

## 5. Consultation

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This chapter discusses the consultation undertaken to date for the proposal and further consultation proposed.

### 5.1 Consultation strategy

The communication objectives for the Great Western Highway Upgrade Program (including the Medlow Bath section) as set out in the *Medlow Bath Consultation Summary Report* (TfNSW, 2020b) 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 who TfNSW will continue to engage with throughout the development and delivery of the Great Western Highway Upgrade 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, business and any directly impacted residents/landowners
- provide clarity to the local community on the strategic design for Medlow Bath
- actively accept and respond to feedback and input from the local community on the elements of the strategic design, including within the period of consultation
- ensure that members of the local community have sufficient opportunity to provide feedback, in light of fluid COVID-19 advice and restrictions on community consultation.

The consultation strategy has been developed to engage with a broad cross section of the community. Consultation has been open to all interested stakeholders within the Blue Mountains but has focused on the residents and business owners of Medlow Bath.

Consultation that has been undertaken to date for Medlow Bath is outlined in the sections below. For further information on community consultation undertaken as part of the wider program refer to [nswroads.work/gwhd](https://nswroads.work/gwhd).

### 5.2 Community involvement

The strategic corridor for the proposed upgrade between Katoomba and Lithgow was released to the community for feedback in November 2019.

Public consultation was carried out between 29 June 2020 and 31 August 2020 to gather feedback and insights from stakeholders on the proposed draft Medlow Bath strategic design.

Face-to-face consultation with residents and the community was initially scheduled to take place between Monday 29 June 2020 and Saturday 15 August 2020. Due to the COVID-19 health guidelines set by NSW Health, interested parties were asked to register for these sessions to ensure a limit of 20 attendees per session. Prior to the face-to-face consultation NSW Health updated the guidelines which resulted in all consultation being moved online. TfNSW welcomed feedback through an interactive online portal, email, mail, phone and online consultation sessions.

Stakeholders and the community were encouraged to provide feedback on the following proposal elements:

- improving intersections and providing turning lanes
- connectivity across the highway
- how to ensure resilience and emergency access is maintained
- maintaining the speed limit through Medlow Bath
- how to minimise impacts on the village
- landscaping opportunities

Stakeholder and community feedback on the strategic design was used to help refine and inform the design to concept design stage, which has been used for the environmental assessment stage.

Consultation tools and communications materials used during consultation period included the following:

- consultation postcard – a double sided postcard containing consultation session details was delivered to all Medlow Bath residences
- community update and FAQ – a six-page community update including a map of the Medlow Bath strategic design was delivered to Medlow Bath residents and made available on the project website
- bespoke meeting letter – two consultation sessions were planned to address issues for specific areas and streets, including residents in the vicinity of the Great Western Highway/Bellevue Crescent/Delmonte Avenue, and one for residents of Coachhouse Lane
- doorknocking – the project team doorknocked residents of Bellevue Crescent, Delmonte Avenue, and the Great Western Highway on 29 June 2020.

Community consultation sessions and briefings are detailed in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1: Community consultation sessions

Engagement	Details and dates
General community sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 22 July 2020: 7–8pm</li> <li>• Thursday 23 July 2020: 1–2pm</li> <li>• Tuesday 28 July 2020: 12–1pm</li> <li>• Wednesday 29 July 2020: 7–8pm</li> <li>• Thursday 30 July 2020: 1–2pm</li> </ul>
Bespoke community sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 23 July 2020: 7–8pm Bellevue Crescent and Delmonte Avenue residents</li> <li>• Thursday 30 July 2020: 7–8pm Coachhouse Lane residents</li> <li>• Monday 17 August 2020: 6–7pm Coachhouse Lane residents</li> </ul>
Stakeholder group meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29 June 2020, Medlow Bath Highway Action Group</li> <li>• 22 July 2020, Medlow Bath Residents' Association</li> <li>• 5 August 2020, Medlow Bath Rural Fire Service</li> </ul>
Local businesses meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29 and 30 June 2020 with the Hydro Majestic Hotel, United Petrol Station and Mazda Medlow Bath</li> </ul>

In addition, meetings were held on 29 June 2020 with numerous Medlow Bath residents and phone conversations with seven individual residents.

The Medlow Bath consultation period was advertised in local newspapers including the Blue Mountains Gazette (1 July, 12 August, and 19 August 2020) and the Lithgow Mercury (20 June 2020). Two media releases were distributed via the project website and through local media. Information about the consultation period was also distributed via Facebook.

A total of 850 pieces of feedback was received from members of the community, businesses and stakeholders, including the following:

- 70 online feedback forms
- 30 email submissions
- 223 pinned comments on the online map
- 94 reactions, 128 comments and 48 shares were received on two social media posts
- over 400 questions asked and answered at the online consultation sessions.

Seven online community information sessions were held and were attended by 70 people. The online sessions comprised a half hour presentation by the Project Development Manager explaining the proposed design, followed by a half hour question and answer session. Phone consultations were offered to those who were unable to attend the online sessions.

