

Blackheath to Little Hartley Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

March 2023



**CENTRAL NSW
JOINT ORGANISATION**

Bathurst
Blayney
Cabonne
Cowra
Forbes
Lachlan
Oberon
Orange
Parkes
Weddin



Central NSW
Joint Organisation

PO Box 333

Forbes NSW 2871

Phone: 0428 690 935

Email: jenny.bennett@centraljo.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au

Chair Cr John Medcalf OAM, Mayor, Lachlan Shire Council

1 March 2023

Reference: jb:vp 230301

Enquiries: Ms J Bennett: 0428 690 935

Director of Transport Assessments
Planning and Assessment
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Re: Blackheath to Little Hartley Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

As you are well aware Local Government Regional Joint Organisations (JOs) were proclaimed in May 2018 under the NSW Local Government Act 1993. The Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO) represents over 200,000 people covering an area of more than 50,000sq kms comprising the Local Government Areas of Bathurst, Blayney, Cabonne, Cowra, Forbes, Lachlan, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Weddin, and Central Tablelands Water. Lithgow have recently joined as associate members.

Tasked with intergovernmental cooperation, leadership and prioritisation, JOs have consulted with their stakeholders to identify key strategic regional priorities. The CNSWJO Strategic Plan can be found here: [Strategic Plan & Regional Priorities - Central Joint Organisation \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/strategic-plan)

A safe swift and secure link between Sydney and Central NSW is a significant priority for Central NSW communities. Safety, time and productivity benefits are so important for our visitors, our freight and for us as we travel to and from Sydney.

We thank the NSW Government for the ongoing commitment to the improvements of the Great Western Highway and welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on the Blackheath to Little Hartley EIS.

The CNSWJO policy is that we are “solution agnostic” to a safe swift and secure link between Sydney and the Central West and the Board shares the Deputy Premier, The Hon Paul Toole’s vision for dual carriageway at 100km per hour for the Great Western Highway.

The Board thanks the Government for its commitment towards the project that will ultimately give an additional 67km of dual carriageway and greater safety especially for emergency vehicles. The Board understands the planning for tunnels to reduce the gradient down the western escarpment, with the current Blackheath to Little Hartley section on exhibition, and it is pleased to learn that dual carriageway is possible through this challenging terrain.

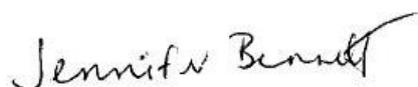
The Central NSW JO speaks for over 157,000 people covering an area of more than 47,000sq kms comprising of Bathurst, Blayney, Cabonne, Cowra, Forbes, Lachlan, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, and Weddin.

Further, the region is concerned that the congestion through the Blue Mountains not only impacts through traffic but has significant impacts on local communities and supports upgrades that minimises this congestion. This congestion has been exacerbated by landslips caused by the significant rain events through the past three years of La Nina.

We know there will be more bushfires, more intense rain events and traffic incidents that will continue to impact the security of the both the road and rail links to and from Sydney and for this reason alone all effort to upgrade and future proof this section of the linkage are important.

If you require further information or clarification on comments in this submission, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0428 690 935.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Bennett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'J'.

Jennifer Bennett
Executive Officer
Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO)