

**Wyang Shire Key Infrastructure Study – Interim Report**  
*Prepared for Wyong Shire Council*

## **CHAPTER 2 Planning status of the projects**

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## 1 Overview

Cardno has undertaken a desktop review of documentation provided by Wyong Council as well as additional documents sourced from both Council and the internet. Documents reviewed are listed in the Bibliography (Appendix A). Face to face interviews were also conducted with a range of critical Government agencies in order to gain an understanding of the current planning status of each project. Following is a précis of the outcomes of the literature review and the stakeholder consultation process. The précis separately covers:

- Strategic planning on the Central Coast;
- Planning for the F3 Freeway links;
- The East Coast High Speed Rail;
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sydney Airport; and
- Local Central Coast transport infrastructure.

Under each heading, a summary is provided firstly of the pertinent components of the relevant planning policies and reports and secondly of the outcomes of the stakeholder consultations. It should be noted at this point that the comments made during stakeholder consultations reflected the opinions of the particular officers being interviewed and did not necessarily represent the opinions of their respective employers. Having said this, the comments hold considerable weight as they were offered by senior personnel who have specific expertise in the areas of responsibility of their respective Agency employers.

## 2 Central Coast Strategic Planning

The Central Coast is expected to experience considerable growth over the next two decades. Seventy percent of that growth will occur in Wyong Shire. Strategic planning is in place to assist Wyong Shire to meet projected demands.

### 2.1 Strategies

#### State Level

The *Central Coast Regional Strategy 2006-31* (NSW Department of Planning, 2008) encapsulates current State level strategic planning for the Wyong Shire.

The *draft Central Coast Transport Strategy* (NSW Government, October 2010) supports the Regional Strategy and provides a vision for the Central Coasts regional transport network.

The *draft North Wyong Shire Structure Plan*, (NSW Planning, November 2010) facilitates achievement of the Regional Strategy targets for new housing and jobs within the Shire.

The *Lower Hunter Regional Strategy, 2006-31* (NSW Department of Planning, 2006) is relevant to Central Coast regional planning because it plans for significant housing and employment growth on land adjacent to the Wyong Structure Plan Area.

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### Local Level

Wyong Shire Council strategic planning is articulated in a portfolio of Statutory Planning Instruments, policies and strategies. Critical overarching Instruments and strategies include:

- The Wyong Local Environmental Plan, 1991;
- The draft Wyong Local Environmental Plan, 2011 (yet to be exhibited);
- The Wyong Shire Residential Development Strategy, 2002;
- The Wyong Shire Retail Strategy, 2007;
- The Wyong Shire Cultural Plan, 2005; and
- The Wyong Shire Water Plan 2050.

These are supported by a series of local strategies which currently include:

- The Wyong / Tuggerah Planning Strategy, 2005;
- The Entrance Peninsular Planning Strategy, 2009; and
- The Toukley Planning Strategy, 2010.

## 2.2 State Level Planning

### *The Central Coast Regional Strategy 2006-31 (NSW Department of Planning, 2008)*

The Strategy addresses planning projected to 2031 for the Gosford and Wyong Local Government Areas. It includes a Plan to accommodate a projected regional population increase of 100,000 people by 2031.

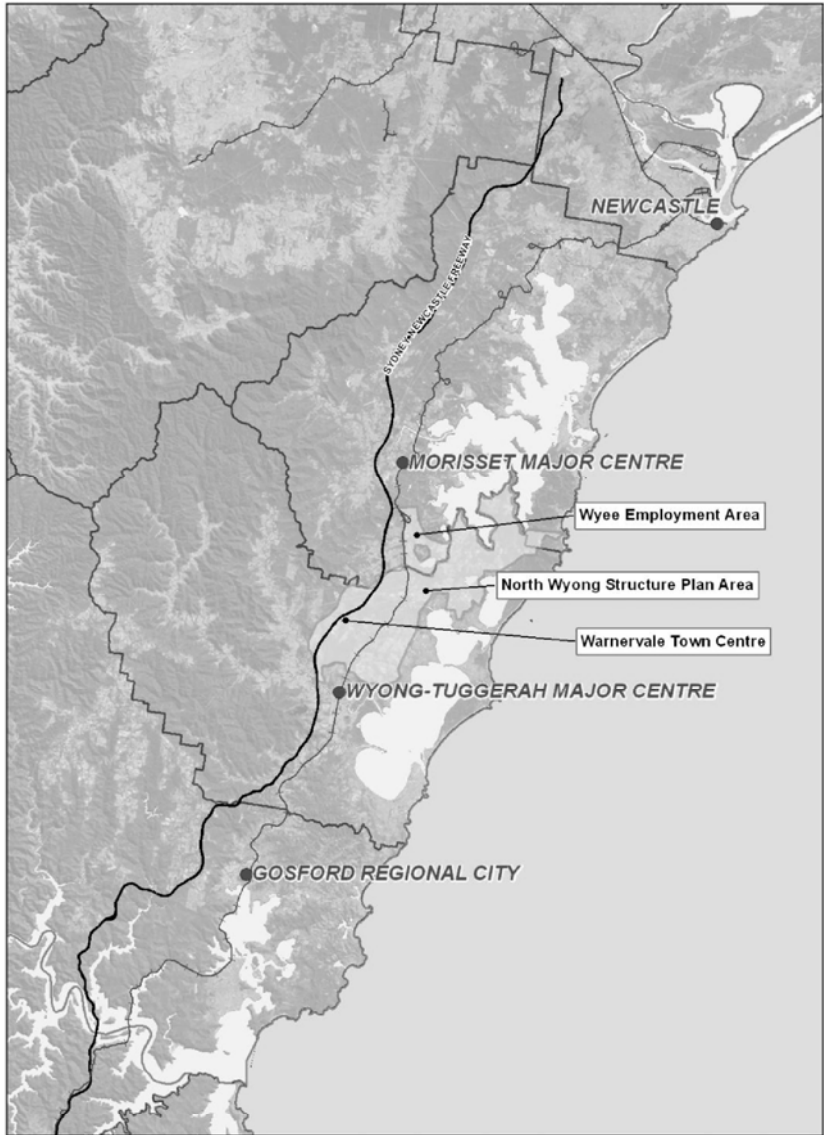
#### General Summary

The Strategy:

