Magpie Hollow Road.

Key features

- An additional westbound lane in the existing verge and an additional eastbound lane in the existing median
- Upgrades to junctions at McKanes Falls Road, Old Bathurst Road and Mudgee Street
- Modifications to the junction at Forty Bends Road (western junction)
- Widening at South Bowenfels is predominantly into the hillside due to the location of heritage properties, resulting in a significant length of retaining structures

How we've improved upon the 2013 concept design

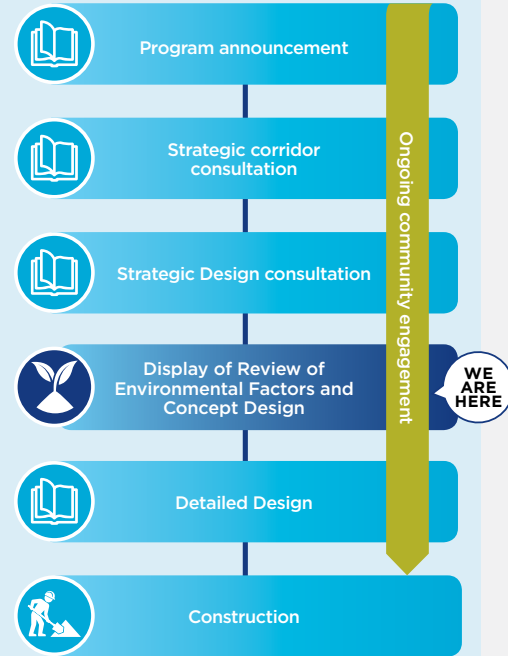
- Provision of four lanes from Forty Bends to the existing four lanes in Lithgow

Next steps

Transport will use your feedback to continue to refine and improve the design of the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade.

Subject to planning approval, construction would commence at Coxs River Road in late 2022.

Where are we



Katoomba to Lithgow

The REF for Katoomba to Blackheath (East Section - excluding Medlow Bath) will be available for consultation in early 2022.

The environmental assessment for Blackheath to Little Hartley (Central Section) will be available for consultation in late 2022.



Artist's representation of new Great Western Highway, near the intersection of Old Bathurst Road, looking south (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

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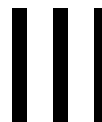
Page 6 of 8

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Little Hartley to Lithgow REF
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Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Review of Environmental Factors – Biodiversity fact sheet

November 2021



Transport is committed to minimising environmental impacts during construction and delivery of the upgrade

Together, the Australian and NSW Governments have committed more than \$2.5 billion towards the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway Upgrade, between Katoomba and Blackheath, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow, respectively. The Great Western Highway Upgrade will reduce congestion, deliver safer, more efficient and reliable journeys for those travelling in, around and through the Blue Mountains, and better connect communities in the Central West.

Transport for NSW (Transport) is committed to minimising impacts to the natural environment.

We have carried out extensive biodiversity studies along the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade corridor, and our investigations are continuing to make sure we fully understand the flora and fauna in the area.

Transport is presenting a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade for community consultation from **22 November to 21 December 2021**.

We invite the community and other interested stakeholders to submit feedback to help inform next steps for the proposal.



Biodiversity assessments

Following background research and habitat suitability assessments, Transport carried out targeted vegetation, flora and fauna field surveys in March, April, May and August 2021.

Around 73 per cent of the proposal corridor is made up of mostly cleared grassland on rural and rural-residential land.

The upgrade would require the removal of 75.19 hectares of native plant community types. Around 18 hectares is Tableland Basalt Forest in the Sydney Basin and South Eastern Highlands Bioregion, which is listed as Endangered under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act). Around six hectares is classified as White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland, which is listed as Critically Endangered under the BC Act. Of this, 3.6 hectares is consistent with the listing under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

There are potentially nine threatened flora species within the upgrade area. During spring/summer 2021 we will carry out targeted surveys to give us the best chance of detecting whether these species are growing in the proposal corridor.

Ten threatened fauna species were recorded during field surveys: Squirrel Glider, Greater Glider, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Little Bent-winged Bat, Large Bent-winged Bat, Large-eared Pied Bat, Brown Treecreeper, Eastern False Pipistrelle, Greater Broad-nosed Bat, and Scarlet Robin.

We will conduct additional targeted surveys of Purple Copper Butterfly, which has previously been identified in the upgrade area, Booroolong Frog, and Gang-gang Cockatoo in spring 2021.

We did not identify any of the mapped habitats for threatened fish species listed under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (FM Act). It is unlikely that any threatened species listed under the FM Act occur in the waterways that intersect the corridor area or directly downstream.

The Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (REF Appendix D) assesses the potential direct and indirect biodiversity impacts and identifies mitigation measures to avoid, manage or reduce these impacts.

As the upgrade would remove native vegetation and potential fauna habitat, Transport will need to offset these impacts under the EPBC Act and BC Act.



Squirrel Glider, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Purple Copper Butterfly (left to right)

Reducing the impact of our work

A Flora and Fauna Management Plan will be prepared and the detailed design for the road will minimise native vegetation and habitat removal, particularly around mapped Purple Copper Butterfly habitat.

