

SSI-22004371: LGS
Economic Development and Environment

3 March 2023

Angela Stewart
The Department of Planning and Environment
angela.stewart@dpie.nsw.gov.au.

Dear Angela,

Great Western Highway Upgrades - Blackheath to Little Hartley (SSI-22004371)

I refer to the abovementioned project and your request for submissions for the proposed upgrade of The Great Western Highway between Blackheath and Little Hartley as part of the 'Upgrade Program'. The project would comprise the construction and operation of new twin tunnels around 11 kilometres in length between Blackheath and Little Hartley, and associated surface road upgrade work for tie-ins to the east and west of the tunnel portals (i.e. the entrance and exit points for the tunnels).

Council considers the Environmental Assessment adequately highlights the relevant issues, and has no objection to the project, noting most of the issues will be local in nature and more relevant to another local government authority.

As such, should the development be approved, Council recommends that the following conditions are placed on the consent:

Heritage

1. Little Hartley contains numerous Local Heritage Significant Items and is within a designated Heritage Conservation Area under the Lithgow Local Environmental Plan 2014. There is the potential that the heritage items/conservation area could be indirectly impacted upon during the construction process. Management and monitoring strategies (noise/vibration etc) shall be implemented and submitted to Council as to how the heritage items will be protected and monitored throughout the construction stage.

Dust

2. The applicant shall ensure that during construction works all measures are taken to eliminate/suppress any dust nuisance emanating from the pipeline project area. This includes an onsite sprinkler and/or water truck being available at all times during construction works. Trucks are to be covered with a tarp or other material that would prevent dust emissions when leaving the vicinity.

Engineering Requirements

3. A fully certified traffic control plan and road works signage will be required where machinery may obstruct traffic on any of Council's Public Roads whilst construction work is being undertaken. A traffic control plan and certification of fully qualified contractors/persons will be required to be submitted to Council prior to any work commencing. Failure to comply may result in Work Cover Intervention and may also include Council stopping all work immediately until such time the developer complies with suitable traffic management procedures.

4. A maintenance bond, that is agreeable by both parties for the project, shall be paid to Council for any potential damage to Council's roads/road reserves and infrastructure prior to commencement of work.

5. Mt Victoria Pass and all associated transport assets must remain within the care and control of Transport for NSW. This will remain a strategic corridor for hazardous freight that cannot pass through the tunnel.

6. Emissions management- A tunnel of such length must be regularly vented to ensure locations are equally impacted and there is not a concentration of exhaust gasses at either portal.

7. Material reuse- Significant volumes of VENM will come out of the excavation and tunnelling works. Noting this volume, Lithgow and Blue Mountains Council's should have the opportunity to identify reuse opportunities such as landfill capping and other bulk earthworks construction uses before commercial opportunities are investigated.

8. It is encouraged that local procurement is utilised for the project where possible.

In addition, attached for your reference is a copy of Council's submission to the REF. The REF response is to be furthered considered in response to this project.

While Council supports this project and the broader objectives it will achieve, the following is to be noted, as per Council's previous submission for the Little Hartley to Lithgow upgrade project:

1. Council objects to the construction of any rest areas (for heavy vehicles or otherwise) within the Hartley Valley.

2. Council stands with the Hartley District Progress Association (and many others within the community) in not favouring the proposed design speed of 100km/h.

3. While Transport for NSW has acknowledged that the Mt Victoria Pass, inclusive of road surface, pavements, and the bridge, will remain under the care and control of TfNSW upon completion of the project, there are other significant lengths of the existing alignment which will revert to Council management as local roads upon completion of this upgrade. These assets hold significant value and carry financial and risk management liabilities with respect to asset depreciation, maintenance, and renewal. It is financially perilous for Council to accept these responsibilities without a commensurate long term financial offset. To do so would result in necessary reductions in service across Council's existing functions. On behalf of our community, the Council requests that Transport for NSW engage with the administration to develop a solution to this problem which does not result in an adverse impact to Lithgow Council or its residents.

If you require any further information in relation to this matter, please contact the undersigned by telephone in Council's Economic Development and Environment Department during normal business hours on (02) 6354 9999.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "L. Stevens". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" at the end.

Lauren Stevens
Development Planner