

CONTENTS

Executive summary	2
1 Introduction.....	6
1.1 The project.....	6
1.2 Project location and study area	7
1.3 Structure of this Environmental Assessment report.....	16
2 Strategic justification and project need	18
2.1 Strategic context	18
2.2 Need for the project.....	22
2.3 Key project objectives.....	23
2.4 Statement of strategic need.....	24
3 Project alternatives.....	26
3.1 Alternatives considered	26
4 Description of the project.....	34
4.1 Project scope.....	34
4.2 Details of project design elements.....	44
4.3 Design.....	58
4.4 Construction.....	62
5 Assessment process.....	76
5.1 Statutory context.....	76
5.2 Environmental planning instruments	76
6 Consultation.....	80
6.1 Outline of the consultation process.....	80
6.2 Consultation objectives.....	81
6.3 Consultation for Iluka Road to Woodburn project to date	82
6.4 Consultation proposed during Environmental Assessment exhibition.....	88
6.5 Consultation proposed during construction.....	90
7 Assessment of key issues – ecology.....	92
7.1 Assessment approach	92
7.2 Existing environment	93
7.3 Potential impacts of the project.....	115
7.4 Impact mitigation and management measures.....	129
8 Assessment of key issues – hydrology and flooding	144
8.1 Assessment approach	144
8.2 Existing environment.....	144
8.3 Potential impacts of the project.....	152
8.4 Impact mitigation and management measures.....	164

9	Assessment of key issues – general construction impacts.....	166
9.1	Noise and vibration impacts.....	166
9.2	Construction traffic.....	181
9.3	Erosion, sedimentation, acid sulphate soils, water quality and riparian management issues.....	186
10	Other issues.....	216
10.1	Operational traffic and transport issues.....	216
10.2	Operational noise and vibration issues.....	221
10.3	Operational soil and water issues.....	232
10.4	Aboriginal heritage issues.....	234
10.5	Non-Aboriginal heritage issues.....	240
10.6	Land use and socio-economic impacts.....	243
10.7	Landscape character and visual impacts.....	251
10.8	Air quality.....	265
10.9	Greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.....	272
10.10	Hazards and risk.....	282
10.11	Waste management.....	284
11	Environmental risk analysis.....	288
11.1	Methodology.....	288
11.2	Environmental risk analysis.....	290
12	Draft statement of commitments.....	300
13	Justification and conclusion.....	310
13.1	Summary of strategic and project need.....	310
13.2	Justification.....	310
13.3	Conclusion.....	318
14	References.....	320

Figures

Figure 1-1	Project regional context	9
Figure 1-2a	The project - Class M motorway upgrade (Ch 6600-6800)	10
Figure 1-2b	The project – Class M motorway upgrade (Ch 68000-70500)	11
Figure 1-2c	The project – Class M motorway upgrade (Ch 70500-72500)	12
Figure 1-3a	The project – Class A initial staging (Ch 66000-68000)	13
Figure 1-3b	The project – Class A initial staging (Ch 68000-70500)	14
Figure 1-3c	The project – Class A initial staging (Ch 70500-72500)	15
Figure 4-4a	Key features of the motorway upgrade (Ch 66000-Ch 68000)	37
Figure 4-4b	Key features of the motorway upgrade (Ch 68000-Ch 70500)	38
Figure 4-4c	Key features of the motorway upgrade (Ch 70500-Ch 72500)	39
Figure 4-5a	Key features of the initial staging (Ch 66000-Ch 68000)	40
Figure 4-5b	Key features of the initial staging (Ch 68000-Ch 70500)	41
Figure 4-5c	Key features of the initial staging (Ch 70500-Ch 72500)	42
Figure 4-6	Typical cross-section for a motorway upgrade	45

