

5. Corridor Refinement Workshop

The preferred route corridor refinement workshop was held on 28 November 2006.

5.1 Widened Corridor Route Selection Process

The route selection process involved a review of the nominated alignments in Section B against the project team route selection workshop assessment criteria, stakeholder submissions and key project risks and issues, to recommend the preferred route alignment.

The process was based upon the process, criteria and criteria weightings developed at the route selection workshop (see Section 8 of the *Preferred Route Report* and Appendix A). The process occurred as a project team workshop generally following the key steps outlined below.

1. Review all submissions and records of contacts, other relevant information, issues and risks.
2. Review nominated alignments with consideration to the route selection workshop assessment criteria (Appendix A) and confirm / adjust findings.
3. Review nominated alignments with respect to the route selection workshop “value for money” consideration and confirm / adjust findings.
4. Provide recommendation on the preferred route alignment.

In Section B/C the route selection workshop assessment results were considered for the whole of Section B and C.

In Section E, the two alignments were considered for the entire length of Section E.

Participants in the workshop included members from the RTA Pacific Highway office, RTA Major Infrastructure, RTA Environment Branch, GHD Environment team, Engineering team, Community team and Project Management team.

5.2 Assessment Criteria

The agreed assessment criteria under the functional, community and environment categories and their relevant descriptive measures are listed in Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 below.

Table 5.1 Project Team Assessment Criteria – Functional

WWC Assessment Criteria – Function			
No.	Summary Title	Descriptive Measure	Weight
A	Transport Efficiency – Light vehicles	Travel times measured in seconds.	26%
B	Engineering Risks	Length of route through floodplain/soft soils; extent of cut and fill in high grade / steep areas; extent of areas involving widening of existing cuttings.	4%
C	Transport Efficiency – Heavy vehicles	Heavy vehicle operating costs measured in cost per one way trip and cost per year.	35%

WWC Assessment Criteria – Function			
D	Re-use of existing assets	Length of existing road pavement used as highway carriageway.	0%
E	Staging opportunities	Group discussion and consensus on whether or not the route option enables staging of the works to achieve early benefits in safety, transport efficiency and /or other program objectives.	26%
F	Safety during Construction	Extent of areas where speed zones required during the works; extent of traffic interfaces with the works area.	9%
Total			100%

Table 5.2 Project Team Assessment Criteria – Community

WWC Assessment Criteria – Community			
No.	Summary Title	Descriptive Measure	Weight
A	Noise for private properties	Weighted noise impact score based on property distances from the route centre line to address existing and new noise receivers.	19%
B	Community severance / consolidation	Specifically focused on Corindi / Corindi Beach.	15%
C	Private Properties acquired	Measured in the area of private land (not farms) to be acquired and the number of affected owners.	6%
D	Structures acquired	Number of structures directly affected (possibly lost) by the route.	10%
E	Visual amenity	Agreed as a highly subjective consideration but agreed for the purpose of this assessment to be the length of the new route through high visual constraint areas.	0%
F	Commercial Business Impacts	Compatibility with existing businesses and planned projects.	13%
G	Aboriginal heritage	Significant sites and key cultural areas within the route corridor (250m).	22%
H	Non-Aboriginal heritage	Key / registered sites within the route corridor (250m).	4%
I	Loss of productive land	Land currently zoned for rural, horticultural or forest management.	10%
J	Loss of public estate	Loss of access to areas of public recreation lands.	1%
Total			100%

Table 5.3 Project Team Assessment Criteria – Environment

WWC Assessment Criteria – Environment			
No.	Summary Title	Descriptive Measure	Weight
A	SEPP 14 – impact area	Not relevant.	N/A
B	SEPP 14 – severance		N/A
C	Water Quality	Number of water courses that the route crosses as an indication of potential risk to water quality through the project route.	0%
D	Native Flora – Threatened species	Number of potential threatened Flora species within the route corridor (250m).	27%
E	Native Flora – vegetation	Area of native vegetation to be cleared.	14%
F	Native Flora – communities	Endangered Ecological Communities affected.	25%
G	Native Fauna – known threatened species	Area of habitat to be cleared of high quality / potential as an indicator and/or fauna records.	27%
H	Native Fauna – known wildlife corridors	Widening of existing severance.	7%
Total			100%

5.3 Widened Corridor Route Selection Results

5.3.1 Section B/C

The rankings and scoring of the refined Orange and Orange options in the combined section B/C obtained during the route selection workshop were confirmed in light of the reviewed heavy vehicle operating costs and stakeholder submissions obtained following the announcement of the preferred route in August 2006.

