



Failford Road to Tritton Road

Review of environmental factors - Appendix H
Concept design submissions report

May 2008

(blank page)


Document Controls

Branch / Section	RTA Environment Branch / Environmental Planning and Assessment
Project No	D/00198/C/TS/22
Document description	Pacific Highway Upgrade, Failford Road to Tritton Road, Concept Design Submissions Report

Person(s) managing this document	Person(s) writing this document
Mark Woods	Faye Hargreaves, Mark Woods

Location	File No.
G:\ENVIRONMNT\Planning and Assessment\Projects\0708\Failford Road - Pacific Highway\Failford Road - Pacific Highway\Concept design submissions\2008March27-FR2TR Concept Subs Rpt Final.doc	3M3967

Document status	Date
Final	27 March 2008

Declaration	Signed
<p>This report was prepared under the supervision of:</p> <p>Roger Fenner Project Development Manager Pacific Highway Services NSW RTA Major Infrastructure Directorate Grafton, NSW</p>	

© NSW Roads and Traffic Authority
Prepared by RTA Environment Branch
Version 1

A person using RTA Environment Branch documents or data accepts the risk of:

- Using the documents or data in electronic form without requesting and checking them for accuracy against the original hard copy version; and*
- Using the documents or data for any purpose not agreed to in writing by RTA Environment Branch.*

(blank page)

Contents

1	Introduction and background	1
1.1	Consultation during preparation of concept design.....	2
1.2	Consultation during public display of concept design	2
2	Summary of issues and responses	4
2.1	Responses to NSW Government Agency submissions.....	5
2.2	Responses to Local Government submissions	14
2.3	Responses to community submissions	14
3	Main issues raised in submissions.....	25
4	Additional commitments.....	26

(blank page)

I Introduction and background

In October 2004, the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) commenced planning for an upgrade of the Pacific Highway from Failford Road to Tritton Road, approximately 25 kilometres south of Taree on the NSW mid north coast. This upgrade would replace a 3.3 kilometre length of the existing northbound carriageway. It would raise the standard of this section to be consistent with adjoining sections of the Highway, which would improve safety and travelling conditions.

In January 1996 the NSW and Australian governments announced their joint commitment to a 10 year program to upgrade the Pacific Highway between Hexham and the Queensland border. As of the end of June 2006, a total of 233 kilometres are now double-lane divided road. The remaining 466 kilometres of highway are under construction, have been approved for construction or have had a preferred route identified. The Pacific Highway is an AusLink National Network road. Its upgrading is funded by NSW and Australian governments.

The Failford Road to Tritton Road upgrade forms part of the NSW Government's Pacific Highway Upgrading Program. The project objectives and design principles adopted for the development of the Concept Design are detailed in Section 3 of the Failford Road to Tritton Road Concept Design Report and form part of the RTA's key requirement to establish a safe and efficient road transport route from Hexham to Queensland border.

I.1 Stakeholder consultation

The needs and interests of stakeholders and the community are varied. An approach to consultation was used for the Failford Road to Tritton Road Pacific Highway upgrade project, which focused on developing good relationships with key stakeholders.

The consultation objectives as documented in the community involvement plan for Failford Road to Tritton Road Pacific Highway upgrade project were to:

- Ensure the local community, Government authorities and interest groups are kept informed of the progress of the project.
- Ensure environmental and community impacts are properly addressed.
- Consider and, where appropriate, take action on issues raised by the community and other stakeholders.
- Communicate project milestones and community benefits and likely impacts to the public.
- Advise the community through advertising, particularly if the works have an impact on traffic flow through the area.
- Advise affected stakeholders on when and how they might be affected.
- Advise affected stakeholders how they can obtain further information or communicate concerns and complaints or suggestions.

1.2 Consultation during preparation of concept design

The community involvement plan for this project involved the implementation of several different communication mechanisms to enable an effective two-way flow of information between the study team and the community. The consultation activities carried out leading up to, and during, the preparation of the concept design for this project included:

- A toll free project information line (1800 232 290).
- A community update in February 2005.
- A planning focus meeting in February 2005.
- A public information session in February 2005.
- Establishment of a community liaison group. Three meetings were held with this group at the Nahiic Agricultural Hall, in April, June and September 2005. A subsequent meeting was held at the Forster-Tuncurry Memorial Services Club during the concept design display period.
- Individual meetings with owners of potentially affected properties during July 2005. These included Pacific Blue Metal and several private land owners.
- Briefings with representatives from Great Lakes Council and Greater Taree City Council in July 2005.
- Provision of information on the RTAs website www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

1.3 Consultation during public display of concept design

The concept design for the Failford Road to Tritton Road Pacific Highway upgrade was placed on public display from Friday 10 February 2006 to Friday 17 March 2006. The public display of the concept design was widely advertised in local newspapers. Consultation activities carried out during the public display of the concept design included:

- Seven formally advertised static displays throughout the display period. These were located at the Nahiic Old Bank Centre, Greater Taree City Council offices, Great Lakes Council offices, Forster RTA Motor Registry, Taree RTA Motor Registry, RTA Hunter Regional Office; and RTA Pacific Highway Office.
- Three staffed displays. These were held at the Nahiic Old Bank Centre on Tuesday 21 February, and Forster RTA Motor Registry and Taree RTA Motor Registry on Wednesday 22 February. The staffed displays provided an opportunity for members of the community to individually discuss issues of concern with the project team.
- The production of 1500 community update brochures providing information on the concept design that were distributed to all identified stakeholders and made available to the general public at each of the display locations. A copy of the community update brochure was also sent to any person that contacted the toll free project information line.
- Personal delivery of a letter and information on the concept design to potentially affected land owners.
- A community liaison group meeting held on 2 March 2006 at the Forster-Tuncurry Memorial Services Club;
- Briefings with individuals and groups on request.
- An update on the RTAs website www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

This Submissions Report details the consultation undertaken during the exhibition of the concept design and documents the submissions received and provides responses to the issues raised in those submissions.

