North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension Corridors

Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment

Transport for NSW

31 January 2018

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Document control record

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Document control						
Report title		Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment				
Document ID		n/a	**Project number**		240625	
Client		Transport for NSW				
Client contact		Helen Borland	**Client reference**			
Rev	**Date**	**Revision details/status**	**Author**	**Reviewer**	**Verifier** (if required)	**Approver**
0	20 December 2017	**Working draft**	**TW, SC**	**CM**		**CM**
1.0	31 January 2018	**Draft for public exhibition**	**TW, SC**	**CM**		**CM**
Current revision		**1.0**				

Approval			
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Executive summary

Transport for NSW proposes to protect two rail corridors in western Sydney for future rail infrastructure for passenger train services. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would connect the T1 Western Line near St Marys and T8 South Line near Macarthur via the future Western Sydney Airport site. The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor would extend from Leppington Station to Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis, to connect with the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor and South West Rail Link Extension corridor are shown in Figure E-1.

The recommended corridors are critical to meeting the New South Wales (NSW) Government's ambitions for a '30-minute city' in which people have access by public transport to education, jobs and services within 30 minutes regardless of where they live. The future North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension infrastructure would connect residents in the emerging suburbs of the South West Growth Area with jobs and services in the new Western Economic Corridor, future Western Sydney Airport site, Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis, Liverpool, Greater Penrith, Campbelltown–Macarthur and Western Sydney Employment Area.

Investigations have been undertaken for the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension to identify suitable corridors of land to accommodate new railway infrastructure in the future. The purpose of this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment is to provide an assessment of the strategic impacts and benefits of providing future public transport infrastructure in the recommended corridors, as well as an assessment of the benefits of protecting the corridors now. The draft Strategic Environmental Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Department of Planning and Environment's *Planning Guideline for Major Infrastructure Corridors*. The assessment has been undertaken to inform the process of corridor protection in statutory environmental planning instruments, which will be requested to be carried out by the Department of Planning and Environment.

This draft Strategic Environmental Assessment is not an application for approval to build or operate any transport infrastructure within the recommended corridors. Rather, it is intended only to support the statutory process of protecting land so that it is available when required in the future for potential public transport use.

At the time of rail infrastructure delivery, an environmental impact statement for the proposed project would be prepared in accordance with the relevant environmental planning and approvals legislation.

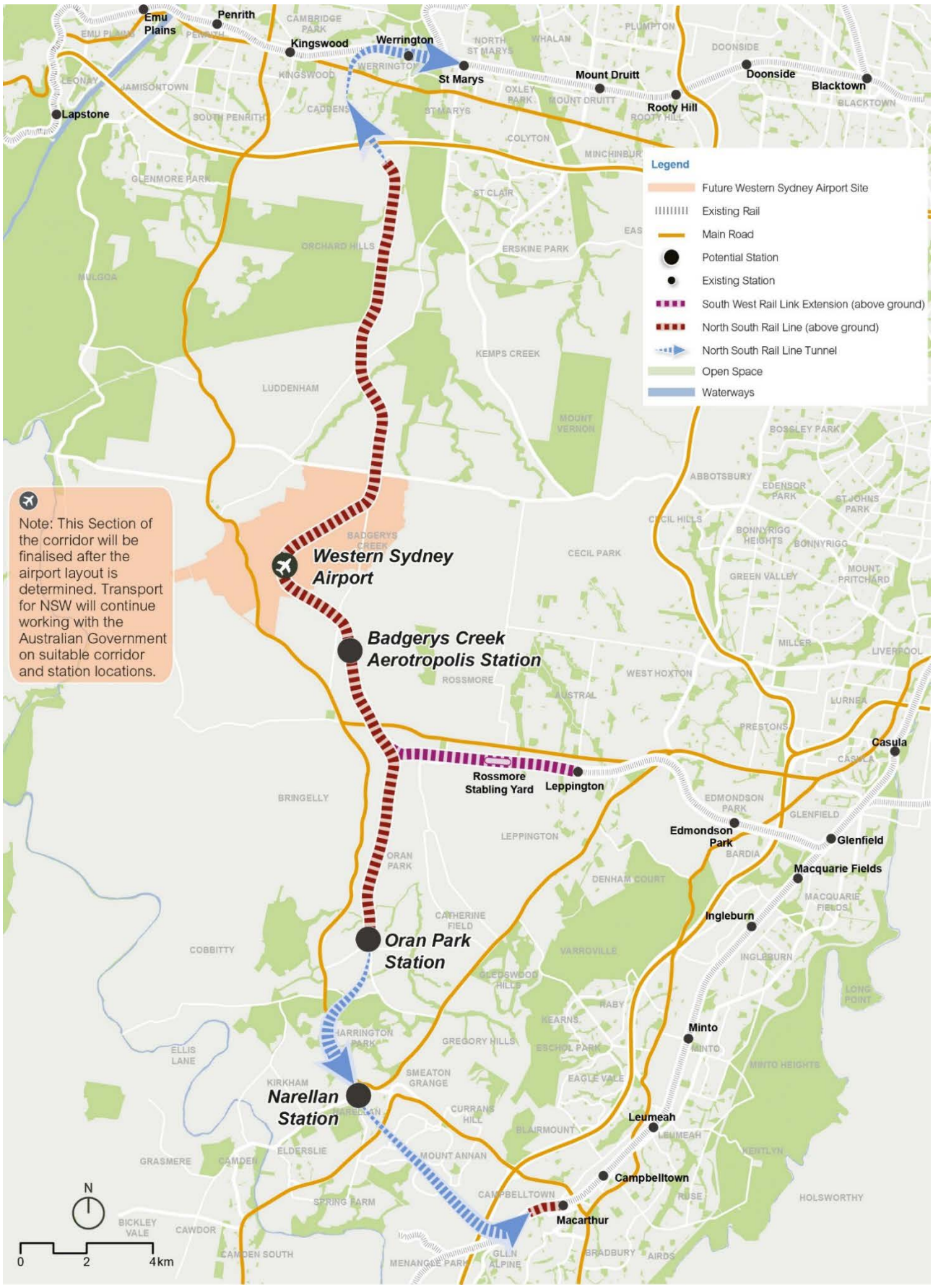

Figure E-1 The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors

Need for the recommended corridors

As western Sydney transitions through the emergence of the Western Parkland City into a Metropolitan City Cluster, the Western City District's population will grow by around 464,000 people. As documented in the *Draft Western City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017b), this equates to an additional 184,500 homes required in the District by 2036. Together with the Central River City around Greater Parramatta, these two districts will grow by more than one million people over the next 20 years.

Much of the Western City District's future growth will be focused on the existing centres of Greater Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown–Macarthur. As part of this growth there is a commitment from the Australian Government to build a new Western Sydney Airport, which is expected to commence operations in 2026. The Western Sydney Airport will be the catalyst for a new Western Economic Corridor around the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis, which is anticipated to provide unprecedented economic opportunities for western Sydney.

With the anticipated population growth in western Sydney, improved transport connections are required to enable the NSW Government's vision for a 30-minute city, where people live within 30 minutes of their jobs, education and health facilities, services and great places. The North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension will be key north-south and east-west transport links that will connect people to jobs and places and provide greater education, employment and business opportunities to support the Western Economic Corridor. The need for the recommended corridors is also underpinned by the *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017a) and the *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* (Transport for NSW 2017).

It is important to ensure that appropriate provisions are made now to meet the future transport needs of not only western Sydney but also the wider Greater Sydney Region. Integrated transport planning decisions are required that consider the long-term requirements for both land use and transport.

Identifying and protecting the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors now will make the best use of government resources by ensuring that sufficient land is available in the future for construction of rail infrastructure when it is needed.

Given the rapid expansion of development in western Sydney, early protection of corridors is vital to ensure that there is sufficient land available in the future when the construction of railway infrastructure is required. Corridor protection will inform future land use planning, minimise acquisition costs, avoid redundant development and enable consideration of the future rail infrastructure during land use planning so that impacts can be avoided, or appropriate mitigation measures can be implemented. Protection of the recommended corridors also provides opportunities for land use and economic development that would perhaps not otherwise be realised. Additionally, protecting the recommended corridors now will reduce disruption to communities and businesses in the future when the infrastructure is constructed.

The benefits of corridor protection are further reiterated in Infrastructure Australia's *Australian Infrastructure Plan and Corridor Protection: Planning and investing for the long term*.

Identifying and protecting corridors for the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors is an important opportunity to undertake before development in the region reduces future opportunities for such a piece of infrastructure. It would also provide clarity for the Department of Planning and Environment, councils and developers, and provide greater certainty for existing and future residents in the area.

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors represents an integrated transport solution that balances infrastructure benefits and opportunities with land use and environmental impacts and meets the stated objectives of Australian and NSW strategic policies. Protecting the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors well in advance of their construction would:

- Protect land from development that might preclude future rail infrastructure, or make it more difficult and/or expansive to build when it is required

- Provide residents, employers, councils, landowners, developers and Government agencies with greater confidence that transport infrastructure can be built, and more certainty about where it will be located, so that new development can be planned around it
- Assist in the long-term planning of transport services and rolling stock investments
- Ensure that town centres and other employment centres are located and planned to optimise their access to public transport
- Allow appropriate land use restrictions and setbacks to be built into master plans and design codes to reduce potential noise and other environmental impacts on residences, schools, and other sensitive receptors
- Allow directly-affected landowners to factor transport corridors into their plans, and to dispose of land at their own volition
- Allow the Government to develop cost-effective, measured approaches to corridor land acquisition and management.

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been selected following a comprehensive process that has involved community consultation, exploration of multiple alignments and the input of a number of technical experts. Following investigations into existing natural and built constraints in the study area as well as an initial public consultations, the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been selected to avoid environmental, social and economic impacts.

One of the key features of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is the sections that will be in tunnel between St Marys and Orchard Hills and Oran Park and near Macarthur. This feature has been incorporated into the recommended North South Rail Line corridor to avoid potential impacts on existing landowners in this area as well as to prevent any impact on Harrington Forest, Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan, schools, heritage items and local/State roads including the M4 Western Motorway and Great Western Highway. However, the whole of life cost of tunnel rail infrastructure is substantially higher than for surface rail infrastructure. The much greater cost of developing rail infrastructure in tunnel can make rail projects unfeasible.

The proposed surface corridor has been deliberately located to respond to existing topographical constraints as well as the presence of native flora and fauna, flood conditions and the local/State road network.

As a result of the comprehensive corridor selection process that has been undertaken, it is considered that potential environmental impacts arising from corridor protection or future transport infrastructure have been minimised or avoided.

Methodology for selecting the recommended corridors

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been identified following a comprehensive process that has involved community consultation, exploration of multiple alignments and analysis of existing natural and built constraints. The identification process has been in accordance with the process outlined in the Department of Planning and Environment's *Guideline for Major Infrastructure Corridors*. The process has involved:

- Reviewing government policies and strategies including the recently released *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* and the *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan*
- A constraints and opportunities analysis through community and stakeholder consultation to understand the context of the study area
- An options and alignment assessment utilising multi criteria analysis aimed at achieving the objectives whilst minimising social and environmental impacts

The recommended corridors have been selected to avoid or minimise environmental, social and economic impacts, as well as to respond to the projected future growth in population and travel demand in western Sydney.

The recommended corridors

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are shown in Figure E-1.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel at St Marys and remain in tunnel to Orchard Hills. Between Orchard Hills and the northern boundary of the future Western Sydney Airport site the recommended corridor is at the surface. Much of this surface section of the recommended corridor would be co-located with the Outer Sydney Orbital corridor. The North South Rail Line would potentially extend north from St Marys to Cudgegong Road and further investigations for this extension of the corridor are ongoing.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor continues at the surface between the southern boundary of the future Western Sydney Airport site and Oran Park, via the future Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis. Between Oran Park and Glen Alpine the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel. The North South Rail Line returns to the surface within the existing T8 South Line rail corridor at Glen Alpine and continues at the surface to Macarthur Station. A section of the existing rail corridor alongside Menangle Road to the west of Macarthur Station would need to be widened to accommodate the North South Rail Line.

North of Bringelly Y Junction, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is generally 60 metres wide to accommodate up to four railway tracks, comprising two tracks in each direction. South of Bringelly, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is generally 40 metres wide to accommodate up to two railway tracks, comprising one track in each direction.

