

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On the 30 August 2006 the NSW Minister for Roads announced the preferred route for the Oxley Highway to Kempsey Section of the Pacific Highway Upgrade. The features of the preferred route were detailed in the *Pacific Highway Upgrade – Oxley Highway to Kempsey, Preferred Route Report* (Preferred Route Report).

The preferred route generally comprised a 150m wide corridor for the length of the project, however a *wider corridor* (up to 800m in width) was adopted through Cairncross State Forest, in the Bill Hill Road area. This *wider corridor* allowed for further investigations so as to minimise impact on koala habitat, productive forestry within Cairncross State Forest, productive agricultural land, private property and utilities. Public (stakeholder) submissions were also sought on the *wider corridor*.

This report documents the process and outcomes of refining the *wider corridor* within the Bill Hill Road area, to a narrower 150m wide preferred route corridor. In order to select the route to be adopted within the *wider corridor* in the Bill Hill Road area, a corridor refinement workshop was conducted on the 28 November 2006. Three feasible route options with the *wider corridor* were assessed against each of three criteria categories;

- ▶ Functional;
- ▶ Socio Economic; and
- ▶ Natural and Cultural Environment.

The methodology in the corridor refinement workshop used for assessing the options within the *wider corridor* was similar to that used in the value management workshop in December 2005 and the route selection workshop in March 2006, when determining the preferred route.

Additional ecological studies and engineering analysis were undertaken prior to the workshop, in addition to further public submissions being sought and considered.

The corridor refinement workshop resulted in the recommendation of the modified refined Orange alignment as the preferred route in the Bill Hill Road area. The modified refined Orange alignment is shown in Figure 5.2.

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