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**MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
OF BATHURST REGIONAL COUNCIL
HELD ON 7 August 2024**

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1. PUBLIC FORUM

MINUTE

Vanessa Comisky – Vice Chair BRAC, Art Gallery Toilets, Tourism Strategy and Public Forum – Thanked Council for the additional time for Bathurst Regional Access Committee (BRAC) to respond to the tourism strategy. Noted that two submissions from BRAC have been sent to Council. Spoke to the Ordinary meeting item relating to the allocation of funds to the Art Gallery toilets. Thanked the Mayor for comments on the 2BS interview. Spoke to the recording of the public forum, requesting that Council record the public forum in the future. Spoke to the Mayor's previous comments and provided an alternative model.

MAYOR noted that the recording of Public Forum will be a matter for consideration by future Council.

Bob Triming – Chair BRAC, Art Gallery Toilets, Machattie Park and Tourism plan – Spoke to his position as chairperson of the BRAC. Spoke to the proposed reallocation of funds to the Art Gallery toilets. Supportive of the toilets. Advised that the Mayoral interview on 2BS allayed his questions about the facility. Spoke to his understanding of the compliance requirements of the DDA. Spoke to BRAC's submission to the tourism plan. Spoke to the pruning of trees in Machattie Park and the damaged caused by the flying foxes.

Elaine West – Carillon Bells and Asset Management Plans – Asked about the Carillon and the old bells that were removed; asked where they currently are.

A/DCCS advised they are currently stored in Central Tablelands Collections Facility. Ms West asked whether they could be returned?

GENERAL MANAGER advised that there is insufficient storage space at the Carillon. Ms West asked for clarification on the Asset Management Plan Project.

DCSF noted the allocation is for the update of the AMP's and staff allocation to undertake inspections of the assets.

Public Forum closed 6.13pm

2. MEETING COMMENCES

MINUTE

Meeting commenced at 6:13pm.

Present: Cr K Burke (TEAMS), Cr J Jennings, Cr M Hogan, Cr I North, Cr A Smith, Cr R Taylor

3. RECORDING OF MEETING

4. PRAYER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

5. APOLOGIES

MINUTE

MOVED: Cr R Taylor SECONDED: Cr I North

RESOLVED:

That the apology of Cr W Aubin be accepted and leave of absence granted.

That the apology of Cr B Fry be accepted and leave of absence granted.

That the apology of Cr G Hanger be accepted and leave of absence granted.

That the attendance via audio-visual link of Cr K Burke be accepted.

6. MINUTES

6.1. Confirmation of Minutes

File No: 07.00064

MINUTE

RESOLUTION NUMBER: POL2024-25

MOVED: Cr I North SECONDED: Cr M Hogan

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting of Bathurst Regional Council held on 3 July 2024 be adopted.

7. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

MINUTE

NIL declarations of Interest.

8. RECEIVE AND DEAL WITH GENERAL MANAGER'S AND DIRECTORS' REPORTS

8.1 DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES REPORT

8.1.1. DRAFT POLICY - KEEPING OF ROOSTERS

FILE NO: 13.00021

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt the draft 'Keeping of Roosters' Policy.

REPORT:

At its Policy meeting on 1 May 2024 Council resolved to exhibit a draft policy to prohibit the keeping of roosters within zones R1, R2 and R3 of the Bathurst LGA. The draft Policy as exhibited is provided at **Attachment 1**. The Policy was placed on public exhibition from 20 May 2024 to 18 June 2024. Council received two submissions via the Your Say Bathurst website during this period.

The primary focus of the prohibition of roosters with Zones R1, R2 and R3 in the Bathurst LGA is to address the increasing impact and disturbance to the community of crowing roosters and to find a balance between meeting legislative requirements for noise impacts within highly populated residential areas and meeting lifestyle expectations within R5 - large lot residential areas. The introduction of this policy will align Bathurst LGA with many other NSW LGA's.