- Identifies a demand for 56,000 dwellings to 2031 to accommodate the increased population and falling household occupancy levels;
- Supports creating capacity for 45,000 new jobs in the Region to 2031 (6000 in Gosford, 5500 in Tuggerah-Wyong, 18000 in remaining centres, 5000 in employment lands and 10,500 in the area identified as the Wyong Structure Plan Area);
- Promotes Gosford as the regional city and Tuggerah-Wyong as the major regional centre;
- Identifies the North Wyong Shire Structure Plan Area, incorporating the Wyong Employment Zone and the new Warnervale Town Centre, as the focus for new employment lands and new Greenfield residential development (10,500 new jobs, 19,000 new dwellings); and
- Provides a framework for future rail and road transport infrastructure to be identified and prioritised.

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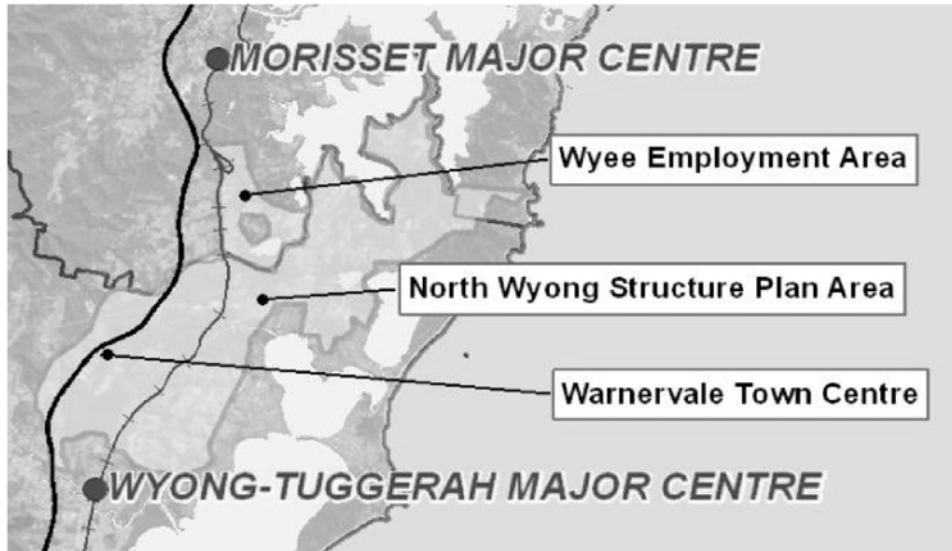
Under the Strategy, the two Central Coast Councils are charged with the responsibility of providing, either through Local Environmental Plans or local planning strategies, sufficient quantities of zoned land to enable dwelling capacity and employment generation targets to be achieved.



**Figure 2** Central Coast Strategic Planning – Key initiatives (Central Coast Regional Strategy, 2008; Lower Hunter Regional Strategy, 2008)

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Critical to infrastructure planning for Wyong Shire, the *Lower Hunter Regional Strategy* (NSW Department of Planning, 2008) identifies significant capacity for residential and employment lands within the southern portion of the Lake Macquarie Local Government Area. The Strategy identifies Morisset as an emerging major centre and Wye as a new employment and residential zone with combined capacity to generate 1600 new jobs and up to 2500 additional dwellings.



**Figure 3** Critical growth areas in the Lower Hunter and North Wyong districts

**Economy and employment**

The Central Coast economy has become important as a market for goods and services, as a focus for primary and secondary production and as a labour supply for Sydney.

Critical components set to grow in the local economy include:

- Retail;
- Community services (health, education, public administration, trades, property and business services as well as hospitality services); and
- Knowledge based institutions, which are emerging as major contributors to the local economy.

Infrastructure planning will be a major component of continued economic and employment growth. Improved regional connections, including stronger links to Sydney will induce additional investment and may spur new local employment opportunities.

Wyong Employment Zone has been recognised as a State Significant Site. This will assist in the delivery of employment targets that are set out in the Central Coast Regional Strategy.

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## **Regional transport**

### Trends and issues

The Region is highly car dependent with insufficient public transport or cycling links between centres, rail stations and other destinations.

There are substantial commuter movements to / from the region via rail and road. The F3 Freeway and Sydney – Newcastle rail line are the main out of region movement corridors. As a consequence, Central Coast commuters are forced to compete with the national and state private and commercial freight functions.

The rail corridor is located on the western fringe of the heavily populated coastal areas. It provides a regional link between Tuggerah-Wyong, Gosford Centre and other centres to the north and south and the main interregional link to the lower Hunter and metropolitan Sydney. Buses play a critical role in connecting to the rail corridor and providing inter-regional public transport.

Road and rail infrastructure play the most significant role in moving freight to, from and through the Central Coast.

There is an increasing demand for logistics centres in strategic locations, particularly near major roads including the F3 Freeway.