We will re-establish native vegetation and use modified limbs salvaged from removed vegetation as much as possible to provide habitat for native fauna, and use nest boxes if needed.

As the main cause of increased fauna injury and death after the upgrade is open to traffic is anticipated to be vehicle collisions, we will provide fauna exclusion fencing connecting to three new fauna underpasses.

We will extend the two existing large culverts at Boxes Creek and Butlers Creek to include fauna-friendly design elements to encourage fauna crossing. The combined drainage culvert and fauna underpass at Whites Creek will also remain, along with the three existing fauna rope bridges.

We will make sure fencing and fauna underpasses are maintained in order to ensure these measures remain effective.

When we are building

We have been able to minimise the clearing of native vegetation and the impacts on habitat by following the existing highway alignment as much as possible.

Transport will carry out pre-clearing surveys to help reduce injury or death to local fauna when we are removing vegetation. Most of the native and threatened fauna species within the proposed upgrade area are able to move quickly, and typically leave vegetation when we begin clearing.

Noise and vibration may temporarily disturb fauna, but these impacts are only expected in the construction footprint and unlikely to have a significant, long-term impact on fauna.

When we need to work at night, we will use the lowest intensity lighting we can for the task, and lights will be turned off when not needed.

Local fauna would likely relocate from areas next to the highway that are indirectly impacted by noise and light to more suitable habitat further afield while we are building the road.



Existing combined drainage culvert and fauna underpass at Whites Creek

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Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Review of Environmental Factors – Cultural heritage fact sheet

November 2021



Transport is committed to protecting cultural heritage in the Hartley Valley

Together, the Australian and NSW Governments have committed more than \$2.5 billion towards the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway Upgrade, between Katoomba and Blackheath, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow, respectively. The Great Western Highway Upgrade will reduce congestion, deliver safer, more efficient and reliable journeys for those travelling in, around and through the Blue Mountains, and better connect communities in the Central West.

Transport for NSW (Transport) is committed to preserving the character and heritage values of the Hartley Valley.

We have carried out extensive investigations to identify and minimise impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage and non-Aboriginal heritage items as part of the proposed Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade.

Transport is presenting a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade for community consultation from **22 November to 21 December 2021**.

We invite the community and other interested stakeholders to submit feedback to help inform next steps for the proposal.



Protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage

Transport acknowledges and respects the rights of Aboriginal people to determine the cultural significance of their heritage. We consult with Aboriginal people who hold cultural knowledge so that we can determine the significance of Aboriginal places and/or objects found in project areas.

We have conducted extensive Aboriginal cultural heritage investigations along the entire proposed Great Western Highway Upgrade Program corridor, following Transport's Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI).

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) has been prepared which assesses Aboriginal cultural values potentially impacted by the project.

We have consulted with the Aboriginal Focus Group of local knowledge holders for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade in producing this ACHAR, and the report is available as part of the REF in Appendix G.

Archaeological surveys along the entire corridor from Katoomba to Lithgow were carried out with representatives from Aboriginal stakeholder groups between November 2019 and March 2020. These surveys identified four new Aboriginal sites in the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade proposal area.



Aboriginal hearth found during test excavations in the proposal area

Archaeologists and Aboriginal site officers carried out test excavations at 16 Aboriginal sites in the upgrade footprint between 19 April and 29 June 2021, to confirm whether Aboriginal objects were present beneath the ground. They found archaeological evidence of Aboriginal occupation across the area, including a high density of stone artefacts at three specific locations.

Consultation with Aboriginal community members has confirmed that the entire proposal area is significant to Aboriginal people, with a number of sites being identified as having high cultural significance.

Reducing the impact of our work

In consultation with registered Aboriginal parties, we will develop measures to avoid impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and items where possible, or mitigate impacts if we cannot avoid them. This will include protection and salvage measures.

We are working with the Aboriginal community to determine the best way to protect artefacts and we will be led by the community as we develop a curation policy for salvaged Aboriginal objects.

Transport will seek an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) from Heritage NSW, before any known Aboriginal heritage sites are impacted.

When we are building

We will follow the specific procedures documented in the Aboriginal Heritage Management Plan (AHMP). We will confine works to the minimum possible area required for construction activities and place temporary fencing at the boundary of specified Aboriginal heritage sites.

The salvage and excavation of Aboriginal artefacts will be carried out by a qualified archaeologist with the assistance of Aboriginal site officers.

If an unknown or potential Aboriginal object is found during construction, we will stop work until we have completed the appropriate procedures for managing unexpected heritage items.*

Protecting non-Aboriginal heritage

The proposal area contains many non-Aboriginal heritage items which could be directly or indirectly impacted by the upgrade. We conducted extensive studies of 31 heritage or potential heritage items to assess their cultural heritage significance and identify ways to mitigate potential impacts.

These studies indicated that the proposal would have a major impact to the heritage listed Lyndoch Orchard and three unlisted heritage items, including the bridge over the River Lett and the historic bullock track and creek crossing.

The state heritage listed Hartley Historic Site, state heritage listed Fernhill, and Billesdene Grange were identified as being moderately impacted. The proposal would have a negligible or minor impact to 23 heritage items.

A summary of potential impacts on heritage items is provided in REF Chapter 6.5.

