



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Transport for NSW

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Medlow Bath Upgrade Review of Environmental Factors

Cultural heritage fact sheet

July 2021



Transport is committed to preserving heritage values in Medlow Bath

Together the Australian and NSW Governments are investing more than \$4.5 billion towards upgrading the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow. 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 of Blue Mountains communities and minimising impacts to heritage wherever possible.

No part of the Blue Mountains listed on the *World Heritage List* will be impacted by the Great Western Highway Upgrade Program.

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 Medlow Bath Upgrade.

Transport is presenting a Concept Design and a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the Medlow Bath Upgrade for community consultation from 26 July to 24 August 2021.

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



**Protecting
cultural heritage**

Protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage

Transport has conducted extensive Aboriginal cultural heritage investigations along the entire proposed Great Western Highway Upgrade corridor.

The proposed Medlow Bath Upgrade corridor spans three distinct Aboriginal language groups: the Darug, the Gundungurra, and the Wiradjuri peoples.

We did not identify any recorded Aboriginal sites within the proposed Medlow Bath Upgrade corridor.

An archeological survey* has been completed to assess Aboriginal cultural heritage. This included a Stage 2 Report, which is part of the Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI).

Through the PACHCI, we invited local Aboriginal organisations and advertised for local knowledge owners to take part in an Aboriginal Focus Group and provide nominations for registered Aboriginal parties to act as site officers in field surveys.

Site officers attend all excavations and investigations and can:

- Comment on the potential for Aboriginal cultural material to be present within the proposed route corridor
- Comment on the cultural significance of any Aboriginal cultural heritage sites identified during the survey
- Comment on proposed management recommendations, including recommendations for further assessment.

In accordance with PACHCI, we also asked the Bathurst and Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) to provide advice on Aboriginal cultural heritage issues that may arise as a result of the proposed project.

When we are building

Based on the Stage 2 Report, we do not expect any direct or indirect impacts to items of Aboriginal cultural heritage as a result of the proposed Medlow Bath Upgrade, as no Aboriginal sites were identified within the proposed upgrade corridor.

As the area has undergone extensive landscape modification and high level of disturbance, it is unlikely that the project will impact any previously unidentified culturally sensitive items.

Reducing the impact of our work

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.**

* Archaeological Survey Report: Great Western Highway Duplication – Katoomba to Lithgow (Jacobs, 2020).

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



Vibration will be carefully managed to avoid impacts to heritage structures during construction

Protecting non-Aboriginal heritage

There are a number of non-Aboriginal heritage items listed on the *State Heritage Register* and the *Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2015* along the proposed upgrade corridor, including:

Medlow Bath Railway Station Group: Medlow Bath Station is a representative example of a Federation free style classical railway station. The Medlow Bath Station Group is of state significance as part of the early construction of railway line duplication to the upper Blue Mountains at the beginning of the 1900s.

Hydro Majestic: The Hydro Majestic was developed by Mark Foy and opened on 4 July 1904. The Hydro Majestic is a unique overlay of hotel building styles including the Federation free style architecture of the Casino and Reception buildings and the art deco main wings. It has state significance as a pioneering spa resort with more than a century of use.

Former Post and Telegraph Store: The former Post and Telegraph Office and Store are associated with the Hydro Majestic and are considered an unusual example of a Federation gothic shopfront.

St Luke's Anglican Church: St Luke's Church of England is a representative example of a Federation carpenter gothic church built for a small rural village.

Other heritage items that have been identified in the Medlow Bath township include 'Urunga' Cottage, Melbourne House, Cosy Cot and Sheleagh Cottage, the avenue of Radiata Pines, and the Annis and George Bills horse troughs.

When we are building

We will use pre-condition surveys and vibration monitoring to ensure identified heritage buildings are not impacted by vibration from construction.

We propose to provide hoarding protection and closely monitor the stone fence in front of the Hydro Majestic for any destabilisation as a result of vibration, and will conduct repairs if any damage is identified.

We recognise that the pedestrian bridge will introduce a new aspect to the views to and from several of the heritage items, in particular the Medlow Bath Railway Station Group. However, the bridge will bring many benefits to the town by making it safer to walk and cycle around Medlow Bath, and we are designing the bridge to be as unobtrusive as possible.

We will need to move the concrete bus shelter for the upgrade, and we are seeking feedback from the community and Blue Mountains City Council to determine a suitable location.

Reducing the impact of our work

We will work closely with heritage specialists and stakeholders to minimise the visual impact of the proposal, particularly the pedestrian bridge.

We will also consult with the community to develop a Cultural Interpretation Strategy to identify opportunities to tell local stories and celebrate local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture.

What is an REF?

Transport has legal obligations to assess and mitigate impacts that may result from a proposed activity. An REF details these legal obligations, and the environmental impacts and mitigation measures of a project. Feedback on this REF will inform the approval of the proposed Medlow Bath Upgrade.

What is a Concept Design?

The Concept Design is a project design that 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 concept design may change based on feedback provided by stakeholders.

View the REF and Concept Design

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

Have your say

We will hold online consultation sessions where you can ask our team any questions you have and tell us what you think.

We recommend that you view the REF and Concept Design before you speak with the team or make a submission.

Speak to the project team

Wednesday 28 July **Saturday 31 July**
1.00–2.30pm 12.30–2.00pm

Tuesday 3 August **Thursday 5 August**
6.30–8.00pm 6.30–8.00pm

Register for our Microsoft Teams live-stream consultation sessions at nswroads.work/gwhdconsult

Contact us on **1800 953 777** or gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au to book a personal phone consultation if you prefer.

Face-to-face consultation

As COVID-19 restrictions are once again in place, we regret we are unlikely to be able to offer face-to-face consultation at this time.

Consultation will be held online to ensure your safety and comply with COVID-19 restrictions.

If restrictions ease before consultation ends we will organise face-to-face consultation, in line with existing guidelines at that time.

How to make a formal submission

We welcome all feedback on the Medlow Bath Upgrade REF and Concept Design.

To have your input formally considered, and receive a response in the consultation report, use our online submission form at nswroads.work/gwhdconsult or mail a printed submission to:

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program
Medlow Bath Upgrade REF & Concept
Design PO Box 2332, Orange NSW 2800

Consultation and exhibition is open from 26 July - 24 August. All formal submissions must be received by midnight, 24 August.

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 2332, Orange NSW 2800



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