Figure 4-7a	Proposed access (Motorway upgrade) (Ch 66000-68000)	49
Figure 4-7b	Proposed access (Motorway upgrade) (Ch 68000-70500)	50
Figure 4-7c	Proposed access (Motorway upgrade) (Ch 70500-72500)	51
Figure 4-8	Proposed access and intersections for initial staging	52
Figure 4-9a	Possible locations for ancillary areas (motorway upgrade) (Ch 66000-68000)	65
Figure 4-9b	Possible locations for ancillary areas (motorway upgrade) (Ch 68000-70500)	66
Figure 4-9c	Possible locations for ancillary areas (motorway upgrade) (Ch 70500-72500)	67
Figure 4-10a	Possible locations for ancillary areas (initial staging) (Ch 66000-68000)	68
Figure 4-10b	Possible locations for ancillary areas (initial staging) (Ch 68000-70500)	69
Figure 4-10c	Possible locations for ancillary areas (initial staging) (Ch 70500-72500)	70
Figure 5-11	Environmental assessment process for Devils Pulpit upgrade	79
Figure 7-12	Vegetation communities adjacent to the existing Pacific Highway within project area	97
Figure 7-13	Endangered ecological community adjacent to existing Pacific Highway within the project area – Subtropical Coastal Floodplain Forest	99
Figure 7-14	Key habitats and corridors (Source: DECCW Key Habitats and Corridors, online)	102
Figure 7-15	Satellite photo showing regional scale habitat linkages (Source: Google Earth Pro 2009)	103
Figure 7-16	Edge effects of project	122
Figure 7-17	Subtropical Coastal Floodplain Forest biodiversity offset option	142
Figure 8-18	Pine Road Creek – existing case 3 month Average Recurrence Interval 1 hour and 100 year Average Recurrence Interval 1 hour event – peak flood levels	148
Figure 8-19	Ch 68800 – existing case 3 month Average Recurrence Interval 1 hour and 100 year Average Recurrence Interval 1 hour events – peak flood levels	149
Figure 8-20	Tabbimble Floodways No. 2 and No. 3 – existing case 3 month Average Recurrence Interval 9 hour event – peak flood levels	150
Figure 8-21	Tabbimble Floodways No. 2 and No. 3 – existing case 100 year Average Recurrence Interval 9 hour event – peak flood levels	151
Figure 8-22	Pine Road Creek – design case 3 month Average Recurrence Interval 1 hour event – peak flood levels and flood impacts	156
Figure 8-23	Pine Road Creek – design case 100 year Average Recurrence Interval 1 hour event – peak flood levels and flood impacts	157
Figure 8-24	Tabbimble Floodways No. 2 and No. 3 – design case 3 month ARI 9 hour event – peak flood levels	158
Figure 8-25	Tabbimble Floodways No. 2 and No. 3 – design case 100 year Average Recurrence Interval 9 hour event – peak flood levels	159
Figure 8-26	Pine Road Creek – design case 100 year Average Recurrence Interval 1 hour event (20 per cent climate change) peak flood levels and flood impacts	161
Figure 8-27	Ch 68800 – design case 100 year Average Recurrence Interval 1 hour event (20 per cent climate change) peak flood levels and flood impacts	162
Figure 8-28	Tabbimble Floodways No. 2 and No. 3 – design case 100 year Average Recurrence Interval 9 hour event (20 per cent climate change) peak flood levels	163
Figure 9-29	Locations of sensitive receivers and noise loggers on the initial staging alignment	167
Figure 9-30	Estimated batching plant noise propagation	178
Figure 9-31	Soil Landscapes of the Woodburn 1:100,000 Sheet (DIPNR)	189
Figure 9-32	Land use map of study area and its catchment	192
Figure 9-33	Constructed channel on unnamed creek downstream east of Pacific Highway	194
Figure 9-34	Overland flowpath for Tabbimble Floodway No. 3 upstream of Pacific Highway	195

Figure 9-35	Tabbimoble Floodway No. 3 downstream of Pacific Highway	195
Figure 9-36	Tabbimoble Floodway No. 2 downstream of Pacific Highway	196
Figure 9-37	Sampling locations for assessment of water quality	200
Figure 9-38	Temporary freshwater pool on Pine Road Creek upstream (west) of Pacific Highway	201
Figure 9-39	Temporary freshwater pool on unnamed creek downstream (east) of Pacific Highway	201
Figure 9-40	Tabbimoble Floodway No. 3 downstream (east) of Pacific Highway	201
Figure 9-41	Tabbimoble Floodway No. 2 downstream (east) of Pacific Highway	202
Figure 10-42	Level of service criteria for two lane rural highways (Austroads date)	219
Figure 10-43	Land use map of project area and surrounds	247
Figure 10-44	Typical road corridor with distant ridgeline views	253
Figure 10-45	Typical road corridor through forested area	253
Figure 10-46	Floodway crossing	253
Figure 10-47	Partial pastoral lands glimpses	253
Figure 10-48	Typical enclosed road corridor	257
Figure 10-49	Typical enclosed road corridor	257
Figure 10-50	Typical sclerophyll forest	257
Figure 10-51	Revegetation at existing cutting	257
Figure 10-52	Tabbimoble Floodway No.2	259
Figure 10-53	Typical floodplain forest	259
Figure 10-54	Typical cleared pasture land	259
Figure 10-55	Forested land boundary with cleared pasture land	259
Figure 10-56	RTA risk grading matrix	260
Figure 10-57	Project site, existing highway at Devil's Pulpit	265
Figure 10-58	Location of sensitive receivers in the vicinity of the project site	269

Tables

Table 2-1	Project objectives	23
Table 3-2	Design options considered as part of the Devils Pulpit upgrade	29
Table 4-3	Project arrangements for existing accesses and intersections	47
Table 4-4	Proposed bridge structures	54
Table 4-5	Details of existing and proposed drainage structures and associated fauna passage northbound (NB) and southbound (SB)	56
Table 4-6	Proposed overhead (rope) fauna crossings	56
Table 4-7	Road furniture and fencing design	57
Table 4-8	Design criteria	58
Table 4-9	Potential pre-construction and construction activities	62
Table 4-10	Resources and indicative quantities required for construction	74
Table 4-11	Water volumes required for construction	74
Table 6-12	Stakeholders of the Devils Pulpit Upgrade	83
Table 6-13	Consultation during Environmental Assessment preparation	87
Table 6-14	Issues raised during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment	87
Table 7-15	Description of vegetation communities in the study area	95
Table 7-16	Targeted threatened flora	100
Table 7-17	Vegetation condition ratings	104