Reducing the impact of our work

The upgrade proposes use of 2.5 hectares of national park land at Hartley Historic Site to keep the alignment away from the village to avoid impacts to heritage buildings. We are working closely with National Parks and Wildlife Services on this.

We will work closely with heritage specialists and take an archival recording, which may include digital data capture methods such as 3D scanning, of specified heritage items.

If there is archaeological potential at any site, we will carry out further archaeological surveys prior to construction commencing.

We will use pre-condition surveys and monitor vibration to make sure identified heritage structures are not adversely impacted by vibration from construction.

There are a number of heritage properties where we will need to remove some vegetation. We will revegetate these areas with plantings that match the existing landscape.

A qualified arborist will examine and assess the remnant orchard trees at Lyndoch Orchard for significance and horticultural value. We will make sure any rare, old, or significant examples or varieties are considered for propagation or preservation.

When we are building

Before we begin construction, all of our contractors will undergo historical heritage awareness training to make sure they understand known and potential heritage items in the area.

If any historical heritage materials, features and/ or deposits are discovered, we will stop work until we have completed the appropriate procedures for managing unexpected heritage items.*



Hartley Historic Village

* The Standard Management Procedure - Unexpected Heritage Items (Transport for NSW, 2015)

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Lithgow Civic Ballroom – Tony Luchetti Showgrounds, George Coates Avenue, Lithgow

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Hartley Community Hall, Corner Great Western Highway and Mid Hartley Road, Hartley

*Book a 45 minute time slot

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Page 4 of 4



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Review of Environmental Factors – Landscape character and visual impact fact sheet

November 2021



Transport respects the unique natural environment and cultural heritage of the upgrade corridor

Together, the Australian and NSW Governments have committed more than \$2.5 billion towards the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway Upgrade, between Katoomba and Blackheath, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow, respectively. The Great Western Highway Upgrade will reduce congestion, deliver safer, more efficient and reliable journeys for those travelling in, around and through the Blue Mountains, and better connect communities in the Central West.

Transport for NSW (Transport) recognises that the Hartley Valley has unique natural and cultural scenic qualities.

The Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade seeks to deliver a project which responds to and is sensitively integrated within its surrounds.

Transport is presenting a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design

for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade for community consultation from **22 November** to **21 December 2021**.

We invite the community and other interested stakeholders to submit feedback to help inform next steps for the proposal.



**Respecting
character and
responding to place**

Landscape character and visual impact assessment

Transport has carried out an extensive assessment of the potential impacts of the upgrade on landscape character and visual amenity.

Five individual landscape character zones (LCZs) were identified and assessed: Butlers Creek Valley, Hartley Ridge, River Lett Valley, River Lett Hill, and Forty Bends.

The assessment found that the upgrade would have a high to moderate impact across four of the LCZs when it is operational, due to vegetation clearing, the introduction of new infrastructure, and associated earthworks.

The proposal is expected to have a moderate impact on one LCZ (Forty Bends), where only minor changes to the existing character and environment are proposed.

Landscape and urban design strategy

Transport respects the strong sense of place that residents, as well as visitors and through-traffic, attach to the Hartley Valley.

The upgrade provides an opportunity to balance the amenity and liveability of the towns and villages along the highway, with the movement of traffic on the road.

The proposal uses landscape and urban design principles in the road design in order to minimise visual impacts and allow the upgrade to respond to the existing landscape, vegetation and heritage features.

We are exploring opportunities to help people engage with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage, along with the nature and character of the places in the Hartley Valley and through to Lithgow.

As part of this work, we are developing an active transport strategy to promote better pedestrian and cycling connections. We invite community feedback on features that could be included.

We will also seek community feedback and input into our Cultural Interpretation Strategy, to help celebrate local stories and heritage along the route, during 2022.

Our urban design objectives

- Develop an integrated design that compliments the existing beauty, ecology and character of the Hartley Valley and its setting
- Minimise impacts to heritage sites, significant trees and cultural values of the community
- Create a road corridor that responds to the natural and cultural environment, and the underlying character of the Hartley Valley and surrounds.

For more information, please see REF Chapter 6.9 and the Urban Design and Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment report.



Aerial view of Butlers Creek Valley looking east towards Victoria Pass

Reducing the impact of our work

We will use urban design to minimise visual impacts, for example, by:

- designing structures to reduce their bulk
- seeking ways to make the road less visually dominant
- integrating bridges and retaining walls into their surroundings
- blending cuttings and embankments into the surrounding terrain.

We will remove as little vegetation as possible and take every opportunity to provide plantings, particularly in areas where screening is required.

Both native and exotic species will be planted, to fit in with the existing landscape. We will use more mature plants where possible, as visual impacts will be reduced as vegetation grows.

We welcome further suggestions to help integrate the design into its surroundings and minimise impacts on heritage and culture that is important to the community.

When we are building

During construction, temporary impacts will include views of earthmoving and construction equipment, stored materials and stockpiles. We will provide suitable barriers to screen views from nearby residences.

Temporary lighting will be screened or diverted to reduce unnecessary light spill.

Site facilities will be returned to their pre-construction condition when works are finished.



