

6.10 Socio-economic

This section provides a summary of the assessment of potential socio-economic impacts during construction and operation of the proposal and identifies mitigation measures to address these impacts. A detailed assessment of socio-economic impacts is presented in the Technical working paper – Land use, property and socio-economic assessment (Appendix M).

6.10.1 Methodology

The socio-economic assessment involved the following:

- Scoping the likely range of potential socio-economic issues and identifying communities potentially affected by the proposal's construction and operation
- Describing the socio-economic characteristics, conditions and values in the study area to provide a baseline from which potential impacts and benefits of the proposal can be assessed
- Identifying, assessing and evaluating the potential impacts and benefits to socio-economic values from the proposals construction and operation. Impacts were assessed using the evaluation matrix and criteria provided in Section 2.2 of Appendix M
- Identifying measures to avoid, manage or mitigate negative impacts and support potential benefits where practicable.

This assessment principally draws on information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing 2016, supplemented with information and data from Government agencies, Lithgow City Council and Blue Mountains City Council resources, and consultation with local businesses, community members and stakeholders.

6.10.2 Existing environment

Regional existing environment

Socio-economic profile

The socio-economic profile of the local community near the proposal based on 2016 Census data and other data from the ABS is outlined in Table 6-95.

Table 6-95 Regional socio-economic profile

Socio-economic profile	Description
Population, age and mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Around 1,975 people are living in the study area (refer to Section 3.1 of Appendix M) of which half live in the suburb of South Bowenfels• Older population (more people 65+ years old) with fewer people of working age when compared with the average for NSW• Low level of mobility with high proportions of people living in the study area for five years prior to the census.
Cultural diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low levels of cultural diversity compared to NSW with low levels of people born overseas or who speak a language other than English.
Households and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total of 761 households in the study area of which half are in South Bowenfels

Socio-economic profile	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High number of lone person and couple only households compared to the NSW average.
Housing costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing is generally more affordable compared to NSW.
Socio-economic disadvantage and need for assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities exhibited relatively high levels of advantage and low levels of disadvantage when compared with NSW Generally, fewer people have need for assistance when compared with NSW with the exception of South Bowenfels which is likely associated with two retirement communities.
Income and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Median incomes were similar or slightly greater when compared to the rest of NSW Main industries of employment include health care and social assistance, public administration and safety, mining, retail, and construction.
Travel behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities are relatively dependent on private vehicles as their mode of transport to work.

Regional social infrastructure

Social infrastructure refers to community facilities, services and networks that help individuals, families, groups and communities meet their social needs, maximise their potential for development and enhance community well-being.

A range of social infrastructure serving communities in the study area are located within the main regional centres and towns of Lithgow, Mt Victoria, Blackheath and Katoomba. Communities in the study area also access services and facilities in larger centres such as Bathurst and Penrith, both located about an hour drive from the study area.

The urban centre of Lithgow in particular is the main focus of community services and facilities servicing communities in the study area including education, health care, emergency services, sport and recreation, and cultural facilities. Locally, social infrastructure within the study area suburbs are generally limited and include recreational and cultural facilities associated with tourist lookouts and historical sites, community halls, places of worship and emergency services.

Regional business and industry

There were 1,310 businesses in the Lithgow City LGA in 2019 (ABS, 2021 and ABS, 2021a), of which about 18.8 per cent were construction related businesses, and 18.5 per cent were agriculture, forestry or fishing businesses. At the same time, the Blue Mountains LGA had 5,617 businesses, of which construction accounted for 19.4 per cent and professional, scientific and technical services represented 16.4 per cent. Other important industries for businesses in the Lithgow City and Blue Mountains City LGAs included:

- Rental, hiring and real estate services
- Health care and social assistance
- Financial and insurance services
- Retail trade.

Tourism is an important industry within the study area and surrounding Blue Mountains, Central West and Orana region, leveraging the region's natural environment, recreation, cultural, historical and rural values. The region hosts a wide range of tourism related businesses including accommodation, restaurants, cafes, museums and galleries, specialty stores, including several that are located within the study area. Over the

12 months to June 2019, there were about 4.52 million overnight and daytrip visitors to the Blue Mountains Tourism Region (which includes the proposal area).