Warnervale Airport (owned by Wyong Council) operates as a local airport. Its future is being considered as part of the Wyong Employment Zone (**WEZ**) rezoning.

### Significant proposals

#### *Road upgrades*

- Wyong - upgrades / road widening projects to improve access to the North Wyong Structure Plan Area / Warnervale Town Centre / Wyong employment Zone.
- Gosford - various upgrades to main roads in central and southern Gosford.

#### *Rail upgrades*

- Wyong – North Warnervale – new rail station; Tuggerah Rail Station Interchange and Carpark
- Gosford – Central coast stabling to accommodate new outer suburban cars; Woy Woy commuter carpark extension.
- A Rail Clearways Plan aims to improve capacity and reliability on the CityRail Network. – An additional platform at Hornsby Station is planned to improve reliability for Central Coast services.

#### *Bus Services*

- Strategic bus corridors are proposed to improve connections between the rail corridor and the coastal population centres.

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### Implications for transport infrastructure

The plan for the Gosford regional city includes development of the rail station as a transport hub.

The plan for the Tuggerah-Wyong major centre includes improved transport links, with an emphasis on bus services.

Council and State Government are required to undertake integrated land use and transport planning to ensure that opportunities to benefit from infrastructure are realised.

### Implications of the proposed major infrastructure

#### F3 to M7 Link

Improved road access may result in a population spike and accelerated demand for residential land on the Central Coast.

There may also be accelerated demand for logistics centres and general industrial development, particularly in the North Wyong Structure Plan Area because of adjacency to the link intersection with the F3.

#### **2.2.2 The Draft North Wyong Shire Structure Plan, (NSW Planning, November 2010)**

##### Overview

The Structure Plan was prepared to create a platform for planning in the northern portion of the Wyong Shire, the area identified in the Central Coast Strategic Plan as the key locality to support the region's growth. The Plan provides land capacity to accommodate:

- 17,800 new dwellings (43,000 persons) on 850 hectares of Net Developable Land (NDL); and
- 12,100 – 17,000 new jobs on 455 hectares of NDL.

Short term release areas are at Bushells Ridge, Warnervale Town Centre and the Wyong Employment Zone.

#### **2.2.3 The Draft Central Coast Regional Transport Strategy, (Transport NSW, 2010)**

##### Overview

The Strategy is a shadow document to the Central Coast Regional Strategy derived to facilitate Integrated Land Use and Transport Planning within the region. It identifies that the region's transport challenges are framed by:

- Difficult topography and resulting dispersed settlement patterns;
- Increasing population with a growing number of young and elderly families; and
- A significant commute out of the region.

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Against this background, the Strategy maintains in the 25 year timeframe that:

- Projected populations of the Central Coast will continue to rely on roads for private/public/ commercial transport;
- The F3 will remain the principal regional movement corridor;
- The Sydney-Newcastle rail line will remain the principal regional public transport mode; and
- The region's transport network needs to provide:
  - Local connectivity to support jobs close to home and access to local services;
  - Maintained / improved connections to key centres out of the region.

### **Precis of proposed initiatives**

The Strategy commits in 10 years to:

- Various upgrades to the F3 & investigations of the F3 to M7 link;
- Road / rail upgrades to support the North Wyong Structure Plan and the Tuggerah-Wyong major regional centre;
- North Warnervale Rail Station & Transport Interchange;
- Strategic bus corridors and Bus Priority measures; and
- Implementation of the NSW Bike Plan via Wyong and Gosford strategies.

The Strategy commits beyond 2020 to:

- Investigation of the Gosford to Sydney fast rail connection; and
- Planning for the Outer Sydney Orbital connection to the Central Coast.

## **2.3 Local level planning**

The Wyong local planning system is currently under review in accordance with State requirements to adopt a standardised consolidated Local Environmental Plan. At the time of preparation of this report, Wyong has not yet issued a draft of its consolidated Plan. It is expected that the draft will be released for comment in early 2012.

The suite of local planning policies and strategies is consistent with the State based strategic planning for the region and generally provides a platform for delivery of the targets set by these.

## **2.4 Agency responses and concerns**

In interviews with local agencies a number of pertinent opinions were voiced with regard to the challenges for strategic planning on the Central Coast. Notwithstanding that these are opinions only of the relevant officers interviewed, they are of value to the study as a snapshot of issues of concern to senior personnel working within the current regional planning framework of the Central Coast. Pertinent issues raised are based on a critical need for Government intervention to kick start the development proposed in the Strategies. Specifically, a number of interviewees considered that:



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- In the current and likely medium term economic climate, the targets set by the planning strategies will not be met without Government commitment to infrastructure provision and 'anchor investment' on key sites. Sites mentioned specifically included the Warnervale Town Centre and Gosford Landing;
- Local transport infrastructure on the Central Coast is at capacity and will require a substantial upgrade to encourage development and serve future populations;
- State government should view the Central Coast as a key growth area on par with the North and South Western Sydney Growth Centres; and
- Warnervale will not develop without the Sparks Rd upgrade. With regard to this particular issue, DP&I personnel reported that Wyong Council, Landcom and Woolworths have committed to jointly fund the entry road off Sparks Road and have requested that the State fund the Sparks Road intersection.

### 3 F3 Freeway Duplication

It has long been accepted that there is a critical need for a second major freeway north out of Sydney to link Western Sydney, Central Coast and the Hunter Region. Current literature reports that peak period capacity on a six-lane F3 is likely to be exceeded by 2021. Central Coast based traffic makes up about 60% of the total daily traffic on the F3 and growth within the region will clearly have a significant impact on the efficient function of the Freeway. A solution to the problem is clearly critical to Wyong Shire.