Artist's representation of McKanes Falls Road at intersection with the Great Western Highway, looking west (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

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Page 4 of 4



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Review of Environmental Factors – Property fact sheet

November 2021



Transport aims to minimise property impacts wherever possible

Together, the Australian and NSW Governments have committed more than \$2.5 billion towards the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway Upgrade, between Katoomba and Blackheath, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow, respectively. The Great Western Highway Upgrade will reduce congestion, deliver safer, more efficient and reliable journeys for those travelling in, around and through the Blue Mountains, and better connect communities in the Central West.

Since 2013, Transport for NSW (Transport) has purchased over a quarter of the land needed for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade.

The proposal will use Transport owned land and as much of the existing road corridor as possible, however some full and partial property acquisitions and temporary leases will be required.

Transport is presenting a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade for community consultation from **22 November** to **21 December 2021**.

We invite the community and other interested stakeholders to submit feedback to help inform next steps for the proposal.



Acquisition, adjustments and leases

To widen and realign the highway and provide for local road changes and new access roads, the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade requires the full acquisition of 11 property lots and the partial acquisition of 50 lots.

Of the 11 full acquisitions, six lots are privately owned, four lots are owned by National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS), and one lot is Crown land.

Around 64 per cent of the land to be acquired between Little Hartley and Lithgow is rural and bushland, about 34 per cent is rural residential, and two per cent is zoned as residential, commercial use or community use.

The NPWS land is a portion of the Hartley Historic Site, which Transport proposes to revoke to keep the alignment away from the village to avoid impacts to heritage buildings. A compensation package will be negotiated with NPWS.

Most properties would be partially acquired with compensation, as the upgrade won't substantially affect the current or future use of the rest of the property.

While we have tried to minimise property impacts as much as possible, some private properties will require negotiation of property adjustments due to partial acquisition, for example to accesses, fences or dams.

Parts of nine lots will be leased during construction for site facilities and temporary sediment basins, which are designed to capture sediment from water run-off during construction. Construction leases will be negotiated with the property owners.

Any land leased for construction purposes will be reinstated to at least its original standard in consultation with the land owner as part of the handback process.



Hartley Historic Village

Reducing the impact of our work

We have been talking to directly affected owners about impacts to their property and the acquisition process. If the project team has not been in contact with you, your property does not have a direct boundary impact.

We will continue to consult with affected property owners throughout the design phase. We respect all property owners' rights to privacy when holding these discussions.

Although Transport has been delegated the power for compulsory acquisition of land, our aim is to achieve a negotiated settlement for all land required for the proposal.

All property acquisition will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* to ensure fair compensation.

The NSW Government has introduced additional support programs to help residents affected by a property acquisition to navigate through the process. This includes a designated Personal Manager Acquisitions, in addition to Transport's Acquisitions Officer.

Personal Managers Acquisitions are community engagement professionals specially trained to assist residents affected by property acquisition. The Personal Manager Acquisitions is available to provide confidential help and support to make the acquisition process as easy as possible.

The Acquisitions Officer is responsible for carrying out the necessary steps to purchase property being acquired. Acquisition Officers are property experts and can answer complex questions you may have about the acquisition and valuation process.

Please contact the project team if you'd like to talk to our Personal Manager Acquisitions or Acquisitions Officer.

When we are building

During construction, there may be some temporary disruption to property accesses. We will use a Traffic Management Plan to minimise these impacts.

Access to properties and businesses will be maintained during construction, with alternative access and signage provided if required.

We will consult with property owners before the work is carried out, if we have to make any temporary changes to access during any part of construction.



Great Western Highway looking west at Coxs River Road

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Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Review of Environmental Factors – Frequently Asked Questions

November 2021

How will the upgrade improve road safety?

The proposed Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade would use modern design standards to improve safety by separating carriageways, reducing gradients and easing curves as much as possible. Two lanes in either direction will provide opportunities to overtake safely and allow us to install median treatments, which help prevent head on collisions. A third lane on River Lett Hill will provide opportunities to overtake slower vehicles safely.

Intersections with local roads will be upgraded to include deceleration and acceleration lanes for safer entry and exit from the highway. Additional local access and service roads will be provided, reducing the need for local traffic to travel along the highway.

Crash reduction analysis indicates the upgrade would reduce the number of crashes on the Great Western Highway by 57 per cent within the project length.

Will the upgrade improve access for emergency services?

Providing a more reliable connection for emergency services has been a key consideration as we plan for the upgrade. Upgraded intersections will provide safer and faster access to the highway. Dual carriageways with median crossovers will allow us to set up contraflow provisions when lanes are blocked as a result of traffic incidents. This will give emergency vehicles better access to attend highway incidents and to move around congestion.

How will the upgrade promote travel time savings?

The performance of the Great Western Highway is expected to deteriorate and approach operational capacity within the next fifteen years. Drivers would face congestion along the highway and delays at intersections, with few opportunities to overtake slower vehicles.

Providing a four lane divided carriageway between Little Hartley and Lithgow, and an extra westbound lane on River Lett Hill would increase the capacity of the highway, providing safe opportunities to pass slower vehicles. Delays at intersections and junctions would be reduced by the provision of deceleration and acceleration lanes, which separate turning vehicles from the flow of traffic

How did you get to the current design for the upgrade?