As Outlined in the 1 May 2024 report, the rational for Council to adopt a "no rooster" Policy within zones R1, R2 and R3 is:

- Roosters can create 'offensive noise' and complaints about noisy roosters are increasing.
 - Council has limited resources to investigate and deal with noise and other environmental complaints. The proposed policy of 'no roosters' in R1, R2 & R3 will assist Council Officers and other staff to direct valuable resources into other areas of compliance and development assessment.
-

The draft policy allows for roosters to be kept within other zones within the Bathurst LGA that are more suitable to accommodate them.

There will be a transition period for current owners of roosters in those zones impacted, which can be managed on a case-by-case basis and the severity of the nuisance.

The two submissions received via Your Say Bathurst (**Attachment 2**) raise several concerns of opposing viewpoints. A third submission was received 2 weeks after the policy exhibitions closing date. Matters raised in each submission are outlined in the Table below, along with Council’s response.

Submission	Council Response
<p data-bbox="263 712 582 741">Gavin Newton - Submission 1</p> <p data-bbox="263 819 767 983">Raised concerns the Poultry Society was not asked for formal comment. Raised concerns that the policy is unfairly targeting roosters and is biased against poultry lovers, when compared to “the keeping of dogs” within the LGA.</p> <p data-bbox="263 1178 767 1424">Raises concerns that poultry breeders within the LGA will have their breeding lines impacted, and to maintain breeding lines they require the housing of a number of roosters and a large number of hens, at times up to 9 or more. Without this ability, the breeders will not be able to maintain their breeding lines and will not be able to participate successful within poultry exhibition/shows.</p> <p data-bbox="263 1592 767 1727">Believe Council is effectively using a woke policy process to demonise this hobby and persecute poultry owners and as such, are looking for “an easy way out” for dealing with a neighbour complaint.</p>	<p data-bbox="794 712 1279 846">Council sought formal input through its standard public exhibition process. Under the draft policy, the keeping of hens is still an allowable activity within Zones R1, R2 and R3.</p> <p data-bbox="794 880 1297 1149">Barking dogs are managed by Council Rangers on a case-by-case basis and utilise the nuisance dog provisions under the Companion Animals Act 1998. Also, NSW legislation - State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development), does not support the keeping of roosters within R1, R2 & R3 zones. The legislation does not hold the same position regarding the keeping of dogs within these zones.</p> <p data-bbox="794 1178 1289 1559">Council does support poultry breeders within the LGA. The adoption of this policy allows the continued activities of poultry hobbyist to breed poultry for display and competition, within zones suited to having roosters and larger numbers of hens. These larger block sizes assist breeders to meet their obligations under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO Act) concerning offensive noise, reducing the impact on surrounding residents. If complaints are received, they will still be assessed by Council Officers against the offensive noise provisions of the POEO Act.</p> <p data-bbox="794 1592 1289 1915">The keeping of roosters to sustain breeding lines is not an activity that is suitable in high density residential living. Council must consider the changing circumstances within society and the impacts of certain activities upon surrounding residents. Societal changes include working from home and shift workers, reduced block sizes and reduction in yard space, dual occupancy and subdivision of existing blocks all have a cumulative effect relating to the impact of offensive noise on residents. Council's policies must be reviewed</p>

	<p>and if necessary revised to keep up with these societal changes and expectations.</p> <p>The State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) came into force in 2008. It provides clear guidance regarding the keeping of fowl and poultry.</p>
<p>Submission 2 from a member of the public who requested anonymity.</p> <p>Believes Council should also include Zone R5 within the exhibited policy as Offensive Noise from roosters is also experienced within this zone.</p>	<p>R5 zones are of significant size (generally 4000 sqm or larger) allowing many residences who purchase these blocks extra lifestyle activities, including the keeping of poultry. Consideration by Council has been given for residences within R5 zones to continue to keep roosters, allowing for the continuing of activities associated with poultry breeding and displaying. The extra size associated with these blocks allows more scope to manage and control activities which may create offensive noise such as the housing of roosters. Complaints received relating to offensive noise from roosters will still be assessed by Council Officers to determine if the noise constitutes offensive noise under the POEO Act.</p>