Table 5.4 demonstrates the confirmed rankings of the refined Orange and Orange option in Sections B and C. The results for Sections B and C were compared to determine a preference for the wide corridor section.

Table 5.4 Workshop Rankings (Sections B and C) ¹

Section		Functional	Community	Environment	Cost (\$)
B	Orange	3	2	4	\$147M ²
	Refined Orange	1	1	4	\$159M ²
C	Orange	4	2	1	
	Refined Orange	1	1	1	

¹ The RSW also assessed the blue, green and purple. This workshop confirmed the previous RSW findings from which the refined orange option was identified as the preferred route in section B and C.

² Combined cost for section B and C.

The workshop group recommended that the refined orange be confirmed as the preferred alignment in Sections B and C for the Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing upgrade of the Pacific Highway.

In addition to the workshop findings, the following key points were noted:

Community Submissions

- ▶ All directly affected property owners that indicated a preference in the wider corridor supported the westerly alignment (refined Orange option);
- ▶ The North Coast Advisory committee for the National Parks and Wildlife Service expressed a preference for the Orange option because of the higher level of clearing required by the westerly option (refined Orange option); and
- ▶ Department of Environment and Conservation had been briefed about the extent of environmental studies undertaken to select the preferred route and that the wide corridor section would be refined further.

Environmental

- ▶ The preferred route alignment addresses the indigenous community request to not impact the known indigenous burial site in Section B;

Functional

- ▶ Additional assessment of heavy vehicle operating costs confirmed the functional benefits of the refined Orange option over the Orange option in Section B/C.

Community

- ▶ The noise assessment supports the selection of the refined Orange option.

5.3.2 Section E

The following key points for community consultation environmental, functional and community categories resulted from discussion during the meeting for Section E.

Community Consultation

- ▶ The service station owner at Halfway Creek expressed a preference for closer proximity to the highway to increase the visibility of his business to passing motorist (preference for the blue/orange option).

Environmental

- ▶ The blue/orange option performs better than the refined orange because it uses more of the existing highway corridor, minimising vegetation clearing;

Functional

- ▶ The blue/orange option would require reconstruction of the highway and not duplication to meet the design standards for the Pacific Highway upgrade (existing highway is on non-compliant horizontal and vertical alignment); and
- ▶ The refined orange option performs marginally better against the functional criteria than the combined blue/orange option.