The original concept design for Mount Victoria to Lithgow was developed with extensive community consultation and feedback between 2008 and 2013. Consultation began again in 2019, and the design has been refined as a result of consultation and design workshops over the course of 2020/21.

We welcome community feedback on how the design can be further developed and improved to deliver the best upgrade possible between Little Hartley and Lithgow.

What is going to happen to the recent works at Forty Bends?

We were pleased to be able to deliver safety upgrades through the Hartley Valley as part of the jointly funded \$250 million Great Western Highway Safety upgrade between Katoomba and Lithgow, which have been delivering safety benefits to the residents of the valley since they were finished in 2017.

The recent Forty Bends work will be retained. We will build upon these works by providing an additional westbound lane in the existing verge and an additional eastbound lane in the existing median, allowing four lanes from Forty Bends to Lithgow.

Is my property going to be impacted by acquisition?

We have been talking to affected owners about impacts to their property and the acquisition process. If the project team has not been in contact with you, the project does not have a direct boundary impact on your property.

Why do you need a road bridge at Jenolan Caves Road intersection?

The bridge at Jenolan Caves Road will reduce the length of the steeper grade on River Lett Hill. This will reduce the amount of climbing vehicles will have to do and, as a result, reduce vehicle emissions. It will also allow traffic to join and leave the Great Western Highway via safer on and off ramps. We will use urban design to minimise the visual impacts of the bridge as much as possible.

What would the speed limit be?

The posted speed limit would be 100 km/hr from Little Hartley to Forty Bends, 90 km/hr from Forty Bends to McKanes Falls Road, and 80 km/hr from McKanes Falls Road to Lithgow.

In contrast to the more heavily populated townships in the Blue Mountains, which include developed urban centres, traffic lights and school zones, the more rural environment of the Hartley Valley allows us to safely design a road with a speed limit of up to 100km/hour.

How can drivers safely access the highway with a higher speed limit?

The upgrade is being designed to provide controlled access to the highway. The busiest intersections will be grade separated (using underpasses and overpasses) allowing vehicles to merge into traffic rather than join the highway at a signalised intersection. Some local roads will no longer have direct access to the highway, but will be connected by service roads to the improved intersections. We are interested in your feedback on how to make these intersections safer for local road users.

Why are there rest areas in the concept design?

The Great Western Highway Upgrade Program aims to increase safety for all road users. This includes making sure that drivers of heavy vehicles have appropriate opportunities to rest so that they can avoid driver fatigue. The proposed rest areas would also cater for light and recreational vehicles, with the addition of facilities like picnic tables, toilets and information boards to showcase the local area.

We have listened to community concerns about the rest areas and the new design has been set lower into the landscape to reduce visual impact, with urban design and landscaping to be used to further blend the rest areas into their surroundings.

How will residents and landowners access local roads and properties?

Where the alignment of the proposed upgrade departs from the existing highway, the existing road would be kept as a service road for the local community and to provide property access. Service roads will connect to upgraded intersections, allowing residents to move around the valley.

How will the project minimise visual impacts in the Valley?

We recognise that the Hartley Valley has unique natural and cultural scenic qualities. As part of the design process we have carried out an extensive assessment of the potential impacts of the upgrade on the character of the landscape and visual amenity.

The proposal uses landscape and urban design to minimise visual impacts and to allow the upgrade to respond to the existing landscape, vegetation and heritage features. We welcome further suggestions to help us integrate the design into its surroundings and minimise impacts on heritage and cultural values.

What impact will the upgrade have on Hartley Historic Village?

We are aware of the significance of the Hartley Historic Village, and know how important it is to the community to protect it and its heritage buildings. The upgrade proposes use of 2.5 hectares of national park land at Hartley Historic Site to keep the upgraded highway away from the village and avoid impacts on heritage buildings. We are working closely with National Parks and Wildlife Services on this revocation process.

How will you protect Aboriginal cultural heritage?

We have been working with the local Aboriginal community to identify and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage in the proposal area. This has included extensive Aboriginal cultural heritage investigations along the entire proposed Great Western Highway Upgrade Program corridor, following Transport's Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI). Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI).

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) has been prepared which assesses Aboriginal cultural values potentially impacted by the project. We are consulting with, and will be led by, registered Aboriginal parties to help develop measures to avoid impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and items where possible or mitigate impacts if we cannot avoid them. This will include protection and salvage measures.

How will you reduce impacts on the natural environment?

Transport is committed to minimising impacts to the natural environment. We have carried out extensive biodiversity studies along the upgrade corridor, and our investigations are continuing to make sure we fully understand the flora and fauna in the area.

The upgrade will use Transport-owned land and as much of the existing road corridor as possible, to minimise the clearing of native vegetation and the impacts on habitat. A Flora and Fauna Management Plan will be prepared and the detailed design for the road will minimise native vegetation and habitat removal, particularly around habitat for the Purple Copper Butterfly. The landscape design will include using both native and exotic species to vegetate disturbed areas in a way that compliments the character of the local environment.

What provisions will be made for fauna/wildlife crossings?

We will build three new fauna underpasses beneath the highway to help local fauna move safely across the road corridor, and provide fauna exclusion fencing that will help lead fauna to the new underpasses.