Submission 3 – Late submission received 2 July 2024 from Tony Hellyer Tony Hellyer is a poultry breeder and raised the same concerns as Gavin Newton	Council's response to submission 3 is addressed in Council's response to submission 1.
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CONCLUSION:

Bathurst Regional Council has considered the noise impact associated with the keeping of roosters within R1, R2, R3 zones on the community. It is recommended the draft Policy – Keeping of Roosters be adopted as exhibited.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Nil

BATHURST COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN – OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES:

Objective 6: Community leadership and collaboration.

Strategy 6.3 Advocate for our community.

Strategy 6.4 Meet legislative and compliance requirements.

Strategy 6.5 Be open and fair in our decisions and our dealings with people.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

02 **Consult** - to obtain public feedback on alternatives and/or decisions

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Policy - Keeping of Roosters [9.1.1.1 - 1 page]
2. Submissions [9.1.1.2 - 6 pages]

MINUTE

RESOLUTION NUMBER: POL2024-26

MOVED: Cr I North SECONDED: Cr A Smith

RESOLVED:

That Council adopt the draft 'Keeping of Roosters' Policy.

8.2 DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES AND FINANCE'S REPORT

8.2.1. COUNCIL POLICY REVIEW - POLICIES REVIEWED WITH NO OR MINIMAL CHANGES IDENTIFIED

File No: 11.00006

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- (a) adopt the following Policies as amended:
- i) Insurance - Public Liability Insurance
 - ii) Insurance - Public Liability - Ex-gratia Payments
 - iii) Protected Interest Disclosures (PID)

REPORT:

As part of Council's governance procedures, a program to review all Council policies every two years has been implemented.

Policies with no or minimal changes

The following Council Policies have recently been reviewed. As part of the review, it was identified there were no/or minimal changes to be made, and therefore the policies are not required to be placed on public display or formally readopted by Council.

Policy Reviewed	Action	New Renewal Date
Insurance – Public Liability Insurance (Attachment 1)	Addition of small amount of text to paragraph under 'minor works'.	August 2026
Insurance – Public Liability – Ex-gratia Payments (Attachment 2)	No changes	August 2026
Protected Interest Disclosures (PID) (Attachment 3)	Updated objective, new formatting/style, updated body of text, updated staff tables.	August 2026

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Nil

BATHURST COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN – OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES:

Objective 6: Community leadership and collaboration.

Strategy 6.4 Meet legislative and compliance requirements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

01 **Inform** - to provide the public with balanced and objective information to help them understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Insurance Public Liability Insurance REVIEWED AUGUST 2024 [9.2.1.1 - 2 pages]
2. Insurance Public Liability Ex gratia Payments REVIEWED AUGUST 2024 [9.2.1.2 - 2 pages]
3. Policy Protected Interest Disclosures PID UPDATED July 2024 [9.2.1.3 - 20 pages]

MINUTE

RESOLUTION NUMBER: POL2024-27

MOVED: Cr M Hogan SECONDED: Cr I North

RESOLVED:

That Council:

- (a) adopt the following Policies as amended:
 - i) Insurance - Public Liability Insurance
 - ii) Insurance - Public Liability - Ex-gratia Payments
 - iii) Protected Interest Disclosures (PID)

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

MINUTE

Cr Hogan – Policy Meetings – Spoke to Policy meetings being a waste of time and that the new Council should review whether they are held.

Cr Taylor – Mitchell Highway/Cardinia Ave – Spoke to the bus stopping location that is impacting sight lines. Asked if buses must stop at a designated bus stop? Noted that this is impacting on residential access.

DES advised that buses do not have to have a designated bus stop to stop, but they must operate safely. Noted that he will make enquiries and advise Councillors.

Cr North – Newbridge/Caloola Road – Noted that the Newbridge/Caloola Road reseal works are starting to break up and that they did not deal with the existing problems. Requested that staff go and inspect.