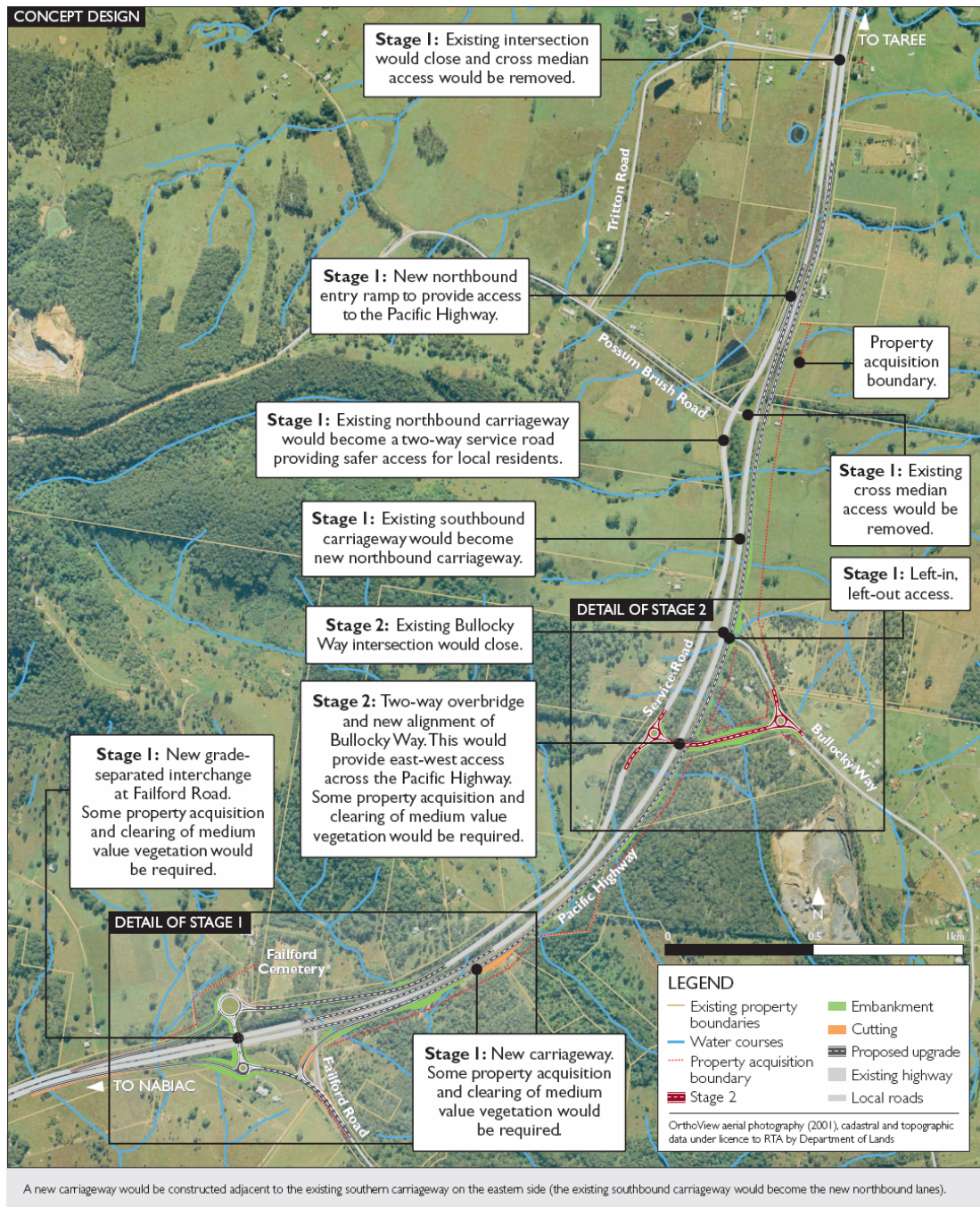


Figure I.1: Concept Design, Failford Road to Tritton Road, Pacific Highway.

2 Summary of issues and responses

The RTA received a total of 45 written submissions from 31 organisations or households on the displayed Concept Design for the Failford Road to Tritton Road Pacific Highway upgrade. Seventeen telephone calls to the toll free project information line were recorded during the public display period. The key issues raised in written submissions, during telephone calls to the project information line and during meetings with the project team are summarised in this Chapter. Table 2.1 lists all respondents and each respondent's allocated submission number. The table also indicates where in Chapter 2 their issues have been addressed.

Each issue raised within a submission was identified as a broad issue (eg. biodiversity, contaminated land, etc.). Consideration of each issue was undertaken by the RTA and a response is provided.

Table 2.1: List of respondents

Respondent	Submission No.	Section where issues are addressed	Issue No.
Department of Environment and Conservation	44	Flora & Fauna, Indigenous Heritage, Noise Issues, Air Quality, Water Quality, Environmental Management	6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
Department of Natural Resources	06	Concept Design	5
Department of Primary Industries	41	Planning & Land Use	2, 3, 4, 17
ForestsNSW	34	Planning & Land Use	1
Great Lakes Council	43	Planning & Land Use	25
Armstrong, C and R	02, 08, 26, 32	Planning & Land Use, Concept Design	26, 28, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 49, 52, 53, 54, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64
Banks, J and R	18, 31	Concept Design, Safety Issues	26, 45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63, 64, 65
Black, G and M	07, 27	Planning & Land Use, Concept Design	26, 45, 54, 57, 62, 63
Campbell, T and J	25	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Cassar, M J	13	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Chisholm, D	42	Property, Communications	68, 69, 74
Colomb, Y	21	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Conroy, B	03	Concept Design	46, 52
Croak, K	37	Noise Issues	71
Daniels, G	05	Planning & Land Use, Concept Design	26, 47, 54, 57
Davis, R	10	Concept Design	55

Faulder, C and J	12	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Gregory, R and S	24	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Hopkins, N and D	15	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Huntingford, H and J	19, 39	Concept Design, Community Health	45, 47, 48, 49, 50, 54, 57, 62, 63, 64, 70, 72
Maher, S	01	Planning & Land Use, Concept Design	26, 27, 38
McGarry, J and S	11, 20, 29, 35	Planning & Land Use, Concept Design, Noise Issues, Community Health	29, 30, 31, 45, 48, 50, 54, 56, 57, 62, 63, 66, 67, 70, 72
Micallef, J, R, D and M	28	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Pacific Blue Metal	33	Planning & Land Use	28, 32
Peacock, G	15	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Power, H	30	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Proctor, D and J	17	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Rex, P and K	23	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Slattery, K	04	Communications	73
Sorensen, L	14	Concept Design	45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Smith, D	38, 45	Concept Design	33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 66
Smith, J and B	22, 36	Concept Design	41, 45, 48, 54, 57, 62, 63
Sparkes, G and J	09, 16, 40	Concept Design	45, 48, 50, 51, 54, 62, 63

2.1 Responses to NSW Government Agency submissions

The RTA received written submissions on the concept design from Forests NSW (FNSW), Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). These issues and the RTA responses are detailed in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 Issues raised by NSW Government Agencies