#### 3.1 Literature Review

Cardno has reviewed the three critical studies of the F3 to Sydney Orbital link:

- The F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study (SKM, 2004);
- Interim report – F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study, (Masson Wilson Twinney, 2004); and
- Review of the F3 to M7 Corridor Selection, prepared by Mahla Pearlman AO, 2007.

In addition to the above, we have reviewed the following supporting reports:

- Central Coast Regional Organisation of Councils Submission to the Hon Mahla Pearlman Review, dated 2 April 2007;
- Cardno review and presentations (2010 / 2011);
- The Strategic Planning Department Director's Report presented at the September 10 2003 Ordinary Meeting of Wyong Shire Council; and
- State Government Hansard (Page 651) of 11 May 2011.

#### F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study (SKM, 2004)

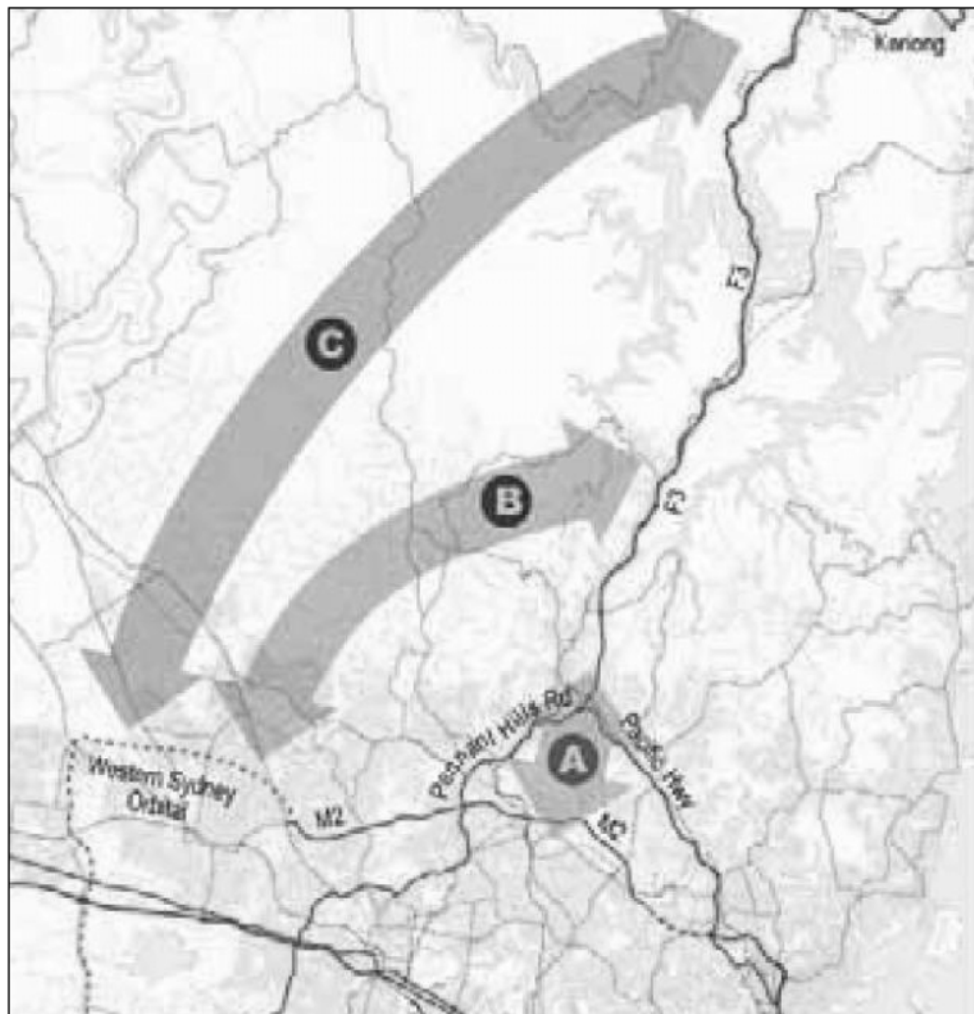
Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) was commissioned by the New South Wales Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) to carry out a strategic study for the Australian Government to identify a route for the National Highway connecting the F3 and the Western Sydney Orbital (now the M7) or the M2 Motorway (M2) to relieve pressure on Pennant Hills Road (the interim National Highway).

A Newsletter (Newsletter No. 3) released by SKM in May 2003 stated that the aim of the study was to identify a new route that would:

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- Alleviate traffic congestion and improve travel reliability on the National Highway;
- Reduce the operating costs of long-distance commercial and freight transport;
- Improve road safety on the National Highway;
- Improve local amenity (reduce traffic, air and noise emissions and severance) for people living and working along Pennant Hills Road;
- Minimise social and environmental impacts during construction and operation;
- Provide opportunities for improved public transport;
- Integrate with the regional transport network;
- Serve the future growth needs to long-distance transport; and
- Be economically justifiable and affordable to government.

SKM produced its final report in 2004. The report included assessment of three broad corridor types as illustrated in **Figure 4**.



**Figure 4** F3 Link Corridor Options (Source: F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study, prepared by SKM)

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The corridors were described in the F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study as follows:

**Type A Corridors**

Type A corridors include the more easterly options, which form a southern extension of the F3 corridor to connect with the M2 Motorway. All the Type A options would be mostly in tunnel under existing roads and/or residential areas. Some Type A options would involve a tunnel under the Lane Cove River and Lane Cove National Park.

Type A corridor options range from an easterly alignment connecting with the M2 Motorway at Macquarie Park, to a westerly alignment, generally following Pennant Hills Road and connecting with the M2 Motorway at the existing M2/Pennant Hills Road Interchange.

