

## Chapter 15 Cultural heritage

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*This chapter describes the aspects of Aboriginal and European cultural heritage that may be affected by the location of the Proposal. Heritage items located during the investigations are described, an assessment is made of likely impacts on these heritage resources, and appropriate mitigation measures are presented.*

### 15.1 Method of assessment

#### 15.1.1 Background research

The cultural heritage assessment addresses both Aboriginal and European heritage resources located within the study area.

Background research into the cultural heritage resources along the route of the Proposal included:

- review of site cards, reports and associated documents relevant to the study area and surrounding region held by the NSW DEC
- review of local heritage literature applicable to the area
- review of heritage listings and schedules held by Commonwealth, State and local government authorities and non-government organisations, namely:
  - World Heritage properties (as identified under the EPBC Act)
  - the Register of National Estate (Australian Heritage Council)
  - the State Heritage Register and State Heritage Inventory (NSW Heritage Office)
  - 'Aboriginal place' listings under section 84 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*
  - Schedule 2 - Heritage Items of the Greater Taree LEP 1995, Schedule 2 – Heritage Items of the Hastings Council LEP 1987
  - Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Registers held by the RTA, RailCorp, and Department of Education and Training
  - Register of the National Trust (National Trust of Australia [NSW])

Consultation was conducted with representatives of the Bunyah and Purfleet Taree Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC) and local heritage researchers.

#### 15.1.2 Aboriginal consultation and participation

The study area falls within the boundaries of the Purfleet/Taree LALC, based at Taree, and the Bunyah LALC, based at Wauchope. The Birpai LALC, based in Port Macquarie, also has a recognised interest the study area.

Consultation with these organisations occurred as part of the route selection phase of the Proposal in 2000, and continued by way of written correspondence, meetings and review of recommendations. Three representatives of the Purfleet/Taree LALC and two representatives from the Bunyah LALC joined archaeologists in the field surveys carried out along the route. The results of the field survey, recommendations and management implications of the survey and report were discussed with each representative.

A summary copy of the draft Working Paper No. 5 was provided to both LALCs. Individual meetings were held with each LALC to discuss and review the report and recommendations. Both LALCs:

- expressed general acceptance of the proposed route
- endorsed the recommended management strategies presented
- supported the practice of archaeological testing of the identified potential archaeological deposits (PADs) and collection of artefacts.

Bunyah LALC stressed the importance of avoiding the reported corroboree ground (site A14) to the south of Kew.

### 15.1.3 Field survey

A comprehensive field survey of the route of the Proposal was conducted in August 2002. The survey aimed to identify all visible Aboriginal and historic sites and features along the proposed highway alignment and to define the areas of archaeological potential that may require subsurface testing. Survey for Aboriginal sites involved walking the entire proposed route. Areas considered to have archaeological potential such as creek banks, old growth native trees, crestlines and terrace edges, and all existing natural ground surface exposures were inspected. All examples of old growth native trees in the survey area were inspected for possible Aboriginal scarring.

## 15.2 Environmental context

The study area, extending from south of Johns River to north of Kew as discussed in Chapter 1, supports a mosaic of landuse patterns that will have affected the integrity of the local cultural resource to varying degrees. The township areas (Kew, Johns River and Herons Creek) have undergone extensive land surface change as a result of road and building construction, landscaping and installation of services. Similarly, the existing Pacific Highway corridor has been subject to major landscape modification. Away from the townships, low gradient and well-drained privately owned land is predominantly cleared to form grasslands or open woodland grazing environments. Forest vegetation covers areas of high ground (e.g. the three Brothers mountains).

Disturbance to Aboriginal sites will have variously occurred as a result of original land clearance, forestry, quarrying and pastoral activities. Certain types of fragile Aboriginal sites may have been destroyed, partially destroyed or scattered. In areas such as alluvial flats and basal slopes, undisturbed artefact material may remain below the plough zone. In cleared areas that have undergone minimal ploughing, Aboriginal artefact scatters are likely to have survived.

Major ground disturbance associated with rural and township residential development will have certainly destroyed and disturbed both Aboriginal and non-indigenous archaeological sites.

Forestry activities frequently have a major impact on Aboriginal sites such as scarred trees and open artefact scatters located on crests where logging tracks are made. The removal of old growth trees from logged areas minimises the potential for surviving Aboriginal scars.