We will extend the two existing large culverts at Boxes Creek and Butlers Creek to include fauna-friendly design elements to encourage fauna crossing. The existing combined drainage culvert and fauna underpass at Whites Creek will remain, along with the existing three fauna rope bridges.

Will pedestrians and cyclists benefit from the upgrade?

We want to make sure that all road users benefit from the upgrade. There are currently narrow shoulders and a lack of dedicated cycle paths along the highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow. The proposal would improve conditions for on-road cyclists by providing a 2.5 metre sealed shoulder on both sides of the highway and a two metre sealed shoulder on Coxs River Road and several of the service roads. The realignment around Little Hartley will separate pedestrians from highway traffic.

We are also developing an active transport strategy to promote better pedestrian and cycling connections and we invite community feedback on how you think we could make walking and cycling in the valley easier for everyone.

How will future subdivisions access the highway?

We realise that the Hartley Valley is a growing area undergoing a lot of subdivision and development, and we have considered this in the design. The upgrade is being designed to provide controlled access to the highway. This means that any new sub-divisions will need to connect to the highway via existing local roads and the new service roads. These connect to the upgraded intersections which include grade separation and on and off ramps to safely access the highway.

Is the Newnes Plateau route an option?

Following community suggestions, the Newnes Plateau route was investigated in the development of the Mount Victoria to Lithgow concept design. This route cannot be used as it would require land needed by the Department of Defence at Marangaroo.

Why aren't you fixing the pinchpoint at Blackheath first?

The Blackheath to Little Hartley section of the Great Western Highway upgrade design is now progressing with tunnel investigations. These include geotechnical, hydrogeological and biodiversity investigations, air quality monitoring, traffic and noise studies, Aboriginal and cultural heritage studies, and land surveys. Environmental assessment of the Blackheath to Little Hartley section is due to be completed late in 2022.

Environmental assessment and designs for the surface road upgrade between Little Hartley and Lithgow are much further advanced and we can start delivering benefits to these road users while we continue to investigate and build the tunnel bypass of Blackheath. While we progress tunnelling plans, options for improving mobility at Blackheath will also be investigated and consulted on with the community.

Contact us

Sign up for our eNewsletter online at nswroads.work/gwhd and you'll never miss a project update.

 nswroads.work/gwhd
 gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au
 1800 953 777
 Great Western Highway Upgrade Program
 PO Box 334, Parkes NSW 2870



If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call us on **1800 953 777**.

TfNSW 21.293

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Australian Government



BUILDING OUR FUTURE



NSW
GOVERNMENT

Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Display of Review of Environmental Factors and Concept Design



Artist's representation of Great Western Highway, east of Baaners Lane, looking south-east (indicative only, final layout to be determined through detailed design)

Together, the Australian and NSW Governments have committed more than \$2.5 billion towards the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway Upgrade, between Katoomba and Blackheath, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow, respectively.

The Little Hartley to Lithgow Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design are on display for feedback from **22 November to 21 December 2021**. All formal submissions must be received or postmarked by midnight, **21 December**.

View the REF and concept design

- At our virtual consultation room at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult
- Lithgow City Council Administration Centre
- Lithgow Library Learning Centre

Speak to the project team

Online sessions

- **Tuesday 30 November** 6.30pm–8.00pm
- **Thursday 2 December** 6.30pm–8.00pm
- **Thursday 9 December** 6.30pm–8.00pm
- **Saturday 11 December** 12.30pm–2.00pm


Face-to-face sessions


- **Saturday 4 December** 1.00pm–3.15pm
Lithgow Civic Ballroom – Tony Luchetti Showgrounds (book for a 45 minute session)
- **Tuesday 7 December** 5.30pm–7.45pm
Hartley Community Hall (book for a 45 minute session)

Have your say

For more information

 nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult

 gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au

 1800 953 777

Register for a consultation session at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult
Please see our web portal for further details. Contact us by phone or email to book a personal phone consultation.

Appendix F – Advertisements



Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)



Display of Review of Environmental Factors and Concept Design
22 November to 21 December 2021



Speak to the project team

Online sessions

- **Tuesday 30 November** 6.30pm–8.00pm
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Hartley Community Hall

**Have
your
say**

Find out more

nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult
gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au
 1800 953 777

21.294




Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Display of Review of Environmental Factors and Concept Design
Consultation extended to 16 January 2022



**Have
your
say**

Find out more

nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult @ gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au
 1800 953 777

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Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Little Hartley to Lithgow (West Section)

Display of Review of Environmental Factors and Concept Design
Closing soon – 16 January 2022



**Have
your
say**

Find out more

nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult @ gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au
 1800 953 777

21.295



The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

The Hon Andrew Gee MP

Minister for Defence Personnel
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Federal Member for Calare



The Hon Paul Toole MP

Deputy Premier
Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
State Member for Bathurst

The Hon Sam Farroway MLC

Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier and for Water Infrastructure
Member of the Legislative Council

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 23 November 2021

HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE GREAT WESTERN HIGHWAY UPGRADE FROM LITTLE HARTLEY TO LITHGOW

The community is invited to have its say on the environmental assessment and concept design for the West section of the transformative Great Western Highway upgrade between Little Hartley and Lithgow.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Barnaby Joyce said the Australian Government's \$2 billion commitment to the Great Western Highway upgrade would help transform the vital transport link into a smoother, safer passage way for motorists.

