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Recommendations and Way Forward

The main recommendations of the study are presented below.

20.1 The Preferred Option

It is recommended that 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.

Planning and design of the link should be based on constructing the tunnels as two lanes in each direction if tolled or three lanes in each direction if untolled.

The new link should be designed with appropriate recognition of the high proportion of heavy vehicles (up to 18%) that would use the link.

The link should be designed for motorway to motorway design standards at its interchanges with the F3 Freeway and M2 Motorway west. Furthermore, interchange ramps should be constructed within existing road reserves as far as practicable.

The desirability of an intermediate connection with Pennant Hills Road should be considered in the development of the link.

Opportunities to reallocate road space on Pennant Hills Road should be considered, to realise benefits for other users, improve the general amenity of the area and access to Pennant Hills and Thornleigh railway stations.

Improvements needed on Pennant Hills Road south of the M2 motorway up to and including the North Rocks Road intersection should be implemented to ensure acceptable traffic flow and no queuing in the Purple link tunnels.

Improvements needed on the F3 Freeway at Wahroonga, including widening within the road reserve up to approximately Edgeworth David Avenue, should be implemented so as to ensure acceptable traffic flow and no queuing in the Purple link tunnels.

20.2 Way Forward

The following steps should be considered:

- i) Governments consider the affordability of the Purple Option;
- ii) Investigate alternative alignments and sub-options within the Purple corridor, and develop a concept proposal;
- iii) Consult with the community on the concept proposal; and
- iv) Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the preferred concept proposal.

20.3 F3 Capacity Issues

The proposed link would greatly improve connectivity between the Sydney Orbital and the F3 Freeway. The capacity of the F3 Freeway would also influence operations of the new link. There will 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 impacting on the F3 Freeway are likely to be required beyond the timeframe of this study (2021).

An investigation into the planning need for a new northern transport corridor could be considered as part of the current review of the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy by the NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources. Such an investigation is outside the scope of this study, or National Highway planning.