



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)

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 proposed mitigation measures of a project.

What is a concept design?

The concept design is developed in sufficient detail to allow an assessment of likely environmental, social and economic impacts so stakeholders can provide feedback. It may change based on feedback received.

View the REF and concept design

You can view the Little Hartley to Lithgow REF and concept design at:

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

Have your say

We are planning to hold a mixture of online and COVIDSafe face-to-face consultation sessions.

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

General online sessions

Tuesday 30 November 6.30pm–8.00pm

Saturday 11 December 12.30pm–2.00pm

Targeted online sessions

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

Face-to-face sessions

Saturday 4 December 1.00pm–3.15pm*

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

Tuesday 7 December 5.30pm–7.45pm*

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

*Book a 45 minute time slot

Register for a consultation session at

nswroads.work/gwhwestconsult

Bookings are essential for face-to-face sessions, which will be held pending COVID restrictions or the occurrence of local cases at the time of the events. QR code sign in and proof of double vaccination status will be required.

Contact us on **1800 953 777** or

gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au to book a personal phone consultation if you prefer.

How to make a formal submission

We welcome all feedback on the Little Hartley to Lithgow 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/gwhwestconsult, email us at gwhd@transport.nsw.gov.au, or mail a printed submission to the address below.

Consultation is open from 22 November to 21 December 2021. All formal submissions must be received or postmarked by midnight, 21 December.

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

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