## 15.3 Existing cultural context

### 15.3.1 Ethnohistory

The Moorland to Herons Creek study area is placed in the tribal territory of the Ngamba people (Tindale 1940, 1974). This territory apparently stretched from near Taree (approximately 31 km to the south of the study area) to Telegraph Point (approximately 45 km to the north of the study area) and west almost to Comboyne. The real tribal boundaries of Aboriginal peoples have mostly been obscured by their early displacement from traditional lands with the advent of European settlement. Today, the local Aboriginal community generally believes that all of the tribal groups between Crescent Head and Karuah are considered to belong to a larger tribal grouping with a shared culture and association, known today as the Birpai Nation.

To date there has been no detailed synthesis or study of ethnographic sources for the region around the Moorland to Herons Creek study area. Notwithstanding the absence of institutionalised communities in the area, there has been, and remains, a significant local Aboriginal presence within the region.

Studies suggest that potentially large populations were supported along the main river corridors and the coastal plain, and that intercommunication, either within or between different groups, was very important for economic and/or ceremonial reasons. Access routes following natural topographical lines, both along and across the coastal plain, would therefore have been important components of Aboriginal land use.

### 15.3.2 Historic overview

The first European references to the Camden Haven area were made in 1770 when Captain James Cook sailed along the mid north coast in the *Endeavour*. Since the overland expedition to the Hastings in 1818, the Port Macquarie and Camden Haven areas have been used for the collection of oyster shells to manufacture lime (1820s), harvesting and milling of timber (1870s onwards) and agriculture (1830s onwards).

The settlement of Rossglen was established around 1870. Following the construction of a bridge across the river, the Ross Glen hotel, store and police station moved to Kew (formerly known as Crossroads). Johns River township was formed in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The corridor of the study area approximates an alignment of travel that was established by European travellers since the region was developed by settlers travelling to Port Macquarie in the 1830s.

### 15.3.3 Sites listed on heritage schedules and registers

The following places and items are listed on heritage schedules and registers and occur in relative proximity to the proposed upgrade:

- Middle Brother Mountain, consisting of the Middle Brother State Forest and Middle Brother National Park, is listed as an Indicative Place on the Register of National Estate (i.e. it is not registered but is being considered for registration). The entry is for natural heritage values only (although the mountain also has high Aboriginal cultural values).
- 'Brothers Mountain Coastal Conservation Area' is classified by the National Trust (NSW).
- The Three Brothers Mountains have been gazetted as an Aboriginal Place under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.
- The Royal Hotel (formerly the Stables Hotel), corner Ocean Drive and Pacific Highway, Kew, is included as a Heritage Item under the Hastings LEP.

- The Kew Police Station Building, No. 20 Tathra Road, Kew, Part Portion 62, is included as a Heritage Item under the Hastings LEP.
- There are a number of Aboriginal sites which have been registered on the NSW DEC Aboriginal Sites Register and occur within or partly within the study area (refer Section 15.4).

There are no items or places within the study area listed as World Heritage properties or on the Heritage and Conservation Registers (under section 170 of the Heritage Act) of RTA, RailCorp and the Department of Education and Training.

There are no places on the initial list of the National Heritage Register.

#### 15.3.4 Previous archaeological investigations

Archaeological surveys and assessments in the region have been conducted since the late 1970s. More recently, the upgrading of the highway has generated considerable archaeological research in what was previously a relatively archaeologically unknown area.

The cultural heritage investigations for the route selection phase for the Proposal determined that some 124 Aboriginal sites had previously been recorded in a 250 km<sup>2</sup> area centred on the study area. Site types include scarred trees, burial locations, shell middens, stone arrangements, artefact scatters, isolated finds, rock shelters with deposit, and natural mythological sites.

Fifteen Aboriginal sites were recorded during the targeted field surveys conducted within and near the route of the Proposal as follows:

- six isolated finds
- three artefact scatters
- three possible scarred trees
- a reported subsurface archaeological deposit
- a reported corroboree ground
- a reported stone arrangement.

In addition, six PADs and eleven European sites were found. Sites that are relevant to the assessment of the Proposal are discussed below in Section 15.4.