DES advised as to the impacts of recent weather. Noted he will provide further advice to Councillors.

Cr Burke – Pump track Raglan - Spoke to positive feedback received from the Raglan community on the pump track that has been built.

Mayor – Line Marking Master Plan update requested – Asked for an update on the Line Marking master plan.

DES advised that plans have been drafted and are being reviewed. Once draft plans are completed, they will be circulated to Councillors, they will then go to the Traffic Committee.

10. MEETING CLOSE

MINUTE

The Meeting closed at 6:22 pm.

CHAIR:

POLICY:	INSURANCE - PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE
DATE ADOPTED:	Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #XXX Policy Meeting 6 November 2024 Resolution No. POL2024- Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #9.3.6 Council 21 September 2022 Resolution Number. ORD2022-331 Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #1 Policy 5 December 2012 Council 6 February 2013 Minute Book No. 11477 Director Corporate Services Report #1 Policy 1 December 2004, Council 8 December 2004 Minute Book No.9416 (former BCC Policy)
ORIGINAL ADOPTION:	Director Corporate Services Report #1 Policy 1 December 2004, Council 8 December 2004 Minute Book No. 9416 (former BCC Policy)
FILE REFERENCE:	11.00039/031, 03.00006
OBJECTIVE:	To ensure the protection of Council's assets through appropriate public liability coverage

Policy

Bathurst Regional Council requires all contractors, subcontractors, event promoters (excluding events requiring full Mount Panorama circuit closure for speed events), leaseholders, stallholders, hirers (in the case of a meeting room/space, event or gallery space in a Council building), artists participating in an artist-in-residence program or artists present at the time of an art exhibition are to have Public Liability Insurance with a minimum coverage of \$20 Million. Exceptions to requiring \$20 Million Public Liability Insurance are outlined below.

Bathurst Regional Council should be noted as an interested party on all Public Liability Insurance Policies held by third parties where possible. If an insurance Policy expires, or Insurer changes during the term of engagement, Council must receive a copy of the updated Certificate of Currency.

Where Council is undertaking a contract works policy i.e., where a contractor is undertaking work on Council's behalf rather than as a third party, request should be made that Council appear as a co-insured on the contractor's liability policy, to allow Council full access to the policy if required.

Confirmation of Public Liability Insurance Policy in the form of a Certificate of Currency, must be provided to Council prior to the commencement of any work, use, service or activity.

Minor works

Where the work being completed by a contractor or subcontractor is less than \$20,000, or is otherwise deemed to represent a very low risk to Council, Council will normally seek advice from its insurance provider before accepting a lower Public Liability amount.

Use of Mt Panorama Racing Circuit

Bathurst Regional Council requires all event promoters (for events requiring full Mount Panorama circuit closure for speed events) to have Public Liability Insurance with a minimum coverage of \$30 Million or other amount specified by the Office of Sport Permit.

Children's Services (including Family Day Care Scheme)

Clause 29 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* requires a minimum of \$10 Million Public Liability Insurance to be held by each Approved Provider of a centre based childcare service, or a Family Day Care Scheme.

Clause 30 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* requires each family day care educator to hold Public Liability Insurance with a minimum value of \$10 Million.

POLICY:	INSURANCE - PUBLIC LIABILITY – EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS
DATE ADOPTED:	Director Corporate Services & Finance Report #X.X.X Policy Meeting 6 November 2024 Resolution No. POL2024-XXX Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #9.3.6 Ordinary Council Meeting 21 September 2022 Resolution No. ORD2022-331 Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #1 Policy 5 December 2012 Council 6 February 2013 Minute Book No. 11477
ORIGINAL ADOPTION:	Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #5 Council 19 October 2005 Minute Book No. 9677
FILE REFERENCE:	03.00006
OBJECTIVE	To establish a sound position for Council when dealing with public Liability claims that have been denied by Council.

It is important the Council's position when dealing with Public Liability Claims that have been denied by the Insurer is established. The reason for the denial by the Insurer is based on the fact that no legal liability is attributed to Council. This decision is based on the law of negligence.