Tunnels have been incorporated into the recommended North South Rail Line corridor to avoid established areas and land uses, as well as to avoid impacts on:

- Crossings of several State roads including the Great Western Highway, M4 Western Motorway, The Northern Road, Camden Valley Way, the Camden Bypass and the Hume Highway
- Key centres and facilities between the T1 Western Line and M4 Western Motorway including St Marys Town Centre and Penrith Health and Education Precinct, which is based around Nepean Hospital, Western Sydney University Penrith Campus and Nepean College of TAFE Allied Health Facility
- Major residential development
- Narellan Sports Hub
- Harrington Forest and associated recreational and conservations areas
- Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan, William Howe Regional Park and the Scenic Hills
- Existing 330 kilovolt transmission lines
- Items listed on the State Heritage Register including St Marys Station, Orielton and Sydney Water Supply Canal.

The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor is at the surface between Leppington Station and its connection to the North South Rail Line at Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis. West of the existing Rossmore Stabling Yard, the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor is generally 60 metres wide to accommodate up to four railway tracks, comprising two tracks in each direction. The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor has been shifted slightly from the previous Recommended Corridor exhibited in 2015. The corridor alignment has been amended to improve operational efficiency and minimise impacts on existing property layouts.

The key potential environmental impacts of protecting the recommended corridors and of the future rail infrastructure are described in the following sections.

Land use and property impacts

Land use and property impacts have been avoided by locating portions of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in tunnel where there is substantial urban development, transport infrastructure or social infrastructure at the surface. The recommended corridors have been selected to maximise flexibility in the design and function of future precincts identified for growth in NSW Government strategic plans. The recommended corridors will be located at least 400 metres away from major roads, enabling future local road networks to be designed to support residential and commercial precincts.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor through Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Badgerys Creek is co-located with the Outer Sydney Orbital, which will minimise land take for transport infrastructure in this area and also reduce the potential for severance of properties.

Protecting the recommended corridors now will enable planning authorities to optimise the integration of land use and future rail infrastructure when undertaking precinct planning processes and assessing development applications. This will help to ensure that new development surrounding the recommended corridors is compatible with future rail infrastructure and appropriate for being serviced by rail. It will also help planning authorities to ensure that conflicts between new sensitive land uses and future rail infrastructure can be avoided, or mitigation measures can be incorporated where appropriate.

Prior to the construction of infrastructure in the recommended corridors an environmental impact statement would assess the potential impacts of the proposed infrastructure on nearby land uses and would detail measures to avoid or mitigate these impacts.

Economic impacts

The North South Rail Line will act as a catalyst for the new Western Economic Corridor. The provision of high capacity public transport will support the growth of the Western Economic Corridor by improving access to a wide range of jobs in new and existing centres and health and education assets in the Penrith Health and Education Precinct and at Campbelltown–Macarthur.

The future provision of public transport infrastructure in the recommended corridors is expected to make a direct economic contribution to western Sydney and the broader Sydney Metropolitan Area in terms of economic growth, employment and savings to the economy.

The recommended corridors provide important opportunities to support existing and future housing and employment centres in western Sydney with potential for increased population and employment densities serviced by future mass transit infrastructure. Creating more and higher-value employment opportunities in western Sydney will help to manage travel demand from western Sydney and facilitate the 30-minute city.

If the recommended corridors are not protected there would be higher future costs associated with land acquisition and relocating local infrastructure, utilities and services. If incompatible development were to occur within and around the recommended corridors, then these costs could rise to a point where building rail infrastructure in the future becomes unviable, undermining the ability of the NSW Government to deliver cost effective public transport to western Sydney leading to increased congestion of the road network.

Traffic and transport

Where the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel it would avoid impacts on several State roads including the Great Western Highway, M4 Western Motorway, The Northern Road, Camden Valley Way, the Camden Bypass and the Hume Highway. Also, the recommended corridors have been placed in cut to the greatest extent possible to minimise the impact on the likely future local road network. They are also located at least 400 metres from major roads as much as possible, enabling a future local road network to be designed that can support future residential and commercial precincts.

Where stations have been indicatively identified, they have been located to minimise impacts on the state road network, enabling local accessibility to the station and to ensure that land around the station can be suitably developed. Identified stations would be the subject of precinct planning that would take an integrating approach to land use and transport planning, to ensure that future stations are optimally connected with the local road network, to provide for bus interchange and to link to active transport networks. As precinct planning progresses along the recommended corridors further opportunities for stations may be identified.

At the time of infrastructure delivery, the environmental impact statement for the proposed project would include a detailed assessment of any local road, bus and active transport networks that have been developed around the recommended corridors. The environmental impact assessment would include construction and operational impacts on the existing transport networks, as well as setting out improvements to these networks that would be implemented to support the new station precincts.

Noise and vibration

There will be no noise impact associated with the protection of the recommended corridors.

Where the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel it would avoid airborne noise impacts to sensitive receivers.

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are located to reduce noise from the future rail infrastructure as much as possible by maximising the potential for future rail infrastructure to be in cutting.

Protecting the recommended corridors now will enable planning authorities to consider the future rail infrastructure in precinct planning processes and when assessing development applications. This will help to ensure that new development surrounding the corridors is compatible with the future rail infrastructure and that future land use conflicts can be avoided, or mitigation measures can be incorporated where appropriate.

Prior to construction of the infrastructure an environmental impact statement would assess noise and vibration impacts of the infrastructure on adjoining and surrounding noise receptors, and would detail measures to avoid or mitigate potential impacts.

Visual amenity, built form and urban design

Corridor protection will not have an impact on landscape values as it will not involve any physical works.

Where the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel it would avoid visual impacts to sensitive receivers and significant landscapes at Harrington Forest, the Scenic Hills, Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, and William Howe Regional Park. The tunnel would require access and air circulation outlets to be provided above it. The location of these outlets would be determined during detailed design and documented in the environmental impact statement prior to delivery of the infrastructure.

The surface sections of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are located to minimise visual impacts on existing and possible future sensitive receivers by maximising the potential for future rail infrastructure to be in cut.

Protecting the recommended corridors now will enable planning authorities to consider the future rail infrastructure in precinct planning processes and when assessing development applications. This will help to ensure that new development surrounding the corridors is compatible with the future rail infrastructure and that future land use conflicts can be avoided, or mitigation measures can be incorporated where appropriate.

Prior to construction of the infrastructure an environmental impact statement would assess visual and landscape impacts of the infrastructure and would detail measures to avoid or mitigate potential impacts.

Soil and water

Corridor protection will not have an impact on water resources as it will not involve any physical works. The recommended corridors have been aligned to generally avoid flood prone land, and are mostly located above the 1 in 100-year flood levels.

Soil conditions in the vicinity of the recommended corridors are known to be subject to erosion and potential contamination, which can be mitigated through appropriate remediation and erosion and sediment control at the time that future infrastructure is required.

Prior to construction of the infrastructure an environmental impact statement would assess soil and water impacts of the infrastructure, and would detail measures to avoid or mitigate potential impacts.

Biodiversity

Corridor protection will have no immediate impact on biodiversity, however, future construction and operation of rail infrastructure would result in potential future biodiversity impacts that would need to be taken into account as part of rail design and planning.

Within the former South West Growth Centre most vegetation is 'Biodiversity Certified' meaning its removal has already been assessed and off-set. Non 'Biodiversity Certified' native vegetation that is directly impacted by the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor is located within the South Creek riparian corridor and an associated tributary near Bringelly. Native vegetation north of the future Western Sydney Airport site is also not 'Biodiversity Certified'.

Potential ecological impacts that are likely to arise a result of the removal of non-Biodiversity Certified native vegetation could include loss of habitat for existing biota, including some threatened species, as well as increased edge effects for retained vegetation.

Prior to construction of the infrastructure an environmental impact statement would include a detailed biodiversity impact assessment for construction and operational impacts in accordance with the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

Detailed biodiversity investigations would also inform the preparation of a Biodiversity Offsets Strategy. Biodiversity offsets aim to be secured early in the corridor protection process to minimise future costs and provide biodiversity benefits prior to any impacts on habitat.

In addition to this, a future application would be referred to the Australian Government for assessment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Heritage

The recommended corridors have been selected to avoid direct impacts on heritage items and conservation areas where possible. While the landscape is acknowledged to be of cultural and social significance to Aboriginal people, there are no identified areas of particular cultural or social significance within the recommended corridors.

Where the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel it would prevent impacts on heritage values.

The Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council controls several small sites through native title claims for land near the Rossmore to Bringelly section of the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor, but none of these sites are impacted by the recommended corridor.

Prior to construction of the infrastructure an environmental impact statement would include a detailed heritage impact assessment for both Aboriginal heritage and European heritage, for construction and operational impacts. In relation to European heritage, design and construction measures would be identified to minimise any impacts on the curtilage, fabric or setting of the State Heritage Register listed Kelvin' group and local heritage items including Luddenham Road Alignment, McGarvie-Smith Farm and the former Overseas Telecommunications Commission site.

Air quality

Protection of the recommended corridors would have no air quality impacts. Construction of future infrastructure would generate temporary air quality and greenhouse gas impacts. While operation of a future rail infrastructure is not expected to generate significant quantities of air emissions, the tunnel would require access and air circulation outlets to be provided above it. The location of these outlets would be determined during detailed design, and documented in the environmental impact statement prior to delivery of the infrastructure.

Overall, the operation of public transport infrastructure within the recommended corridors is expected to contribute to a significant reduction in air quality and greenhouse gas emissions compared to the increased car travel that would otherwise be expected to occur in its absence.

Social impacts

The design and location of the recommended corridors have been carefully selected to ensure that social benefits are maximised and impacts are avoided or minimised. To this extent, locating parts of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in tunnel would minimise disruption to existing communities.

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would maximise the opportunity to integrate future rail infrastructure into planned urban development and employment areas and to minimise impact to existing and future communities. Transport for NSW will continue to work with other relevant agencies across the NSW Government to ensure that land use planning and transport planning processes are integrated and coordinated, so that social disruption in the future can be avoided.

Next steps

Feedback on the recommended corridors will be assessed by Transport for NSW and the corridors refined or confirmed. The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors will also be assessed by the Department of Planning and Environment and considered for statutory planning protection. After considering submissions, and at the request of Transport for NSW, the Department of Planning and Environment is expected to make a recommendation to the Minister for Planning to protect the corridors within an environmental planning instrument. Once protected, planning authorities will ensure that land use and transport planning processes around the recommended corridors are integrated and coordinated.

Any future proposal to build and operate rail infrastructure in the recommended corridors would be subject to a comprehensive environmental assessment in accordance with the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. At that time, environmental impacts including in relation to noise, air quality, biodiversity and visual amenity, would be subject to technical expert assessment in accordance with the relevant procedures for State Significant Infrastructure. This would involve the preparation of an environmental impact statement.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Strategic environmental assessment scope

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Acronyms

Acronym	Description
L_{Aeq}	The 'equivalent noise level' is the summation of noise events and integrated over a selected period of time, which would produce the same energy as a fluctuating sound level. When A-weighted, this is written as the L_{Aeq}
L_{Amax}	The maximum sound pressure level measured over a given period. When A-weighted, this is usually written as the L_{Amax}
NSW	New South Wales
PM_{10}	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of less than 10 µm
$PM_{2.5}$	Airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of less than 2.5 µm
Recommended corridors	The North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors recommended for protection in this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment

1 Introduction

The proposed North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension will be critical to realising the NSW Government's vision of a 30-minute city. In particular they will connect residents in the emerging suburbs of the South West Growth Area with jobs and services in the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis.

A future North South Rail Line would comprise a rail connection for passenger train services between the T1 Western Line near St Marys and the T8 South Line near Macarthur. A future South West Rail Link Extension would extend from Leppington Station to Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis for connection to the North South Rail Line. The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are shown in Figure 1-1.

Continuing rapid urban growth in western Sydney and ongoing planning for the Western Sydney Airport at Badgerys Creek by the Australian and NSW Governments have reinforced the need to protect long term public transport corridor in western Sydney, so that railway infrastructure can be built efficiently and cost-effectively in the future.

In December 2012, the NSW Government released the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* for the State's transport system to 2031. It identified a need for a corridor between Penrith and Campbelltown/Macarthur. It was identified as a key transport corridor in western Sydney and one that is facing increased travel demand. It also indicated that a transport corridor connecting to the existing South West Rail Link could improve the performance of the Sydney transport network.

In 2014, the need for an extension of the South West Rail Link was further endorsed in the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's *A Plan for Growing Sydney* as a major transport project to support the connection of jobs and homes in western Sydney.

The North South Rail Line and the South West Rail Link Extension potential future infrastructure projects have continued to be identified in key strategic planning documents, including the *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056, Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* and *Draft Western City District Plan* released in 2017.