Issue		Response
No.	Planning and land use	
1	Forests NSW major interest regarding the upgrade was in ensuring provision for B-double access along Possum Brush Road to the highway which, it has been noted, has been catered for in the Concept Design.	Noted.
2	The construction of a dual carriageway Highway adjacent to the existing road will impact on a few small rural properties and bushland areas. Endeavours to minimise the extent of property acquisition should ensure that agricultural impacts are not significant.	The RTA acknowledges that there would be some property acquisition from several properties adjacent to the existing Highway and the concept design has been developed to try and reduce the impacts as much as possible associated with the acquisition. The REF that will be prepared for the proposed upgrade will include an assessment of the impacts on those properties. Conversion of the existing northbound carriageway to a service road would allow safer ingress and egress for residents, cattle trucks, delivery vehicles, etc.
3	The proposal would not directly affect any significant, identified mineral resources. However, it could consume considerable quantities of construction materials during its implementation. Consequently, DPI Mineral Resources considers that the environmental assessment should include: an estimate of the construction material requirements for the proposal; their likely sources; and the potential impact on the sustainability of construction material supply in the district that could arise from obtaining any of those requirements from existing quarries.	The RTA notes DPI – Mineral Resources' concerns and advise that the issue will be addressed in the REF.
4	<p>Possum Brush Quarry and Failford Quarry are two strategically important, major, potentially long-lived hard rock quarries. Their operation could be significantly affected by the proposal.</p> <p>In both cases, access for heavy quarry trucks needs to be appropriately accommodated. Specific issues that need to be considered include: the suitability of the northbound entry ramp at Possum Brush Road for northbound truck access from Possum Brush Quarry; the suitability of the overbridge at Bullocky Way (Stage 2) for long term access to and from the Highway by quarry trucks from either quarry; for Possum Brush Quarry trucks, the suitability of entry</p>	<p>The RTA notes the access issues raised by DPI (Mineral Resources) and confirm that the issues will be further considered during the preparation of the final concept design.</p> <p>The potential impact on site access for Pacific Blue Metal quarries was one of many factors considered by the project team during the investigations undertaken prior to the preparation of the concept design. The issue will be considered further by the project team in the development of the final concept design.</p>

Issue		Response
	<p>onto the highway for southbound trucks and exit from the Highway for northbound trucks following removal of cross median access at Possum Brush Road (and possibly Tritton Road) during Stage 1 and prior to overbridge construction in Stage 2; for Failford Quarry trucks, the suitability of entry onto the Highway for northbound trucks and exit from the Highway for southbound trucks following removal of cross median access at Bullocky Way in Stage 1 and prior to overbridge construction in Stage 2; and transitional arrangements for trucks servicing either quarry during the construction of each Stage.</p>	
Concept design		
5	All issues of concern to the Department of Natural Resources have been addressed.	Noted.
Noise and vibration		
6	<p>The concept design report does not detail the likely impacts of the preferred route on noise receivers within the study area, nor is a comparison made of the noise impacts between the three route options.</p>	<p>The preliminary investigations carried out during the selection of the preferred route and the development of the concept design provides an overview of the biophysical and community constraints within the study area. This information is then used to assist the RTA during the selection of the preferred route and development of the concept design. As discussed in Section 4.4.9 of the concept design report the RTA is carrying out noise monitoring as part of the REF being prepared for the project. The information obtained will be used to identify the potential noise impacts on noise receivers within the study area. The RTA will take these matters into account when preparing the REF, and when considering the project for approval. Any proposed mitigation measures would be developed in consultation with DEC and documented in the REF and REF Decision Report.</p>

7	Whilst the concept design report indicates that approximately 14 residences are located between 50m and 100m from the existing Pacific Highway within the study area, it is unclear if there are residences located more than 100m from the existing Pacific Highway which may be affected by road traffic noise. This should be clarified.	<p>A review of the location of the residences adjacent to the edge of the proposed project has been carried out with the following results:</p> <p>0 to 100m: 7 houses (including 1 to be potentially acquired and 1 in the Bundacree to Possum Brush project).</p> <p>100 to 200m: 12 (including 1 owned by the RTA and 1 to be potentially acquired).</p> <p>200 to 400m: 5 houses.</p> <p>300 to 400m: 7 houses.</p> <p>400 to 500m: 9 houses.</p>
8	Any increase in noise levels during construction would be an actual increase in noise levels and not a perceived increase as stated in the concept design report.	The RTA notes the comment by DEC and confirm the advice contained in the concept design report that a noise assessment is being carried out as part of the REF for the project. This assessment will be carried out in accordance with the relevant DEC and RTA guidelines and will cover the construction noise issue.
9	DEC notes that noise monitoring will be undertaken as part of the environmental assessment.	Noted.
Air quality		
10	Whilst the concept design report does not provide any data on air quality it appears from the information available that there is little to differentiate between the route options with regard to air quality.	The RTA notes the comment from DEC regarding air quality and suggests that the preferred route and concept design should produce a net reduction in ongoing vehicle emissions when compared with the 'do nothing' case due to the improved highway alignment.
11	Any increase in particulate matter during construction would be an actual increase and not a perceived increase as stated in the concept design report.	The RTA notes the comment by DEC and confirm the advice contained in the concept design report that potential impacts on air quality are being assessed as part of the REF for the project.

Water quality		
12	DEC notes that no water quality testing was undertaken as part of the preliminary environmental investigations for the selection of a preferred route.	Noted.
13	The observations made in the concept design report on the visual assessment on water quality of a drainage line indicate that existing Pacific Highway runoff is having an adverse impact on water quality. Upgrading the Highway in this section provides an opportunity to improve water quality through the installation of water quality controls on the new alignment. Opportunities should also be explored to link the existing carriageway to new water quality control structures or systems.	The RTA has considered the suggestion by DEC during the development of a refined concept design. Preliminary erosion and sediment control plans are being developed as part of the refined concept design. These plans would be further developed during the detailed design and construction of the project with reference to relevant DEC and RTA guidelines.
14	It is unclear from the concept design report of the type, location and design of permanent and temporary (construction stage) water control structures. Such structure should be considered during the concept design stage to ensure that sufficient space is allowed for the construction, operation and maintenance of these structures.	The type, location and design parameters of the permanent and temporary water control structures are being developed for the refined concept design. Information on the potential location, size and design of the structures would be included in the REF currently being prepared for the proposed project.
15	The indirect impacts of the proposal on downstream flora and fauna species, populations and endangered ecological communities (EECs) require consideration. Proposed crossings of streams (eg along the new southbound carriageway between Bullocky Way and Failford Road) have potential to contribute sediment, road surface pollutants and debris to aquatic ecosystems, especially within Bungwahl Creek and Wallamba River, and ultimately, Wallis Lake. The likely effect on these impacts of the quality of SEPP14 wetlands located at the confluence of Bungwahl Creek and Wallamba River should be discussed. Similarly, the concept design report should consider the likely impact of the proposal on any EECs located downstream of the study area.	The RTA notes the comments by DEC and confirms that potential impacts of this nature are being assessed as part of the REF for the project.