In some circumstances Council may face a situation where a moral obligation may exist, and it may be considered expedient to meet certain claims. However, Council must bear in mind that the insurer will in all likelihood offer no protection as soon as liability is admitted by Council. Additionally, any ex-gratia payment by Council will weaken any subsequent defence that may arise in the future, and the responsibility will then rest with Council.

At the same time, some simple claims may arise, where there is no likelihood of repercussions and the cost of the claim may be less than the cost of staff time to investigate the claim. In such cases it is proposed:

1. That Council take no action on claims for personal injury or those that may lead to a subsequent claim for personal injury, that have been refused by the Insurer.
2. That in the case of claims for property damage up to \$2,000 which are denied by the Insurer. If, in the opinion of the General Manager the claim has no possibility of any future liability and in addition a moral liability exists, or it is considered expedient to resolve, an ex-gratia payment on an without admission of liability and without prejudice basis be made upon the signing of a release.

3. That Council stand by the decision of the Insurer in respect to any claims for property damage in excess of \$2,000.

Special Considerations

1. In order that Council fully protects itself it should stand by the decision of the Insurer. As previously indicated, failure to take this action, may result in Council being held liable for any award that may be given if a claim is pursued through the courts, without any protection from the Insurer.
2. If Council agreed to make available an ex-gratia payment for property damage on a without admission of liability and prejudice basis, following denial by the Insurer, it should be clear that there should be no possibility of any future liability arising.

Before any such payment is made, the claimant should be requested to investigate other forms of recovery, (i.e. through personal insurance). In these circumstances, the private insurer may settle the claim, and the commercial decision is then made whether to pursue the claim against Council. If the claimant remains out of pocket - i.e. for the excess, they may seek recovery from Council.

In either of the above circumstances, the payment should be made upon the signing of a release, and the limit of such claims should be \$2,000, which are to be approved by the General Manager.

3. In the case of claims in excess of \$2,000 Council should stand by the decision of the Insurer.

POLICY:	GIFTS & BENEFITS
DATE ADOPTED:	Director Corporate Services & Finance Report #XXX Policy Meeting 6 November 2024 Resolution No. POL2024-XXX Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #8.2.9.1 Council 2 February 2022 Resolution No ORD2022-43 Council 16 February 2022 Resolution No ORD2022-55 Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #8.3.5 Council 22 September 2021 Resolution No ORD2021-330 Council 20 October 2021 Resolution No ORD2021-349
ORIGINAL ADOPTION:	Director Corporate Service & Finance's Report #1 Policy 6 September 2006, Council 20 September 2006 Minute Book No. 9950
FILE REFERENCE:	18.00013
OBJECTIVE:	To clearly define the parameters relating to the acceptance of gifts and benefits by Councillors and staff of Bathurst Regional Council.

Summary

This Policy supports Council's Code of Conduct and provides procedures and guidance to Councillors and Staff for managing gifts and benefits. Councillors and staff of Council must comply at all times with this policy.

Policy

Councillors and staff must not:

- Seek or accept a bribe or other improper inducement and/or
- By virtue of your position acquire a personal profit or advantage which has a monetary value.

Councillors and staff must not seek or accept any payment, gift or benefit intended or likely to influence, or that could be reasonably perceived by an impartial observer as intended or likely to influence you to:

- Act in a particular way (including making a particular decision)
- Fail to act in a particular circumstance; and
- Otherwise deviate from the proper exercise of your official duties.

Gifts and benefits of value:

Councillors and staff must:

- never accept an offer of money, regardless of the amount
- not accept gifts and benefits that have more than a nominal or token value (more than \$100 from the same person or organisation over a 12-month period)
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that your immediate family members do not receive gifts or benefits that could appear to an impartial observer to be an attempt to influence or secure a favour. Immediate family members include parents, spouses, children and siblings.

Provided at Appendix 1 are some examples of gifts or benefits of value.