#### 15.3.5 Current historical investigations

Subject to funding availability, the RTA is planning to undertake a study of the heritage significance of all pre-1948 RTA concrete beam road bridges within the Northern Region. This investigation would address two existing highway bridges within the study area - at Stony Creek and Herons Creek. As this assessment is to be carried out by the RTA and would assess the potential significance of the bridges and management requirements, the assessment of these sites has not been included in this investigation. However, as noted in Section 15.4.7, these two bridges have been modified, whereas approximately 110 of the remaining 178 such bridges under RTA control have not been modified and thus some may be of higher heritage significance.

## 15.4 Assessment of effects

### 15.4.1 Basis of significance

#### Aboriginal sites

The Burra Charter of Australia defines cultural significance as 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present and future generations' (Australia ICOMOS 1987). The assessment of the cultural significance of a place is based on this definition but often varies in the precise criteria used according to the analytical discipline and the nature of the site, object or place.

In general, Aboriginal archaeological sites are assessed using five potential categories of significance:

- significance to contemporary Aboriginal people
- scientific or archaeological significance
- aesthetic value
- representativeness
- value as an educational and/or recreational resource.

Many sites will be significant according to several categories and the exact criteria used will vary according to the nature and purpose of the evaluation.

The following assessments are made with full reference to the scientific, aesthetic, representative and educational criteria. Reference to Aboriginal cultural values has also been made where these values have been communicated to the consultants. It should be noted that Aboriginal cultural significance can only be determined by the Aboriginal community, and that confirmation of this significance component is dependent on written submissions by the appropriate representative organisations. It must also be noted that all Aboriginal sites are important to Aboriginal people as tangible links with their past.

#### European sites

The NSW Heritage Office and DIPNR have defined a set of criteria and methodology for the assessment of cultural heritage significance for items and places, where these do not include Aboriginal heritage from the pre-contact period (NSW Heritage Office & DUAP 1996, NSW Heritage Office 2000). The assessments provided in this EIS follow the Heritage Office methodology. More detail on the assessment of heritage significance is provided in Working Paper No. 5.

### 15.4.2 Study area sites

Of the sites and resources recorded during the targeted field surveys (see Section 15.3), eight Aboriginal sites, six areas of PADs and eleven European sites (see Figures 15-1A and 15-1B) have been identified within, or in relative proximity to, the Proposal. The other identified sites would not be affected by the Proposal. A schedule of the key characteristics of these potentially affected sites is presented in Table 15-1 and further description of the sites follows.

### 15.4.3 Scarred trees

#### Recordings A7, A8 and A16

Based on the present DEC database, scarred trees must be considered a locally rare site type and sites A7, A8 and A16 could be considered to be of high local significance. However, an Aboriginal origin cannot definitely be attributed to these scars due to difficulties in assessing the age of the trees and the scar regrowth.

On present indications, trees A7 and A8 would not be adversely impacted by the Proposal.

