

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program

Katoomba to Lithgow | Community update

Transport for NSW | November 2019



Great Western Highway looking towards Hartley Valley

The NSW Government is investing \$2.5 billion towards upgrading the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow. The program will provide safer, more efficient, more reliable journeys, and better connect communities with the Central West.



**Improve
safety**



**Connect
communities**



**Boost regional
economies**



**Preserve
natural environment**

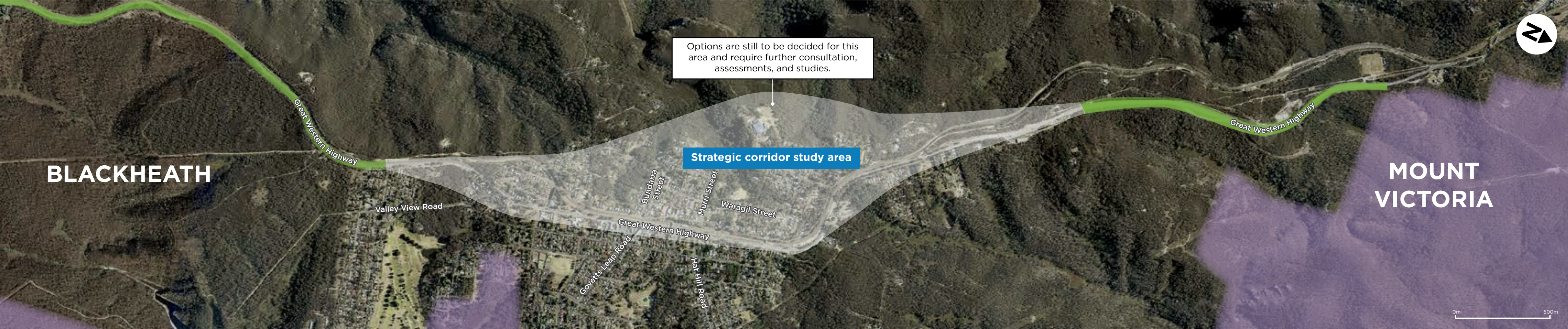


**Improve freight
connection**



**Reduce
travel time**

Strategic corridor between Katoomba and Mount Victoria



Reserved corridor between Mount Victoria to Lithgow





Medlow Bath looking north

The program

We are now seeking feedback from the community, and stakeholders on the strategic corridor between Katoomba to Mount Victoria and for the corridor reserved in 2013 between Mount Victoria and Lithgow.

Once the highway has been upgraded between Katoomba and Lithgow, road users will save at least 10 minutes in travel time and over 95km would be two lanes each way between Emu Plains and Wallerawang.

The NSW Government has progressively upgraded sections of the highway to make it safer and reliable with the most recent project at Kelso opened to traffic in March 2017. In 2018, \$30 million was announced to upgrade the highway between Kelso and Raglan.

There have already been important safety improvements delivered through the safety upgrade program along the Great Western Highway at Blackheath, Mount Victoria and Forty Bends. This work has seen improved road surfaces, intersection upgrades, and lane widening delivered as part of the \$250 million investment by the Australian and NSW governments.

Regional growth

The Central West is NSW's third largest regional centre and contributes 12 per cent gross regional product to the state. The region is expected to grow by more than 300,000 people during the next 20 years and see dwellings increase by 12 per cent. This program will support growth in key industries including agribusiness, manufacturing, mining and tourism.

With a duplicated highway, journeys into and out of the Central West will become safer, more efficient, more reliable, and better connect communities.

Freight benefits

The Great Western Highway is an important route identified as part of the Land Transport Network (Roads), which has been developed through collaboration between Commonwealth, State, and Territory governments. It details the road and rail routes connecting economic hubs.

Out of the four major freight connections into Sydney from the regions, the Great Western Highway is the key east-west route. However, it is the only one of the four routes not two lanes in each direction and limited to 19m B-Double and 20m Performance Based Standard (PBS) vehicles. Alternate routes around the Great Dividing Range use either the Hume Highway or the Golden Highway and are up to 100km longer. This program looks to open up access to more productive vehicles as well as improve more general access for commuters and tourists.

Overview

Options for upgrading the highway between Katoomba and Lithgow are constrained by steep topography, the railway line, private property, existing towns, and the Blue Mountains National Park. Since the current highway is a constrained space, upgrading it without using as much of the existing corridor as possible would make the program more expensive and would have a large and serious impact over the environment.

Generally, the route options presented here are based on a speed limit of 80km/h within the Blue Mountains, except sections of reduced speed limit, and 100km/h through the Hartley Valley. The upgrade program is investigating and considering the following options:

- Katoomba to Medlow Bath to include bridges between highpoints along the ridgeline.
- Medlow Bath to include widening the existing corridor within the current property boundaries through the township with a 60km/h speed limit.
- Medlow Bath to Blackheath options to include widening the existing corridor or running along the western side of the rail line.
- Blackheath options to include: widening the existing corridor; an outer bypass with bridges over Shipley Road, Centennial Pass and Porters Pass Track; a western bypass; or a long tunnel or short tunnel bypass (both beneath the town).