Regional access and connectivity

The Great Western Highway connects Sydney to Bathurst in Central West NSW, via the Blue Mountains and Lithgow. The highway is an important east-west connection for road freight, tourists and communities and towns along its length. Other important road links include Jenolan Caves Road, Darling Causeway and Hartley Valley Road.

Communities in the study area and surrounding region are also serviced by the Blue Mountains Line (BMT), which provides regular intercity train services between central Sydney and Lithgow and regional train services to Bathurst, Dubbo, Parkes and Broken Hill. Several bus routes operate between South Bowenfels and Lithgow.

Community values

The local character, amenity and identity of the study area is influenced by the area’s natural features, nearby World Heritage Area, rural landscapes and lifestyles, and cultural and historic heritage of townships located along the Great Western Highway. These features offer a range of scenic amenity, environmental and recreational values that are important for tourists and visitors, and provide economic and employment benefits for residents and business owners. The region’s scenic amenity and landscape values contribute to the study area’s sense of place. The protection of important outlooks and view sheds and the study area’s rural setting are important to local communities.

A high level of amenity is associated with the study area’s natural setting, the valleys and hills of the area, and the rural villages and townships. Many residents have settled to the region in search of a rural lifestyle. Communities appreciate the quietness of the area, and access to open space, natural bushland and wildlife. The area has remained relatively untouched, and residents value the uniqueness and isolation of the area, with its fresh air, extensive orchards and climatic conditions.

Little Hartley to River Lett

The existing socio-economic environment, including local businesses, social infrastructure, local community access and connectivity, and community values, for the Little Hartley to River Lett proposal is summarised in Table 6-96.

Table 6-96 Existing socio-economic environment – Little Hartley to River Lett

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Local business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor accommodation.
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartley Cemetery • Hartley Hall • Hartley District Progress Association tennis courts • Hartley Fire Brigade shed.
Local access and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Western Highway • Local roads including Mid Hartley Road and Carroll Drive • No bus or rail services.
Community values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local character and amenity which is influenced by rural character and lifestyle with large rural property holdings

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Hartley village which supports businesses and is a focus for the community • Quietness of the area, access to open space, natural bushland and wildlife • Heritage places of local and state significance.

Coxs River Road

The existing socio-economic environment, including local businesses, social infrastructure, local community access and connectivity, and community values, for the Little Hartley to River Lett proposal is summarised in Table 6-97.

Table 6-97 Existing socio-economic environment – Coxs River Road

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Local business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor accommodation • Cafes and restaurants • Retail • Service-related businesses (e.g. real estate businesses).
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartley Cemetery
Local access and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Western Highway • Local roads including Coxs River Road, Ambermere Drive, Baaners Lane, Browns Gap Road • No rail service.
Community values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural character and lifestyle • Heritage places of local and state significance.

River Lett to Forty Bends

The existing socio-economic environment, including local businesses, social infrastructure, local community access and connectivity, and community values, for the Little Hartley to River Lett proposal is summarised in Table 6-98.

Table 6-98 Existing socio-economic environment –River Lett to Forty Bends

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Local business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor accommodation in historic properties • Retail uses • Hartley Historic Village Visitor Centre.
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St John the Evangelist Anglican Church • Hartley Historic Village Visitor Centre.

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Local access and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Western Highway • Local roads including Old Great Western Highway, Kelly Street, Walker Street, Blackmans Creek Road and several unnamed private roads • No rail service or bus services. Various school bus routes use Great Western Highway and local roads.
Community values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large areas of natural bushland and scenic landscapes that are interspersed with rural land uses including larger rural property holdings and areas of rural residential uses at Hartley • Hartley Historic Village is highly valued by local and regional communities as one of the first rural settlements west of Blue Mountains. Key heritage buildings include the courthouse, Royal Hotel, St Bernard's Catholic Church and Presbytery, St John the Evangelist Anglican Church, the former Shamrock and Farmers inns, the Finn residence of Bungarribee, Carney's cottage and garage and Ivy cottage • Tourism to Hartley Historic Village and surrounding heritage places of local and state importance such as Fernhill, Sunnyside Cottage and Hassans Walls Stockade and Barracks.