This draft Strategic Environmental Assessment has been prepared to inform the process of protecting long-term corridors for the future delivery of the transport infrastructure in western Sydney. The Department of Planning and Environment will be asked to prepare the legal framework that creates the statutory protection for the corridors.

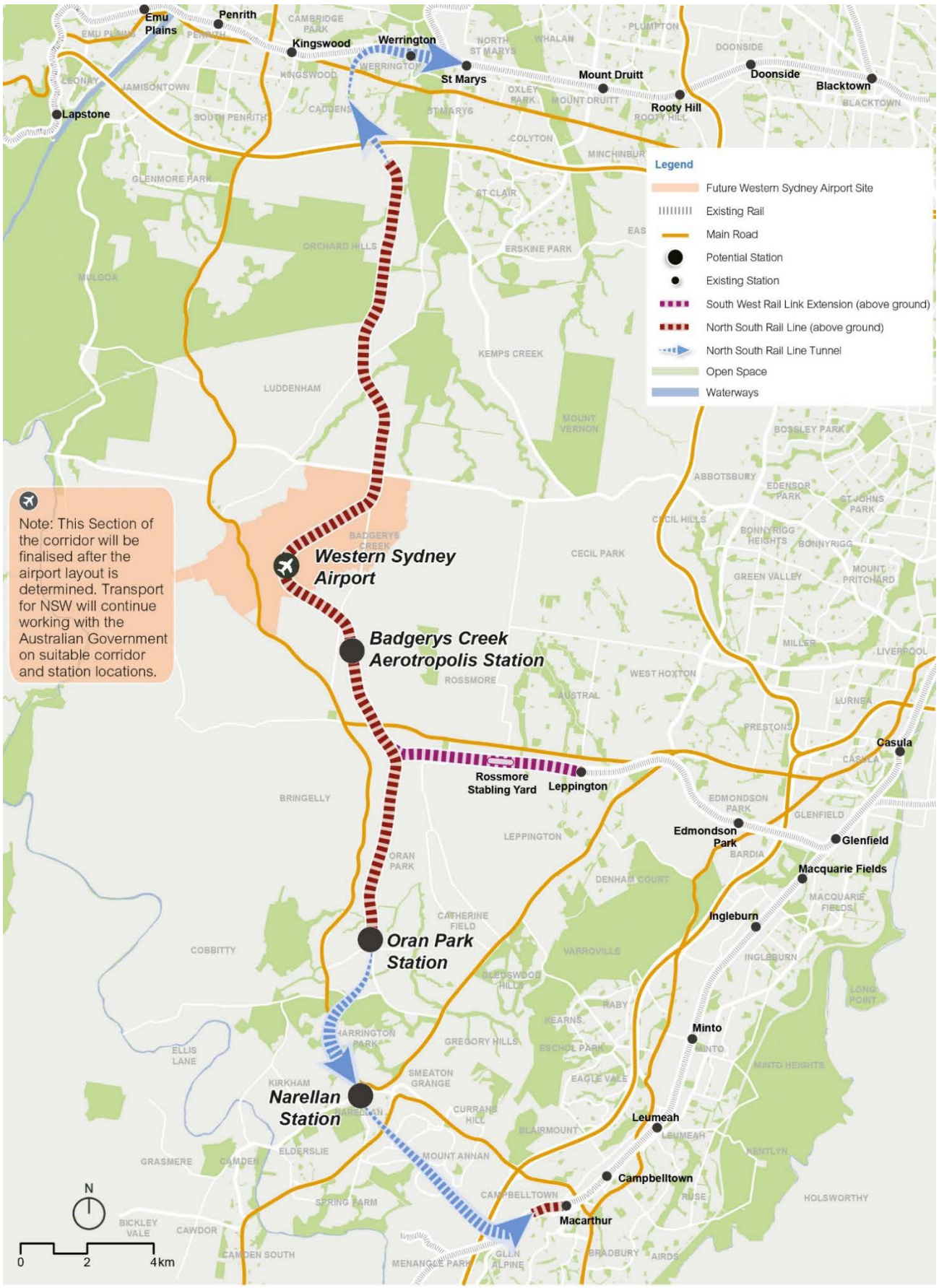

Figure 1-1 The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors

1.1 Purpose of the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment

The purpose of this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment is to provide an assessment of the strategic impacts and benefits of protecting the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors which are intended to accommodate public transport infrastructure in the future.

This draft Strategic Environmental Assessment is not a statutory requirement under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and is not an application for approval to build or operate infrastructure within the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. Rather, it is intended to form the strategic justification for the protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.

It is intended only to support the protection of the corridors for potential future public transport infrastructure when it is required. At such time, design of the required infrastructure would be undertaken and an environmental assessment of the proposed project under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (or the relevant legislation at that time) would be prepared.

If approved by the NSW Government, the recommended corridors will be protected through the statutory environmental planning process. The process includes consultation to provide the community, government agencies and other stakeholders with information about the proposed protection mechanism for the recommended corridors and allow the opportunity to provide feedback on their protection.

This draft Strategic Environmental Assessment has been prepared with consideration of the Department of Planning and Environment's *Planning Guideline for Major Infrastructure Corridors*, and the Strategic Environmental Assessment scope issued by Department of Planning and Environment. Appendix 1 sets out this scope and indicates where it has been considered in the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Transport for NSW has also had on-going consultation with Department of Planning and Environment to ensure that the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment will provide adequate consideration of environmental impacts to support the protection of the recommended corridors.

With consideration of the above matters, the key objectives of this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment are to:

- Provide the strategic justification and need for the protection of the recommended corridors
- Provide the evidence base to inform the creation of statutory planning mechanisms that protects land for the purpose of future infrastructure
- Describe the baseline conditions of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors and surrounding areas with regard to key environmental aspects
- Provide an overview of the business requirements of the future infrastructure
- Document the corridor alignment identification and assessment process and the selection of the recommended corridors
- Strategically assess the environmental, social and economic impacts of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors
- Recommend appropriate strategic mitigation and management measures to reduce the impacts of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors' future use on the surrounding community
- Identify the statutory planning outcomes desired to protect the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors for the use of future infrastructure.

1.2 Objectives of corridor protection

The principal objective of protecting the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link corridors is to make land available for the provision of future public transport infrastructure that would ultimately connect the key centres along the Main West Line and Campbelltown–Macarthur on the Main South Line via the new Western Sydney Airport and the South West Growth Area. This connection would support efficient travel between homes and centres for work, retail, entertainment and key services.

The objectives of corridor protection are to:

- Provide adequate land for the construction and operation of future transport infrastructure so that public transport services can be provided to cater for future growth
- Provide certainty to the community, local councils and developers about the location of future transport infrastructure
- Allow for future land uses and investment decisions to be considered in relation to the future transport infrastructure
- Assist in the efficient and cost-effective delivery of transport infrastructure at the time it is needed.

This draft Strategic Environmental Assessment relates to the protection of corridors for the initial stage of a future western Sydney rail vision. Further rail corridors will also be investigated for protection including the future extension of the railway from St Marys to Cudgegong Road.

Strategic business requirements for the future public transport infrastructure were prepared by Transport for NSW to inform the corridor protection process. Business requirements may be subject to change, depending on the outcome of the Strategic Business Case for the future infrastructure. The strategic business requirements established minimum expectations and/or assumptions (in that they relate to the future delivery of a railway operating as part of the Sydney Rail network) in relation to the following matters:

- Key future connections to the broader transport network
- Location of potential stations at key existing and future centres
- Permissible horizontal and vertical alignments
- Maintenance and construction requirements
- Design assumptions for the Outer Sydney Orbital and Western Sydney Airport, and known or expected major arterial road upgrades to be accommodated.

1.3 Overview of the corridors recommended for protection

The recommended corridors for protection are located in western Sydney and are shown in Figure 1-1. The corridors are described in detail in Section 5, but their key characteristics are briefly described below. The recommended corridors are:

- North South Rail Line corridor – A rail connection for passenger train services between the Main West Line near St Marys and Main South Line near Macarthur
- South West Rail Link Extension corridor – Extending from Leppington Station to Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis, where it would connect with the North South Rail Line.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor is proposed to be in tunnel between St Marys and south of the M4 Western Motorway, and between Oran Park and the Main South Line at Glen Alpine to avoid existing communities and bushland. These tunnel sections of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would not require land at the surface to be protected.

Land at Oran Park and Narellan has been identified for potential future train stations.

The connection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor to the future Western Sydney Airport site is being discussed with the Australian Government and will be determined in 2018. The NSW Government will continue working with the Australian Government to identify a suitable North South Rail Line corridor and station locations to serve the Western Sydney Airport and the surrounding western Sydney suburbs.

The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor is generally 60 metres wide to accommodate up to four railway tracks, comprising two tracks in each direction. In addition to the railway tracks, the 60 metre wide corridor is required to support ancillary infrastructure, such as signalling equipment, access roads allowing for maintenance access for the operator on both sides of the corridor and substations, as well as to provide for embankments, cuttings, retention structures and stormwater management structures where required.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor is also generally 60 metres wide to accommodate up to four railway tracks, comprising two tracks in each direction, between:

- St Marys and the northern boundary of the future Western Sydney Airport site
- The southern boundary of the future Western Sydney Airport site and Bringelly Y Junction.

South of the Bringelly Y Junction, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is limited by the tunnels south of Oran Park and so is generally 40 metres wide to accommodate up to two railway tracks, comprising one track in each direction. The 40 metre wide corridor also provides for ancillary infrastructure as well as for embankments, cuttings, retention structures and stormwater management structures where required.

The North South Rail Line returns to the surface within the existing T8 South Line rail corridor at Glen Alpine and continues at the surface to Macarthur Station. A section of the existing rail corridor alongside Menangle Road to the west of Macarthur Station would need to be widened to accommodate the North South Rail Line.

1.4 Structure

The remaining part of this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Outlines the strategic transport planning context and justifications for the recommended corridors
- Sections 3 and 4: Describes the existing conditions and constraints along the recommended corridors
- Section 5: Describes the process for identifying corridor alignments, selecting the recommended corridors and describes of the recommended corridors, including consultation undertaken to date in identifying and assessing the recommended corridors
- Sections 6 and 7: Provides a strategic environmental assessment of the recommended corridors in accordance with the scoping guideline issued by the Department of Planning and Environment
- Section 8: Provides a strategic environmental assessment of the overall impacts of future rail infrastructure including potential cumulative impacts and an environmental risk analysis
- Section 9: Describes of the corridor protection process
- Section 10: Describes the regulatory context for the delivery of future infrastructure
- Section 11: Consolidates a list of mitigation and managements measures
- Section 12: Provides conclusions and recommendations.

2 Strategic context

2.1 Statement of strategic need

As western Sydney transitions through the emergence of the Western Parkland City into a Metropolitan City Cluster, the Western City District's population will grow by around 464,000 people. As documented in the *Draft Western City District Plan* (see Section 2.3.2) this equates to an additional 184,500 homes required in the District by 2036. Together with the Central River City around Greater Parramatta, these two districts will grow by more than one million people over the next 20 years.

Much of Western City District's future growth will be focused on the existing centres of Greater Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown–Macarthur. The NSW Government has set targets for residential and employment growth and the land release program is already well underway, with the identification of the South West Growth Area and the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area and ongoing precinct planning being undertaken by the NSW Government.

As part of this growth there is a commitment from the Australian Government to build a new Western Sydney Airport, which is expected to start operations in 2026. Initially the airport will cater for around five million air passengers per annum, with a focus on serving the needs of western Sydney. Patronage is expected to grow to ten million passengers per annum by 2030. Beyond the mid-2030s rail connections to the Western Sydney Airport will be important to help meet expected growth as Kingsford Smith Airport approaches capacity in the 2040s.

The emerging economy of western Sydney has the opportunity to benefit from planned investment associated with the Western Sydney Airport to transform into a nationally significant health, education, trade, logistics, advanced manufacturing and science centre. The Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis will be the catalyst for a new Western Economic Corridor, which is anticipated to provide unprecedented economic opportunities for western Sydney.

2.1.1 Future transport task in western Sydney

With the anticipated population growth in western Sydney, improved transport connections are required to enable the NSW Government's vision for a 30-minute city, as set out in the *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* (see Section 2.3.1) and the *Draft Western City District Plan* (see Section 2.3.2), where people live within 30 minutes of jobs, education and services.

Infrastructure for road, public transport and utilities is key to supporting the growth in western Sydney and achieving the likely economic benefits as a result of planned investment in Western Sydney Airport. The Australian and NSW Governments have implemented a *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan* as a first step, focussing on road connections throughout western Sydney.