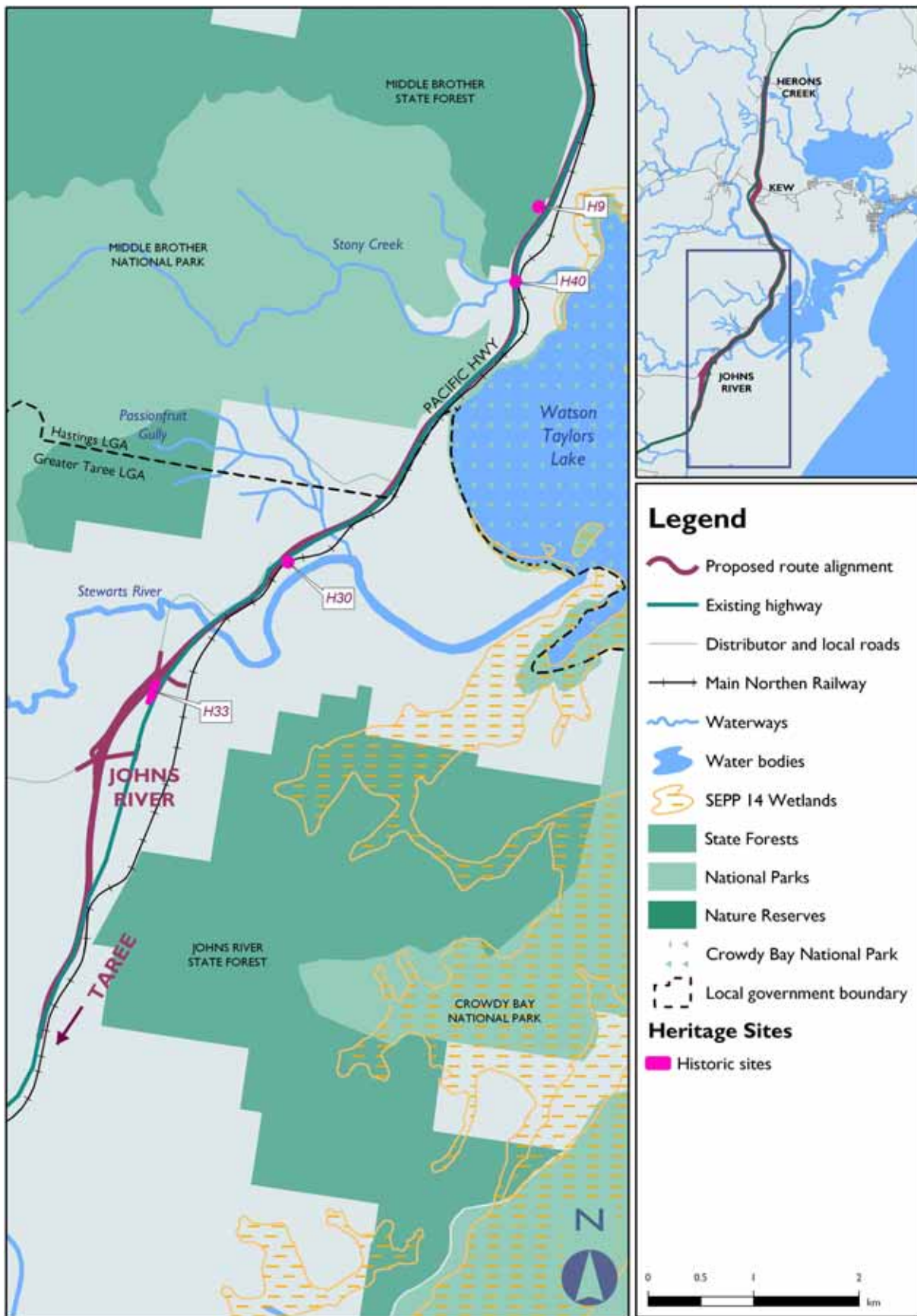


Figure 15-1A Heritage sites of significance (south)

