



27 February 2023

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EIS - Great Western Highway Upgrade Program
Blackheath to Little Hartley
Application No. SSI-22004371

Attention: Angela Stewart
Senior Planning Officer, Transport Assessment
Department of Planning & Environment

Dear Ms Stewart,

**SUBJECT EIS - Great Western Highway Upgrade Project - Blackheath to
Little Hartley - February 2023 - Provisional Submission**

Blue Mountains City Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to provide the attached provisional submission in relation to this project as part of the Review of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.

Transport for NSW (TNSW) is proposing the construction and operation of new twin tunnels around the 11 kilometres in length between Blackheath and Little Hartley, and associated surface road upgrade work tie-ins to the east and west of the tunnel portals.

The proposed transformation of the village by the highway forms part of a regional duplication from Katoomba to Lithgow that will have significant impacts.

The information contained in this submission relates to the review of the following document:

1. *EIS - Great Western Highway Upgrade Project - Blackheath to Little Hartley – Exhibited 18 January 2023 until 1 March 2023.*

The Council accepts that the Great Western Highway (GWH) is a nationally important transport corridor. However, this corridor also links the villages of the Blue Mountains. The impact of the duplication of the GWH as a regional corridor needs to be assessed in the context of both its national significance and its vital local role.



While Council acknowledges an EIS has been prepared for this stage of the GWH Upgrade project, it is still Council's position the GWH Upgrade Program (Katoomba to Little Hartley) should be seen as a single project and subject to a single EIS process.

The drawback of the current approach can be seen in the EIS where it repeatedly states the baseline for the assessment in the EIS is the upgraded outcome outlined in the Great Western Highway East – Katoomba to Blackheath Upgrade project. A true baseline study would be from existing *before* any part of the broader upgrade program commences. As it is, what is described and subsequently assessed in the EIS is incremental change upon incremental change that artificially minimises the true scale and impact of the project.

The attached submission provides further details addressing the above matters.

As discussed and agreed with the Department of Planning and Environment, the Council provides this provisional submission to satisfy its requirement to provide a response within the statutory timeframes to the EIS, being 1st March 2023. However, as agreed, this submission requires the formal adoption of the Council at its 28 March 2023 meeting.

If you require further information, please contact Will Langevad, Director – Environment and Planning Services (0414 195 759) or Jeff Roorda, Director – Economy, Place and Infrastructure (0436 649 591).

Yours faithfully



ROSEMARY DILLION
Chief Executive Officer