Aboriginal heritage		
16	<p>The concept design report does not discuss measures to mitigate the potential impact of the proposal on Aboriginal heritage objects, sites, and places of local and regional significance to the Birpai People. DEC recommends that further surveys, consultation and development of an appropriate mitigation strategy be undertaken in direct consultation with the Forster Local Aboriginal Land Council and DEC's Aboriginal Heritage Unit.</p>	<p>The preliminary investigations carried out during the selection of the preferred route and the development of the concept design provide an overview of the biophysical and community constraints within the study area. This information is then used to assist the RTA during the selection of the preferred route and development of the concept design. As discussed in Section 8 of the concept design report, the RTA is preparing an environmental impact assessment (REF). The information obtained during the preparation of the REF will be used to identify and consider the potential impacts on Aboriginal objects, sites and places within the study area.</p> <p>The RTA has undertaken appropriate consultation with the Aboriginal community in accordance with the DEC Interim Community Consultation Requirements for Applicants and RTA policy. As part of this consultation the RTA met with representatives of the Forster Local Aboriginal Land Council in September 2005 during the preparation of the concept design. The RTA will continue to liaise with members of the Aboriginal community during the preparation of the REF and detailed design.</p> <p>The REF will also provide further information on the consultation undertaken during the development of the project and any proposed mitigation measures will be documented in the REF and REF Decision Report.</p>
Flora and fauna		
17	<p>The DPI Aquatic Habitat Protection Unit has reviewed the document and is satisfied with the level of information provided. It appears that fish habitat will not be adversely impacted as a result of this Upgrade.</p>	<p>The advice from DPI Aquatic Habitat Protection Unit is noted.</p>
18	<p>The removal of existing tracts of native vegetation particularly south of the Bullocky Way intersection will contribute to the loss, fragmentation and modification of habitat for a number of fauna and flora species, populations and communities. Stands of moist and dry eucalypt forest and riparian communities will be impacted by the construction of the Failford Road interchange and associated ramps and cutting and embankment work. These impacts will be most evident at the site of the proposed Failford Road interchange, along the proposed new southbound carriageway, and at the Bullocky Way overbridge and re-alignment.</p>	<p>The REF being prepared for the project will include an assessment of the extent of native vegetation clearing that would be required in order to construct the project. It will also document the potential impacts of native vegetation clearing associated with the project including the potential impacts on fauna and flora species, populations and communities, as well as mitigation measures that would be considered to be implemented to ameliorate those impacts.</p> <p>The RTA will take these matters into account when determining the REF, and when considering the project for approval.</p>

19	<p>A number of threatened flora (eg <i>Asperula asthenes</i>, <i>Thesium australe</i>, <i>Hibbertia hexandra</i>) and fauna (eg squirrel glider, glossy black cockatoo, masked own, brush tailed phascogale, koala, eastern mastiff bat) may occur within or near the study area. There is also considerable potential for the occurrence of regionally significant fauna and flora in or near the study area. The concept design report states that site inspections failed to find any threatened fauna known or likely to occur in the study area and that clearance of "medium value" vegetation will be required in the southern part of the study area. However, no information is provided on the level of survey or inspection effort, durations, date (ie time of day and year), replication, surveyor qualifications/experience, and stratification of flora and fauna surveying or inspections that were undertaken. Nor is there information in the concept design report that defines "medium value vegetation".</p> <p>Also, the concept design report does not refer to the results of previous work undertaken to the south of the study area for the Bundacree Creek to Possum Brush EIS, prepared by Sinclair Knight Merz in October 2001. This document contains details on the occurrence and habitat requirements of terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna that occur or are likely to occur in or near the southern end of the study area. DEC recommends that the concept design report be reviewed to define "medium value vegetation" and consider the full complement of threatened and regionally significant flora and fauna species likely to be affected by the proposed construction and maintenance activities in the study area. This will require sourcing of existing documents, including the results of surveys undertaken in the adjacent Talawahl NR (formerly Kirrawak State Forest), EIS related surveys, DEC's Wildlife Atlas, ROTAP database and other databases such as Bird Atlas II.</p> <p>Maps showing the location and distribution of records of threatened and regionally significant fauna and flora should also be provided in the concept design report.</p>	<p>The preliminary investigations carried out during the selection of the preferred route and the development of the concept design provides an overview of the biophysical and community constraints within the study area. This information is then used to assist the RTA during the selection of the preferred route and development of the concept design. As discussed in Section 8 of the concept design report the RTA is preparing an environmental impact assessment (REF). The information obtained during the preparation of the REF will be used to identify the potential impacts on flora and fauna species within the study area.</p> <p>The REF will identify any threatened flora or fauna species that have been found within the study area and discuss any regionally significant fauna and flora that have been found within the study area. The potential impacts of the construction of the project on any threatened, or regionally significant, flora and fauna species identified will be discussed in the REF and the mitigation measures that may be required to ameliorate those impacts will be identified. The REF will include references to documents considered to be relevant to this study that were considered during preparation of the REF. The methodology used to determine the presence or otherwise of threatened and regionally significant flora and fauna in the study area will also be included in the REF. Terms used to describe the relative environmental value of features of the study area (eg medium value vegetation) will be defined in the REF.</p> <p>The RTA will consider the potential impacts on threatened and regionally significant flora and fauna when preparing the REF and considering the project for approval.</p>
----	--	--

20	<p>The concept design report briefly refers to the presence of some fauna habitat features in the study area. It is worth noting that even disturbed areas may provide foraging and breeding habitat for frogs, insects, birds, reptiles and mammals. Microhabitat features that can provide these services include ponds in artificial drainage systems, rock and log substrates, vine clusters in the lower and mid canopy layers, understorey shrubs and ground cover vegetation, hollow-bearing live and dead trees, and revegetated road verges and median strips. The “diversity of tree species” is not in itself a fauna habitat feature, however the foliage of Blackbutt and Tallowood are important food sources for koalas. It would seem highly unlikely that, given the availability of some of these habitat features in the study area, “none of the threatened species known or likely to occur were observed”. DEC recommends that more information be provided in a revised version of the concept design report to adequately address this aspect and thus allow a more informed assessment of the potential ecological impact of the proposal to be made.</p>	<p>The RTA notes the comments made by DEC regarding fauna habitat and confirms the advice provided in answer to issue 19 above regarding the environmental assessment for the project. The REF being prepared for the project will include an assessment of the fauna habitat features of the study area, including the potential impacts and any proposed mitigation measures.</p>
21	<p>In a regional landscape context, the study area occurs within forest partly disturbed by clearing for agriculture, forestry, roads and villages but with residual links to DEC estate and other native vegetation. DEC estate includes Talawahl NR and Talawahl SCA to the north, Khappinghat NP to the northeast, and Darawank NP to the east. These tracts of forest form parts of three important wildlife corridors (Kiwarrak-Khappinghat Regional Corridor, Failford Regional Corridor, and Nabitac-Wallamba Subregional Corridor) that provide connectivity for fauna dispersing and moving through this landscape. The concept design report identifies three potential ‘stepping-stone links’ of forest habitat (mainly large eucalypts) that may facilitate the movement of arboreal fauna across the existing highway. DEC advises that these links should be considered to be part of the formerly intact and more extensive habitat for the movement of terrestrial and arboreal fauna and as such should be protected from impacts associated with the proposed construction activities. The southernmost links (ie 700 metres south of Bullocky Way and 500 metres north of Failford Road) should be considered as locations for fauna crossings and these would be incorporated into the design of the proposal.</p>	<p>As discussed above, the RTA is currently preparing an REF for the project. The REF will identify the potential impacts on corridors used by fauna moving through the study area. Any proposed mitigation measures required will be documented in the REF. This may include fauna crossings should they be considered appropriate following the assessment and further discussions with DEC.</p>