Forty Bends to Lithgow

The existing socio-economic environment, including local businesses, social infrastructure, local community access and connectivity, and community values, for the Little Hartley to River Lett proposal is summarised in Table 6-99.

Table 6-99 Existing socio-economic environment – Forty Bends to Lithgow

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Local business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail uses • Visitor accommodation • Services related businesses that service residents and workers of surrounding suburbs and motorists along Great Western Highway.
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hassan's Walls Lookout • Bownfels Catholic Cemetery • Blunder Street Reserve • Bowenfels Presbyterian Church and Cemetery • Colin McGarry Memorial Play Centre • South Bowenfels Rural Fire Brigade Sheds • Playground • Kirkley Gardens Village • Treeview Estates Retirement Village • Lithgow Bible Church • Unnamed landscaped area • Three Tree Lodge Aged Care

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lithgow Community Private • Lithgow Hospital and Emergency Department.
Local access and connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Western Highway • Local roads including Forty Bends Road, Daintree Close, McKanes Falls Road, Mudgee Street / Old Bathurst Road, Mudgee Street / Quarry Place, Magpie Hollow Road • No rail service. Several bus services including Route 100 loop service connecting Lithgow to Littleton and Route 200 loop service connecting Lithgow to South Bowenfels.
Community values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of natural bushland and scenic landscapes at Hassans Walls north of the Great Western Highway • Rural landscapes at South Bowenfels, including larger farming properties and rural residential uses at McKanes Falls Road • Urban development and residential subdivisions northern of the proposal • Regional and local level community uses at South Bowenfels, including major health care and medical facilities concentrated at the Lithgow Hospital campus, retirement living and aged care facilities, and local facilities at South Brisbane dating from the mid-1800s • Heritage buildings and sites of local significance.

6.10.3 Potential impacts

Little Hartley to River Lett

Construction impacts

Construction impacts within Little Hartley to River Lett section are summarised in Table 6-100.

Table 6-100 Construction socio-economic impacts – Little Hartley to River Lett

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Business and industry	<p>The only business within the Little Hartley to River Lett section is the Hartley Valley Holiday Farm. During construction, potential impacts on the Hartley Valley Holiday Farm would mainly be associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise and dust from construction activities adversely affecting the amenity of the farm and impacting on its use and enjoyment for visitors as a place to relax and participate in outdoor pursuits such as horse riding, tennis, swimming, bike riding, dirt-bike riding and bush walking • An increase in construction traffic, particularly heavy vehicles, on the Great Western Highway and accessing work areas for this stage of the proposal potentially impacting perceptions of road safety for visitors to the farm • Changes to the landscape and visual amenity due to the presence of construction infrastructure and activities.

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	Impacts from construction activities for this stage of the proposal may discourage some people from using the holiday farm during the construction phase.
Social infrastructure	<p>During construction, potential impacts on social infrastructure in this stage of the proposal would result from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise and dust from construction activities for the new highway, resulting in temporary amenity disruptions for people visiting memorials within the Hartley Cemetery • Changes in local access and potential traffic disruptions for visitors to Hartley Cemetery and users of community facilities at Mid Hartley Road, due to changes in road conditions near to construction works and increased construction traffic. <p>Adverse impacts on amenity at Hartley Cemetery may disrupt peoples' reflection and remembrance of loved ones. This may detract from some people's use of the cemetery for this purpose, although it is expected that any impact is likely to be minor given the relatively low numbers of people that are likely to be visiting the cemetery on a regular basis.</p> <p>Changes to road conditions along the Great Western Highway and local roads in the study area have potential to affect access for the Hartley Rural Fire Brigade when attending incidents, particularly to the east and west.</p>
Access and connectivity	<p>This stage of the proposal would mainly be constructed away from the existing highway although changes to local traffic conditions would occur where the new road crosses the existing highway at either end of this stage or at tie-ins to the highway and local roads. These have potential to result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary traffic delays for road users due to such things as localised speed reductions and temporary lane closures, impacting on local residents and businesses, travellers on the Great Western Highway, and freight vehicle operators • Road safety risks due to temporary changes in road conditions and potential driver distractions from the presence of construction activities.
Community values	<p>Potential impacts to the community during construction may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary changes in local amenity due to increase noise, dust and light spill relating to construction activities for residents, businesses and facilities in proximity to the worksites • Temporary changes in local road access and connectivity • Temporary impact of increased employment relating to construction.