A joint Australian and NSW Government *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* (see Section 2.2.4) has also been prepared to inform the public transport connections needed throughout western Sydney. The North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension are identified as key north-south and east-west transport links that will connect people to jobs and places, and provide greater education, employment and business opportunities to support the emerging Western Parkland City and new Western Economic Corridor.

In addition to this, the Outer Sydney Orbital and Western Sydney Freight Line will establish a transport structure for the Western City District providing for future road and freight movements.

2.1.2 Why protect public transport corridors now

It is important to ensure that appropriate provisions are made now to meet the future transport needs of not only western Sydney but also the Greater Sydney Region, and this includes early protection of corridors for future transport infrastructure.

New communities in western Sydney are already being developed, and planning for additional new communities is underway. For instance:

- Oran Park had a population of 195 in 2011, this was nearly 5000 by 2016, and is expected to eventually be home to 25,000 residents by 2036
- Planning is ongoing for the development of Sydney Science Park at Luddenham, which is expected to become an employment centre with 12,000 knowledge-based jobs and home to more than 10,000 residents
- Planning investigations into the land release of 1500 hectares of land from Oran Park to Bringelly Road known as South Creek West were announced in November 2017, which will potentially provide for new communities comprising up to 30,000 homes
- Planning for a future Western Sydney Airport at Badgerys Creek is also progressing and its development will be a catalyst for the Western Economic Corridor including the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis
- The *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* and *Draft Western City District Plan* identify the investigation of a potential new growth area extending from the northern boundary of the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area and the Castlereagh Motorway reservation north of Ropes Crossing. Confirmation of and protection of a corridor for the St Marys to airport section of a future North South Rail Line and a St Marys to Schofields alignment within this potential growth area would facilitate the identification of strategic land use opportunities to provide housing and employment.

Given the growing interest in urban development in western Sydney, protecting the recommended corridors now will facilitate integrated land use and transport planning, ensure that there is land available along the optimal corridor in the future when public transport infrastructure is required and prevent development pressures from impacting on the opportunity for the future delivery of cost-effective infrastructure. By coordinating land use and transport planning, protecting public transport corridors enables opportunities for new precincts to be built that will complement the future infrastructure, ensuring suitable development is located where it can be supported by future train services. Avoiding incompatible development along the protected corridors would reduce the potential for future disruption to communities and businesses. Further, protection of the recommended corridors provides opportunities for land use and economic development that would perhaps not otherwise be realised.

Early protection of a corridor has a number of other benefits, including increased certainty for the community about the location of future infrastructure, enabling future infrastructure to be delivered at the time it is needed. Early protection of corridors therefore provides clarity and certainty for planning authorities, landowners, communities and businesses.

2.1.3 Why are the corridors designed to accommodate rail?

The recommended corridors are intended to complement the existing transport network, providing the optimal corridor in which mass passenger transit can be built when the need arises.

The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* (see Section 2.2.4) identifies that demand for train services on the Main West Line is forecast to increase by 57 per cent and on the Main South Line by 119 per cent by 2056. These lines, which are already operating at close to capacity, will not cope with this level of passenger growth. Major upgrades and expansion of the rail network will be required to support anticipated future growth in western Sydney and early corridor protection would assist in ensuring that these upgrades can be undertaken as they are needed.

The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* identifies a north-south rail corridor connecting Cudgegong Road with Macarthur via St Marys and the future Western Sydney Airport site as critical to integrated land use and transport planning for the future of western Sydney. The recommended corridors represent the first important stage of corridor protection, being a north-south connection between St Marys and Macarthur, via the future Western Economic Corridor and Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis. Separate rail corridor investigations will be carried out for protection of future railway infrastructure from Cudgegong Road to St Marys.

The future North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension will provide an important alternative to current dependence on private vehicles for most trips and contribute positively to the ongoing management of congestion on Sydney's road and rail networks as well as supporting travel to the Western Economic Corridor.

2.1.4 Strategic planning

A number of Australian and NSW Government strategic policies have already begun to plan for the infrastructure that will be needed to support the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis and the growth of Western Sydney. As a result, the need for the recommended corridors are underpinned by several Commonwealth and NSW government policies and strategies that recognise the need to implement plans now to meet the demands of future growth.

The Australian Government has identified the importance of supporting future population growth, addressing congestion, and supporting local and regional employment expansion in the *Australian Infrastructure Plan* (see Section 2.2.1) and the *Smart Cities Plan* (see Section 2.2.3). The need for early corridor protection and infrastructure provision is identified in the *Australian Infrastructure Plan*, and the benefits of early corridor protection have been further reiterated in the Infrastructure Australia's *Corridor Protection: Planning and investing for the long term.*

The Australian Government has reinforced the importance of planning for growth in western Sydney through investment in the Western Sydney Airport, the *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan* (see Section 2.2.2) and *Western Sydney City Deal* (see Section 2.2.3).

These policies and investments demonstrate that the Australian Government supports corridor protection and is seeking to encourage early identification and protection of future infrastructure corridors.

The short-term protection of the recommended corridors is also underpinned by NSW Government policies and strategies. The need for a transport corridor connecting Penrith and Campbelltown–Macarthur was first identified in the NSW Government's *Long Term Transport Master Plan* (see Section 2.4.2), and subsequently supported in the *State Infrastructure Strategy* (see Section 2.3.3) and *A Plan for Growing Sydney* (see Section 2.3.4). The Greater Sydney Commission's *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* (see Section 2.3.1) and *Draft Western City District Plan* (see Section 2.3.2) further set out the importance of coordinating land use and infrastructure initiatives across western Sydney, including by prioritising the identification and protection of infrastructure corridors.

2.2 Australian Government policies

Australian Government policy relevant to the corridor study is predominantly focussed on infrastructure investment, with the Western Sydney Airport being one of the Australian Government's key investment commitments.

2.2.1 Australian Infrastructure Plan

Infrastructure Australia is a statutory body that advises the Australian Government, investors and infrastructure owners on a wide range of infrastructure matters. One of Infrastructure Australia's current focus areas is on facilitating the delivery of quality public transport in Australia's cities to address urban congestion. To support this, Infrastructure Australia is recommending significant Australian Government investment in this area as well as more effective long-term planning for future project delivery.

Infrastructure Australia released the first *Australian Infrastructure Plan* in 2016. The plan makes a number of recommendations in relation to selecting and planning for infrastructure projects in the future, and includes long-term corridor protection and opportunities for Australian Government funding for city-building public transport projects.

Of particular importance to the recommended corridors, the *Australian Infrastructure Plan* specifically identifies that corridor protection is critical in translating long-term planning into infrastructure and that effective corridor protection mechanisms should be established to ensure the timely protection of surface, subterranean and air corridors for future infrastructure priorities. The *Australian Infrastructure Plan* notes that *"the failure to preserve corridors reduces the ability of governments to respond to infrastructure pressures and raises the cost of delivering future projects."*

The *Australian Infrastructure Plan* was informed by the Australian Infrastructure Audit carried out in 2015. The Audit examined the drivers of future infrastructure demand across each state in Australia, particularly population and economic growth. The Audit considered the principal drivers of infrastructure demand – population and economy, and made the following key findings that will influence future transport infrastructure demand in western Sydney:

- Population growth in Greater Sydney is expected to reach 6.25 million people in 2031, an increase of 1.6 million from 2011
- Demand for urban transport infrastructure is projected to increase significantly
- The cost of congestion in capital cities is expected to increase to around $53.3 billion in 2031, an increase of around 290 per cent on 2011 costs, in the absence of additional capacity and/or demand management. A significant proportion of this originates from the Sydney – Newcastle – Wollongong urban area where it is expected to cost around $14.8 billion by 2031
- Urban transport decisions need to complement land use decisions – there remains a risk that community resistance to land use change and higher densities will undermine the economic, social and environmental benefits of investment in urban transport.

Protection of the recommended corridors is consistent with Infrastructure Australia's strategic policy objectives of supporting cost-effective infrastructure investment that will address urban congestion, and ensure that urban transport decisions are integrated with land use planning processes.

2.2.2 Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan

Following the 2014 announcement that Badgerys Creek will be the site of the Western Sydney Airport, almost $3 billion over 10 years has been allocated jointly by the Australian and NSW Governments to the *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan*. This plan contains a framework for investment in major road infrastructure upgrades to support the growth of the Western City District and involves transport links that will capitalise on the economic benefit of increased activity in the region. The work includes:

- Upgrade of The Northern Road to a minimum of four lanes from Narellan to the M4
- Construction of a new M12 Motorway to the future Western Sydney Airport site, between the M7 Motorway and The Northern Road
- Upgrade of Bringelly Road to a minimum of four lanes between The Northern Road and Camden Valley Way, with the design to allow reconfiguration to a six-lane road if needed in the future
- $200 million for local roads upgrades.

These road upgrades will support the local economy and liveability of western Sydney and indicate that both levels of government have recognised the importance of transport infrastructure in the region. Protection of the recommended corridors will support this investment in the road infrastructure in western Sydney and will contribute to the overall improvement of the transport network in western Sydney.

2.2.3 Western Sydney City Deal

The *State of Australian Cities 2014-2015* presented a comprehensive picture of how Australia's major cities are evolving, finding that there was more demand for transport in Australia than ever before. Consequently, average commuting times in major cities have also increased. It emphasises the importance of improved integration of long-term planning to anticipate and address growing demand, making efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and identifying and planning for future needs.

The report notes that transport infrastructure has an important role to play in shaping cities. With much of the population growth occurring on the urban fringes, an increasing number of people are living further away from city centres and the jobs they provide, leading to a growing need to effectively connect homes and workplaces.

The concept of 'City Deals' was subsequently announced in the *Smart Cities Plan* (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2016), which focuses on leveraging Australian Government investments in infrastructure to ensure that projects prioritise broader economic objectives, maximise investment reach by facilitating alternative financing models, and increasing overall infrastructure investment levels. The Western Sydney City Deal is a partnership between the Australian and NSW Governments to provide funding and policy support for the generation of economic growth, jobs and housing, reduce travel times and improve environmental outcomes.

A key priority of the Western Sydney City Deal is to increase investment in infrastructure, particularly public transport projects that are intended to unlock the economic potential of the region, reduce congestion and support local needs.

The Western Sydney City Deal is intended to complement land use decisions over the next 20 years and will focus on local job opportunities, connectivity and liveability.

The Western Sydney City Deal represents a clear policy commitment from both the Australian and NSW Governments to invest in western Sydney. The protection of the recommended corridors aligns with the intent and objectives of the City Deal to deliver future growth and development of Western Sydney.

2.2.4 Western Sydney Rail Needs Study

The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* is a joint investigation by the Australian and NSW Governments to determine the need, timing and service options for rail investment to support western Sydney and the future Western Sydney Airport. The study considers the proposed start of airport operations in the mid-2020s as well as the longer term rail needs of western Sydney. The key objectives of the *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* are to:

- Improve rail connectivity between western Sydney and the rest of Sydney
- Provide rail connectivity to the future Western Sydney Airport site
- Assess if and how passenger train services could be provided to the future Western Sydney Airport site.

The study has identified and considered broad options to address these rail needs, and recommends options for more detailed assessment and development.

One recommendation from the *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* is for a north-south connection between Cudgegong Road and Macarthur via St Marys and the future Western Sydney Airport site. The north-south link would represent a major investment into enhancing cross-regional rail capacity in western Sydney. This link would not only connect large areas of the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis to the future Western Sydney Airport site, but also connect growth areas in the north-west, west and south-west. Importantly, this link would provide onward rail connections to strategic centres such as Penrith, Liverpool, Greater Parramatta and Campbelltown. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor represents the first important stage of this north-south connection through the South West Growth Area, and connecting to the T8 South Line at Macarthur.

The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* determined that with standard growth forecasts for western Sydney, a north-south link would be economically viable in the 2030s. However, the future development of Western Sydney Airport and the city shaping planning work being undertaken by the Department of Planning and Environment in collaboration with the Greater Sydney Commission is driving population and economic growth in the region that may see the rail link being beneficial earlier than that period.

To further improve its economic viability, the full north-south link could be built in stages as Western Sydney continues to grow and demand from Western Sydney Airport increases. The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* identified that the link north of Western Sydney Airport to St Marys would be a suitable first stage, with a subsequent extension to Cudgegong Road, due to the greater population densities in that region, and the potential to connect to the Sydney Metro Northwest and key employment centres in Sydney's north.

2.3 NSW Government strategic plans and policies

The NSW Government has released a number of strategic plans and policies to provide a framework for future land use planning and the development of transport infrastructure. Strategic plans and policies relevant to the recommended corridors have been released by planning and transport agencies and are discussed in the following sections to demonstrate that the recommended corridors are consistent with the overall strategic direction for NSW, as well as relevant land use and transport policy.