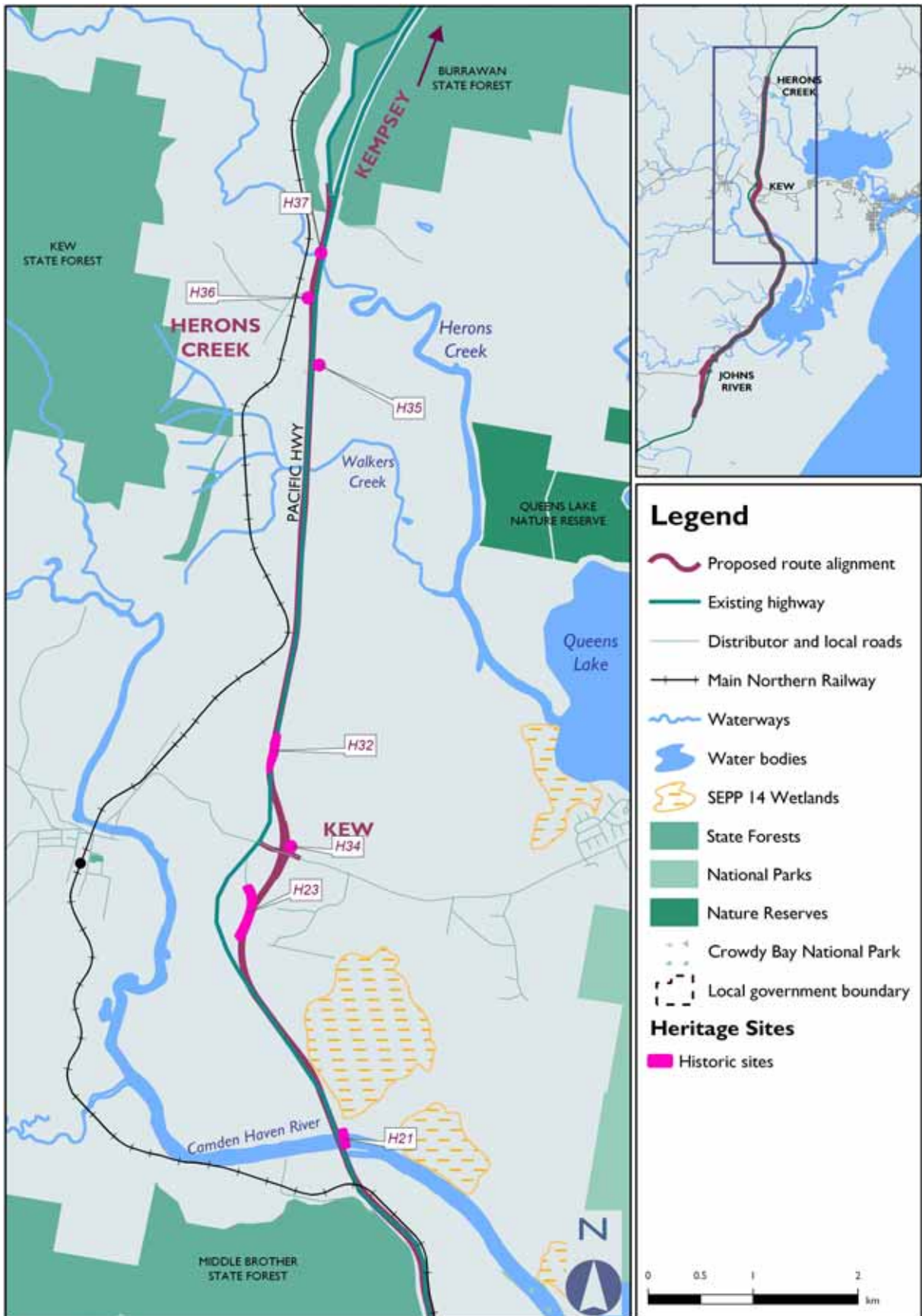


Figure 15-1B Heritage sites of significance (north)

**Table 15-1 Inventory of historic sites**

Site	Site Type and Description	Anticipated impact or location relative to the Proposal
<b>Aboriginal sites</b>		
A1	Isolated find with moderate potential for the site to be larger and associated with <i>in situ</i> subsurface material	Located approximately 30 m west of proposed road cut. Will not be impacted by road works.
A3	Artefact scatter along entry track to a nearby home. The site may be larger and has moderate potential to be associated with <i>in situ</i> subsurface material.	Located approximately 10 m south of highway reserve boundary and approximately 30 m south of proposed earthworks. Will not be impacted by road works.
A6	Isolated find with low potential for site to be larger.	Will be directly impacted by Cluleys Road works.
A7	Scarred tree – the site extends to edge of root zone.	Located outside of highway reserve. Will not be impacted by road works.
A8	Possible scarred tree – the site extends to edge of root zone.	Located outside of highway reserve. Will not be impacted by road works.
A14	Reported place of 1903 Aboriginal corroboree. General location only, area within 100 m radius of this point.	Located immediately west of, but outside of highway reserve. Will not be impacted by road works.
A16	Possible scarred tree – the site extends to edge of root zone.	Located within existing highway reserve, between new service road and new northbound carriageway. The tree is around 8 m southwest of proposed cut. Exact location of tree requires confirmation in relation to location of road works in order to protect from road works.
30-6-2	Middle Brother Mountain, Aboriginal story place and cosmological site. No definitive boundary for the significant area has been defined. The site includes the whole mountain complex and the basal slopes which are traversed by the existing highway.	The Proposal will involve some filling and excavation within the highway reserve adjacent to the existing carriageway. Impacts have also be reduced so as to be consistent with Aboriginal requests to minimise the extent of earthworks, maximise reuse of existing corridor, and avoid new highway alignments.
<b>Potential archaeological deposits</b>		
PAD1	Remnant alluvial terrace surface approximately 60m x 20 m.	Located to the east and outside of highway reserve, will not be impacted by road works.
PAD2	River flats, levee and terrace deposits extending 200 m south of the south bank of Stewarts River.	Will be directly impacted by bridge works - impact will include excavation for bridge piers.
PAD3	Upper alluvial terrace and 100 m margin adjacent to wetland basin.	PAD extends into highway reserve on west side of existing carriageway. No construction works are proposed in this area.
PAD4	Remnant terrace surface on either side of Highway forming elevated northern banks of tributary south of Herons Creek, approximately 150 m x 50 m.	PAD will be directly impacted by filling on either side of the existing carriageway.
PAD5	Terrace surface and associated basal slopes adjacent to flood plain on either side of existing highway carriageway, approximately 200 m x 150 m.	PAD will be directly impacted by filling and excavation on either side of the existing carriageway.
PAD6	Levee deposit on south bank of Herons Creek, west of highway, approximately 100 m x 20 m.	PAD will be directly impacted by filling on west side of the existing carriageway.