22	Construction of the proposed interchange, overbridge and new road system will increase the degree of edge incursions into the adjacent forest especially in less disturbed areas such as the southern end of the study area. The concept design report should consider the type and potential impact of these effects on fauna and flora communities and habitats in these areas. Edge effects include pest plant and animal incursion, increased bushfire risk, and heightened potential for human incursion resulting in, for example, rubbish dumping and bushrock removal. As part of this work, the concept design report should also consider the range of key threatening processes prescribed under Schedule 3 of the <i>Threatened Species Conservation Act</i> 1995 and the potential impact of the proposal on these processes.	<p>The REF being prepared for the project will identify relevant environmental impacts associated with the project, including the potential edge effects. The REF will also identify any mitigation measures that may be required to ameliorate those identified impacts.</p> <p>The flora and fauna assessment undertaken as part of the REF will address the range of key threatening processes prescribed under Schedule 3 of the <i>Threatened Species Conservation Act</i> 1995 and the potential impact of the proposal on these processes.</p>
23	The concept design report lists proposed environmental mitigation measures that will be developed during the environmental impact assessment process. The concept design report would benefit from an expansion of these points to emphasise the application of current 'best practice' interventions in the mitigation of the potential impact of the proposal on the biodiversity of the study area. For instance, the concept design report could outline the type and location of proposed fauna crossings, fencing, habitat tree management protocol, and structures to intercept and retain sediment and road surface pollutants. Consideration of these mitigation measures at the concept design stage will be helpful in identifying resource needs and likely costs and facilitating the integration of these interventions into the overall concept design process.	As discussed above, the preliminary investigations carried out during the selection of the preferred route and the development of the concept design are designed to provide an overview of the biophysical and community constraints within the study area. This information is then used to assist the RTA during the selection of the preferred route and development of the concept design. As discussed in Section 8 of the concept design report the RTA is preparing and environmental impact assessment (REF). The information obtained during the preparation of the REF will be used to refine the proposed mitigation measures.
Environmental management		
24	It is critical that the feasibility of mitigation measures to address specific issues and impacts is assessed and the results of this assessment considered through the route development process.	The RTA notes the advice from DEC. The RTA has an ongoing commitment to ensuring the mitigation measures proposed for Pacific Highway projects are feasible and reasonable. This commitment will continue during the development of this project.

2.2 Responses to Local Government submissions

A submission was received from Great Lakes Council. Table 2.3 summarises the issues raised in this submission and the RTA's responses to those issues.

Table 2.3: Issues raised by Local Government

Issue		Response
No.	Concept Design	
25	Great Lakes Council has advised that they have not received any comments from members of the public in relation to this project.	Noted.

2.3 Responses to community submissions

Thirty nine written submissions were received from the wider community. Sixteen of these were form letters. A submission was received from Pacific Blue Metal and the rest were from local residents.

Table 2.4 summarises the issues raised by the community in written submissions, during meetings and during calls to the project information line. The RTA's responses to these issues are also documented.

Table 2.4: Issues raised in community submissions.

Issue		Response
No.	Planning and land use	
26	Does allowing for B-doubles at these two roundabouts mean that the present load restrictions on Bullocky Way will be increased / removed? Objection to heavy traffic using Bullocky Way, which is currently a quiet residential area with a sense of community.	This project does not propose any change to the present load restrictions on Bullocky Way. The term 'suitable for B-doubles' is a design standard used by the RTA to indicate that a structure or road feature is suitable for all vehicle types such as delivery vehicles and school buses.

27	What are the projected start and finish dates?	<p>This project is currently in the planning and environmental assessment phase for this section of the Highway. The selection of the preferred route and the development of the concept design will allow the RTA to move onto the next step in this phase, the preparation and exhibition of the Review of Environmental Factors (REF).</p> <p>The construction timetable for the project is yet to be determined.</p>
28	If Stage 2 goes ahead, Stage 3 would be that Pacific Blue Metal will apply to Council to lift the 5-ton limit and restrictions, giving them easy access between the two quarries and for northbound trucks.	This project consist of the two stages outlined in the concept design report and the RTA is not seeking to change any load restrictions on local roads or to alter any development consent conditions imposed by Council on quarry operations.
29	The main consideration currently stopping Great Lakes Council from lifting the 5 tonne limit on Bullocky Way is the inability of the current intersection with the Pacific Highway to cope with trucks. Once the Stage 2 infrastructure is in place this load limit can be lifted which will allow quarry trucks and any other trucks including B-doubles to use Bullocky Way.	This project does not propose any changes to the present speed limits or load restrictions on Bullocky Way. Any change to the speed limit or load restrictions on Bullocky Way would be a matter for Great Lakes Council.
30	The future development of land to the North of Failford does not warrant an overbridge or provision of a service road because that land can be effectively serviced by Blackhead Road and Spicers Road together with the number of upgradeable 4 wheel drive tracks which could all feed possible future traffic onto the Lakes Way (northbound) or via Drut and Failford Roads for access to the Highway (southbound).	The Stage 2 overbridge is proposed as a long term measure to maintain connectivity following the proposed closure of Bullocky Way. It also provides for future land use development in the area. Stage 2 would not be provided until warranted by local development and traffic growth.
31	Based on the scale provided with the map in the Concept Design, the narrowest part of the corridor for the Highway together with the service road (a point about 680 metres north of the proposed Failford interchange) is approximately 75 metres wide. If this is the case then there would appear to be sufficient space to put northbound traffic between the service road (old northbound) and the current southbound from a point 680 metres north of Failford Road to a point a little	The process for the identification, assessment and selection of the preferred route is discussed in Sections 5 and 6 of the concept design report. The option of constructing a new carriageway between the service road and the current southbound carriageway was investigated as part of that route selection process. The RTA considers that the preferred route selected and discussed in the concept design report provides several advantages over the Central Option, including retention of the northbound carriageway as a service road.