Operation impacts

Operation impacts within Little Hartley to River Lett section are summarised in Table 6-101.

Table 6-101 Operational socio-economic impacts – Little Hartley to River Lett

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Business and industry	Property acquisition for the proposal would not directly impact on businesses. Potential impacts on the Hartley Valley Holiday Farm would mainly be associated with changes to visual and landscape amenity due to the presence of the new road infrastructure and changes in road traffic noise from the new highway.
Social infrastructure	Property acquisition for the proposal would not directly impact on social infrastructure.

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	The new highway would improve access for local and regional communities to community facilities within the Little Hartley to River Lett stage of the proposal by reducing travel times and improved trip reliability.
Access and connectivity	The proposal would support safer and more reliable access to properties and destinations within the Little Hartley to River Lett stage of the proposal, through improved road conditions and the separation of local traffic and through traffic, including freight vehicles for much of this stage of the proposal.
Community values	The proposal will improve the regional accessibility, connectivity and safety of the highway leading to a positive community outcome. Improved traffic conditions will benefit society through improving accessibility to education, work and leisure facilities. Some local residents will be required to travel further distances to access their properties due to the direction separated lanes (refer to Section 6.2 Traffic and Transport) however this disbenefit will be offset by the increase in safety resulting from the restricted turns against ongoing highway traffic. Additionally, the reduction of regional and freight traffic passing through the main area of town will result in improved amenity through a reduction in noise, improved air quality and safety conditions for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Coxs River Road

Construction impacts

Construction impacts within Coxs River Road section are summarised in Table 6-102.

Table 6-102 Construction socio-economic impacts – Coxs River Road

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Business and industry	<p>During construction, impacts to local businesses within the Little Hartley village and wider Little Hartley to River Lett stage of the proposal would mainly result from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic delays, disruptions and local access changes for road users where construction activities are located within or next to the road corridors for the Great Western Highway, Coxs River Road and other local roads • Adverse impacts on local amenity and the business environment due to noise, dust and construction traffic. <p>Access would be maintained during construction to businesses near the proposal. Retail and hospitality businesses at Little Hartley and Hartley may experience an increase in business in response to the day-to-day needs of construction workers.</p>
Social infrastructure	Social infrastructure within or near to the footprint of the Coxs River Road includes the Hartley Cemetery. Amenity impacts and changes to local access are expected as discussed in Sections 6.9 Landscape character and visual impacts and 6.2 Traffic and transport.
Access and connectivity	<p>Construction works would be within the road corridors for the Great Western Highway, Coxs River Road, and Baaners Lane. Potential impacts of these works would result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary traffic delays and disruptions for road users due to such things as localised speed reductions and temporary lane closures, impacting on local

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	<p>residents and businesses, travellers on the Great Western Highway, Coxs River Road and other local roads, and freight vehicle operators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential road safety risks and changes to community perceptions of road safety due to temporary changes in road conditions and potential driver distractions from the presence of construction activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to private properties would be maintained during construction, although temporary access changes may be required for some properties near to construction works
Community values	<p>Potential impacts to the community during construction may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary changes in local amenity due to increase noise, dust and light spill relating to construction activities for residents, businesses and facilities in proximity to the worksites • Temporary changes in local road access and connectivity • Temporary impact of increased employment relating to construction.

Operation impacts

Operation impacts within Coxs River Road section are summarised in Table 6-103.