Type A corridor options would continue to use the F3 as the major road transport link between Sydney and the north.

**Type B Corridors**

Type B corridors include options within the central study area that would connect the Sydney Orbital between Pennant Hills Road and Dean Park to the F3 between Wahroonga and the Hawkesbury River. The options would bypass the developed areas of Hornsby.

Type B corridor options would generally consist of above ground sections and tunnels under existing residential areas. Most options would cross the Berowra Creek Valley with major bridge structures. Some options would include tunnels under the Mt Colah area and Castle Hill, Cherrybrook and West Pennant Hills residential areas.

Type B corridor options would continue to use the F3 corridor, north of Mt Colah/Berowra as the major road transport link between Sydney and the north.

**Type C Corridors**

Type C corridors include the more westerly options which would connect the Sydney Orbital between Windsor Road and Dean Park with the F3 north of the Hawkesbury River.

All Type C options would consist of above ground and tunnelled sections, and a major new crossing of the Hawkesbury River. It is also assumed that some tunnel sections would be required under Marramarra National Park. Most options would involve above ground sections through the Schofields/Kellyfield/Annangrove area and run along parts of the existing Old Northern Road alignment in the Glenorie area. Some options would also include tunnels under existing residential areas at Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill.

Type C options would form a second major road corridor between Western Sydney and the north. Traffic would continue to use the F3 corridor north of Mt White as the major transport link between Sydney and the north.

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### **Preferred Corridor**

The F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study concluded that a Type A corridor Purple option (linking the F3 to the M2) would meet the terms of reference under which it was appointed and would satisfy the objectives and criteria underpinning the Study. It stated as follows:-

*“A1: The Purple Option be adopted as the preferred corridor for a new link, which best satisfies National Highway objectives between the F3 Freeway at Wahroonga and the M2 Motorway.”*

It was concluded that a Type A Corridor would best meet the project objectives by:

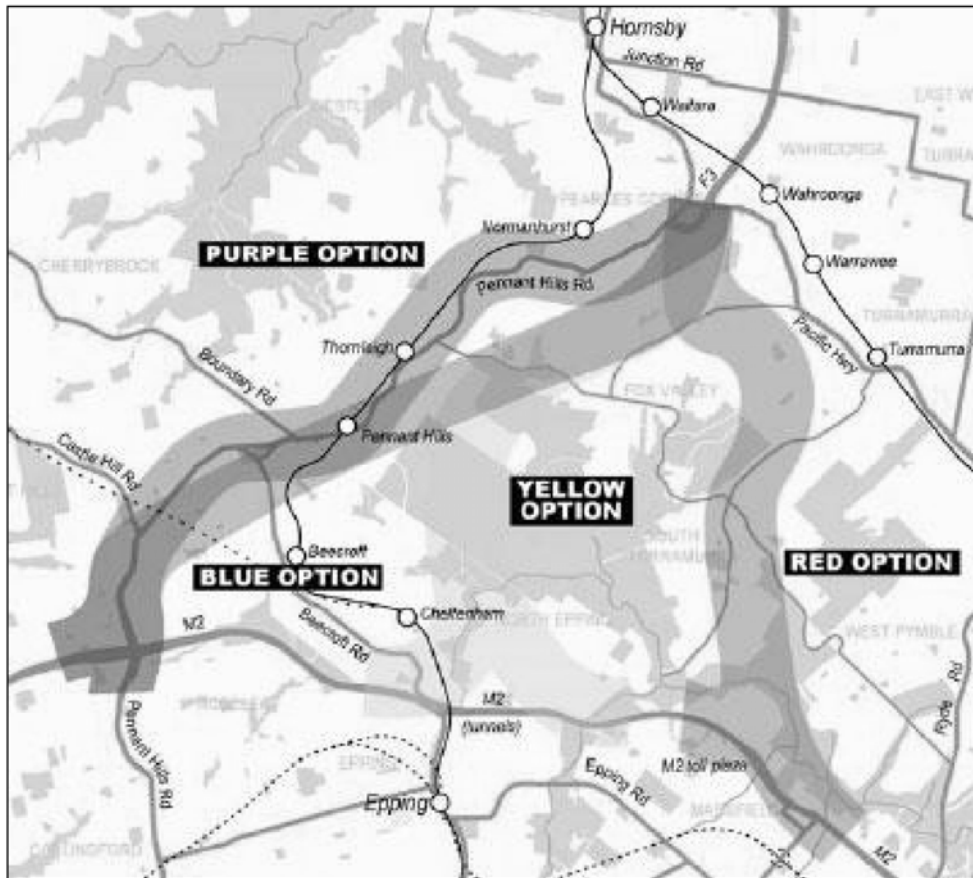
- Reducing traffic volumes and congestion on Pennant Hills Rd;
- Minimising community impacts;
- Minimising costs; and
- Minimising impacts on National Parks, reserves and other bushland areas, endangered ecological communities and indigenous heritage sites.

The study also recognised that a western route (Option ‘C’ route) may be needed in the longer term (20 to 25 years) to service an increasing population and employment demand in the west and north-west of Sydney.

### **Preferred Route**

Within the preferred Type A corridor, four sub options were identified as illustrated in **Figure 5**.