Site	Site Type and Description	Anticipated impact or location relative to the Proposal
<b>European sites</b>		
H9	Reported site of former school. Remains reportedly occur within a 60 m radius of this point.	Located outside of highway easement, approximately 25 m west of construction fill. Will not be impacted by road works.
H21	Pier remains of former concrete Pacific Highway bridge over Camden Haven River, around 30 m east (downstream) of the existing Highway bridge.	Will not be directly impacted by construction works but may be proposed to be demolished at request of government authorities.
H23	Section of former Pacific Highway, dates from the early 1940s. Follows or approximates alignment of existing dirt track and/or cadastral road easement, approximately 550 m long. Extends south of Kew police station.	All but the far northern end of road remnant will be directly impacted by construction works for the Kew bypass.
H30	Wooden road bridge over Main Northern Railway line, just north of Stewarts River may date from 1914. Site includes bridge structure and abutments.	The bridge is located outside of the highway reserve and approximately 25 m away from construction fill. Will not be impacted by road works.
H32	Section of former Pacific Highway, dates from the early 1940s. Road remnant follows contour in an arc to the east and between the two defined points, approximately 300 m in length.	Most of the road remnant will be directly impacted by highway construction. The road is currently poorly preserved at either end where it abuts existing carriageway.
H33	Section of former Pacific Highway situated along an original late nineteenth-century road reserve. Straight 200 m remnant, north of Johns River.	Will be directly impacted by highway construction.
H34	Surface scatter of late nineteenth century glass and ceramic fragments. Basal, south facing slopes of a ridgeline saddle, scatter is approximately 5 m x 8 m	Will be directly impacted, at least partially, by proposed roundabout on Ocean Drive.
H35	Tree stump with springboard notches - crest of broad, ill-defined spurline.	Located approximately 27 m east of new highway easement boundary and 46 m east of construction excavations. Will not be impacted by road works.
H36	Tree stump with springboard notches, southwest of intersection of highway with access road to Herons Creek.	Will be directly impacted by highway construction but is currently in poor condition.
H37	1938 Concrete Pacific Highway bridge spanning Stony Creek. The bridge was widened in 1980.	Will be replaced by new bridge.
H38	1940 Concrete Pacific Highway bridge spanning Herons Creek. The bridge was widened in 1977.	Will be replaced by new bridge.

Tree A16 is situated around 8 m from a proposed carriageway excavation and in relative proximity to a side road providing access to Ross Glen Road. If it is anticipated that this tree would be unavoidably impacted by development works, further assessment by a botanist is required before a fully informed assessment of cultural significance can be made.

Based on the present level of recording for these sites, A7, A8 and A16 are considered to have moderate to high significance within a local context.

#### 15.4.4 Artefact scatters and isolated finds

##### Sites A1, A3 and A6

Other than to record their locations and content, small and/or disturbed artefact scatters and isolated finds are generally not considered significant under the categories noted in Section 15.4.1. However, sites A1 and A3 have moderate potential to be associated with *in situ* subsurface material. As these sites are located approximately 30m from proposed earthworks, it is not anticipated that they would be affected.