Table 6-103 Operational socio-economic impacts – Coxs River Road

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Business and industry	<p>Partial property acquisition and temporary lease of land for the Coxs River Road would be required of land accommodating five businesses at Little Hartley and Hartley. These include The Lolly Bug, Hartley Realty & Lifestyle Properties, Adams Shed, Alchemy Woodfired Pizza, Venice Caravan Park, Hartley Vet.</p> <p>Potential impacts from the temporary lease or acquisition of land accommodating local businesses would generally result from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of land used for some business activities such as customer and staff parking, display or storage of goods, business signage, requiring changes to the layout of outdoor areas • Realignment of the highway resulting in the reduction of passing traffic and possible access changes for business customers, staff and deliveries. <p>For most businesses, property acquisition or temporary lease of land for the proposal is not expected to impact ongoing business operations for individual businesses and impacts are generally not expected to be significant. However, there are a small number of businesses that may experience impacts that require changes to business operations such as Adams Shed and Hartley Valley Vets.</p>
Social infrastructure	<p>Property acquisition for the proposal would not directly impact on social infrastructure.</p> <p>Potential impacts on social infrastructure at Little Hartley and Hartley from the operation of the Coxs River Road would mainly relate to changes in traffic movement as discussed in Section 6.2 Traffic and transport.</p>
Access and connectivity	<p>The proposal would support safer and more reliable access to properties and destinations within Little Hartley and Hartley, through improved road conditions and the separation of local traffic and through traffic, including freight vehicles for much of this stage of the proposal.</p>

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Community values	<p>The proposal will improve the regional accessibility, connectivity and safety of the highway leading to a positive community outcome. Improved traffic conditions will benefit society through improving accessibility to education, work and leisure facilities. Some local residents will be required to travel further distances to access their properties due to the direction separated lanes, however this disbenefit will be offset by the increase in safety resulting from the restricted turns against ongoing highway traffic. Additionally, the reduction of regional and freight traffic passing through the main area of town will result in improved amenity through a reduction in noise, improved air quality and safety conditions for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>The new alignment of the highway is further away from several residential properties. This will result in the proposal having a positive impact on the surrounding amenity through reduced traffic noise and improved air quality experienced by locals.</p>

River Lett to Forty Bends

Construction impacts

Construction impacts within River Lett to Forty Bends section are summarised in Table 6-104.

Table 6-104 Construction socio-economic impacts – River Lett to Forty Bends

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Business and industry	<p>During construction, impacts on local businesses within the Hartley Historic Village would mainly result from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased noise, dust and construction vehicles, diminishing the amenity of the village • Changed traffic conditions, resulting in potential traffic delays, disruptions and local access changes for road users where construction activities are located within or next to the road corridors for the Great Western Highway, Jenolan Caves Road and other local roads • Increased expenditure by construction workers on day-to-day goods and services, benefiting local retailers and hospitality businesses. <p>Access would be maintained during construction to businesses near the proposal although temporary access changes would be required to facilitate construction and maintain safety.</p>
Social infrastructure	<p>Potential impacts on these uses would general be associated with access changes due to construction activities within the Great Western Highway and Jenolan Caves Road, and amenity impacts due to construction noise and dust impacting on St John the Evangelist Anglican Church and Hartley Historic Village Visitor Centre.</p>
Access and connectivity	<p>Potential impacts of construction works would result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary traffic delays and disruptions for road users due to such things as localised speed reductions, use of roads by construction traffic, and temporary lane closures, impacting on local residents and businesses, travellers on the Great Western Highway, Jenolan Caves Road and other local roads, and freight vehicle operators

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential road safety risks and changes to community perceptions of road safety due to temporary changes in road conditions, use of roads by construction vehicles, including heavy vehicles, and potential driver distractions from the presence of construction activities. Access to private property would be maintained during the construction period, although temporary access changes may be required near to construction works.
Community values	<p>Potential impacts to the community during construction may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resumption of private properties resulting in community dissatisfaction • Temporary changes in local amenity due to increase noise, dust and light spill relating to construction activities for residents, businesses and facilities in proximity to the worksites • Temporary changes in local road access and connectivity • Temporary impact of increased employment relating to construction.

Operation impacts

Operation impacts within River Lett to Forty Bends section are summarised in Table 6-105.