Key themes raised by the community during the consultation period included questions about the following:

- urban design
- property
- traffic
- business case
- heavy vehicles
- road safety
- walking and cycling
- local businesses
- environment
- public transport
- safety upgrades
- resilience
- consultation
- design.

A summary of issues raised is provided in *Medlow Bath Consultation Summary Report* (TfNSW, 2020b) provided in Appendix N.

### **5.3 Aboriginal community involvement**

As part of the overall Great Western Highway Upgrade investigations, the *Great Western Highway Duplication - Katoomba to Lithgow Archaeological Survey Report* was completed (Jacobs, 2020) to assess Aboriginal cultural heritage. This report included a Stage 2 Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI). This PACHCI included the consultation actions outlined in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2: Summary of actions undertaken following the PACHCI

Action	Description	Details/outcome
Action 1	Identify key Aboriginal stakeholders	<p>A search of the National Native Title Register to identify and registered native title claimants or native title holders for the options assessment area was completed on 14 February 2020.</p> <p>For the Medlow Bath proposal area, this search confirmed that there were no native title claimants or native title holders for Medlow Bath. There was a Land Use Agreement (NI2014/001 - Gundungurra Area Agreement) with the boundary located on the eastern side of the Great Western Highway, meaning the road corridor is within its agreement area.</p> <p>The search also identified Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) relevant to Medlow Bath is Deerubbin LALC.</p>
Action 2	Engage Aboriginal stakeholders to undertake an archaeological survey	Nominated representatives for the relevant LALCs, Native Title and Traditional Owner groups were engaged to participate in the archaeological survey where the proposed route corridor traversed their boundaries.
Actions 3 & 4	Undertake the archaeological survey	<p>Consultation was conducted with nominated representatives for the LALCs and Traditional Owner groups during the field surveys. Field surveys were undertaken through 2019 and 2020.</p> <p>Consultation conducted during survey provided an opportunity for the Aboriginal stakeholder representatives to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>comment on the potential for Aboriginal cultural material to be present within the proposed route corridor</li> <li>comment on the cultural significance of any Aboriginal cultural heritage sites identified during the survey</li> <li>comment on proposed management recommendations, including recommendations for further assessment.</li> </ul>
Action 5	Aboriginal stakeholder(s) prepare cultural heritage survey report	In accordance with PACHCI, the Deerubbin LALC was requested to provide a cultural heritage survey report to TfNSW advising on Aboriginal cultural heritage issues that may arise as a result of the proposal.

In relation to the table above, specific considerations for the Medlow Bath section of the project are as follows:

- Action 1: No native title claims were identified to be present within the Medlow Bath project corridor and therefore no further actions are required.
- Actions 2, 3 and 4: As detailed within the PACHI, no archaeological survey was completed of the Medlow Bath area as no AHIMS sites were identified within or near the project corridor.
- Action 5: The Deerubbin LALC provided a cultural heritage survey report to TfNSW and this was included in the PACHCI Stage 2 report prepared by Artefact (2015a). The report found that most of the study area was highly disturbed, and no Aboriginal cultural materials were identified. No objection was raised to the proposed development.

Further consultation and an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment report is recommended for surrounding projects within the wider Great Western Highway Program, however as no impacts to known Aboriginal heritage are proposed as part of the Medlow Bath proposal, further specific consultation with the Registered Aboriginal Parties (ie Deerubbin LALC), is not considered necessary unless impacts beyond those assessed in this REF are identified. Any further impacts beyond the boundary of the assessed areas would be subject to further assessment and consultation with Deerubbin LALC consistent with the requirements of the TfNSW PACHCI.

## 5.4 ISEPP consultation

Blue Mountains City Council has been consulted on the proposal as per the requirements of clauses 13 and 14 of ISEPP. Appendix B contains an ISEPP consultation checklist that documents how ISEPP consultation requirements have been considered. Issues raised during consultation are outlined in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3: Issues raised through ISEPP consultation with Blue Mountains City Council

Issue raised	Response / where addressed in REF
That the Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI) is limited but the stage of detailed design for relevant items that interact with heritage.	Section 6.8 and Appendix J
Relocation of the bus shelter with original paintings is strongly supported. The relocation position, and the details of where and how it will be removed, stored and relocated, should be provided to Council and be included in the documentation.	Section 6.8 and Appendix J
Detailed design phase should consider the following in order to mitigate potential visual impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minimise bulk, with new built forms clearly separate from existing heritage fabric</li> <li>• respond to existing and significant architectural detail, such as the architectural detailing of the station building, or the footbridge.</li> </ul>	Section 6.8, Section 6.9 and Appendix J
Construction of the highway and installation of pedestrian bridge would physically impact Avenue of trees [formerly Avenue of Radiata Pines"] through the reduction of its heritage curtilage. Critical root zones of the trees would also be impacted, while some trees would require removal. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment would determine the full impact of the proposal and could recommend appropriate management and mitigation measures to potentially reduce this impact.	Section 6.8 and Appendix J
The advertising sign near Bellevue Crescent should be salvaged and relocated. The relocation position, and the details of where and how it will be removed, stored and relocated, should be provided to Council and be included in the documentation.	Section 6.8 and Appendix J
The trees within the Hydro site should also be subject to the above requirements on behalf of the property owner.	Section 6.8 and Appendix J
More details on the pedestrian bridge are required to understand and review impacts.	Section 6.8 and Appendix J
Mitigation measures and protections for the stone wall of the Hydro must be in place to protect the wall from vibration impacts. This should be spelled out in the documentation and provided to Council.	Section 6.8 and Appendix J
Details of the new retaining walls within the proposal should be subject to detailed design in consultation with the Council and local community to ensure to adverse visual impacts.	Section 6.8, Section 6.9 and Appendix J