Table 7-18	Habitat types and fauna resources	105
Table 7-19	Threatened fauna recorded or predicted to occur within the study area	106
Table 7-20	Migratory species	111
Table 7-21	Waterway classification	112
Table 7-22	Fish species detected	113
Table 7-23	Direct impacts on vegetation, habitat and threatened species	116
Table 7-24	Proposed underpasses for motorway upgrade	135
Table 7-25	Proposed rope bridges and glider crossings	137
Table 7-26	Biodiversity offset options	141
Table 8-27	Catchment description	145
Table 8-28	Southern drainage – existing flood behaviour	146
Table 8-29	Tabbimoble floodways – existing flood behaviour	147
Table 8-30	Potential impacts of poor design of transverse drainage structures	152
Table 8-31	Southern drainage – design case flood behaviour	154
Table 8-32	Tabbimoble floodways – design case flood afflux*	154
Table 9-33	Summary of noise logger measurements	169
Table 9-34	Analysis of noise logger data	169
Table 9-35	NSW DECCW construction noise criteria	170
Table 9-36	Construction noise impact targets	170
Table 9-37	Ground-borne noise criteria	171
Table 9-38	Vibration limit criteria (mm/s-l)	171
Table 9-39	Potential construction noise sources	172
Table 9-40	Likely estimated construction plant items and associated sound power levels	173
Table 9-41	Estimated noise levels during construction stages, dB(A)	175
Table 9-42	Potential batching plant noise sources	176
Table 9-43	Potential construction vibration sources	180
Table 9-44	Traffic flows on Pacific Highway at Tabbimoble for intended work days	182
Table 9-45	Coach services passing through Devils Pulpit	183
Table 9-46	Catchment description	190
Table 9-47	Water quality objectives for protection of aquatic ecosystems (ANZECC 2000)	197
Table 9-48	Water quality objectives for protection of visual amenity (ANZECC 2000)	198
Table 9-49	Water quality objectives for protection of livestock water supply (ANZECC 2000)	198
Table 9-50	Water quality results and objectives	203
Table 9-51	Result ranges for key water quality parameters	204
Table 9-52	MUSIC results – existing mean annual loads	205
Table 10-53	AADT for RTA permanent sites in axle pairs	216
Table 10-54	AADT for RTA permanent counting station sites in vehicles	217
Table 10-55	Forecast level of service (LoS) for the existing highway	218
Table 10-56	Noise criteria	222
Table 10-57	Noise criteria	223
Table 10-58	Base traffic data input for verification noise modelling	224
Table 10-59	Model input data	225
Table 10-60	Summary of predicted noise impacts on residences – existing and design years	226
Table 10-61	L _{Amax} measured and extrapolated levels	229
Table 10-62	Road surface noise correction relative to dense-graded asphalt concrete	230

Table 10-63	Summary of NSW RTA building acoustic treatments	231
Table 10-64	Mean annual pollutant loads	232
Table 10-65	Forest management zone descriptions	245
Table 10-66	Richmond River LEP 1992 Zone objectives and permissibility	246
Table 10-67	Landscape character summary	254
Table 10-68	Korora air quality monitoring results	267
Table 10-69	NSW DECCW impact assessment criteria for dust deposition (insoluble solids)	270
Table 10-70	Projected impacts of climate change in the region (Climate Change in Australia 2007)	274
Table 10-71	Standard categorisations for direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions	274
Table 10-72	Predicted construction phase greenhouse gas emissions	277
Table 10-73	Predicted impact of the project on vehicle emissions	279
Table 10-74	Potential carbon sequestration for the 'with project' and 'without project' scenarios	279
Table 10-75	Predicted 'with project' and 'without project' emissions for road maintenance	280
Table 10-76	Net operating emissions for 'with project' and 'without project' scenarios (negatives in brackets)	280
Table 10-77	Design and construction phase greenhouse gas emission mitigation opportunities	281
Table 11-78	Risk analysis categories and criteria for risk ranking	289
Table 11-79	Environmental risks analysis matrix	291
Table 12-80	Table of draft environmental commitments for the project	301
Table 13-81	Potential cumulative and synergistic impacts of the project	312
Table 13-82	Objects of the <i>EP&A Act</i> and relevance to the project	315
Table 13-83	Application of principles of ecologically sustainable development to Pacific Highway Upgrade Program and the project	317

Appendices

Appendix A	Director- General's Requirements and Checklist	Vol 2
Appendix B	Minister's Orders	Vol 2
Appendix C	Government and Community Issues Checklist	Vol 2
Appendix D	Technical Working Paper: Ecology	Vol 2
Appendix E	Technical Working Paper: Flooding and Hydrology	Vol 2
Appendix F	Technical Working Paper: Water Quality	Vol 2
Appendix G	Technical Working Paper: Noise and Vibration Assessment	Vol 2
Appendix H	Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan	Vol 2