In circumstances where a gift of value cannot reasonably be refused or returned, Councillors and staff may accept the gift but disclose it immediately to the General Manager or his delegate, or the Mayor, who will then record it in the Council's Gifts Register. Disclosure will be by completion of the Record of Gifts and Benefits Form provided as Appendix 2.

Examples of circumstances where a gift cannot reasonably be refused or returned include anonymous gifts received through the mail or left for the Council official without a return address, gifts accepted for cultural, protocol or other reasons, where returning it would be inappropriate or a gift received in a public forum where attempts to refuse or return the gift would cause significant embarrassment.

Gifts and benefits of nominal value

You may accept gifts or benefits of a nominal or token value¹ that do not create a sense of obligation on your part.

Provided at Appendix 1 are some examples of gifts or benefits of nominal or token value.

Procurement

Individuals who have any role in the procurement process e.g., raising of orders, authorisation of orders and approval of payments to suppliers, must **NOT** accept any gifts of **ANY** value that emanate from this procurement role.

Should a gift be received or offered this should be reported immediately to your supervisor and the corporate governance section.

Gifts Register

The General Manager will establish and maintain the Council's Gifts Register that will as a minimum contain the following information:

- Gift recipient
- Nature of gift
- Estimated value (if available)
- Person giving gift
- Reason for gift

Returns of interest

Councillors and staff who are designated persons must by law disclose any gift(s) received in the period up to 30 June in each year. This must be disclosed in the disclosure of interests returns required under Clause 4.21 of Council's adopted Code of Conduct.

Appendix 1

Gifts and benefits of value

- These include tickets to major sporting events, corporate hospitality at a corporate facility at a sporting venue, free or discounted products for personal use, the frequent use of facilities such as gyms, use of holiday homes, free or discounted travel and free training sessions, and/or
- Situations in which the appearance may be created that any person or body, through the provision of hospitality or benefits of any kind, is securing or attempting to influence or secure a favour from you or the council.
- See also Clauses 6.9 and 6.10 of Council's adopted Code of Conduct.

Gifts and benefits of nominal value

Generally speaking, these include:

- Gifts of single bottles of reasonably priced alcohol to individual council officials at end of year functions, public occasions or in recognition of work done (such as providing a lecture / training session / address);
- Free or subsidised meals of a modest nature, and/or beverages provided infrequently (and/or reciprocally) that have been arranged primarily for, or in connection with, the discussion of official business;
- Refreshments of a modest nature, provided at conferences where you are a speaker;
- Ties, scarves, coasters, tie pins, diaries, chocolates or flowers; and
- Invitations to appropriate out of hours "cocktail parties" or social functions organised by groups, such as council committees and community organisations.
- See also Clause 6.8 of Council's adopted code of Conduct.

**Appendix 2
Record of Gifts and Benefits Form**

Date: ____/____/____

Name of Recipient of Gift:

Department:

Description of Gift Received:

Estimated Value (if known):

Person providing Gift and Organisation to which they belong

Name:

Organisation:

Reason for Gift (if known):

Noted by General Manager: _____
(Signature)

Date Noted: _____

<p><u>OFFICE USE ONLY</u></p> <p>Page No: _____</p>
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POLICY:	TRANSPORT – CORRIDOR OVER THE BLUE MOUNTAINS
DATE ADOPTED:	Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #X.X.X Policy Meeting 6 November 2024 Resolution No. POL2024-XXX Director Corporate Services & Finance's Report #1 Policy 5 December 2012 Council 6 February 2013 Minute Book No. 11477
ORIGINAL ADOPTION:	Director Corporate Services Report #1 Policy 1 December 2004, Council 8 December 2004 Minute Book No. 9416 (former BCC Policy)
FILE REFERENCE:	07.00017, 41.00089
OBJECTIVE:	To continue to lobby for an upgrade of the transport corridor over the Blue Mountains.