	north of the current Bullocky Way intersection. This would straighten the Highway a little more, save some acquisition of land, and alleviate construction through some 750 metres of difficult terrain. The extension of the service road North of this point on the Western side of the Highway would be over easier terrain and would be cheaper to build as a lower grade road than the highway.	
32	The Concept Design would have negative impacts on Pacific Blue Metal. Delivery trucks returning to the Quarry from the north would have to travel an extra 7 kilometres. This may render the operation financially unviable. This would be mitigated if access to Bullocky Way be maintained for southbound traffic. Ideally, an overpass or underpass at the Possum Brush Road intersection for southbound traffic would be the least detrimental option.	The potential impact on the access arrangements for Pacific Blue Metal quarries is one of many factors considered by the project team in the investigations undertaken to during the development of the concept design. The comments provided by Pacific Blue Metals will be further considered by the project team during the development of the final concept design.
33	Concern about access for owners of 15056 and 15046 Pacific Highway. Both owners can only turn left when leaving their property. If they wish to travel north they can cross the median at Possum Brush Road and turn left into their property on their return. If they wish to travel south they can turn left on leaving and cross the median at Tritton Road on their return and then gain access to their property. If these cross median movements are denied they will have to travel to: Failford Road to access the grade separated intersection to travel north; when returning from Forster/Tuncurry they will have to travel via Failford Road as the Bullocky Way median will be closed; and past their properties to a point to the north of Bungwahl Creek to cross the median when they are returning from the south.	<p>A key objective of the Pacific Highway Upgrade Program and this project is to improve safety for all Highway users. One method of helping to achieve this objective is to reduce the potential for conflicts between local traffic and through traffic. The RTA achieves this with the construction of "grade separated" interchanges and services roads and accompanying reduction of "at-grade" intersections and direct access to the Highway.</p> <p>The RTA acknowledges that the proposed upgrade will restrict direct access to the Highway and some residents will have to travel further to access the Highway. However, these changes would result in significant safety improvements for both local and highway traffic.</p> <p>The RTA would investigate the potential to provide appropriate U turn facilities during the further development of the detailed design for the project.</p>
34	Both 15114 and 14991 currently have access via cross turning movements at either Tritton Road or Possum Brush Road for both north and south movements. When the medians are closed, 15114 will be subject to the same restrictions as 15056 and 15046. No. 14991 would be affected when returning from the north and would have to travel to Failford Road. The greater impact on No.14991 of the closing of Possum Brush Road cross median movement is the inability of the residents of No. 14991 to gain access to their grazing land on the eastern side of the Highway.	<p>The RTA notes the comments contained in the submission and confirms the advice to issue 33 above that appropriate U turn facilities would be further investigated during the development of the detailed design for the project.</p> <p>The RTA project team discussed the issue of access to grazing land on the eastern side of the highway with the residents of No. 14991 during the development of the concept design. The project team is developing options to address this issue and will undertake further consultation with the affected landowner.</p>

35	The three cattle properties require convenient access to the Highway to truck livestock to and from markets. Any difficulty in gaining access by carriers is likely to add to cartage costs or in the extreme lead to carriers refusing to pick up and deliver stock.	As discussed in the responses above, The RTA acknowledges that the proposed upgrade will restrict direct access to the Highway and some residents will have to travel further to access the Highway. However the access needs of these properties are being considered by the project team in development of the final concept design.
36	The boarding kennels (No. 150460) has some 2,500 boardings per year, which does not include enquiries, inspection of facilities, visitors and the like. This equates to over 10,000 vehicle manoeuvres per annum and as their clientele ranges from Sydney to the Gold Coast it is likely that there will be confusion as most won't have local knowledge of the access arrangements. This is likely to cause severe financial hardship to the operations of the boarding facility.	As shown on the concept design, the access to this property from the north would not be affected by the proposed upgrade. The RTA understands that under the existing traffic arrangements, motorists wishing to access this property from the south currently do not have direct access to the property and are required to conduct a U-turn at Tritton Road. The project team are investigating appropriate U turn facilities as part of the further development of the project following the removal of cross median access at Tritton Road.
37	The closing of the cross median turning movement at Tritton Road and Possum Brush Road will cause severe hardship to the owners of Nos 15114, 15056, 15046 and 14991 Pacific Highway as well as to residents in Possum Brush Road and Tritton Road. Consideration should be given to a grade separated intersection at the Possum Brush intersection to allow southbound vehicles on the Pacific Highway to access Possum Brush Road and the Service Road. Vehicles travelling south from Possum Brush Road could do so by utilising the service road as presently proposed. The ability of southbound Pacific Highway traffic to access Possum Brush Road would also benefit the owners of Nos 15114, 15056 and 15046 Pacific Highway to turn and proceed north via the service road onto the Highway. The suggestion for a grade separated turning movement is made on the proviso that it does not impact on or require any alteration to the dwelling, outbuilding and cartilage of No 14991. Any such intersection would need to be clear of their property. It seems that an alternative to the grade separation at Possum Brush Road would be to allow southbound traffic on the Pacific Highway to turn left into the existing Bullocky Way access point from the new southbound carriageway. This would allow vehicles to use the new grade separated intersection over both lanes to access the service road then proceed to Possum Brush Road along the service road. This would also benefit the owners of Nos 15114, 15056 and 15046.	A key objective of the Pacific Highway Upgrade Program and this project is to improve safety for all Highway users. One method of helping to achieve this objective is to reduce the potential for conflicts between local traffic and through traffic. The RTA achieves this with the construction of "grade separated" interchanges and services roads and accompanying reduction of "at-grade" intersections and direct access to the Highway. The access requirements of all property owners affected by the proposal have been considered by the project team in the development of the concept design. The RTA acknowledges that some residents would need to travel further to access the highway as the at-grade intersection are replaced by grade-separated interchanges and service roads. The locations for the grade separated interchanges and overpasses shown in the concept design have been developed to best address the needs of as many road users as possible while at the same time trying to reduce the impacts on adjacent residents.

Concept design		
38	What is the cost of this entire proposal? Specifically, what is the cost of the Bullocky Way roundabouts and the overpass?	Section 7.16 of the concept design report discusses the estimated cost of the project and breaks the cost into two components. The cost of the 'M' class proposal is approximately \$46 million (in 2006 dollars) while the estimated cost of the 'A' class proposal (with only a grade-separated interchange at Failford Road) is \$37 million.
39	How does highway southbound traffic, including trucks heading for Possum Brush Quarry from the north, access the northbound service road?	Southbound highway traffic would access Possum Brush Road via the Failford Road interchange and service road on the western side of the highway. It should be noted that the service road is designed as a two way road to allow north and south bound local traffic movements between Possum Brush Road and the interchange.
40	The southbound exit ramp at Failford Road does not appear to be designed to allow traffic flow to access the overbridge to get to the feeder road.	The layout of the Failford Road interchange shown in Figure 19 of the concept design report provides access to the overbridge via the intersection between Failford road and the exit ramp. The final layout of this ramp will be considered by the project team during the refinement of the concept design.
41	An overbridge will attract through traffic unless some deterrent is made. If through traffic could access the high speed highway closer to the Failford Road intersection, this would be a deterrent to them using Bullocky Way, and would be safer and quicker.	There are several site constraints that have influenced the proposed location for the northbound on-ramp from the proposed Failford Road interchange and service road. These constraints have resulted in the on-ramp being located in it's proposed position. The Bullocky Way overbridge, as part of Stage 2 of the proposed upgrade, is designed to provide access to the highway for the residents off Bullocky Way. As the Bullocky Way will remain under the control of Great Lakes Council, the RTA would work with Council to encourage traffic to use Failford Road to access the interchange and highway. This may include traffic calming measures and speed restrictions on Bullocky Way.
42	Surely a smaller roundabout or even a T junction would suffice on the current Bullocky Way, especially in view of the limited traffic from Greys Lane?	As discussed in Section 7.3 of the concept design report, the displayed proposal (Figure 18) shows the ultimate layout for Bullocky Way to allow for future traffic conditions. While a T junction would satisfy traffic requirements for Stage 1 of the proposed upgrade, the roundabouts proposed for Stage 2 are designed to allow access for delivery vehicles, school buses and intermittent use by heavy vehicles.
43	The Failford Road southbound exit ramp should incorporate a lane for traffic wishing to access the feeder road north or for traffic on the Highway travelling south who realise they need to do a U-turn.	As described in Figure 19 of the concept design report, southbound highway traffic will be able to use the southbound exit ramp at Failford Road to access the overbridge and the two way service road on the western side of the highway. The final layout of this ramp will be considered by the project team during the refinement of the concept design.

