Completing the upgrade of the Pacific Highway

Identification of a preferred route to upgrade the Pacific Highway between the F3 Freeway (near Berowra Vale) and Raymond Terrace is a key step in progressing the completion of the upgrade of the highway.

With the $23.2 billion Pacific Highway Upgrade Program in place since 1996, a total 223 kilometres of the highway are now double-line divided roads. As of August 2006, a further 380 kilometres of new highway are under construction, have been approved for construction or have had a preferred upgrade route identified.

This leaves only 100 kilometres of existing highway with a preferred route still to be identified.

The Pacific Highway is an Australian National Network road. For the 10 years to 2006, $2.3 billion has been invested by the NSW and Australian governments. Over the past 10 years, the NSW Government has committed $4.6 billion, and the Australian Government $6.9 billion.

In December 2005, the NSW and Australian governments announced a joint funded program of $900 million for the next three years to 2008. In May 2006, the Federal Budget announced an additional $5.62 billion, matched by NSW for the period to the end of 2009. This increased the total value of the joint investment for the Pacific Highway Upgrade Program from $1.960 billion to $13 billion.

This community update

This community update describes the preferred route for the F3 Freeway to Raymond Terrace upgrade and the reasons why the preferred route was chosen. The Preferred route is on display until Thursday 16 October 2006.

Detailed reports available

The F3 Freeway to Raymond Terrace Preferred Route Report and associated working papers document the process involved in the selection of the preferred route. The report explains how the route options were identified, what criteria were applied in their assessment, and the selection made.

The Preferred route selection process involved an extensive public consultation process and was informed by a series of workshops and public consultations. The Preferred route is on display until Thursday 16 October 2006.

Project staff will be available to discuss the preferred route in more detail at the following locations:

- New South Wales, 231 Old counting Street, Raymond Terrace 3135, 8am-9am.
- Port Stephens Council, 1A Adelaide Street, Raymond Terrace, 3135, 9am-10am.
- Raymond Terrace Motor Registry, 33 Williams Street, Raymond Terrace, 3135, 9am-10am.
- NSW Public Works Office, 31 Prince Street, Grafton, 9am-10am.

Staffed offices will be available to discuss the preferred route in more detail at the following locations:

- New South Wales, 231 Old counting Street, Raymond Terrace 3135, 8am-9am.
- Port Stephens Council, 1A Adelaide Street, Raymond Terrace, 3135, 9am-10am.
- Raymond Terrace Motor Registry, 33 Williams Street, Raymond Terrace, 3135, 9am-10am.
- NSW Public Works Office, 31 Prince Street, Grafton, 9am-10am.

What happens next?

Further socio-economic and environmental investigations will be undertaken to refine the design for the preferred route. Approval of this proposal will be sought under Part 4A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. An Environmental Assessment will be carried out on the proposed preferred route. The Environmental Assessment will be published for community comment prior to an assessment by the Department of Planning for approval by the Minister for Planning.

For more information contact the RFA on 8333 3333.

RFA Freeway to Raymond Terrace

31 Adelaide St, Raymond Terrace, 2315.

For further information phone 02 4924 3291.

THE PREFERRED ROUTE

The preferred route for the P3 freeway to Raymond Terrace upgrade identifies a 15km-wide corridor. The corridor widens at interchange locations.

The preferred route was chosen as it provides the best overall balance between functional, ecological, social, economic considerations and provides for staging opportunities.

Section 1 (option A1)

- Offers two options identified in section 1, option A1 is preferred as it has the following advantages:
  - Clover to join Ravensworth Drive and the Chatham Pipe Line. This connects major infrastructure into a smaller corridor.
  - There is a greater distance between Hotham Swamp and the upgrade.
  - Provides opportunities for sustainable construction in the form of recycled material from Black Hill as embankment fills the adjacent section.
  - Longer of road through cuttings minimizes road impacts on nearby residents.
  - Less fragmentation of native vegetation and wildlife corridors.
  - Reduces visual impact on Black Hill community.
  - No new bridging works in A1, while option A3 would have new bridging works over the railway and the New England Highway.

Section 2 (option B2)

- Of the two options identified in section 2, option B2 is preferred as it has the following advantages:
  - Has the shortest length of road through steep soil and flood affected areas.
  - Requires the least length of bridging to mitigate floodwater.
  - Crosses the Main Northern Railway line (New England Highway and the Hunter River with one bridge)
  - Has less impact on agricultural land.

TYPICAL CROSS SECTION

This cross section shows typical alignment of the P3 freeway. The alignment varies at interchange locations.