Table 6-105 Operational socio-economic impacts –River Lett to Forty Bends

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Business and industry	<p>The proposal would not require the acquisition or temporary lease of land accommodating businesses.</p> <p>Potential impacts on businesses within the River Lett to Forty Bends section would mainly be associated with road changes that require motorists accessing businesses within the Hartley Historic Village to change their travel route or potentially travel further leading to slight delays.</p> <p>Operation of the proposal also has potential to result in noise impacts for visitor accommodation businesses within the Hartley Historic Village, including both during the daytime and at night. This has potential to impact on the enjoyment of these properties for some people.</p>
Social infrastructure	<p>Property acquisition for the proposal would not impact on social infrastructure.</p> <p>Potential impacts on social infrastructure within the River Lett to Forty Bends section would mainly be associated with road changes that require motorists accessing businesses within the Hartley Historic Village to change their travel route or potentially travel further leading to slight delays.</p> <p>There is also potential for operational road traffic noise from the Great Western Highway to impact on amenity for the St John the Evangelist Anglican Church, although any impacts on the use and enjoyment of the church by parishioners are expected to be minor given the times and frequency that the church is used.</p>
Access and connectivity	<p>The proposal would support safer, quicker and more reliable access to properties and destinations through improved road conditions and the separation of local traffic and through traffic, including freight vehicles for much of this section of the proposal.</p> <p>A new service road linking Jenolan Caves Road to the Old Great Western Highway at the entrance to the Hartley Historic Village would continue to provide access to properties and destinations in Hartley, although changes would be required to</p>

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	access routes and require motorists to travel additional distances to access properties and destinations.
Community values	<p>The proposal will improve the regional accessibility, connectivity and safety of the highway leading to a positive community outcome. Improved traffic conditions will benefit society through improving accessibility to education, work and leisure facilities.</p> <p>The new alignment of the highway is further away from several residential properties. This will result in the proposal having a positive impact on the surrounding amenity through reduced traffic noise and improved air quality experienced by local residents.</p>

Forty Bends to Lithgow

Construction impacts

Construction impacts within Forty Bends to Lithgow section are summarised in Table 6-106.

Table 6-106 Construction socio-economic impacts – Forty Bends to Lithgow

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Business and industry	<p>Potential impacts on businesses near the proposal in this stage would mainly result from changes in local access and traffic conditions near to construction works and potential for traffic delays and disruptions. Given the closest businesses to the construction works are located north of the proposal, potential delays and disruptions are most likely to affect customers travelling from the south who are required to travel through the construction work areas. However, there is potential for customers travelling from other directions to experience short delays if traffic congestion extends north of the proposal for motorists heading south on the Great Western Highway. This may result in some customers using competing businesses in other towns.</p> <p>Retail and food outlets near to the construction works may experience a temporary increase in business and demand for local goods and services in response to the day-to-day needs of construction workers.</p>
Social infrastructure	<p>During construction, potential impacts on social infrastructure in the Forty Bends to Lithgow stage of the proposal would mainly result from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction noise, dust, and traffic impacting on amenity for users of the community services near to proposed construction works such as the Bowenfels Presbyterian Church, South Bowenfels Cemetery and Colin McGarry Memorial Play Centre • Changes in local access and potential traffic disruptions and delays for users of community facilities at South Bowenfels and north of the proposal area.
Access and connectivity	<p>Potential impacts of construction works would result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary traffic delays and disruptions for road uses due to changes in road conditions near to construction works, reduced speed limits, and partial road closures, impacting local communities and travellers on the Great Western Highway, McKanes Falls Road and other local roads, including freight vehicle operators

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential road safety risks and changes to community perceptions of road safety due to temporary changes in road conditions, increased construction traffic and use of roads by construction vehicles, including heavy vehicles, and potential driver distractions from the presence of construction activities.
Community values	<p>Potential impacts to community values during construction may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary changes in local amenity due to increase noise, dust and light spill relating to construction activities for residents, businesses and facilities in proximity to the worksites • Temporary changes in local access and connectivity for all road users • Temporary impact of increased employment relating to construction.

Operation impacts

Operation impacts within Forty Bends to Lithgow section are summarised in Table 6-107.