The NSW Government has identified the *Premier's Priorities*, a set of 12 strategic priorities for NSW that encompass a range of social, environmental and economic issues. Of particular relevance to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors is the goal of 'Delivering Infrastructure.' To fulfil this priority, an infrastructure investment program has been established so that key infrastructure programs may be undertaken to accommodate projected population growth, support liveable communities and create jobs.

The majority of infrastructure investment is directed to road and public transport projects, as the NSW Government is committed to reducing traffic congestion and increasing transport connectivity. The recommended corridors are therefore consistent with these strategic objectives as a future railway will connect new urban areas in western Sydney to the existing Sydney Trains network, providing the future population with an alternative option to road transport. The purpose of protecting the corridors is to ensure that this critical infrastructure can be delivered in a timely and efficient manner when it is required.

2.3.1 Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan

The *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* (the Plan) is the NSW Government's strategic plan for the Greater Sydney Region to 2056. The Greater Sydney Structure Plan 2056 is represented in Figure 2-1. The Plan divides the metropolitan region into the Eastern, Central and Western cities and is guided by 10 directions and 40 key objectives, with metrics to measure the achievement of each objective.

The Plan sets targets for dwellings and jobs and is also guided by the goal to create a 30-minute city to connect people to jobs, businesses, schools and services. To achieve this 30-minute city goal, the Plan has been prepared in coordination with the Transport for NSW *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* and the Infrastructure NSW *State Infrastructure Strategy*. The Plan includes the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors to be investigated in the next 10 years.

The Australian Government's investment in the Western Sydney Airport will see the emergence of a new Metropolitan City Cluster around the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis. These new economic agglomerations, together with the need for planning and delivering a transport network to support the significant projected population growth, create the opportunity for a north-south mass transit corridor which would act as a catalyst for a new Western Economic Corridor. The delivery of the Western Economic Corridor is integral to creating more jobs and a diversity of jobs in the Western City District as well as greater education and business opportunities.

The Plan states that transit corridors will improve connectivity in the Eastern, Central and Western cities and notes that strategic land use and infrastructure planning across Greater Sydney can reinforce the opportunities created by existing and proposed mass transit systems by integrating land use and infrastructure planning. The North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension will also assist in realising the goal of the 30-minute city, allowing strategic centres to be accessible by public transport within 30 minutes so people can access jobs, shops and services.

The Plan emphasises that the proactive and early protection of corridors to protect longer-term linear infrastructure opportunities should be undertaken to provide greater clarity and certainty for landowners, communities and businesses.

The *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* prioritises the growth of the Western City, advocating for transit oriented development and the timely delivery of infrastructure to support new communities.

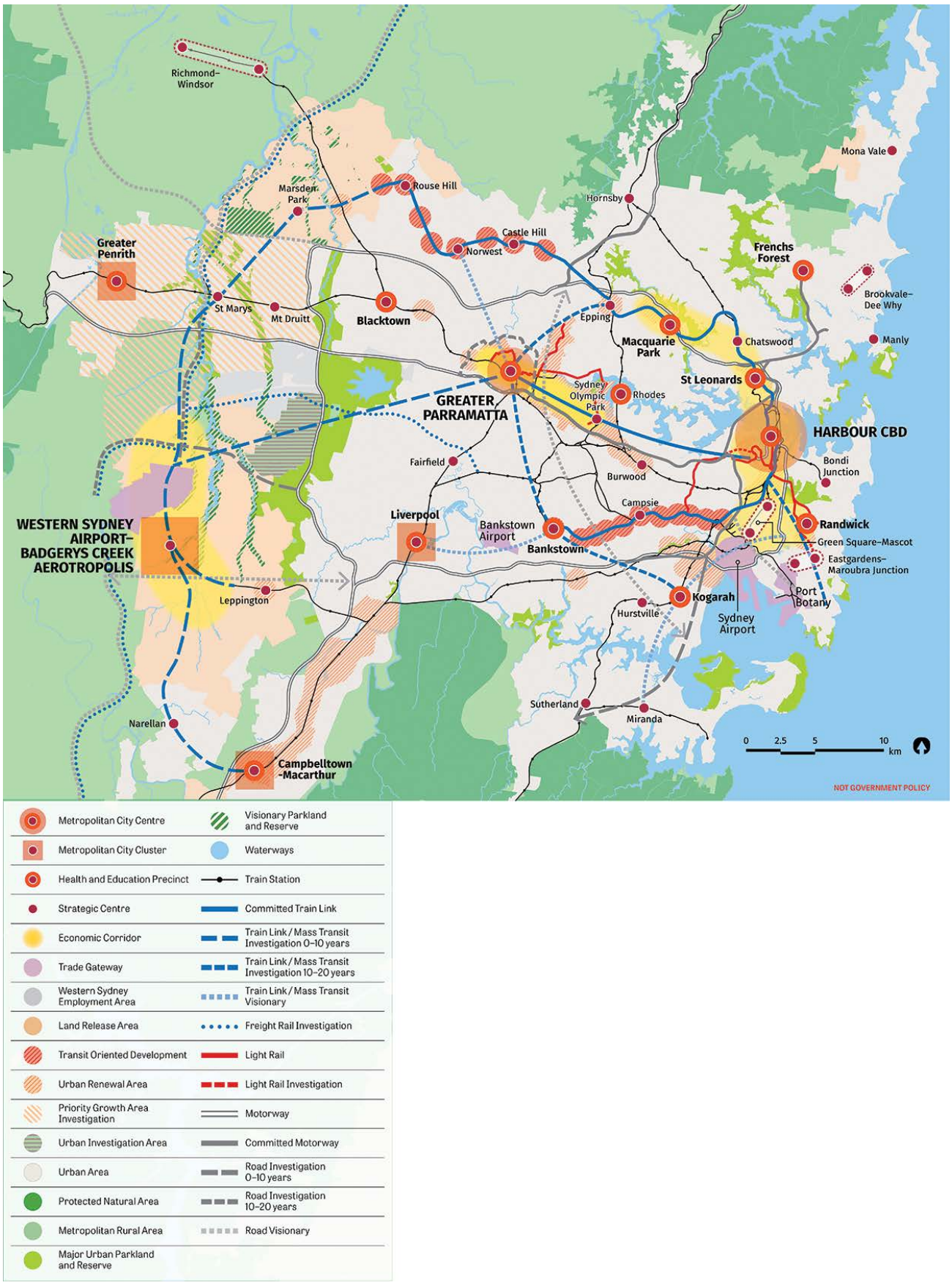

Figure 2-1 Greater Sydney Structure Plan 2056 – the three cities

Source: *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017a)

2.3.2 Draft Western City District Plan

The *Draft Western City District Plan* builds on the *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* by outlining the strategic vision for the Western City District, encompassing the Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Penrith and Wollondilly. The Western City District will be polycentric Metropolitan City Cluster, with a strong relationship between Liverpool, Greater Penrith and Campbelltown–Macarthur, reinforced by the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis and the Western Economic Corridor.

It is intended that this Metropolitan City Cluster will be well-connected by high quality public transport and that transport investments will provide major links for people and freight between the District's strategic centres and to Greater Sydney's north and south. An extract of the *Western City District Structure Plan* is shown at Figure 2-3.

The population of the Western City District is forecast to increase by about 464,000 people by 2036. As the overall population grows, it is also ageing. The number of residents aged over 85 is expected to grow by 206 per cent, while the number of single-person households is expected to grow by 72 per cent. Growth in these households is expected in the local government areas of Camden (238 per cent), Liverpool (91 per cent) and Wollondilly (87 per cent), although couples with children are expected to remain the dominant household type in the District. As a result, there will be comparatively fewer working-age people (20–64 years) living in the District.

These population and demographic changes mean that an additional 184,500 homes are required in the District by 2036, representing 25 per cent of total new housing across Greater Sydney. By 2036, the *Draft Western City District Plan* therefore projects that there will be 572,500 dwellings in the Western City District.

As shown in Figure 2-2, the South West Growth Area and the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area remain key growth areas in the Western City. Other areas of projected growth are around Campbelltown–Macarthur, Narellan, Bringelly and along the existing Main West Line. This projected growth in the number of dwellings highlights the need for corridors to be protected, both to ensure that future infrastructure can be delivered, and to provide certainty for local businesses and communities.

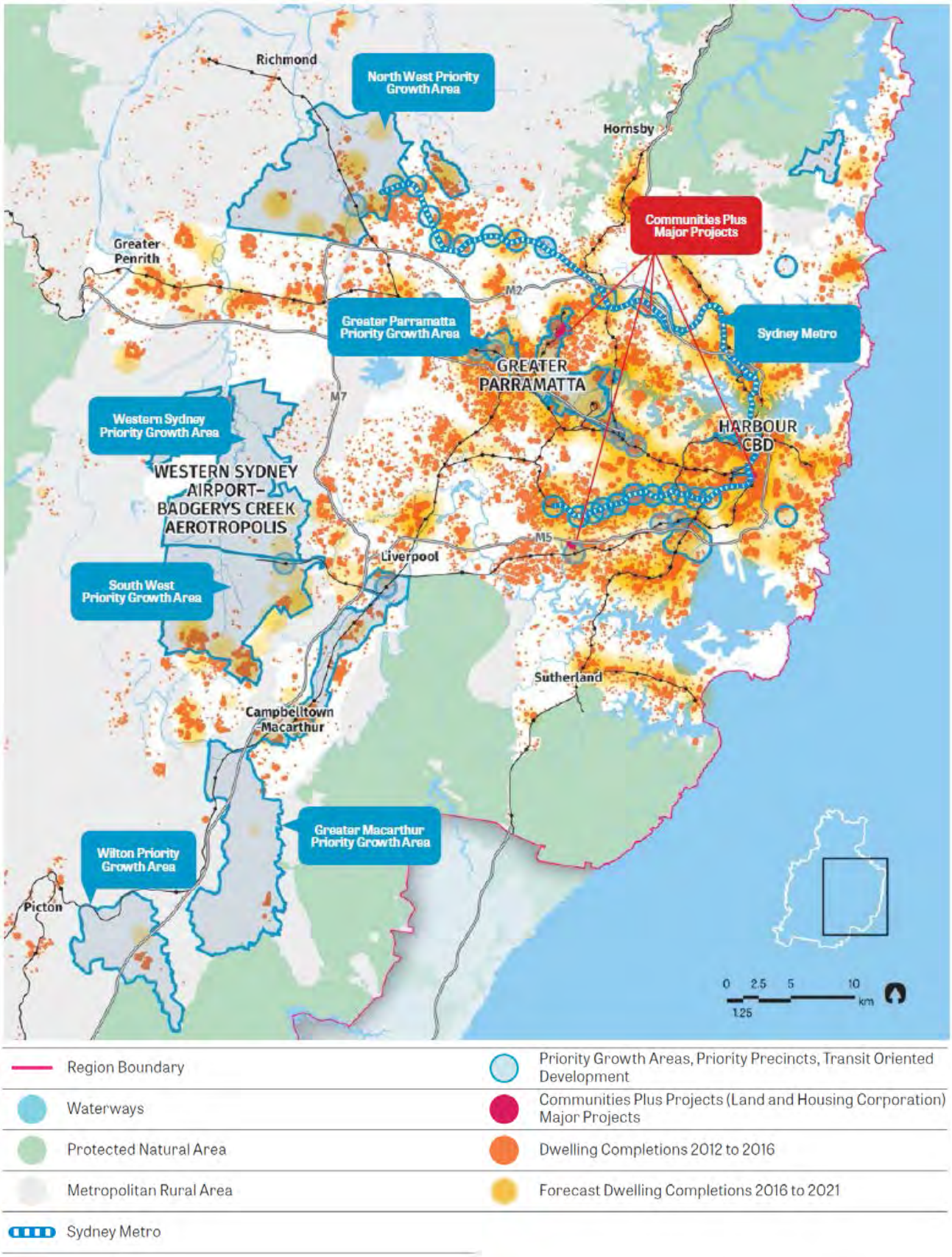

Figure 2-2 Historic and future housing supply

Source: *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017a)