Sites with stratified deposits (meaning chronologically distinct layers of occupation remains) or large assemblages of subsurface and relatively undisturbed artefacts are likely to have a high significance within a local and regional context.

Isolated Find A6 is considered to have low significance, based on the low potential for the site to be larger than recorded, to contain more artefacts, and to be associated with *in situ* subsurface material.

#### 15.4.5 Reported Aboriginal sites

##### Site A14

This site has high significance to the local Aboriginal community as the reported location of a 'corroboree' within historic times (1903). The close proximity of this site to Kew and the fact that it was remembered by members of the local European community suggest that the 'corroboree' did not include secret or restricted elements and may have been intended as a public display. This recording provides a link with the social practices of the local Aboriginal community around the turn of the twentieth century.

The significance of this site rests primarily with its cultural significance to Aboriginal people. Further archaeological investigation of the site is unlikely to change or heighten the understanding of the site.

This site is considered to have moderate to high significance within a local context. The Proposal and associated road works would not adversely impact the site as it is located outside the highway reserve.

#### 15.4.6 Middle Brother Mountain

##### Site NPWS #30-6-2

The Middle Brother Mountain has strong and special cultural significance to the Aboriginal communities of the NSW Mid and North Coasts. Together, the North, Middle and South Brother Mountains constitute a traditional story place and form an integral part of the cultural landscape and cosmology of the NSW North Coast. Middle Brother Mountain can be considered to have high Aboriginal cultural significance within local and regional contexts.

Some minor filling and excavation works would take place within the existing highway reserve adjacent to the existing carriageway. All necessary and appropriate measures would be taken to prevent any potential impacts in this area beyond the road reserve.

### 15.4.7 European heritage sites

The reported former school site (H9), the wooden rail over-bridge (H30) and the trees stump with notches (H35) would not be impacted by the Proposal.

The section of former Pacific Highway alignment (H33) and the pier remains of a former concrete Pacific Highway bridge (H21) are considered to fall below the threshold of the significance assessment criteria for listing on either local or State registers. There are no statutory heritage constraints regarding any Proposal impact on them.

Sites H32 (a section of the former Pacific Highway), H34 (a surface scatter of nineteenth century glass and ceramic fragments) and H36 (tree stump with springboard notches) are relics as defined by the *Heritage Act 1977*, but are not assessed as having local or State level significance. Due to this significance assessment, a section 139 (excavation) permit under the *Heritage Act 1977* may not be required as a prerequisite for construction – see Section 15.5.2.

Site H23 (a section of the former Pacific Highway) falls within the definition of a relic and is assessed as having local significance. A section 139 (excavation) permit will be required – see Section 15.5.2.

Both sites H37 and H38, concrete beam highway bridges, would be replaced as part of the Proposal. These sites have not been assessed in this investigation, however, there are 173 RTA-controlled bridges open to traffic which were built before 1948 and which have at least one 'CBEAM' (reinforced concrete beam) span in the structure. Of these, 63 bridges have been modified in some way including both the two bridges in the study area. These two bridges are to be included in a yet-to-be commissioned RTA heritage assessment of RTA pre-1948 concrete beam bridges in the Northern Region which, it is understood, would develop heritage management strategies for these and other similar bridges in the region.

## 15.5 Mitigation measures

### 15.5.1 Aboriginal sites

The following mitigation measures would be implemented in relation to the identified impacts:

- The possible Aboriginal scarred tree A16 would be conserved alive and *in situ* within the road reserve. An accurate survey of the tree and its location relative to the edge of proposed earthworks would be conducted. A temporary fence would be constructed around the tree for the period of construction. The purpose of the fence would be to define a 'no-go' and 'no-disturbance area', off limits to heavy machinery and materials storage. The retention of native vegetation around the tree would be maximised.
- If accurate survey of the A16 tree determines a location subject to unavoidable construction impact, then further assessment of the tree by a botanist would be required. The purpose of this assessment would be to determine the probable age of the tree and, in particular, the age and origin of the scar. An age determination that was consistent with an Aboriginal origin would strengthen the interpretation made in Working Paper No. 5. Appropriate management strategies should be developed for the tree commensurate with its interpretation and the nature of any unavoidable impact.
- If there is an assessed risk of accidental impact from adjacent earthworks or machinery movements to sites A1, A3, and A14, then temporary fencing would be erected between the site and the zone of construction activity to define no-go and no-disturbance areas.
- Application would be made to the DEC for a section 90 permit to disturb Aboriginal isolated find A6.