"Thousands of motorists rely on the Great Western Highway every day and we are helping fund the upgrades these drivers need and deserve, to ensure they can reach their destination safely and smoothly every time," the Deputy Prime Minister said.

NSW Deputy Premier Paul Toole said the NSW Government was investing \$2.5 billion to transform the Great Western Highway by upgrading it to a four-lane highway between Katoomba and Lithgow to ensure safer, smoother journeys for the main link between the Central West and Sydney.

“This upgrade has been on the books since 2013, when we identified the corridor and reserved it in both the Blue Mountains and Lithgow City Councils’ plans, and now we’re making it a reality, which is massive news for everyone who uses this section of the highway,” Mr Toole said.

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the community to help design the biggest road upgrade the Hartley Valley has ever seen, and, alongside the Central and East sections of the Great Western Highway upgrade, will see more than 100km of safe, modern dual-carriageway all the way to Sydney.

“This will mean traffic can flow smoothly and travel time for motorists will be reduced, so they can get to where they need to go quicker than ever before.

“The upgrade will include new intersections and also make use of the existing highway as a service road to maintain access to local roads and properties for locals. The eastbound and westbound rest areas will also be set back into the landscape to reduce their visual impact.

“We’ve listened to the community and made a number of design changes to ensure we protect the historic village of Hartley which is a significant piece of local history and our state’s heritage.”

Federal Member for Calare Andrew Gee said the release of the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and the concept design was an important milestone for the upgrade.

“Everyone has a horror story of being stuck in traffic coming over the mountains, with vehicles travelling at walking pace, backed up for hours,” Mr Gee said.

“Each day, about 11,000 vehicles travel on the Great Western Highway between Little Hartley and Lithgow. This large volume of freight, tourist and general traffic is only expected to increase as more and more people visit country NSW and make their move from the city to Western NSW.

“The Australian Government knows just how important the Great Western Highway is in connecting regional NSW with Sydney, which is why we have committed more than \$2 billion towards the East and West sections of this game-changing upgrade.

“We’re proposing this upgrade because motorists shouldn’t have to be stuck in traffic along the highway, be delayed at intersections, or go long stretches without safe opportunities to overtake. “It’s really important that the community has input into the project, so I would strongly encourage anyone with an opinion to have their say. Because of the volume of design material, the REF for Katoomba to Blackheath will be displayed separately, in early 2022.”

NSW Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier Sam Faraway said it was vital that the locals who live, move and work around the Great Western Highway help shape this legacy project.

“This is a history-making project that will unlock new opportunities for the Central West and strengthen the connection to Sydney,” Mr Faraway said.

“This work will move this critical project a step closer to becoming a reality.”

The REF and concept design will be on display until Wednesday, 22 December.

The community can review the REF online at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult, or at Lithgow City Council Administration Centre and Lithgow Library Learning Centre.

Community information sessions will be held online on Tuesday, 30 November, and Saturday 11 December. Information sessions focussing on the Coxs River Road and Jenolan Caves Road areas will be held online on Thursday, 2 December, and Thursday, 9 December, respectively. COVID-safe, face-to-face sessions will be held on Saturday 4 December in Lithgow and Tuesday 7 December in Hartley. Residents can also book a phone consultation on 1800 953 777.

Submissions on the project can be made until midnight on Wednesday, 22 December 2021 through the online portal at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult, via email to gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au or by post to Great Western Highway Upgrade Program, PO Box 334, Parkes NSW 2870.

Once submissions have been received, they will be reviewed before a submissions report is released and the REF is determined.

More information is available at: nswroads.work/gwhd

Media Contact:

Deputy Prime Minister – Antony Perry | 0477 971 654

Mr Toole – Alex Bernhardt | 0448 203 742

Mr Gee – Sinead Fogarty | 0417 852 386

Mr Farraway – Lachlan Barnsley | 0447 182 864



Transport for NSW Media Release

13 DECEMBER 2021

MORE TIME FOR FEEDBACK ON LITTLE HARTLEY TO LITHGOW PLANS

Community members will have more time to have a say on the environmental assessment and concept design for the western section of the transformative Great Western Highway upgrade between Little Hartley and Lithgow.

Transport for NSW A/ Director West Kristy Hartwig said extending the timeline for feedback to mid-January would provide more of an opportunity to consider the documents for the western section of the Australian and NSW governments' jointly funded \$2.5 billion commitment to upgrading the East and West sections of the Great Western Highway.

"This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the community to help design the biggest road upgrade from Little Hartley to Lithgow," Ms Hartwig said.

"We realise that people have a lot of competing priorities during the holiday season, so this extension will give everyone more time to review the proposal, have their say and help improve the highway.

"About 11,000 vehicles travel on this part of the Great Western Highway each day.

"This upgrade is going to ensure these motorists can reach their destination safely and smoothly every time.

"It will include new, safer intersections and also make use of sections of the existing highway as a service road to maintain access to local roads and properties."

The Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design for the west section of the highway upgrade will be on display until Sunday 16 January 2022.

Ms Hartwig said feedback already received from the community had included productive suggestions on improvements to the concept design which will be considered.

"Our aim is to develop a good, collaborative relationship with local stakeholders and we're really pleased with the engagement to date," she said.

"It's really important that the community has input into the project, so I would strongly encourage anyone with an opinion to have their say.

Media contact: (02) 9462 6299

“Because of the volume of design material, the REF for Katoomba to Blackheath will be displayed separately, in early 2022.”

The community can review this REF online at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult, or at Lithgow City Council Administration Centre and Lithgow Library Learning Centre.

Submissions on the project can be made until midnight on Sunday 16 January 2021 through the online portal at nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult, via email to gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au or by post to Great Western Highway Upgrade Program, PO Box 334, Parkes NSW 2870.

Once submissions have been received, they will be assessed before a submissions report is released and the REF is determined.

More information is available at: nswroads.work/gwhd

Media contact: (02) 9462 6299

Appendix H – Facebook

Post 1 – 24 November to 2 December 2021

NSW Roads
22 November 2021

Have your say on the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade of the Great Western Highway! Join an online or in-person info session to learn more.

Little Hartley to Lithgow Review of Environmental Factors and Concept Design NOW ON DISPLAY

NSWROADS.WORK/GWH-LH2L
Register for an info session
Feedback closes 22 December

[Learn More](#)

Post 2 – 6 to 11 December 2021

NSW Roads
5 December 2021

Register for an online or in-person consultation session on 7, 9 or 11 December to learn about the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade.

NSWROADS.WORK/GWH-LH2L
Register for an info session
Feedback closes 22 December

[Learn More](#)

Post 3 – 14 – 20 December 2021

NSW Roads
13 December 2021

Little Hartley to Lithgow Upgrade consultation is extended until 16 January. Have your say on the Review of Environmental Factors today!

Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade CONSULTATION EXTENDED Submissions close Sun 16 Jan

NSWROADS.WORK/GWH1W
Little Hartley to Lithgow
Consultation extended till 16 Jan

[Learn More](#)

Post 4 – 10 – 16 January 2022

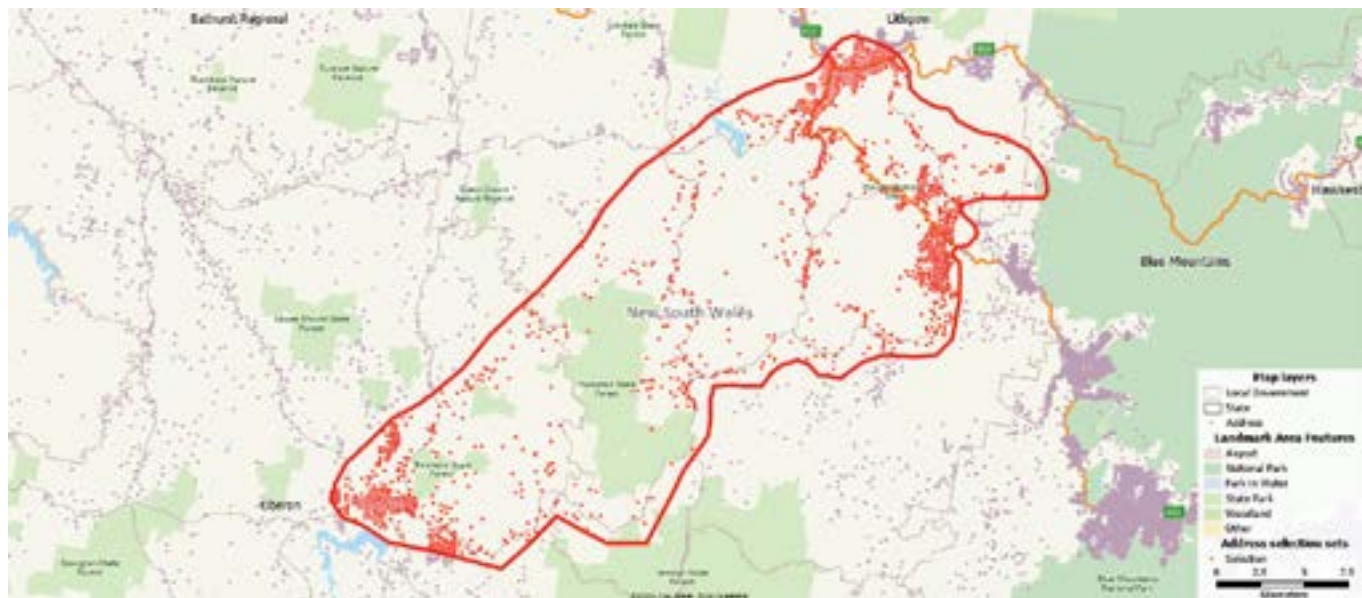
NSW Roads
9 January

Have your say today! Consultation on the Review of Environmental Factors for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade closes on 16 Jan.

NSWROADS.WORK/GWH1W
Have your say by 16 Jan
Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade

[Learn More](#)

Appendix I – Community Update distribution zone



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1800 953 777



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June 2022

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