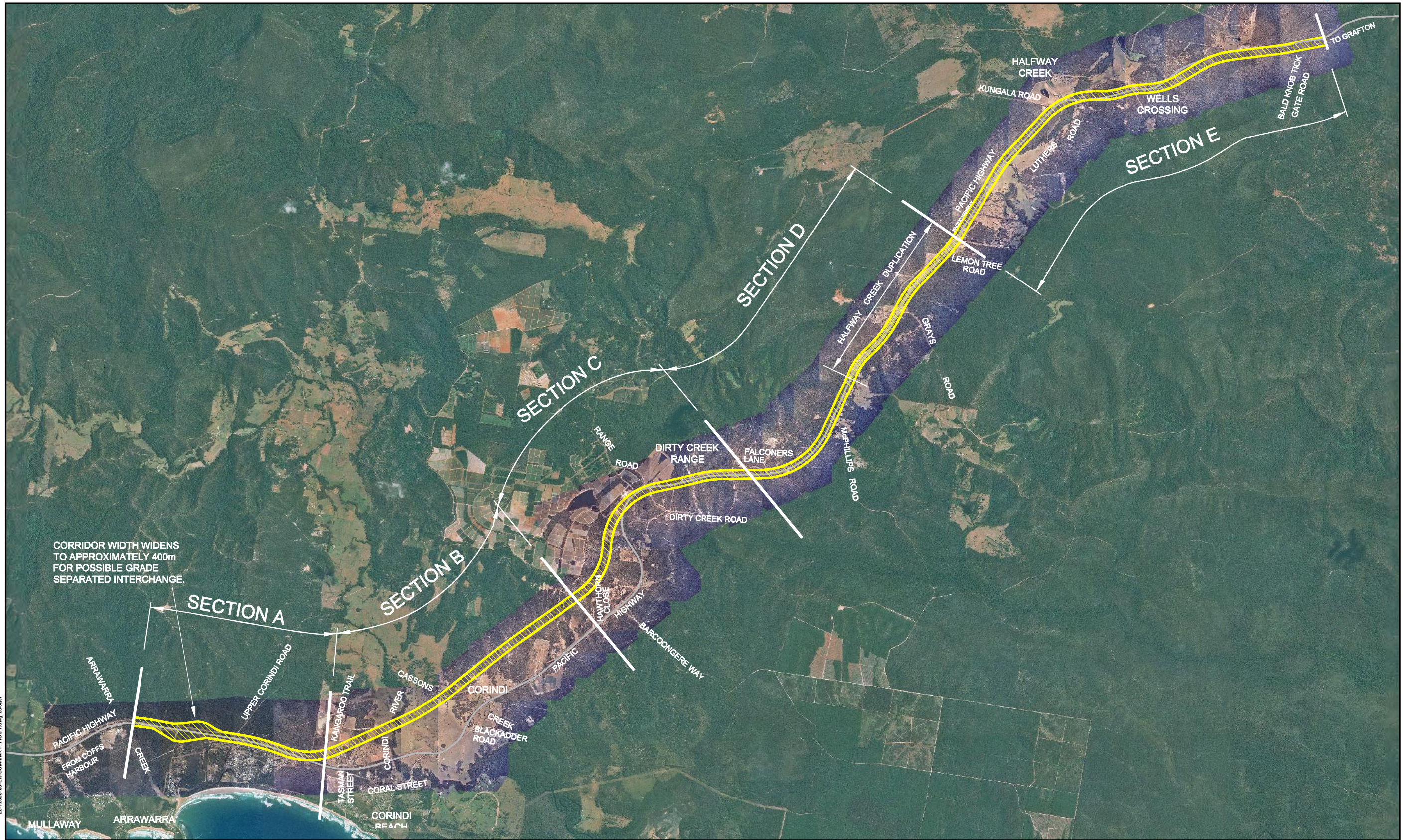
Community

- ▶ The uncertainty of the location of the bora site (see) near Halfway Creek was identified as the key community issue in Section E;
- ▶ Extensive site visits and a walkover with members of the Aboriginal community has been undertaken in an attempt to locate the bora site at Halfway Creek;
- ▶ The group agreed that there was considerable risk in selecting the refined orange option in Section E because of the uncertainty of the location of the bora site;
- ▶ The blue/orange option is preferable as it bypasses the bora site; and
- ▶ The Department of Environment and Conservation's Aboriginal consultation guidelines are being followed, with an Aboriginal focus group to be held early 2007.
- ▶ The following conclusions were made during the workshop for Section E:
 - ▶ The blue/orange option performs better on environment criteria;
 - ▶ The blue/orange option performs better on community criteria;
 - ▶ The refined orange option is marginally better functionally; and

On balance the blue/orange option was chosen as the preferred route.

Figure 5.1 shows the refined preferred route for the full length of the project, Figure 5.2 shows the refined preferred route in Section B / C, and Figure 5.3 the refined preferred route in Section E.