- In accordance with advice provided by the DEC, all excavation or ground disturbance within the potential archaeological deposits PAD2, 4, 5 and 6, would be monitored by an archaeologist and a representative of the relevant LALC. In the event that Aboriginal objects are exposed by construction activities then all work in the vicinity of the find should cease and advice sought from the DEC. Construction works in the area of the find cannot recommence without receipt of a section 90 permit from the DEC.
- Temporary fencing would be installed between PAD3 and the zone of construction activity.
- In order to minimise impact on the Aboriginal cultural values of Middle Brother Mountain, the extent of all earthworks, ancillary works, and vegetation clearance along its basal landforms would be minimised where feasible and, where possible, located within areas of previous disturbance.

### 15.5.2 European sites

The following mitigation measures would be implemented in relation to the identified impacts:

- Application would be made to the Director of the NSW Heritage Office for a section 139 permit to allow for the direct impact of Site H23 (a section of the former Pacific Highway). An archival record of the site would be made prior to impact.
- Notification of the intention to impact sites H32, H34 and H36 would be provided in writing to the Director of the NSW Heritage Office with a request that a determination be made as to whether the intended impact falls under an existing exemption for the RTA to section 139 permit provisions. An archival recording of site H32 would be conducted as part of the recording program for site H23 (a longer section of the same former road alignment) prior to its impact.
- Where, and if, necessary according to the findings of a yet-to be commissioned heritage study of RTA pre-1948 concrete beam bridges in the Northern Region, the RTA would develop heritage management strategies – likely to be an appropriate level of recording - for sites H37 and H38 - concrete beam highway bridges.
- If the construction of bridges over the Stewarts and Camden Haven Rivers would involve the excavation of fluvial sediments in the active beds of these rivers, and where the excavation methodology allows, the content of these excavated sediments should be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist. The objective of such a program is the recording and, where warranted, collection of any exposed maritime relics. If relics are detected then further excavation should cease, pending advice from the NSW Heritage Office.

### 15.5.3 Consultation

Consultation and liaison with the LALCs and community representatives would continue during the pre-construction and construction periods of the Proposal.

## 15.6 Monitoring

All heritage recordings with conservation management requirements that are situated within or in close proximity to the road works would be identified in a CEMP, including a Heritage Management Plan (see Section 21). All management requirements such as disturbance prevention or boundary fencing would be included within the CEMP. Recordings which are relevant to this monitoring are A1, A3, A7, A8, A14, A16, H30, H35 and PAD3.

In the event that a previously unrecorded or assessed Aboriginal object (as defined by the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*) or relic (as defined by the *Heritage Act 1977*) is exposed during construction works, then all work in the vicinity of the find should cease and advice sought from DEC or NSW Heritage Office (respectively).

## 15.7 Implications for ESD

### 15.7.1 Precautionary principle

The route selection and the environmental assessment processes have ensured that, where possible, any potential damage or disturbance to known items or areas of cultural significance would be avoided or otherwise minimised as a result of the Proposal. In some locations, permits would be required from DEC and Heritage Office and this process would ensure that the detail of these sites is recorded.

### 15.7.2 Intergenerational equity

It is unlikely that the Proposal would have any long-term effects that would degrade the cultural heritage resource of the study area for future generations. The investigations undertaken to date for this proposal, together with the required recording of sites impacted, will increase the information base available now and in the future. Consultation with the NSW DEC and the LALCs throughout the construction phase of the Proposal should ensure that any potential irreparable damage to cultural heritage items arising from the Proposal does not occur.

### 15.7.3 Conservation of biological diversity

Assessment of the significance of cultural heritage items and sites acknowledges the close connections between Aboriginal sites and management of environmental resources and the maintenance of biological diversity.

### 15.7.4 Improved valuation and pricing of environmental resources

The importance of cultural heritage resources has been explicitly recognised in the route selection, concept design and environmental assessment phases of the Proposal. While economic valuation has not been made of these resources, their importance from a community perspective has been an integral factor in project development.