## 5.5 Government agency and stakeholder involvement

Various government agencies and stakeholders have been consulted about the proposal, including Blue Mountains City Council, Sydney Trains, NSW TrainLink, WaterNSW, Sydney Water and utility providers (Jemena Gas, Optus/Telstra/NBN, and Endeavour Energy).

Issues that have been raised through consultation with these agencies and stakeholders are outlined in Table 5-4.

Table 5-4: Issues raised through stakeholder consultation

Agency	Issue raised	Response / where addressed in REF
Blue Mountains City Council	Water quality control design, traffic, active transport, heritage, landscaping & parks/recreation	Section 6.2 Section 6.3
Sydney Trains	Railway property interfaces, drainage, electrical, heritage and transport accessibility	Section 6.8 Section 6.9
NSW TrainLink	Railway station operation, transport accessibility and customer feedback	Section 6.10
WaterNSW	Water quality control design, erosion/sediment control and downstream requirements to Special Catchment Area	Section 6.2 Section 6.3
Sydney Water	Water main & sewer main adjustments and planning	Section 3.4 Section 6.2 Section 6.3
Jemena Gas	Gas main adjustments and planning	Section 3.4
Optus/Telstra/NBN	Communication mains adjustment and planning	Section 3.4
Endeavour Energy	Electrical supply to Medlow Bath, local main adjustments and network planning.	Section 3.4

## 5.6 Ongoing or future consultation

A community update will be distributed to local residents, government agencies and councils, and other relevant stakeholders before the REF goes on public display. Advertisements would also be placed in local newspapers to announce the REF display, online consultation sessions, and face-to-face consultation sessions where permissible (considering COVID-19 restrictions).

### **Public display of the REF**

The REF will be on public display from 26 July 2021 and 25 August 2021 via an online portal on the proposal webpage.

During the public display period of the REF the community will be able to provide feedback on the proposal via email, phone, mail, an online portal or in person at the planned consultation sessions.

Following the REF public display period, a consultation summary report will be prepared addressing matters raised by the community and to identify any further assessment and/or design changes made to the proposal. The consultation summary report would be made publicly available on the proposal website. The community would be kept informed of any further changes to the proposal and any future consultation.

### ***Community information sessions***

This REF is on display for comment between 26 July 2021 and 25 August 2021. You can access the documents in the following ways:

#### ***Internet***

The documents are available as pdf files on the TfNSW website at **nswroads.work/gwhdconsult**

A virtual engagement room, virtual information and the opportunity to register for updates is available at the online portal **nswroads.work/gwhdconsult**

#### ***Printed copies***

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, hard copies will not be available.

You can view the Medlow Bath Upgrade REF and Concept Design at our virtual consultation room at **nswroads.work/gwhdconsult**

#### ***Public display***

The project team will be delivering the following information sessions (all online via Microsoft Teams live-stream):

- Wednesday 28 July 2021, 1:00pm – 2:30pm
- Saturday 31 July 2021, 12:30pm – 2:00pm
- Tuesday 3 August 2021, 6:30pm – 8:00pm
- Thursday 5 August 2021, 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Register for our live-stream at **nswroads.work/gwhdconsult**

Currently face-to-face sessions will not be held due to COVID-19 restrictions.

#### ***Proposal webpage***

The proposal webpage contains key proposal information including news updates, links to the online portal, contact information and project documentation. The proposal webpage is **nswroads.work/gwhdconsult**.

TfNSW will continue to consult with the community and relevant stakeholders in the lead up to and during construction of the proposal. Future community consultation would include community updates, information provided on the TfNSW website, and direct consultation in the form of meetings, phone calls and correspondence.

#### ***Continual consultation***

Ongoing consultation with the community, relevant agencies and other stakeholders will be undertaken following the public display of the REF and in preparation of the physical works on site to begin in mid-2022. TfNSW will continue to work closely with the community during

- consultation with community stakeholders to assist in managing impacts during construction
- follow-up meetings to discuss access arrangements with directly affected landholders
- ongoing updates throughout the planning phase and construction period to the immediately affected community as well as travelling public
- ongoing meetings with Blue Mountains City Council, government agencies, utility providers, adjacent landowners and community stakeholders as required
- ongoing updates as required on the proposal website.

### **Contact details**

The project team can be contacted with feedback or enquiries by the following contact details:

Phone: 1800 953 777

Email: [gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au)

Post: Great Western Highway Upgrade Program - PO Box 2332, Orange NSW 2800.