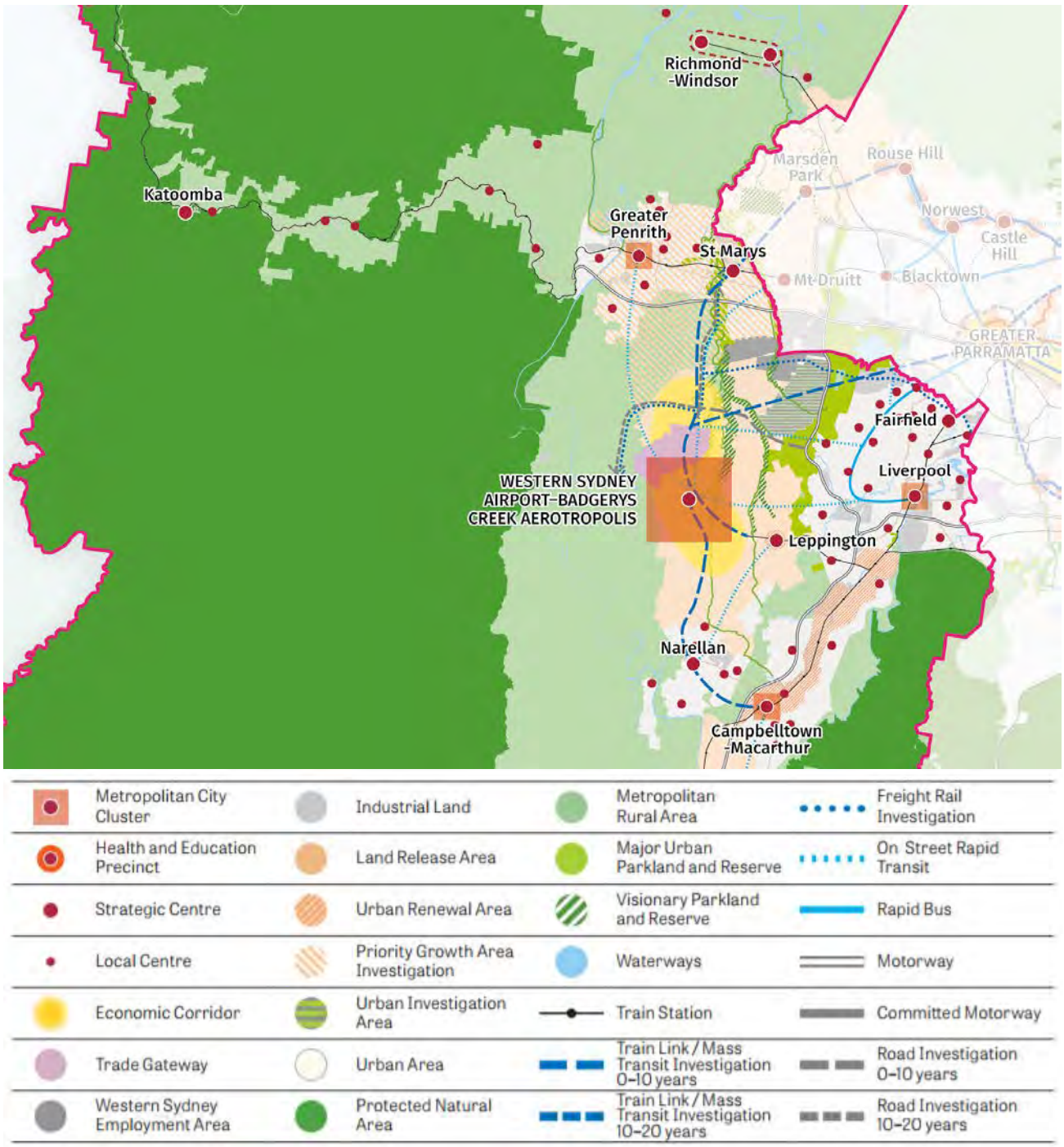

Figure 2-3 Western City District Structure Plan

Source: *Draft Western City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017b)

The *Draft Western City District Plan* also includes job targets that seek to significantly increase employment across the key centres of the Western City District, as shown at Table 2-1.

Table 2-1 Western City District job targets

Centre	Job target	
	2016	2036
Greater Penrith	33,400	44,000-45,000
St Marys	8300	12,000-16,500
Western Sydney Airport	2400	29,000-34,000
Leppington	400	7,000-12,500
Narellan	10,600	14,000-16,500
Campbelltown–Macarthur	20,400	27,000-31,000

Source: *Draft Western City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017b)

To accommodate this projected housing and job growth, the structure plan details the intended land use for the District as well as it identifies investigation areas for growth. These are shown at Figure 2-4 and Figure 2-5. These structure plans illustrate that future development will be concentrated between Campbelltown–Macarthur in the south and Greater Penrith Growth Area in the north, as well as in land release areas, growth area investigations and the new Western Economic Corridor. The Western Sydney Airport Growth Area and the South West Growth Area continue to be the key focus areas for future growth, and will be aligned with the objectives and strategies of the *Greater Sydney Region Plan* and *Draft Western City District Plan* to enhance liveability, sustainability and productivity.

Integration of land use and transport planning is identified as key to achieving objectives related to productivity under the *Draft Western City District Plan*. The future North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension infrastructure are noted as major transit connections that have the potential to contribute to the structure of a compact and connected Western Parkland City.

One of the key priorities of the *Draft Western City District Plan* is to establish the land use and transport structure to deliver a liveable, productive and sustainable Western City District. In this regard, the recommended corridors are identified as a catalyst for the new Western Economic Corridor, centred on the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis, which is integral to creating more jobs and a diversity of jobs in western Sydney.

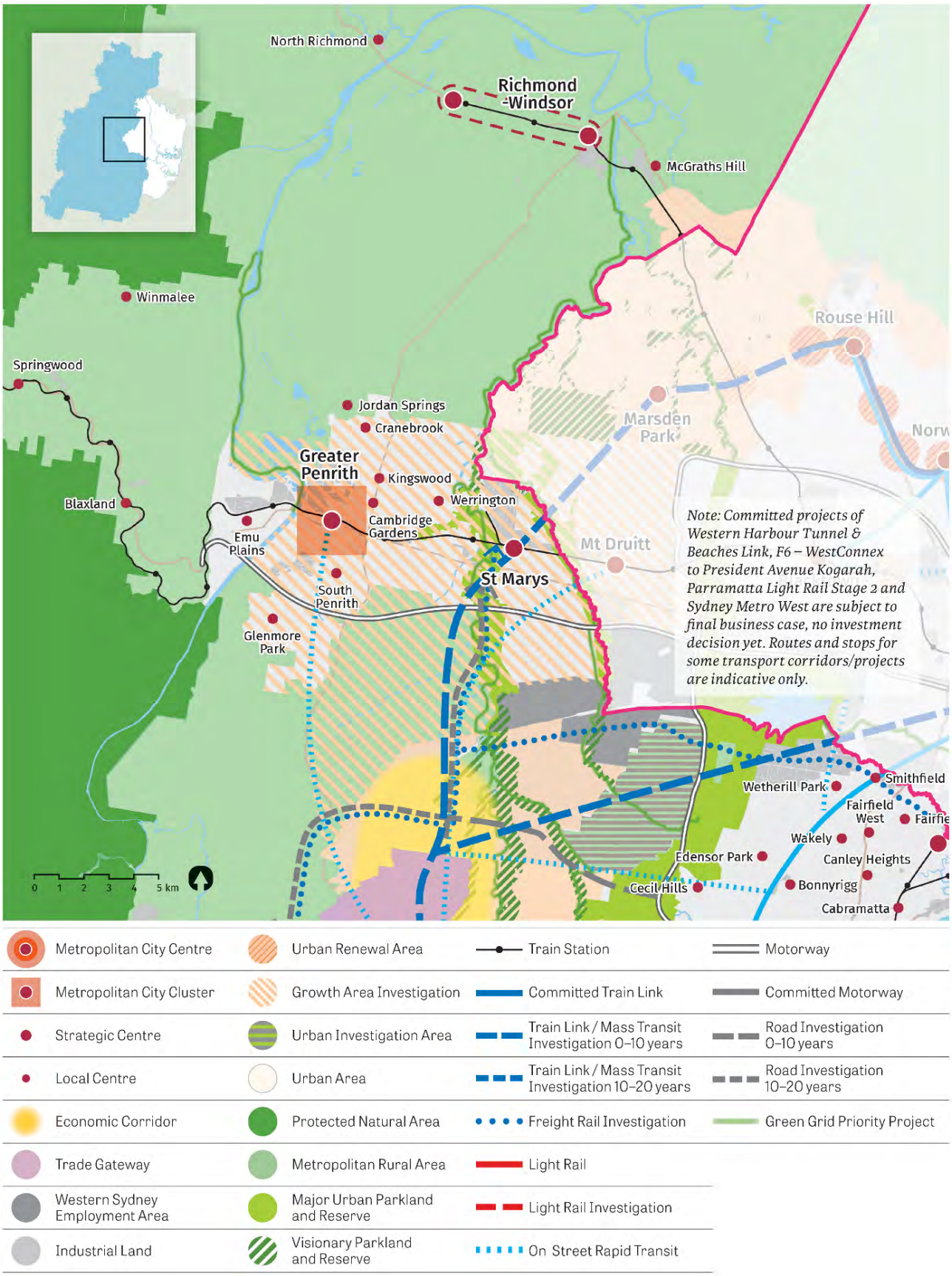

Figure 2-4 Western City District – urban area north

Source: *Draft Western City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017b)

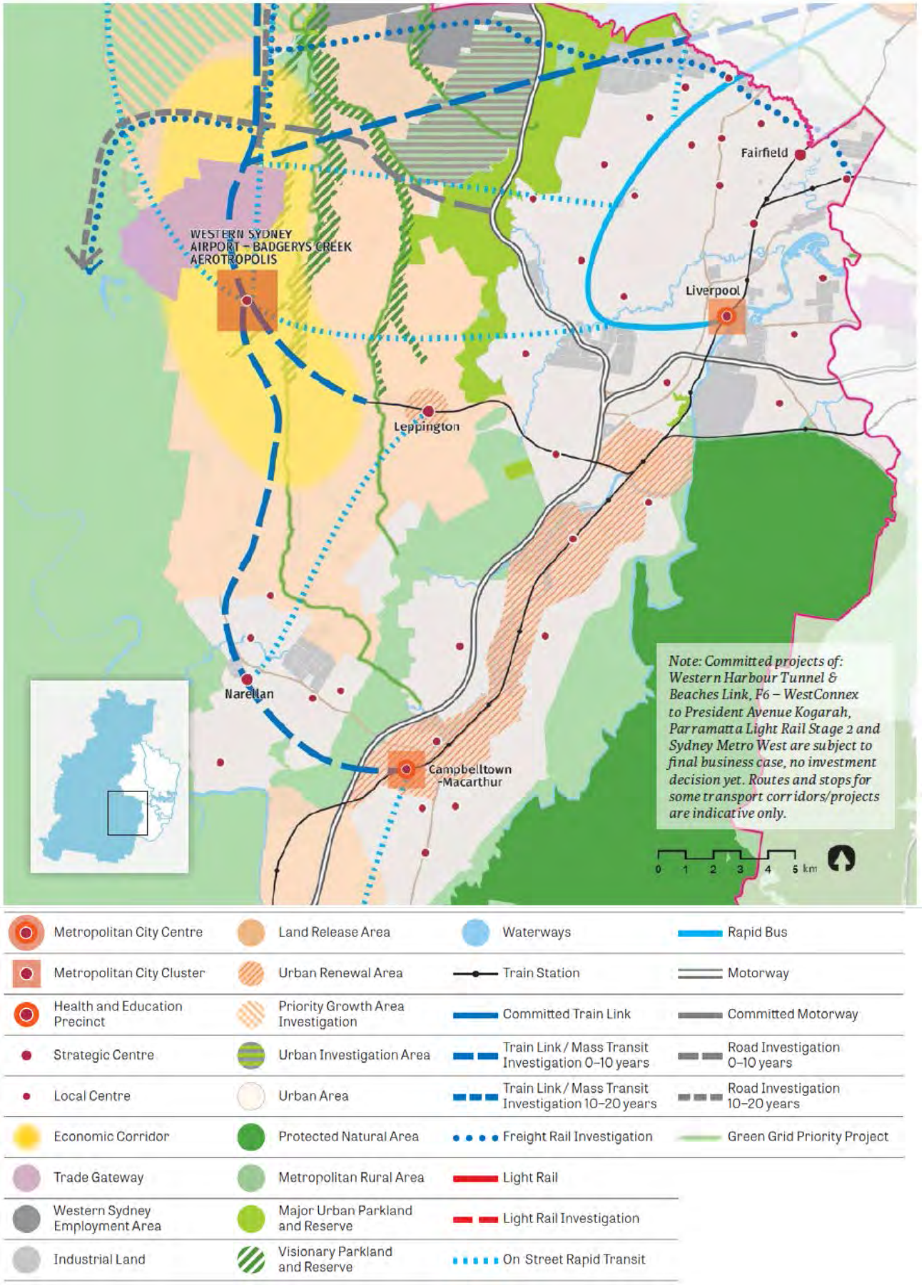

Figure 2-5 Western City District – urban area south

Source: *Draft Western City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017b)

2.3.3 State Infrastructure Strategy

The NSW *State Infrastructure Strategy* provides advice and recommendations for infrastructure projects, and provides support for projects in key sectors including urban public transport. In relation to rail infrastructure, the *State Infrastructure Strategy* emphasises delivering transport projects across the Sydney Rail network. This infrastructure is considered to play a critical role in supporting Sydney's growing population and providing the mobility and connectivity needed to sustain economic growth and urban productivity. The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors will allow for future delivery of railways in the metropolitan area in a timely and efficient manner and are considered to be consistent with the objectives outlined in the *State Infrastructure Strategy*.

