Transport for NSW has extended consultation on the proposed strategic design in Medlow Bath until 31 August 2020.

Due to advice received from NSW Health in light of the developing COVID-19 situation we moved consultation online and understand this option is not accessible to all. These FAQs address many of the questions raised during consultation so far.

There is still time to submit your feedback by getting in touch with the project team via the contact details on the back page of this flyer.

Why are you upgrading Medlow Bath first?

The Government has prioritised Medlow Bath to be the first section of the Great Western Highway upgraded because:

- we can address known safety concerns and provide ongoing safety benefits for local traffic and pedestrians
- the corridor is well defined, so we can upgrade the highway with minimal property and environmental impacts.

It is common on major road projects to upgrade townships like this first, so they do not suffer from congestion when the links between the towns are upgraded.

When will this project start?

We are currently taking feedback to develop the preferred concept design. Site investigations for noise, soil, utilities and traffic will begin at the end of 2020. Environmental Assessment is planned for the middle of 2021, and construction from mid 2022 in line with latest project timelines.
Can you do safety upgrades instead?

The jointly funded $250 million Great Western Highway upgrade program is not suited to a tunnel, due to the existing gradient and short length of this section and would not address safety issues currently on the Highway. Widening the Highway within the existing corridor is the most responsible approach within the program budget.

Will the speed limit change in Medlow Bath?

There are no plans to increase the 60km/h speed limit through Medlow Bath.

Can you make the Foy Avenue intersection safer?

This will be addressed in the proposed Medlow Bath upgrade. A sagull/intersection with turning lanes is proposed and we are investigating other options following community feedback.

Can you make the Bellevue Crescent intersection safer?

This will be addressed in the proposed Medlow Bath upgrade. A sagull/intersection with turning lanes is proposed and we are investigating other options following community feedback.

Can you upgrade the sections between the towns first?

Biodiversity constraints and steep terrain on those sections means several years of planning and environmental assessment will be needed. While we undertake those assessments, we will deliver the project at Medlow Bath so we can provide immediate and ongoing safety benefits at Medlow Bath.

Can you upgrade the sections instead?

We are also investigating short term improvements that we can provide to improve safety while the upgrade is planned and built.

Can you make the Foy Avenue intersection safer?

Foy Avenue is out of scope for this initial part of the project, however we are investigating short term improvements we can provide to increase safety.

What will happen to access on Coachhouse Lane?

There is no location in Medlow Bath with the available space required to allow a pedestrian underpass below both the railway and the Highway.

Can we have a pedestrian underpass?

A new pedestrian bridge with lifts and stairs would allow pedestrians of all abilities to access Railway Parade, the train station platform and the eastern side of the Highway without interacting with traffic and trains.

How high will the retaining wall be?

The retaining wall will be approximately one meter high. There is no location in Medlow Bath with the available space required to allow a pedestrian underpass below both the railway and the Highway.

Can you build a noise wall?

Noise impacts will be considered as part of the environmental assessment.

What will happen to access in front of the Hydro Majestic?

Current parking in front of the Hydro Majestic is on the road corridor and most is required to be relocated as part of its redevelopment project.

To avoid impacting the heritage stone wall along the front of the Hydro Majestic, all street parking would be removed for the upgrade. We will assess the impact of this as part of the environmental assessment.

Can you make the Bellevue Crescent 5 lane instead of 4 lane?

We are consulting with the Hydro Majestic about the redevelopment and the highway upgrade to achieve the best possible outcome for the community of Medlow Bath.

How high will the retaining wall between the road and the railway be?

The retaining wall will be approximately one meter high.

We do not anticipate the existing levels of the highway will significantly change as part of this design.

Amenity impacts such as noise will be considered as part of the environmental assessment.

What will happen to access on Coachhouse Lane?

There is likely to be a minimal part property acquisition required to provide the pedestrian bridge. We are in discussions with the Hydro Majestic about the upgrade which is planned and built.

Will there be any property impacts?

Amenity impacts such as noise will be considered as part of the environmental assessment.

What will happen to access on Coachhouse Lane?

There is no location in Medlow Bath with the available space required to allow a pedestrian underpass below both the railway and the Highway.

Can we have a pedestrian underpass?

The retaining wall will be approximately one meter high. We do not anticipate the existing levels of the highway will significantly change as part of this design.

Can you build a noise wall?

Noise impacts will be considered as part of the environmental assessment. However a noise wall would likely reflect train noise back to the east and traffic noise to the west.

We will conduct noise modelling as part of the environmental assessment and provide suitable noise mitigation where the need is identified.
How will the road design manage overtaking and bottlenecks at either end of Medlow Bath?

There may be some localised congestion at the merge points, similar to what currently exists. Bottlenecks will improve progressively as the adjoining sections of the Great Western Highway upgrade are completed. Local traffic entering and leaving side streets, properties and businesses, will also help to prevent traffic from overtaking or undertaking through the township.

The community has suggested a speed camera be installed to deter speeding and dangerous overtaking. We will explore this as the project develops.

What will the upgrade's capacity for the future provide?

Four lane highways can comfortably accommodate over 50,000 vehicles a day, giving the road many years of capacity into the future. Current traffic volumes at Medlow Bath exceed 19,000 vehicles per day, which is already reaching the capacity of the existing road.

What will happen to the bike track?

We may need to realign parts of the track however we intend to maintain the bike and walking trail.

What will happen to the roadside trees?

There is a possibility that we will need to remove some trees from the roadside. If we need to take existing trees from the roadside, we will aim to relocate or replace those where possible as part of the environmental assessment.

The Medlow Bath Residents Association has identified a redwood tree (*Thuja Plicata*) used in 2008 to improve streetscape, as the preferred tree for planting at Medlow Bath.

Do you have funding for the whole upgrade?

The NSW Government has committed $2.5 billion towards upgrading the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow. This includes planning for projects such as Blackheath and delivery of Medlow Bath among other sections of the 34km project.

Partial or staged funding of an upgrade program of this magnitude is common and we will seek additional funding as required.

Can you put more freight on rail instead?

The Great Western Highway Upgrade is being developed alongside long-term rail options, as both are needed to meet future demand and address current issues around congestion, journey reliability and safety.

A large number of trucks on the highway are moving freight from local suppliers or supporting local businesses and freight that cannot be transported by rail.

The NSW Government is committed to moving more freight from road to rail and already invests in the rail freight network to increase capacity, but this is not a substitute for investing in our road freight network.
Next Steps

TfNSW is collating feedback received from the community on the proposed strategic design for Medlow Bath.

TfNSW is also calling for design tenders for the Medlow Bath upgrade, with a contract expected to be awarded by the end of September.

There will be further consultation in 2021, once the team have progressed the design and environmental assessment.

A Review of Environmental Factors will be exhibited for consultation in mid 2021.

We anticipate that physical work on the upgrade at Medlow Bath could begin in mid 2022.

Medlow Bath

Program announcement
Strategic corridor consultation
Preferred Strategic Alignment Consultation
Options refinement
Review of environmental factors consultation
Project Approval
Detailed Design
Construction
Ongoing community engagement

Contact the Great Western Highway Upgrade team

Never miss an update

Please be sure to sign up to our distribution list. By signing up you’ll never miss an update about the project. You can call, email or write to us to let us know your details. You can also sign up for updates online at nswroads.work/greatwesternhighway.

nswroads.work/greatwesternhighway

1800 953 777

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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.

August 2020
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