

Key messages from the 29 January 2026 Executive Oversight Committee (EOC)

Governance

The Wolgan Road Reconstruction Project is governed by a Project Control Group (PCG) and an Executive Oversight Committee (EOC)¹. This committee comprises senior officers from Lithgow City Council, the NSW Reconstruction Authority and Transport for NSW.

The EOC provides senior level governance, coordination and oversight to ensure the project progresses in a safe, transparent and accountable way, in line with disaster recovery funding and environmental requirements.

This governance structure ensures coordinated decision-making and accountability across all involved agencies.

EOC Key priorities

- **Restoring access:** Progressing interim works to enable reopening of the existing Wolgan Road under controlled conditions as soon as possible, including opportunities to expedite minor works, approvals and procurement.
- **Safety first:** Ensuring the reopening of the existing Wolgan Road provides adequate protections for the safety of the community and other road users.
- **Open communications:** To ensure that the Wolgan Valley community is kept informed of the deliberations of the EOC and throughout the progress of the interim reopening of Wolgan Road and the decision making process for overall project.

Summary of the 29 January 2026 EOC meeting

Senior officers from Lithgow City Council, the NSW Reconstruction Authority and Transport for NSW met on 29 January 2026 as the EOC for the Wolgan Road Reconstruction Project. A summary of the key meeting discussions and outcomes is as follows.

Interim reopening of Wolgan Road

Lithgow City Council, supported by specialist consultants, is progressing planning and design for interim works to manage the reopening of the existing Wolgan Road.

Key points agreed by the EOC include:

- Interim access will be limited to residents and business operations in the Wolgan Valley, excluding the general public.
- The interim opening will allow vehicle access including up to 12.5 metre trucks to support essential services and operations.
- Interim works will focus on safety measures, such as pavement repairs drainage works culvert upgrades, slope stabilisation measures, barriers and signage.
- These interim works will not eliminate all geotechnical hazards and risks but will take the ALARP approach in reducing risk as low as is reasonably practicable.

A Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP) developed by GHD will guide road monitoring and management post-reopening. This includes inspection regimes and actions for changing conditions, e.g., heavy rainfall.

Interim works must comply with environmental and planning requirements. These include:

¹ Prior to the 29 January 2026, the Executive Steering Committee (ESC) was renamed the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) to better reflect their remit.

- Working within existing transport infrastructure planning provisions where applicable.
- Close engagement with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other regulators.
- Using specialist environmental and Aboriginal heritage expertise for any required assessments.
- Implementing erosion sediment and environmental protection controls during works.

Subject to final approvals, finalisation of a procurement strategy and engagement of a delivery contractor by April 2026, the earliest anticipated timeframe for interim reopening is Q3 2026. Once delivery strategies are finalised, a high-level program will be shared with the community.

Planning for a permanent solution

While interim reopening efforts are underway, long-term permanent solutions are being planned simultaneously. Key points from the EOC include:

- GHD has started exploring strategic design options for a permanent solution along the existing Wolgan Road alignment.
- Multiple options will be evaluated through a structured independent evidence-based process considering safety, resilience, cost, constructability and environmental factors.
- A formal multi-criteria assessment (MCA), mutually agreed by the EOC, will compare options before a preferred solution is confirmed.
- No final decision has been made on the permanent solution at this stage.
- Community input will remain crucial as options are refined and assessed.

What the Community can expect next

The EOC confirmed ongoing engagement with the community, including:

- An online Community Webinar scheduled for 11 February 2026, focusing on interim works, safety management and the high-level program.
- Publication of key messages and updates on Council's website following EOC meetings.
- A joint agency response, at Attachment A, to recent correspondence from the Wolgan Valley Association, to be published openly for community awareness and transparency.

Further updates will be provided as key milestones are reached, including confirmation of interim works delivery arrangements and timing.

Community feedback remains important and will inform decision-making where possible.

Closing message

Council and the NSW Government acknowledge the substantial and ongoing impact of the Wolgan Road closure on the community. While reopening and restoring the road is a complex process, all agencies remain committed to:

- Restoring access as soon as practically possible.
- Improving safety outcomes.
- Delivering a long-term solution that is resilient, sustainable and community-supported.

Thank you for your continued patience and engagement as this important work progresses.

Community questions and responses – email 29Jan26

1. Why not move directly to an alliance-type delivery model for restoring the existing road?

The EOC has explored various delivery models for the permanent restoration of Wolgan Road including alliance-style arrangements. Currently, the focus is on completing strategic design and options assessment to clearly define the preferred long-term solution, including project scope, risk profile, environmental requirements and funding eligibility.

Once a permanent solution is confirmed, the EOC will evaluate the most suitable delivery approach. This will involve determining whether an alliance or other collaborative model would be advantageous. The chosen delivery model must meet funding, governance and assurance requirements while delivering value for money and accountability to government and the community.

2. Why not convene a facilitated forum of geotechnical experts and contractors to discuss solutions?

Extensive expert input has already been gathered through specialist investigations, independent technical reviews, and design development by qualified geotechnical engineers and other specialists. Each of these specialists have been appointed using procurement practices that meet the obligations placed on government by relevant legislation and internal policy. This includes members of the EOC accepting input from a community selected geotechnical expert at a meeting on 27 October 2025.

Currently the focus is on finalising interim works supported by current expert advice and progressing a structured evidence-based assessment of long-term options via the strategic design and multi-criteria assessment process. A facilitated forum will be considered on the EOC agenda as the project progresses into later design and delivery phases.

3. Why not hold urgent meetings with approval bodies or seek intervention by the Minister for Reconstruction?

Relevant approval bodies are already actively involved in the project. For instance, Interim works are progressing through established planning pathways and regulators have confirmed these pathways are suitable for the proposed scope.

The Minister for Reconstruction's powers are limited to defined legislative boundaries. While they can support coordination and recovery efforts, they don't eliminate the need to manage environmental safety and legal obligations effectively.

The approach agreed by the EOC is to collaborate with regulators to efficiently resolve issues.

4. When will the community be given a clear timetable and pathway for restoring access?

The EOC acknowledges the community's strong desire for clarity and certainty regarding the reopening timeline.

Currently, interim access is being planned first, as it offers the quickest path to restoring controlled access to the Wolgan Valley. Subject to final approvals, finalisation of a procurement strategy and engagement of a delivery contractor by April 2026, the earliest anticipated timeframe for interim reopening is Q3 2026. Once delivery strategies are finalised, a high-level program will be shared with the community.

For the permanent solution, planning and strategic design option development are underway, including detailed option assessment, a multi-criteria evaluation and ongoing regulatory engagement. Clearer timeframes for the permanent solution will be communicated once a preferred option is confirmed and approval pathways are better defined.

The community will continue to receive updates via the Council's website, public briefings and future community sessions as milestones are reached.