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The southern part of the Bucca Valley Section lies within the alignment of previously reviewed options associated with the Central Corridor (Connell Wagner, 2002c). That report identified that the vegetation within the Southern Section of the valley provides relatively large areas of known or potential habitat for vulnerable / endangered species and provides several major wildlife linkages from the Orara Valley to the coast. The Orara Ornithological Area also crosses the southern end of the Bucca valley section of the study area.

2.4 Sherwood / Corindi Section

Figure 2.2 illustrates the rugged nature of the terrain in the southern part of the Clarence Valley LGA to the west of its boundary with Coffs Harbour LGA. Two roughly parallel north/south ridges extend from the Sherwood Nature Reserve forming a deep valley between them. The terrain gradually flattens out to the north of the ridges in the Upper Corindi area with more hilly and undulating land on the eastern side of the study area in the vicinity of the Corindi River.

Conglomerate State Forest and Wedding Bells State Forest border the Sherwood Nature Reserve on the northern side extending to Upper Corindi (see Figure 2.3). Figure 2.4 shows that there are several protected areas (Forestry Management Zones 1, 2 and 3a) within the Conglomerate and Wedding Bells State Forests. These forested areas form a corridor for movement of wildlife from the western side of the Corindi River to the coast. Numerous creeks and watercourses traverse the study area, as does the major watercourse, the Corindi River. These watercourses would provide important wildlife corridors and are likely to support vegetation of high to very high ecological value.

Agricultural holdings and rural residential properties exist within the valley created by the Corindi River. There are also some agricultural holdings outside the State Forests around Athol Glen, Palm Creek and Upper Corindi.

2.5 Overview

In summary, the terrain through which the CRW passes has previously been identified as posing a significant constraint in terms of engineering feasibility (Connell Wagner, 2004c). The key constraints are identified as the rugged topography, the presence of areas of high value ecological habitat within both the State Forest and the privately owned lands and the need to cross the Sherwood Nature Reserve. As a result of the presence of the escarpment and mountainous terrain associated with the Sherwood Nature Reserve, the CHCC Preferred Corridor presents similar, or potentially greater, topographical and ecological constraints to the CRW proposal.