Council supports the position of the Central NSW Joint Organisation with respect to the transport corridor over the Blue Mountains. The JO's current position is:

Key Message:

1. There must be progress on a safe swift and secure link between Central NSW and Sydney for both passenger and freight, seeking:
 - a. a similar level for service as communities to the north and south of Sydney as well as those west of Brisbane;
 - b. to have speeds of 100k along the route and able to service High Productivity Vehicles;
 - c. to have the corridor sequestered for a future upgrade of a safe swift link between Sydney and Central NSW;
 - d. a multi modal approach to shorten journey times including faster rail; and
 - e. a strategic approach including the rewiring NSW and its impacts on the east-west link of the Blue Mountains.

Sub-messages:

- 1.1. A safe swift connection and secure between Sydney and Central NSW is a priority of the CNSWJO Board. In terms of speed – this means 100kph.
- 1.2. Build this safe swift link now and development will follow, like the M5 and the M2 into the Central Coast.
- 1.3. Corridors needs to be set aside now for development in the future, particularly Kurrajong to M7.
- 1.4. There are more than thirteen kilos of studies on the Bells Line. What is needed now is action.
- 1.5. Taking a staged approach to the development of the Bells Line is sensible.

- 1.6. The CNSWJO Board fully supports the \$2.5b upgrades to the Great Western Highway between Lithgow and Katoomba but has concerns that speeds along this alignment are slowing down.
- 1.7. 80% of the freight by road from Central NSW goes through Lithgow.
- 1.8. Tourism is the third largest industry in Central NSW and totally constrained by transport options most particularly congestion on the Great Western Highway.
- 1.9. Given the significant population increases projected by both the State and Federal Governments, several routes including the Bells Line will be needed for the expansion of Sydney.
- 1.10. A second crossing of the Hawkesbury near Richmond should be part of the considerations of the route.
- 1.11. The corridor needs to be secured now as the costs every day of growth in the north west of Sydney will only increase costs in the future.
- 1.12. We challenge the State Government to publish the daily costs to the tax payers of NSW of not securing the Corridor.
- 1.13. We need to leverage Inland Rail providing linkages to port including the Aerotropolis from the Parkes Special Activation Precinct.
- 1.14. This region supports the use of tunnels and new technologies if feasible.
- 1.15. The past three year La Nina rain event has exposed the fragility of both the road and rail network across the Blue Mountains.
- 1.16. Sections of the road a regularly reduced to 40kph and various other congestion management processes have been put in place, particularly on long weekends. This is having significant impacts on the visitor experience.
- 1.17. Freight impacts of renewable energy build need urgent consideration.

The Maunsell McIntyre report's findings and recommendation are also supported.

**Maunsell
McIntyre**

8.3 Option 1

8.3.1 Description

Option 1 represents a road built to motorway or near motorway standards over its full length. This implies a 4 lane, dual carriageway structure with 3m wide breakdown lanes on the outer edges.

The terrain is steep and mountainous over the eastern half of the route. For a 6km section near Mt Tomah the road must follow a narrow ridge which requires the curve radii to be reduced to 100kph standard in order for the road to stay on the ridge.

A 1.29km long section of tunnel would be required under Mt Tomah to accommodate a four lane road. In the tunnel the road cross section is assumed to reduce to 4 lanes without breakdown lanes for economy. Twin tunnels are envisaged, one for each direction of travel. The existing highway could be used to maintain access to properties, including Mt Tomah Botanical Gardens, and as a bypass for vehicles normally prohibited in tunnels, such as those carrying flammable cargo.

Gradients are significant for loaded truck traffic on the existing road that has grades up to 13%. Option 1 limits gradients to 7% or less, except at one location with 8%, which is a significant improvement.

8.3.2 Alternative Alignments

Alternative alignments were assessed for several sections of the route. Trial design and costs were prepared for each of them, using the same design standards. Alternative sections can be compared between a few common points along the route.

The alternative sections are shown in Figure 8.2 and are as follows.