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**Figure 5** Sub-options within the preferred Type A Corridor. (Source: F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study, prepared by SKM)

The SKM Study carried out a further analysis of the four sub-options and made the following conclusion:

*“..... that the Type A Purple option linking the F3 with the M2 Motorway best meets National Highway objectives and is justified on social, economic and inter-regional transport grounds. The study recommends that the Purple option be the preferred option for the new National Highway link.”*

The identified purple option has a northern connection with the F3 at Wahroonga and a southern connection to the M2 at the existing Pennant Hills Road / M2 interchange (at that time). Its alignment would generally follow Pennant Hills Road and it would comprise dual 2km tunnels from the F3, a short (500 metres) section where it would daylight in an open cut adjacent to the railway corridor and in the vicinity of Brickyard Park at Thornleigh, and dual 5.5km long tunnels to the M2. The interchange at the northern end, at Wahroonga, would directly connect the new link with both the F3 and Pennant Hills Road. A new link/M2 interchange would allow for all traffic movements.

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In May 2004, the Australian Government accepted and endorsed the recommended 'purple option' as the preferred route. The northern interchange (at Wahroonga) would directly connect the new link with the F3 with new links to and from Pennant Hills Road.

### **Capacity Issues of the purple option**

The study identified that the capacity of the F3 would need to be increased over some sections if the benefits of the new link are to be maximised. Specifically, it was identified that there would be a need to increase the capacity of the F3 over some sections south of the Hawkesbury River crossing by 2011. Further capacity enhancements and/or traffic demand management measures on the F3 were considered likely to be required beyond the timeframe of the study (2021).

### **Local Government response**

In 2003, Wyong Council lodged a submission to the public exhibition of the draft Report (*Director's Report, Strategic Planning Department, September 10 2003 Ordinary Meeting of Council*) expressing a preference for the 'Red Option' corridor. Council's resolution read:

*That Council make a submission advising:*

That in relation to the upgrading of Pennant Hills Road:

- a. Council prefers the Red Option.*
- b. DOTARS, before proceeding with further work, identifies the consequences of the preferred option with regard to traffic congestion at the southern end connection with the M2.*
- 2. That upgrading of the F3 Freeway south of the Hawkesbury River into 6 lanes be expeditiously carried out by the Federal Government.*
- 3. That SKM, DOTARS and the local Federal Members be advised that Council views the creation of an alternative major additional transport corridor to the F3 as a priority for the Central Coast and for Australia and that planning for such a route should commence as a matter of urgency.*
- 4. That Council request support on Item 3 from the Hunter Regional Organisation of Councils.*

*The Central Coast Regional Organisation of Councils (CCROC) supported the yellow option on the basis that it would provide F3 traffic with more direct access to the M2 for access to the M7 and more direct access to the CBD and there would be significant traffic relief benefits for both the Pacific Highway and Pennant Hills Rd. (Letter to Hon Mahla Pearlman, 2 April 2007).*

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**Interim report – F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study (Wilson Masson Twiney, 2006)**

Following the publication of the SKM Study, Transurban Ltd submitted that a Type A corridor Yellow option would provide a better route than the Type A corridor Purple option based on different traffic forecasts produced by Transurban's modelling. To assess that assertion, a desktop review of the traffic forecasts used by SKM and Transurban was carried out by Masson Wilson Twiney, Transport and Traffic Consultants.

The Masson Wilson Twiney report concluded that "despite the more recent traffic modelling showing similar results for both the Yellow and Purple Options, the Purple Option would better serve the transport functions required in the F3 to Sydney Orbital Corridor".

**Future Actions**

The report noted that traffic capacity on a six-lane F3 between Sydney and the Central Coast is likely to be exceeded in peak periods by 2021. A decision would need to be made regarding long term options for the corridor. Options canvassed included an eight lane F3 and a Type C option. The report stated that at that a future time, the decision making process may determine that a Type C option is warranted.

**Review of the F3 to M7 Corridor Selection (Hon Pearlman, 2007)**

On 19 February 2007, the Federal Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads, the Hon. Jim Lloyd MP, announced the establishment of an independent Review of the F3 to M7 Corridor Selection, to examine the technical underpinnings and the robustness of the process followed to ensure the decisions taken by governments previously on the route selection of the preferred 'purple' option were soundly based.

The Review concluded the following:

1. *"That the assumptions and data used in the SKM 'F3 to Sydney Orbital Link Study 2004' were valid and reasonable at the time of the study;*
2. *That there have been changes affecting land use and transport flows since the SKM Study's publication, but that these changes reinforce the selection of the preferred route; and*
3. *That the SKM study recommendations progress as follows:*
  - a. *The preferred route follow a Type A corridor Purple option and that this be progressed to the next stages of investigation including: detailed concept design, economic and financial assessment and environmental impact assessment; and*
  - b. *A Type C corridor be planned now."*

The Pearlman Review was completed in August 2007. The Review's recommendations were reviewed by Government and accepted by the Hon. Jim Lloyd MP.

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### 3.2 Agency responses and concerns

Cardno interviewed both Gosford and Wyong Council urban and transport planning officers regarding their current attitudes to the F3 options. Responses are summarised as follows:

- Both Councils support the F3 to M2 connection to relieve traffic congestion and potentially encourage growth on the Central Coast.
- Both Councils support an alternative link from the F3 to the M7 by 2021 and believe feasibility and corridor selection should begin now.
- Both Councils believe the regional significance of the Kariong Interchange has been overlooked in planning to date.
- Wyong Council considers an F3 Freeway interchange at Doyalson is critical to the successful growth of North Wyong.

