

Blue Mountains upgrade of the Great Western Highway involves widening the roadway to four lanes between Emu Plains and Katoomba and undertaking safety improvements between Katoomba and Mount Victoria. The upgrade was commissioned to improve travel times for motorists and provide a safer road environment for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.

The Woodford to Hazelbrook section of the Great Western Highway upgrade is being delivered by the Lawson Alliance, comprising

"In August 2013 Abigroup and Baulderstone integrated into their parent company, Lend Lease. So while we joined the Lawson Alliance as Abigroup, we are now finishing the work under the Lend Lease brand," said Alliance Manager Paul Cejka.

WOODFORD TO HAZELBROOK

After completing two earlier stages of the upgrade, The Lawson Alliance was approached to complete the Woodford to Hazelbrook (W2H) upgrade when the original contractor

PROJECT FEATURES

"In addition to widening the existing highway we also installed a concrete centre median strip and added shoulders to the roadway on both sides of the highway. An off-road pedestrian and service road path connected with pathways built in earlier stages of the project. The local railway station and shopping centre were connected with a new pedestrian bridge at Winbourne Road and local traffic entering from side roads are catered for with new protected centre bays at Clearview Parade, Park Road and Woodford Avenue. Full size bus stop bays were created and the full length of the project will be landscaped before the project is completed.

"A full stormwater system has been installed, including water detention basins. In fact managing rainwater run off during the delivery of the project was a key environmental consideration during the project," said Paul.

CHALLENGES & INNOVATIONS

According to the RMS, about 24,000 vehicles a day travel on this section of the highway. Heavy vehicles make up about 12 per cent of the traffic with more than half the road freight transport between the central west and Sydney using the Great Western Highway.

"Maintaining traffic flow and minimising disruption for local residents continues to be a daily consideration," said Paul. The narrow road corridor means there is no room for stockpiling materials and the close proximity of the worksite to local residents means strict limitations for construction hours and vibration.

"Vibration monitoring, control of dust and the management of site water were important not only because of how close the site was to local homes, but also because of the proximity to the Blue Mountains National Park," said Paul.

The route is also historically significant to both Indigenous Australians and early settlers, so heritage items were documented as they were uncovered during the works.

"From a technical perspective, we also had climactic considerations on this project. In winter we needed to adjust the concrete mix temperature so we could continue concrete placement when the temperature dropped. In summer, dust control became a factor in hot and windy weather," said Paul.

"A key achievement on the W2H upgrade was the implementation of the Lend Lease Incident and Injury Free system, which contributed to a best result achieved during 2013 of 415 work days with no lost time for injury (LTI)," said Paul. "We developed a plan for the site's journey to becoming Incident and Injury Free and encouraged all of the work groups on the project to provide feedback on how we could achieve the goal of remaining at zero LTI," he said. Work is currently expected to be completed in July 2014.

For more information contact Lend Lease, website www.lendlease.com.au

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