

Blackheath Area Community Alliance

8 October 2020

The Hon Paul Toole MP
Member for Bathurst
Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
52 Martin Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister,

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program – Katoomba to Lithgow

We refer to our letter dated 8 July 2020 and subsequent meeting with yourself and Nicholas Chilton on Monday 24 August 2020 attended by myself and Adele Colman representing the Blackheath Area Community Alliance ('Blackheath Alliance').

All members of the Blackheath Alliance express their thanks and appreciation to you for organising the meeting on Monday 24 August 2020.

We look forward to working with you, Transport for New South Wales and Blue Mountains City Council to address the short term and immediate safety and congestion issues on the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow. The Blackheath Alliance is currently working with its members, particularly the Blackheath & District Chamber of Commerce Inc. on a set of measures to present to you in this regard.

The Alliance also looks forward to your announcement of further safety upgrades and the construction of additional passing lanes on the Bells Line of Road.

However all members of the Blackheath Alliance remain very concerned in relation to the continual imposition of the Strategic Corridor placed over Western Blackheath

Our community is also suffering from the ongoing significant and detrimental social and economic impacts caused by the proposed Station Street and Centennial Glen options.

As discussed with you on Monday 24 August 2020 these options and the Strategic Corridor need to be immediately and permanently removed from any further consideration in relation to the duplication of the Great Western Highway through Blackheath. All community and action groups unanimously agree on this.

We therefore remind of our request to:

- 1) Remove the proposed Station Street (inner bypass) and Centennial Glen (outer bypass) options from consideration for the upgrade of the highway through Blackheath, and

2) Lift the current Strategic Corridor placed over Western Blackheath.

The ongoing uncertainty of the Strategic Corridor and the proposed Station Street and Centennial Glen options is impacting on:

- Property values in Western Blackheath and the related social and economic well-being of local residents and businesses, and
- Business and property investment and related job activity.

The Blackheath community remains very concerned that both the proposed Station Street and Centennial Glen options involve:

- Significant property acquisition (both residential and business property) and impacts on surrounding residential properties and the loss of local businesses
- Destruction of precious heritage, flora and fauna, bushland and recreational areas
- Loss of Centennial Glen as a significant rock climbing destination in Australia, and the severe impact this will have on local tourism and business in our community and related impacts on local school enrolments
- Loss of the Blackheath/Mount Victoria Rural Fire Brigade and the Blackheath Mount Victoria RSL Sub-branch, both currently located in Station Street, Blackheath
- Significant negative impacts on the Blackheath Men's Shed, the Mountains Christian College and the Vipassana Meditation Centre

We are therefore looking forward to your announcement in the very near future that you will be directing Transport for New South Wales to lift the Strategic Corridor over Western Blackheath and to permanently remove the proposed Station Street and Centennial Glen options so residents in the affected areas can get on with their lives, and local businesses can plan and invest with certainty.

We also look forward to working with you to address the short term and immediate safety and congestion issues on the highway between Katoomba and Mount Victoria.

Please do not hesitate to contact Michael Paag on m 0423 596 240 or by email (blackheathaca@gmail.com) should you have any questions and or require further information in relation to this letter.

Yours faithfully,



Michael Paag
Secretary
Blackheath Area Community Alliance