44	Why not use the funds for the roundabout, or even the overbridge, on Bullocky Way to create one nearer the Failford Road intersection, to allow northbound traffic quicker access to the high speed highway. Even allowing for the cemetery, it seems that there is room to do this.	There are several site constraints that have influenced the proposed location for the northbound on-ramp from the proposed Failford Road interchange and service road. These constraints have resulted in the on-ramp being located in it's proposed position. The Bullocky Way overbridge, as part of Stage 2 of the proposed upgrade, is designed to provide access to the highway for the residents off Bullocky Way. As the Bullocky Way will remain under the control of Great Lakes Council, the RTA would work with Council to encourage traffic to use Failford Road to access the interchange and highway. This may include traffic calming measures and speed restrictions on Bullocky Way.
45	Objection to an overbridge at Bullocky Way in Stage 2	The objection to the overbridge in stage 2 is noted.
46	The team deserve congratulations for the detail and depth of information supplied. Support for the Concept Design.	The support for the team and the concept design is noted.
47	Objection to the proposed removal of the left turn into Bullocky Way heading south in Stage 2.	The objection is noted.
48	Support for Stage 1 of the Concept Design but not Stage 2.	Noted.
49	Would be pleased to see the Bullocky Way intersection with the new southbound lane completely closed.	Noted for consideration by the project team during the refinement of the Concept Design.
50	It is not unrealistic for residents of Failford and Possum Brush, both now and in the future, to use the Failford Road overbridge.	Noted.

51	How can the RTA justify two overbridges within 2 kilometres of each other?	The displayed concept design shows both the stage 1 design and the ultimate design (stage 2) proposal for this section of the highway. As discussed in Section 7.3 of the concept design report, the Stage 2 overbridge at Bullocky Way is proposed as a long-term measure to maintain connectivity for residents in the Bullocky Way area following the closure of Bullocky Way to the highway. Stage 2 would is not proposed to be implemented until warranted by local development and traffic growth.
52	The Failford Road southbound exit ramp needs a roundabout at junction with Failford Road, allowing easier access for traffic (particularly trucks / B-doubles) wishing to turn right or go across the overbridge.	Noted for consideration by the project team during the refinement of the Concept Design.
53	The service road should allow earlier northbound access than Possum Brush to the Highway.	The comment is noted for consideration during the development of the detailed design. However, engineering constraints limit the opportunities for accessing the highway where the ramp is located. The proposed access arrangements also services Possum Brush Road. Preliminary investigation revealed that the predicted traffic levels for this movement are low and the proposed service road is appropriate for the traffic volumes now and in the future.
54	Support for no right turn off the Pacific Highway into Bullocky Way and no right turn out of Bullocky Way onto the Highway.	The support is noted.n
55	Objection to Bullocky Way being closed to vehicles turning either north or south.	The objection is noted.
56	Bullocky Way should be closed to the Highway completely so that all traffic to the Failford estate entered and exited via Failford Road. The roads in the estate would therefore only be used by local traffic. The small percentage of residents who travel out of the estate regularly would quickly adapt to entering the Highway at the Failford Road intersection.	Noted for consideration by the project team during the refinement of the Concept Design.

57	Support for Stage I of the Concept Design. The proposed “left in, left out” intersection of Bullocky Way and the Highway would allow easy access to locals and at the same time discourage additional through traffic.	The support for stage I is noted..
Safety		
58	Will the “old” Pacific Highway service road have a reduced speed limit (than the current 90kph) when it is a two-way road?	The RTA would expect that the speed limit for the service road may be lower than the current speed limit of 90kph as the service road would cater for two way traffic movements,. However, it is probable that the service road would revert to a local road under the control of Council, who would therefore be responsible for the decision on speed zoning for this road.
59	Earlier access to the Pacific Highway northbound than at Possum Brush should be provided, to improve the safety of the feeder road.	The comment is noted for consideration during the development of the detailed design. However, engineering constraints limit the opportunities for accessing the highway where the ramp is located. The proposed access arrangements also services Possum Brush Road. Preliminary investigation revealed that the predicted traffic levels for this movement are low and the proposed service road is appropriate for the traffic volumes now and in the future.
60	Ideally, traffic calming devices or “local traffic only” signs would be placed on Bullocky Way after the Quarry access road.	The management, speed zoning and sign posting of local roads is outside the scope of this project and is therefore a matter for consideration by Great Lakes Council.
61	The service road should have a 60kph or 70kph speed limit.	Noted for consideration by the project team during the refinement of the Concept Design. However, as it is probable that the service road would be a local road under the control of Council, the responsibility for the decision on appropriate speed zoning for this road would rest with Council.
62	The only traffic that would benefit from the overbridge would be the small, but vocal, minority who travel northbound on a regular basis, and perhaps Forster residents travelling to Taree hoping to shave a couple of minutes off their journey. These commuters rarely if ever obey the speed limits, often reaching 100kph in the 60kph zone and overtaking at unsafe points along Bullocky Way.	The comment is noted. However, speed zoning and traffic control on local roads is outside the scope of the project and is a matter for consideration by Great Lakes Council.