Lithgow Bypasses

Two possibilities exist to go around to the north of Lithgow:

- Southern route, new route leaving GWH at Marangaroo and climbing up to the Newnes Plateau.
- Northern route, new route leaving the Mudjee road (MR 55) near Wallerawang and climbing up to the Newnes Plateau by

Berambing – Bilpin Area

The existing road could be widened to 4 lanes, or alternatively a separate alignment could be used which would leave facilities along the existing road untouched. A new alignment would be roughly parallel to the existing road.

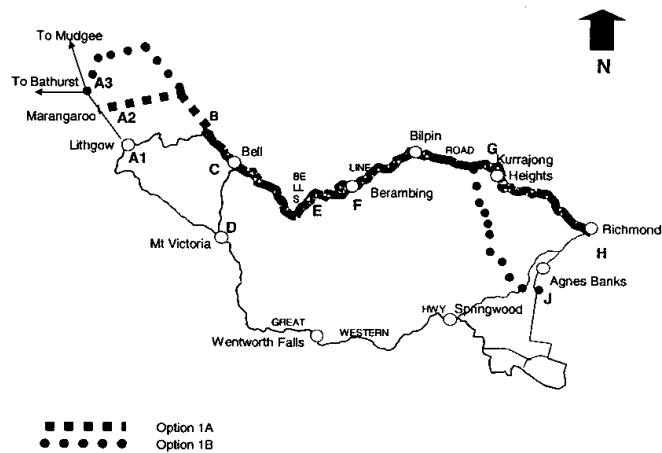


Figure 8.2: Diagram of Options 1A and 1B

Kurrajong Heights to Nepean River

The existing road up Bellbird Hill is too steep to be upgraded to the preferred standard. Two alternatives were considered:

- Alternative to Bellbird Hill involving a longer route to the south that avoids the S bends and permits flatter gradients for the steep sections. This route would still go through Kurrajong Heights township.
- An alternative route from a point west of Kurrajong Heights that runs south to near Bowen Mountain and crosses the Nepean River upstream of the Yarramundi Bridge. This route bypasses Kurrajong Heights township, Kurrajong and North Richmond.

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bypasses Kurrajong Heights township, Kurrajong and North Richmond.

8.3.3 Costs

The MXRoad model provided a preliminary alignment and basic earthworks quantities for the various alternatives for Option 1. Lengths of large bridges were also estimated. Drawings of the alignment at 1:25,000 scale are given in a separate volume of A3 size drawings.

Costs were based on the basic quantities with allowances for standard construction features and finishes, safety, drainage, signage, lighting, environmental management and project management at representative rates.

Table 8.6 summarises costs for two complete routes using different alternative sections for the Lithgow bypass and the Kurrajong Heights – Nepean River section.

Table 8.6: Preliminary Costs for Option 1 Alternatives

Section		Option 1A			Option 1B		
		length (m)	Cost \$ mill	Av rate \$mill /km	length (m)	Cost \$ mill	Av rate \$mill /km
Southern Lithgow bypass to Newnes Junction	A2 – B	18.0	309	17.2			
Northern Lithgow bypass to Newnes Junction	A3 – B				21.8	300	13.8
Newnes Junction to Bell	B-C	5.4	70	12.9	5.4	70	12.9
Bell to Mt Tomah	C – E	18.1	371	20.5	18.1	371	20.5
Mt Tomah - Berambing, incl 1.3km tunnel	E - F	3.1	227	73.6	3.1	227	73.6
Berambing to Kurrajong Hts	F - G	18.4	208	11.3	18.4	208	11.3
Kurrajong Hts to Richmond	G - H	19.1	275	14.4			
Kurrajong Hts to Agnes Banks	G - J				18.1	339	18.7
Total		82.0	1,459	17.8	84.8	1,514	17.8

To construct a freeway-standard link from Agnes Banks to the M2/Western Sydney Orbital at Blacktown would cost about \$260 million, excluding land, or a total of about \$1,770 million.

8.4 Option 2

Preliminary design results for Option 2 indicate that minimum design standards may need to be reduced to 70kph in order to retain the use of most of the existing road pavement. If higher standards were imposed, the length of reconstruction would increase substantially with associated high costs.