Transport for NSW statement

21 NOVEMBER 2019

<u>Great Western Highway upgrade through Blackheath</u>

Transport for NSW is asking the Blackheath community to get involved with the consultation process to help shape the upgrade of the Great Western Highway.

The upgrade between Katoomba and Lithgow is in the early stages of planning and no decision has been made on which of the possible route options will become the final highway alignment.

Transport for NSW apologises for any concern to the community caused by a flyer that did not fully explain the breadth of options and status of planning for Blackheath.

We understand the complexity of the upgrade in this area and will continue to work with the Blackheath community to co-design the route and minimise impacts on property.

The final alignment through Blackheath will be significantly informed by feedback received from the community.

Possible Blackheath options include:
- widening the existing corridor;
- an outer bypass with bridges over Shipley Road, Centennial Pass and Porters Pass Track;
- a western bypass;
- a long tunnel or a short tunnel bypass (both beneath the town).

Options along the eastern side of the Blackheath village will not be pursued due to impact on the World Heritage Areas of the Blue Mountains. For the same reasons, options that run directly through the Blue Mountains National Park have also been ruled out.

Those residents and businesses that fall within the very broad strategic corridor study area have been contacted and are being encouraged to actively engage in the consultation process, which will shape the final alignment.

The first community session will start at 5pm on Monday in Lithgow, with other sessions next week - in Katoomba on Tuesday evening and Blackheath on Wednesday evening. All feedback will be considered, with submissions to close at 5pm on Monday 16 December.

Media contact: (02) 9462 6299

Background:
We have advised the Minister's office that a tunnel is geologically feasible which is why the option was put forward.