63	<p>Concern about the risk of a fatality among the many local children, including the very young, at the preschool and child minding centre, and the retired and health conscious locals who walk around the block for their aerobic health each day if Stage 2 is implemented. Many locals run or walk along Bullocky Way each day for health reasons, so breathing in truck exhausts would not be very healthy.</p>	<p>The provision of the second stage of this proposal would be required by the level of development in the local area. Therefore the road safety issues associated with increased traffic volumes in the local area may be an issue that Council and the local community would need to consider in advance of the implementation of Stage 2 of this project.</p> <p>Consideration could also be given in consultation with Council to encouraging through traffic to use Failford Road to the interchange by the provision of suitable network signposting. The determination of appropriate speed limits and other traffic control measures within the local road network, including the service road on the western side of the highway, would be a matter for Council to determine.</p> <p>The potential air quality impacts directly associated with the proposal are being assessed as part of the REF for the project</p>
64	<p>Since the RTA upgraded the signs and the road there have been no further accidents to date. Stage 2 is overkill.</p>	<p>The comment is noted. Based on the current traffic volumes and level of development in this area, it is agreed that interim measures such as the Stage 1 proposal would suffice for some time to come. However, as this area develops and traffic volumes increase, it is expected that there would be a warrant for the implementation of the second stage of the Proposed Upgrade on the grounds of safety and amenity.</p>
65	<p>It should not be a concern that the northern carriageway just south of Bullocky Way can only safely accommodate 90kph rather than 110kph. This situation occurs all over Australia. This 90kph is only for approximately 1 kilometre and breaks the monotony of the 110kph and sharpen driver concentration. This will be an excellent road when the Failford Road (Stage 1) is complete without any further alteration at Bullocky Way.</p>	<p>Noted. This project is planning for the upgrade of this section of the highway to a standard and level of safety equivalent to adjoining sections.</p>
66	<p>Concern that there may be difficulty of access for ambulance, fire fighting vehicles, police and other emergency vehicles.</p>	<p>The RTA consults with representatives of the emergency services during the development of Pacific Highway projects to ensure adequate access for emergency vehicles is considered during the development of the Concept Design. The RTA will continue to consult with those emergency services during the further development of this project.</p>

Property issues		
67	Concern about a drop in property values because of the noise and pollution from Stage 2.	<p>It should be noted that the provision of the second stage of this proposal would be necessitated by the level of development in the local area rather than being the base cause of such development. The increase in traffic volumes, with the potential impacts on property values and increases in noise and air pollution would therefore be more closely aligned with local development pressures rather than any additional pressures associated with the implementation of the Stage 2 of this project.</p> <p>However, the potential noise and air quality impacts directly associated with the proposal are being assessed as part of the REF for the project.</p>
68	Landowner wants to stay on property and would prefer a partial rather than a total acquisition.	Property acquisition would be undertaken in accordance with the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 and the RTA Land Acquisition Policy. The landowner would be further consulted with regard to the extent of the acquisition proposed for this property following the determination of the final road reserve boundaries during the detailed design phase of the project.
69	Landowner would prefer to retain his sheds, to have a fence at the top of the batter and have the powerline relocated clear of the property..	Further consultation with directly affected landowners would be undertaken during the detailed design phase with regard to property and utility adjustment issues such as the impact on sheds and the location of fencing. While it is unlikely that the powerline passing through this property will have to be relocated, the landowner would be consulted if this is found to be necessary.
Noise issues		
70	Clearing of vegetation for the construction of Stage 2 would increase noise from the Highway down the valley	As discussed in Section 4.4.9 of the concept design report the RTA is carrying out noise monitoring as part of the REF being prepared for the project. The information obtained will be used to identify the potential noise impacts on noise receivers within the study area. The RTA will take these matters into account when determining the REF, and when considering the project for approval. Any proposed mitigation measures will be developed in consultation with DEC and documented in the REF and the REF Decision Report.

71	Has the RTA developed a strategy to minimise the increase in traffic noise, especially from heavy vehicles, that will directly impact on the amenity and lifestyle of the residents of the western end of the Highlands Estate?	As discussed in Section 4.4.9 of the CDR the RTA is carrying out noise monitoring as part of the REF being prepared for the project. The information obtained will be used to identify the potential noise impacts on noise receivers within the study area, including those of the western end of Highlands Estate. The RTA will take these matters into account when determining the REF, and when considering the project for approval. Any proposed mitigation measures will be developed in consultation with DEC and documented in the REF and REF Decision Report.
Community health		
72	Concern about community health as a result of increased noise and pollution following the construction of Stage 2. P10 particles and heavy metal fumes from increased traffic would impact severely on the developmental health of the young and the lifespan of the elderly.	It should be noted that the provision of the second stage of this proposal would be necessitated by the level of development in the local area rather than being the base cause of such development. The increase in traffic volumes with the potential increases in noise and air pollution would therefore be more closely aligned with local development pressures rather than any additional pressures associated with the implementation of the Stage 2 of this project. However, the potential noise and air quality impacts directly associated with the proposal are being assessed as part of the REF for the project.
Communications		
73	Complaint for not being contacted before the public display.	Members of the project team have met with this resident since the display of the concept design.
74	Would like a copy of the REF when released.	The REF will be made publicly available on the project website when it is placed on display and an electronic copy will be provided on CD to all landowners who are directly affected by the project.

3 Main issues raised in submissions

The information below provides a summary of the main issues raised in submissions to the display of the concept design:

- The construction of a dual carriageway highway adjacent to the existing road has the potential to impact on surrounding rural properties, bushland areas and businesses. Consideration should be given to minimising the impact on these areas.
- Provisions for B-Double and heavy vehicles access to the local road system and adjacent quarries needs to be considered.
- The concept design report does not adequately detail the likely impacts of the proposal on noise receivers and it is unclear as to which residences are likely to be affected by road traffic noise.
- Upgrading the highway in this section provides an opportunity to improve water quality controls on the new alignment. There is potential to link the existing water quality control structures with the new alignment.
- There are a number of threatened flora, fauna species located within the vicinity of the study area. The direct and indirect impacts of the proposal on the flora and fauna species, populations, habitats and endangered ecological communities (EECs) require consideration. Existing documents, surveys and databases should be referenced when considering the potential impact on these items.
- The concept design report does not discuss measures to mitigate the potential impact of the proposal on Aboriginal heritage.
- Further detail is required on the environmental management measures proposed to be implemented to minimise the impact on the surrounding environment and community.
- What are the project start and finish dates.
- The concept design as displayed would have negative impacts on adjacent businesses and residential areas due to altered access arrangements, both to individual properties and existing intersections with the Pacific Highway at Bullocky Way, Possum Brush Road and Failford Road.
- There is both support for and objections to the proposed Bullocky Way traffic arrangements in Stages 1 and/or 2.
- Concerns about the cost of the Proposal, and in particular the proposed overpass and Bullocky Way roundabouts.
- Concern for safety of local residents/children associated with the conversion of the existing Pacific Highway to a two way service road, the location of the northbound connection to the new highway and opening up local roads such as Bullocky Way to through traffic. Traffic should be restricted to local traffic only and have a reduced speed limit.

4 Additional commitments

Consideration of responses received during the display of the concept design has resulted in the following commitments by the RTA, to be included as part of the proposed upgrade.

- The Concept Design will be refined following consideration of the issues raised by stakeholders and the community.
- A review of environmental factors (REF) is currently being prepared to assess the ecological and social impacts of the refined proposal and this will also be placed on public display.
- Consultation will continue during the refinement of the Concept Design and public display of the REF. Ongoing consultation activities will include:
 - The toll free project information line.
 - Meetings with the community liaison group.
 - A community update announcing the public display of the REF.
 - Correspondence with the contacts on the project's stakeholder database concerning the public display of the REF.
 - Advertising in local newspapers announcing the public display of the REF.
 - Meetings with individuals and stakeholder groups on request.
 - Updates on the RTA's website www.rta.nsw.gov.au.