### 3.3 F3 to M2 Project Status

A review of State Government Hansard (Page 651) of 11 May 2011 has provided the most recent documented status update for the F3 Freeway Duplication. The Hon. Duncan Gay stated that:

- No planning work has been undertaken since mid-2009. This has been due to a lack of funding.
- In 2008, 2009 and 2010 submissions were made for funding – Infrastructure Australia did not allocate any funding or include it in their national infrastructure priority list.
- In 2009 \$5 million was allocated towards the F3 - M2 link in the Federal budget but NSW did not use these funds.
- In May 2011 Federal funding for the F3 - M2 link was cut from the National Building Program's forward budget estimates.
- The change in Government may move things forward.
- The Liberal Government had made it clear before the election that they will commence construction on one of the key missing links in the Sydney Orbital road network by 2015. Infrastructure NSW will determine whether it will be the F3-M2, the M5 East duplication, the M4 East extension or the F6.
- An application will need to be made to Infrastructure Australia to get funding.

As part of this review process, Cardno also interviewed Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW - the planning arm of the former Roads and Traffic Authority) to gain information on the current status of freeway planning for the Sydney to Hunter corridor. TfNSW provided valuable information on two levels:



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With regard to the southern extension of the F3:

- TfNSW is committed to the F3 to M2 option (Option A “Purple Link”).
- A funding submission to Infrastructure Australia was made in May 2011, notwithstanding that previous funding submissions were rejected in 2008, 2009 & 2010.
- Subject to funding, construction of the link is scheduled to commence in 2014 for completion in 2018.

Regarding options and progress for an F3 duplication:

- Transport for NSW is carrying out early feasibility analysis for an ‘Outer Sydney Orbital’ that would initially link the south west and north west growth centres and then potentially extend north to link with the F3 and south to Port Kembla (Figure 6). The concept is consistent with the Sydney Metro Plan, 2036 which identifies an “outer Sydney orbital serving Western Sydney and linking to the Central Coast”.
- TfNSW informs that the first priority of the Orbital would be to link the W. Sydney Growth Centres.
- TfNSW reports that the Orbital is not high on its current priorities list. The major focus of the agency at present is the Sydney North West Rail Link.

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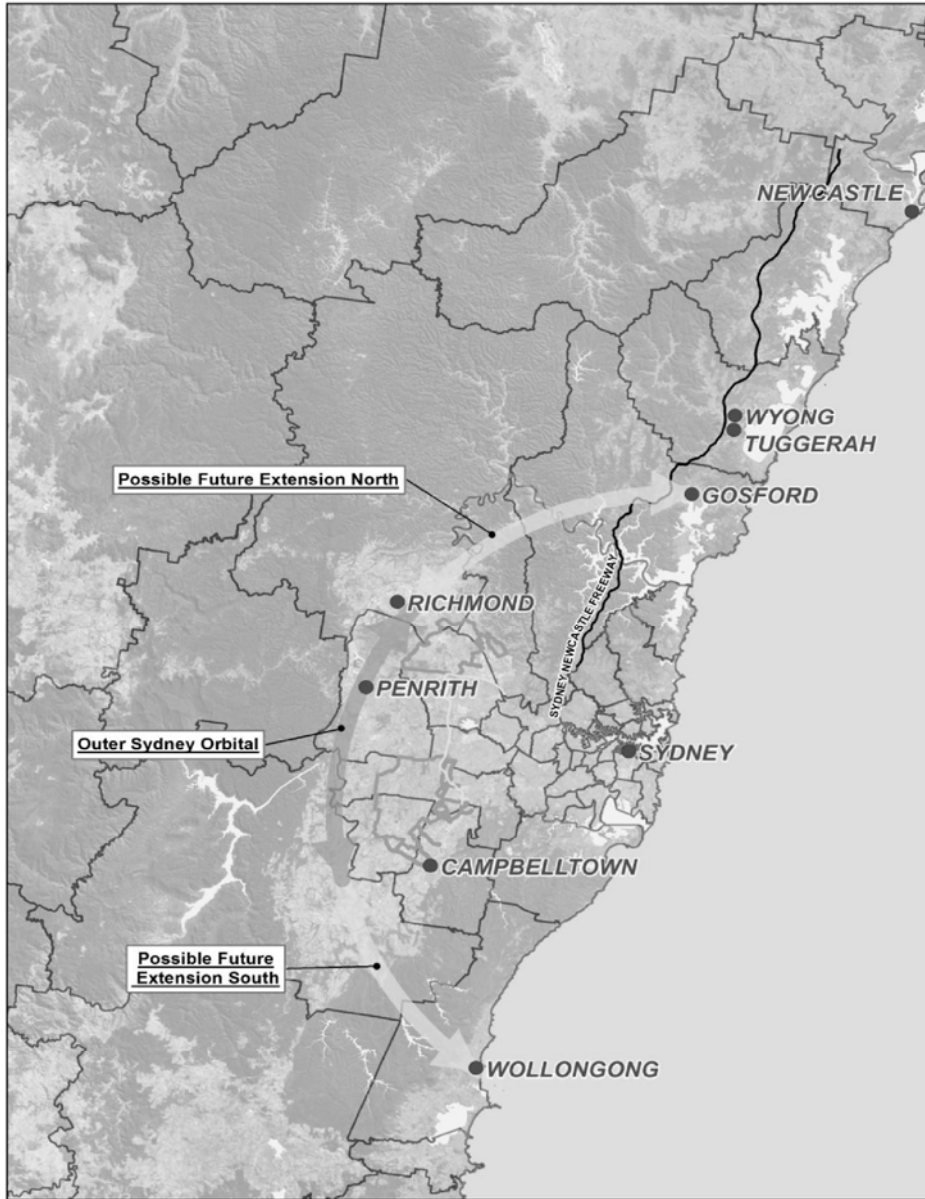


Figure 6 Possible Outer Sydney Orbital

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## 4 High Speed Rail

### 4.1 Background

Feasibility and options for a High Speed Rail (HSR) network on the east coast of Australia linking Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane are currently being considered by the Australian Government. In August 2010, the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport commissioned a 2 phase study.

A Phase 1 report was released in July 2011. It considered:

- Range of costs;
- Potential corridors and stations;
- Potential future demand; and
- Potential social and regional development impacts.

A Phase 2 report is in production at the time of writing. It will consider:

- Financial feasibility analysis;
- Identify optimum route alignment;
- Refine patronage and cost estimates; and
- Investigate potential financing options.

Government has made no commitment beyond the completion of the 2-phase feasibility study.

### 4.2 Literature review

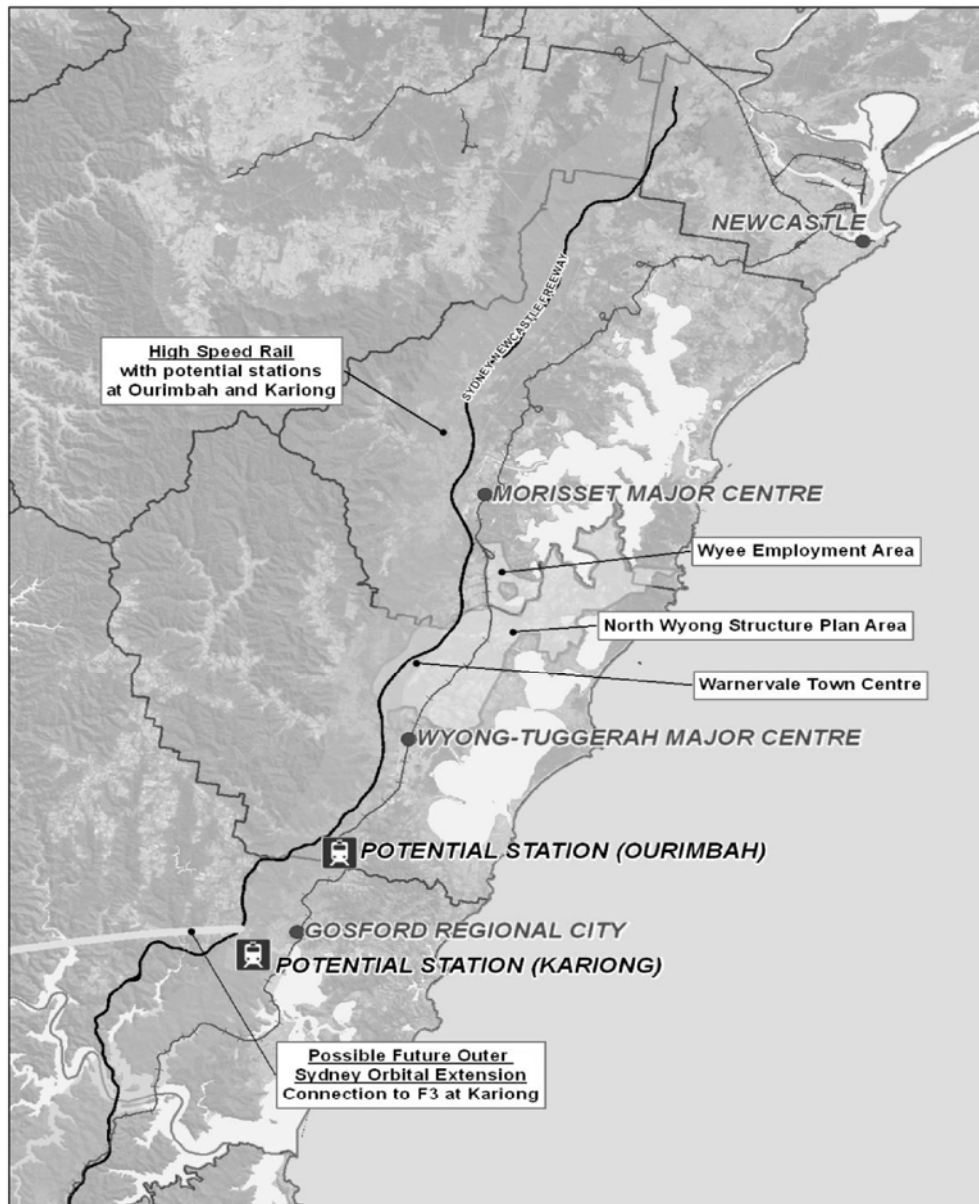
#### High Speed Rail Study – Phase 1 (AECOM, July 2011)

The salient outcomes of the Phase 1 Study are:

- At a National level:
  - The Melbourne to Brisbane Corridor has been costed at \$61-\$108billion (in \$2011).
  - The acquisition and preservation of future corridors now (at an estimated cost of \$6billion in \$2011) could reduce future land acquisition costs.
- At a regional level:
  - The report shortlists the Newcastle to Sydney (Central Coast) corridor for Phase 2 analysis. The corridor is costed at \$10.7-17.9billion in \$2011.
  - Staged development of the corridor is recommended with Sydney to Gosford/Wyong forming the first stage followed by Wyong to Newcastle.
  - A corridor following the F3 Freeway alignment is preferred (see Figure 7).
  - The Central Coast is identified as an area of sufficient demand to warrant a rail station.

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- Kariong and Ourimbah are identified as alternative options for a Central Coast station. Of these, Kariong is promoted over Ourimbah on the basis that it provides a good interface with the existing rail network and connectivity to the Gosford regional centre. The report does not directly identify a preferred Central Coast station location.



**Figure 7** East Coast High Speed Rail – potential Central Coast corridor