2.3.4 A Plan for Growing Sydney

Until the *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* is finalised and adopted, *A Plan for Growing Sydney* remains the city-wide strategic plan. The plan establishes the vision for the Sydney Metropolitan Region over the period to 2031. *A Plan for Growing Sydney* places a strong emphasis on accelerating housing supply, the provision of transport infrastructure to support future population growth, and the ongoing strength of the economy, balanced against creating liveable communities and protecting the natural environment.

The plan emphasises the continued development of western Sydney as key to the ongoing growth and productivity of the metropolitan region, including:

- Building new housing and urban renewal around centres in western Sydney
- Fostering economic development in strategic centres and transport gateways in western Sydney
- Connecting centres in western Sydney to support their development.

The plan seeks to take advantage of opportunities arising from the Australian Government's investment in the Western Sydney Airport and identifies that north-south connections between Campbelltown and Penrith should be improved.

In addition to this, the plan supports the ongoing development of the precincts within the South West Growth Area, and specifically recognises the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension as key to supporting growth across western Sydney.

2.3.5 Growth areas

The recommended corridors affect two growth areas, as shown in Figure 2-6, being the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area and the South West Growth Area. Also, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor terminates near the proposed Greater Macarthur Growth Area.

The Western Sydney Airport Growth Area is located in the area surrounding the future Western Sydney Airport and is intended to provide opportunities for employment, additional dwellings and associated services. The Western Sydney Airport Growth Area contains the former Broader Western Sydney Employment Area, which comprised around 4537 hectares of land identified for future employment uses including industrial, warehousing and offices, with the potential to generate around 57,000 jobs over the next 30 years.

The South West Growth Area (previously South West Growth Centre) will provide for a range of housing types that will benefit from close proximity to the future Western Sydney Airport and from major investments in transport infrastructure, including the upgrade of Camden Valley Way, Narellan Road and Bringelly Road. The former South West Growth Centre comprised around 117,000 hectares and established 18 precincts, which were intended to provide for around 110,000 dwellings and around 300,000 residents. Seven precincts have been rezoned for urban development and are in various stages of delivery.

Further rezoning of land within the precincts of the South West Growth Area and the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area is expected to occur in the near future. Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plans are being developed by the Department of Planning and Environment, in consultation with Penrith City Council, Liverpool City Council, Campbelltown City Council and Camden Council for these growth areas and are anticipated to be exhibited for community feedback in 2018.

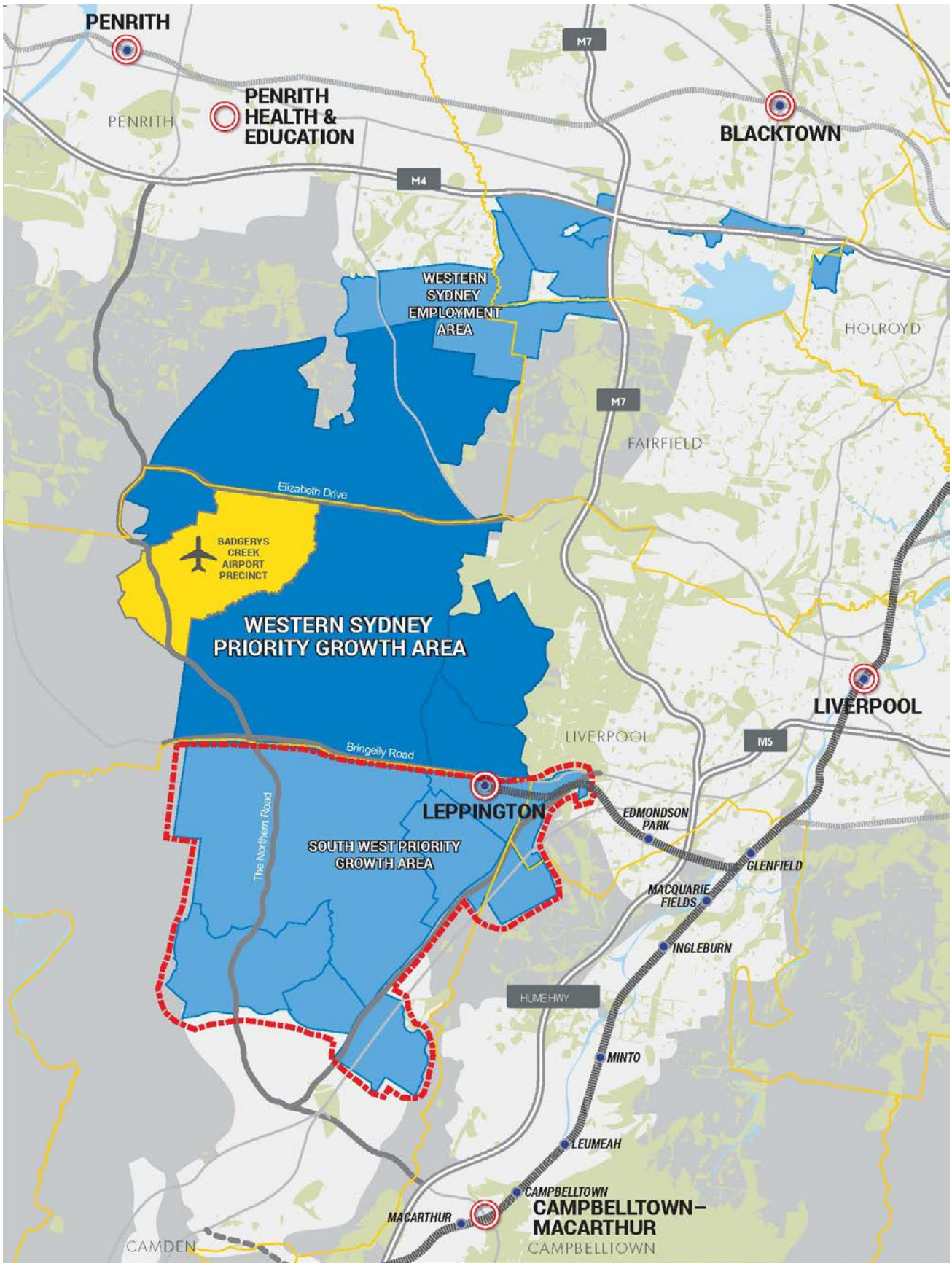

Figure 2-6 Western Sydney Growth Area

Source: http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Priority-Growth-Areas-and-Precincts/Western-Sydney-Priority-Growth-Area/Map

2.3.6 The Greater Macarthur Growth Area

The Greater Macarthur Growth Area is a series of precincts around the seven rail stations from Glenfield to Macarthur and the land release precincts of Menangle Park, Gilead and Appin (as shown in Figure 2-7), and extending down to Menangle Park and Wilton, that are intended to facilitate consolidated growth to provide additional dwellings, jobs, community infrastructure and services for current and future residents of the region. It is expected that the Greater Macarthur Growth Area will be able to accommodate around 57,000 new dwellings and over 40,000 new jobs.

As part of the Greater Macarthur Growth Area, precinct plans for six of the seven urban renewal precincts between Glenfield and Macarthur have now been finalised by the Department of Planning and Environment, including for the Macarthur precinct. The precinct plans will guide future planning proposals within these precincts. Menangle Park and Mt Gilead precincts were rezoned during 2017. Other rezoning is expected to take place gradually, with the first homes expected to be under construction by late 2018. An accompanying Land Use and Infrastructure Strategy for the Greater Macarthur Growth Area is currently being prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment.

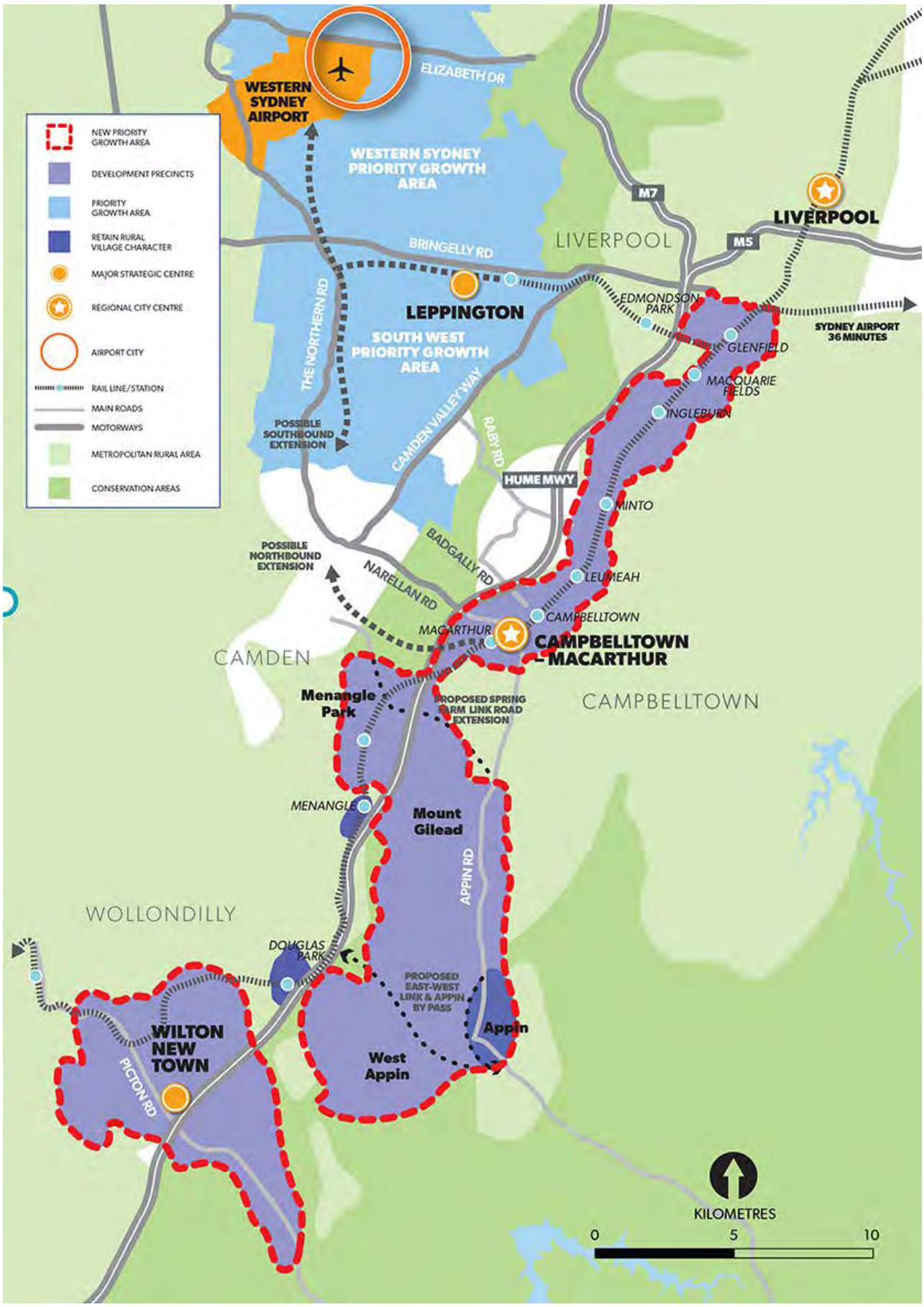

Figure 2-7 Greater Macarthur Growth Area

Source: http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Priority-Growth-Areas-and-Precincts/Greater-Macarthur-Priority-Growth-Area/Map

2.3.7 Local policies

Penrith City Council

Penrith City Council has prepared a number of strategic plans and studies that outline the future development of Greater Penrith. In January 2017, Penrith City Council released its *Economic Development Strategy*, which sets out a strategic framework to guide Council in supporting future economic development and encouraging faster and greater investment in jobs growth. The strategy has a goal for Penrith to create between 42,000 and 55,000 additional local jobs by 2031.