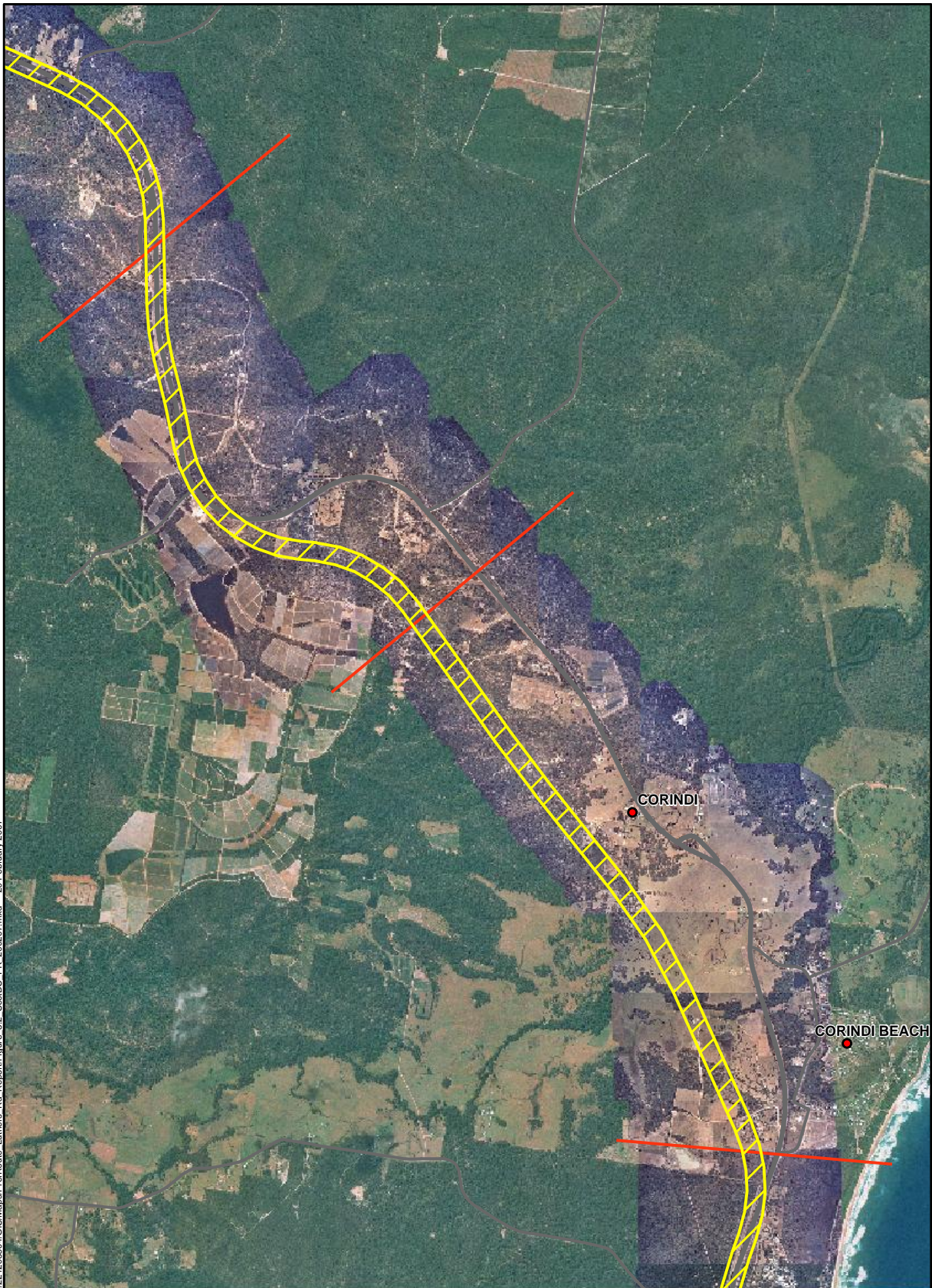
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<p>0 1 2 3 Kilometres</p> <p>Map Projection: Universal Transverse Mercator Horizontal Datum: Geodetic Datum of Australia 1994 Grid: Map Grid of Australia, Zone 56</p>		<p>LEGEND</p> <p> 150m wide Corridor (unless noted otherwise)</p> <p> Existing Highway</p>
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Spatial layers courtesy of Coffs Harbour City Council, NSW Department of Lands, NSW Roads and Traffic Authority, Geoscience Australia, NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, NSW Department of Primary Industries.



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<p>SCALE 1:48000</p> <p>Map Projection: Universal Transverse Mercator Horizontal Datum: Geodetic Datum of Australia 1994 Grid: Map Grid of Australia, Zone 56</p>	<p>GRID N</p>	<p>Legend</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> Section Breaks</td> <td> Locality</td> <td> Highway</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Preferred Route 150m Corridor</td> <td> Hill/Mountain</td> <td> Main Rd</td> </tr> </table>		Section Breaks	Locality	Highway	Preferred Route 150m Corridor	Hill/Mountain	Main Rd
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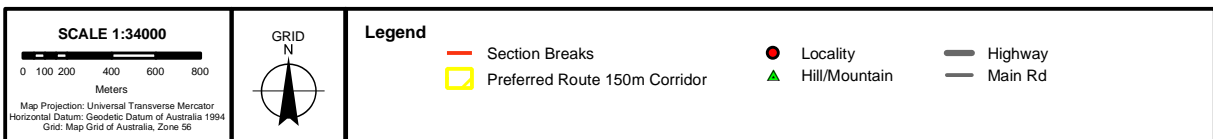
Spatial layers courtesy of Coffs Harbour City Council, NSW Department of Lands, NSW Roads & Traffic Authority, Geoscience Australia.

Section B/C - Preferred Route

Figure 5.2



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Spatial layers courtesy of Coffs Harbour City Council, NSW Department of Lands, NSW Roads & Traffic Authority, Geoscience Australia.