- Options that run around the eastern side of the Blackheath village have been ruled out due to impact on the World Heritage Areas of the Blue Mountains. Options that run directly through the Blue Mountains National Park have also been ruled out.
- Blackheath to Mount Victoria to include widening the existing corridor and changes to the Mount Boyce Heavy Vehicle Inspection Bay.
- Mount Victoria to the base of Victoria Pass to include a tunnel bypass beneath the village.
- Base of Victoria Pass to South Bowenfels to include a four lane divided road with a 100km/h speed limit.
- Jenolan Caves Road intersection to be grade separated.

We are still in the early stages of planning and design, and need your feedback in order to take forward the project.

Further survey work, technical studies and environmental assessments are also needed to refine our understanding in developing the program.

What happens next?

At the end of this consultation period, the team will produce a consultation summary report that includes responses to feedback that will be published on the program's website. Feedback gathered will inform project design.



From Mount Boyce looking north.

Information sessions

We are presenting the Great Western Highway Upgrade Program for your feedback. You can comment online, contact the team, or attend an information session. No formal presentation will be given, so please feel free to drop in at any time.

- **Katoomba Street entrance (outside) to Katoomba Village Shopping Centre, 79 Katoomba Street Katoomba**
Tuesday 26 November 2019 – 11am to 2pm
- **Katoomba-Leura Community Centre, 81-83 Katoomba Street Katoomba**
Tuesday 26 November and 3 December 2019 – 5pm to 7pm
- **Hydro Majestic (Delmont Room 2) Great Western Highway Medlow Bath**
Monday 9 December – 5pm to 7pm
- **Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre (Bates Hall), corner Gardiner Crescent and Great Western Highway Blackheath**
Wednesday 27 November and 4 December 2019 – 5pm to 7pm
- **Mount Vic Flicks, 2A Harley Avenue Mount Victoria**
Tuesday 10 December 2019 – 5pm to 7pm
- **Hartley Hall, 2 Mid Hartley Road Hartley**
Wednesday 11 December – 5pm to 7pm
- **Lithgow Valley Plaza, Corner Lithgow and Bent Streets Lithgow**
Monday 25 November 2019 – 11am to 2pm
- **Hoskins Memorial Church Hall, 43 Bridge Street Lithgow**
Monday 25 November and 2 December 2019 – 5pm to 7pm

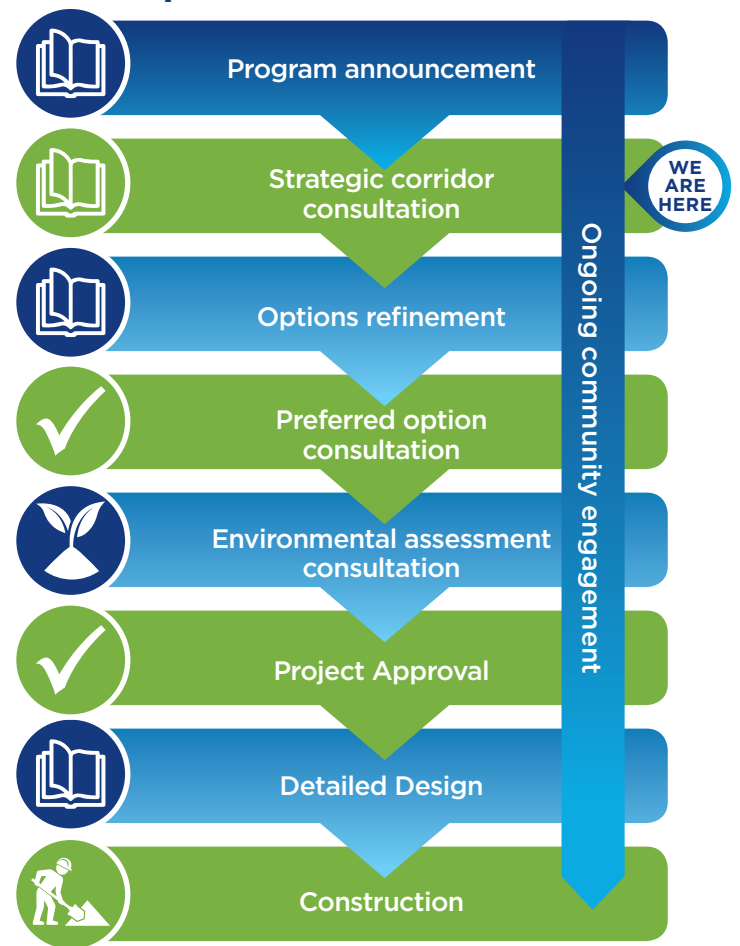
Unstaffed displays will also be available during normal business hours in the following locations.

- **Katoomba Library**
30 Park Street, Katoomba
- **Lithgow Library and Learning Centre**
157 Main Street, Lithgow
- **Oberon Library**
corner of Dart and Fleming Streets, Oberon
- **Bathurst Regional Council**
158 Russell Street, Bathurst
- **Orange City Library**
147 Byng Street, Orange



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**.

Next steps



There are several ways you can find out more information and have your say:

- visit the website: rms.work/greatwesternhighway
- visit an information session
- comment on the collaborative map online
- complete a feedback form either online or through the post, or
- contact the team through phone call, email, or post.

Feedback closes at **5pm** on **Monday 16 December 2019**.

Contact us

If you have any questions or would like more information please contact our project team:

- 1800 953 777
- gwhd@rms.nsw.gov.au
- rms.work/greatwesternhighway
- Great Western Highway Upgrade Program
PO Box 2332, Orange NSW 2800



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