Table 6-107 Operational socio-economic impacts – Forty Bends to Lithgow

Socio-economic criteria	Description
Business and industry	<p>The proposal would not require the acquisition or temporary lease of land accommodating businesses.</p> <p>The proposal would have beneficial impacts for businesses through improved access and connectivity resulting in reduced travel times and travel reliability for vehicles travelling to and from the south east, and enhanced road safety.</p>
Social infrastructure	<p>Property acquisition for the proposal would not impact on social infrastructure. The proposal would improve access and connectivity to regional level community services and facilities such as health and medical services within the Lithgow Hospital campus, and aged care facilities, by making travel to these facilities quicker, safer and more reliable.</p> <p>The proposal would require minor changes to local access for community facilities at Mudgee Road, including the fire station and Presbyterian Church.</p> <p>During operation, road traffic noise from the proposal has potential to impact on the amenity for users of the Bowenfels Presbyterian Church. This may affect the use and enjoyment of this facility for some people.</p>
Access and connectivity	<p>Widening of the road to provide two lanes in each direction would support improved access and connectivity for regional traffic through improved driving conditions and road safety, reduced travel times and improved connections to the regional road network.</p> <p>The proposal would restrict right turning movements from some local roads and properties fronting the Great Western Highway. This would require some motorists to travel additional distances to access properties and destinations.</p>
Community values	<p>The proposal will improve local and regional accessibility, connectivity and safety of the highway leading to a positive community outcome. Improved traffic conditions will benefit society through improving accessibility to education, work and leisure facilities. Some local residents will be required to travel further distances to access their properties (refer to Section 6.2 Traffic and transport), however this disbenefit will be offset by the increase in safety resulting from the restricted turns against ongoing highway traffic.</p>

Socio-economic criteria	Description
	The widening of the highway would result in the intensification of road infrastructure, potentially resulting in amenity impacts for some residential uses, including on rural properties, possibly impacting on the use and enjoyment of these properties.

6.10.4 Safeguards and management measures

Table 6-108 Safeguards and management measures – socio-economic

No	Impact	Environmental safeguards	Responsibility	Timing	Reference	Locations
SE01	Community consultation	<p>A Community Communication Strategy (CCS) will be prepared for the proposal to facilitate communication with the local and regional communities including relevant Government agencies, Councils, adjoining landowners and businesses, residents, motorists and other relevant stakeholders that may be affected by the proposal. The strategy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify people or organisations to be consulted during the delivery of the proposal • Set out procedures and mechanisms for the regular distribution of information about the proposal • Outline mechanisms to keep relevant stakeholders updated on construction activities, schedules and milestones • Outline avenues for the community to provide feedback (including a 24-hour, toll free proposal information and complaints line) or to register complaints and through which Transport will respond to community feedback 	Transport/ Contractor	Prior to construction and construction	Appendix M	N/A

No	Impact	Environmental safeguards	Responsibility	Timing	Reference	Locations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline a process to resolve complaints and issues raised. 				
SE02	Business impacts	Access will be maintained to local businesses near to construction works. Where temporary access changes are proposed, these will be agreed with the affected business owner.	Contractor	During construction	Appendix M	All
SE03	Business impacts	Signage would be provided to key business locations such as Little Hartley and Hartley Historic Village during construction.	Contractor	During construction	Appendix M	All
SE04	Business impacts	Ongoing consultation will be undertaken with local business owners at Little Hartley, Hartley Historic Village, Hartley and South Bowenfels that may be impacted during construction in accordance with Community Communication Strategy.	Contractor	During construction	Appendix M	All
SE05	Emergency vehicle access	Access for emergency vehicles will be maintained at all times during construction. Any site-specific requirements will be determined in consultation with the relevant emergency services agency (e.g. for South Bowenfels Rural Fire Brigade and Lithgow Hospital).	Contractor	During construction	Appendix M	All
SE06	Local access changes	Local communities and road users will be notified about access changes prior to implementation.	Contractor	During construction	Appendix M	All

Other safeguards and management measures that would address socio-economic impacts are identified in sections 6.2 Traffic and transport and 6.11 Property and land use.