The Strategy recognises the North South Rail Line as an essential catalyst to the economic development of the region, stating that the North South Rail Line is essential to grow jobs and related business activity sectors in Penrith. It notes that a North South Rail Line connection will improve access between Penrith, Liverpool and Campbelltown and create connections between the Penrith Health and Education Precinct, Western Sydney University and other employment centres. The Penrith Health and Education Precinct is positioned to be one of Australia's premier destinations for health, education and medical research and the Strategy explicitly notes that the North South Rail Line will create opportunities for greater jobs and urban densities in a new town centre. The Penrith Health and Education Precinct structure plan is shown at Figure 2-8.

In June 2017, Penrith City Council adopted the *Penrith Community Plan*. This 10-year plan contains long-term strategies to achieve seven community outcomes, one of which is for a strong focus on improving public transport. The plan includes a strategy for Penrith City Council to be an advocate for North South Rail Line.

Figure 2-8 Penrith health and education precinct structure plan

Source: *Penrith Health and Education Precinct – Strategic Vision* (Penrith Business Alliance 2011)

Liverpool City Council

Liverpool City Council has prepared a suite of strategic planning documents to guide planning decisions. *The Liverpool Business Centres and Corridors Strategy* (2013) is the guiding document for development of Liverpool's retail and business areas. While Liverpool City Council sets out to encourage retail and commercial development, the Strategy seeks to define and preserve a retail hierarchy across Liverpool local government area.

The *Liverpool Residential Strategy 2008* is a 25 year strategy that recommends a balanced approach between the development of new release areas and the redevelopment of existing urban areas for new housing. The Strategy provides for a wider variety of housing types, including smaller and adaptable houses, to provide for the population growth and to increase housing affordability.

Campbelltown City Council

The *Campbelltown 2027 Community Strategic Plan* was adopted in 2016 and sets goals for the development of the Campbelltown Local Government Area over the next ten years. The Community Strategic Plan emphasises Campbelltown's key role as a strategic centre, as identified by *A Plan for Growing Sydney* and the *Draft Western City District Plan*. The *Community Strategic Plan* identifies that the strategic direction of Campbelltown City Council will align with the priorities outlined in the *Draft Western City District Plan*. The *Community Strategic Plan* also notes that there is currently limited access to multimodal transport and that a key priority is enhanced connectivity, accessibility and movement through improved public transport. Corridor protection and future infrastructure will assist with this.

Camden Council

The *Camden Community Strategic Plan* was released in June 2017 and is the most recent strategic planning document that has been released by Camden Council. The plan identifies that Camden Council strategic plans and policies are influenced by Australian and State strategic planning policy. The Community Strategic Plan particularly notes that it is influenced by the *Draft Western City District Plan*, the *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan* and the *Western Sydney Rails Needs Scoping Study*. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor is identified as one of the strategic priorities that Camden Council will be working towards.

2.4 Transport policies

2.4.1 Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056

The *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* is an update of the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* and is a suite of strategies and plans for transport and customer mobility to guide transport investment over the long term. The Strategy notes that the developing Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis will require investment in a mass transit network to shape a sustainable urban form and to support 30 minute access to centres. To support this, Transport for NSW commit to investigating within the next 10 years a north-south train link through the future Western Sydney Airport site between St Marys and Campbelltown–Macarthur, as well as a rail link between Leppington and the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis. Initiatives for investigation are shown in Figure 2-9.

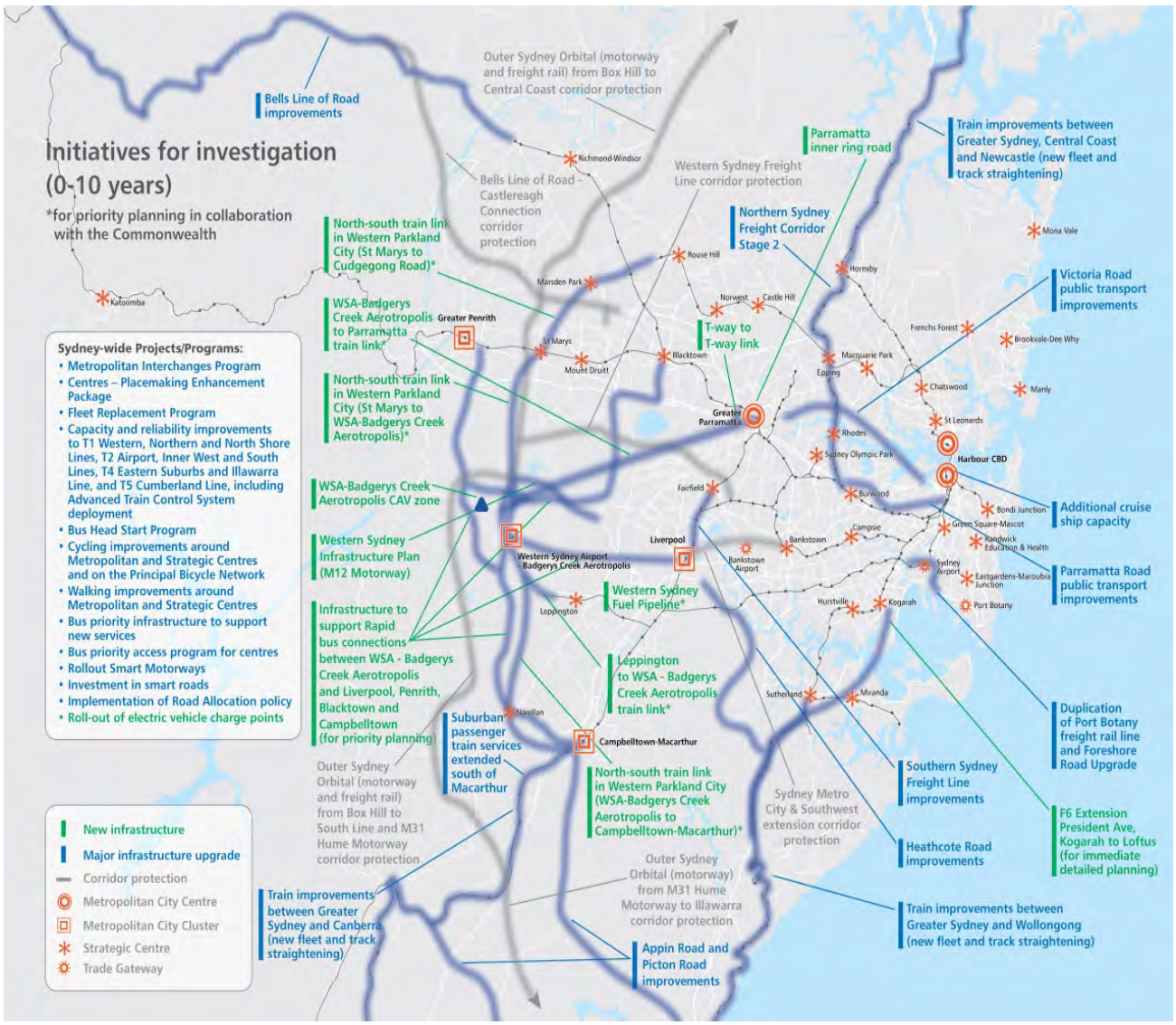

Figure 2-9 Initiatives for investigation (0–10 years)

Source: *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* (Transport for NSW 2017)

The visionary Greater Sydney mass transit network is shown in Figure 2-10 and illustrates a new train/mass transit corridor between the existing T1 Western Line, the future Western Sydney Airport site, Leppington and Campbelltown–Macarthur. The recommended corridors are consistent with the visionary network and early corridor protection will ensure that they can be delivered in the future.

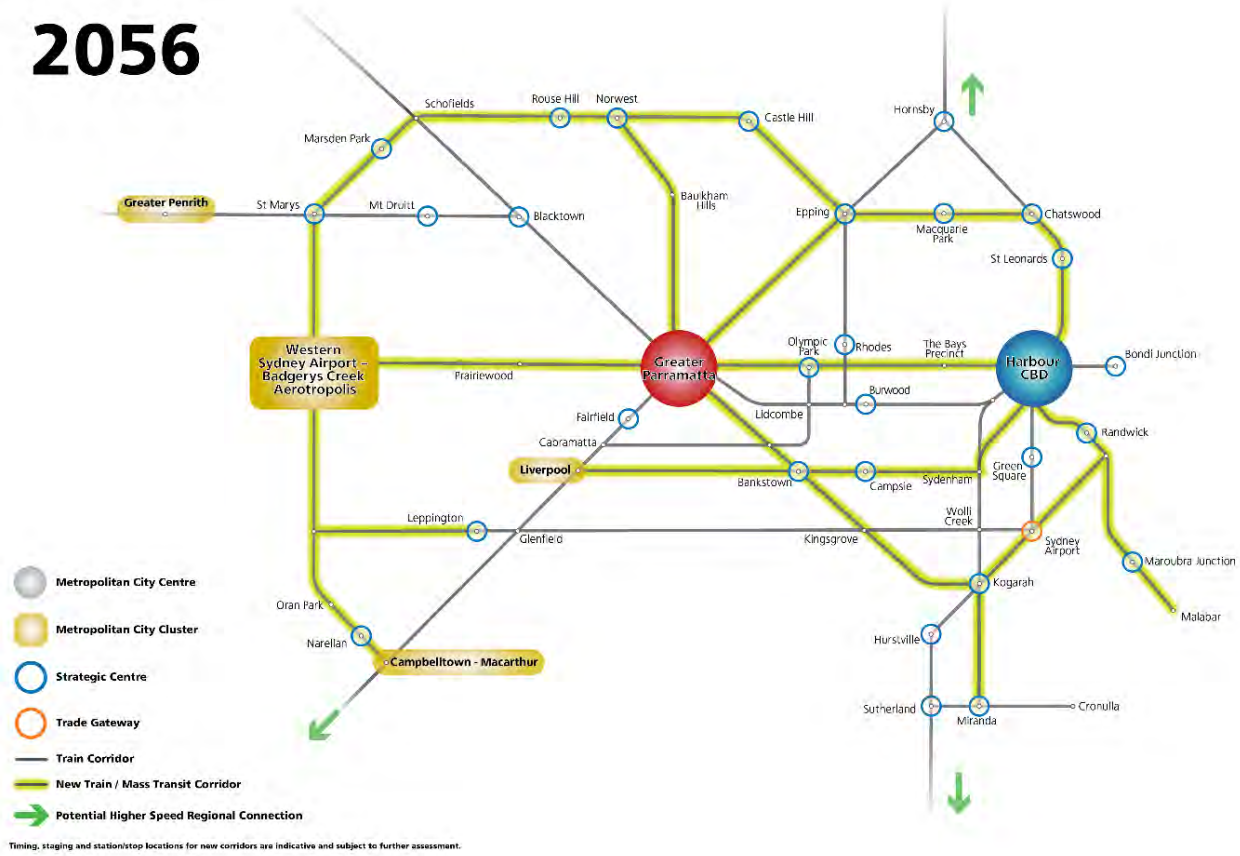

Figure 2-10 Greater Sydney Mass Transit Network (Visionary)

Source: *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* (Transport for NSW 2017)

2.4.2 Long Term Transport Master Plan

Until the *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* is finalised and adopted, the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* remains the city-wide transport plan. The plan defines the direction for transport planning for the next 20 years and sets the framework for transport and policy decisions to enable the NSW Government to deliver an integrated, modern transport system with a focus on customer experience.

Solutions and actions are identified to respond to key challenges and to integrate, modernise, grow and manage the transport system in the short, medium and long term. The plan identifies the following four key challenges for Greater Sydney:

- Improving public transport and cutting congestion
- Equipping Greater Sydney for jobs growth
- Connecting new growth centres
- Protecting critical strategic and growth corridors.

Figure 2-11 illustrates western Sydney transport corridors that are subject to increased demand. In particular, the corridor that connects Campbelltown–Macarthur to Penrith via the South West Growth Area is shown to be experiencing increased demand. Over the long term, planning for increased demand in these emerging corridors will be critical.

To meet these challenges, the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* identifies the need to protect 19 major transport corridors to meet Sydney's future transport requirements (refer to Figure 2-12). These corridors include the South West Rail Link Extension to extend the South West Rail Link from Leppington westwards as well as a North South Rail Line corridor connecting Leppington to Marsden Park in the north.

Protecting important transport corridors is identified as key to ensuring that the long-term development of the transport network can be undertaken in a cost efficient manner. Identified as one of these key corridors, the protection of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension recommended corridors will ensure that the metropolitan transport network can support future growth in western Sydney.

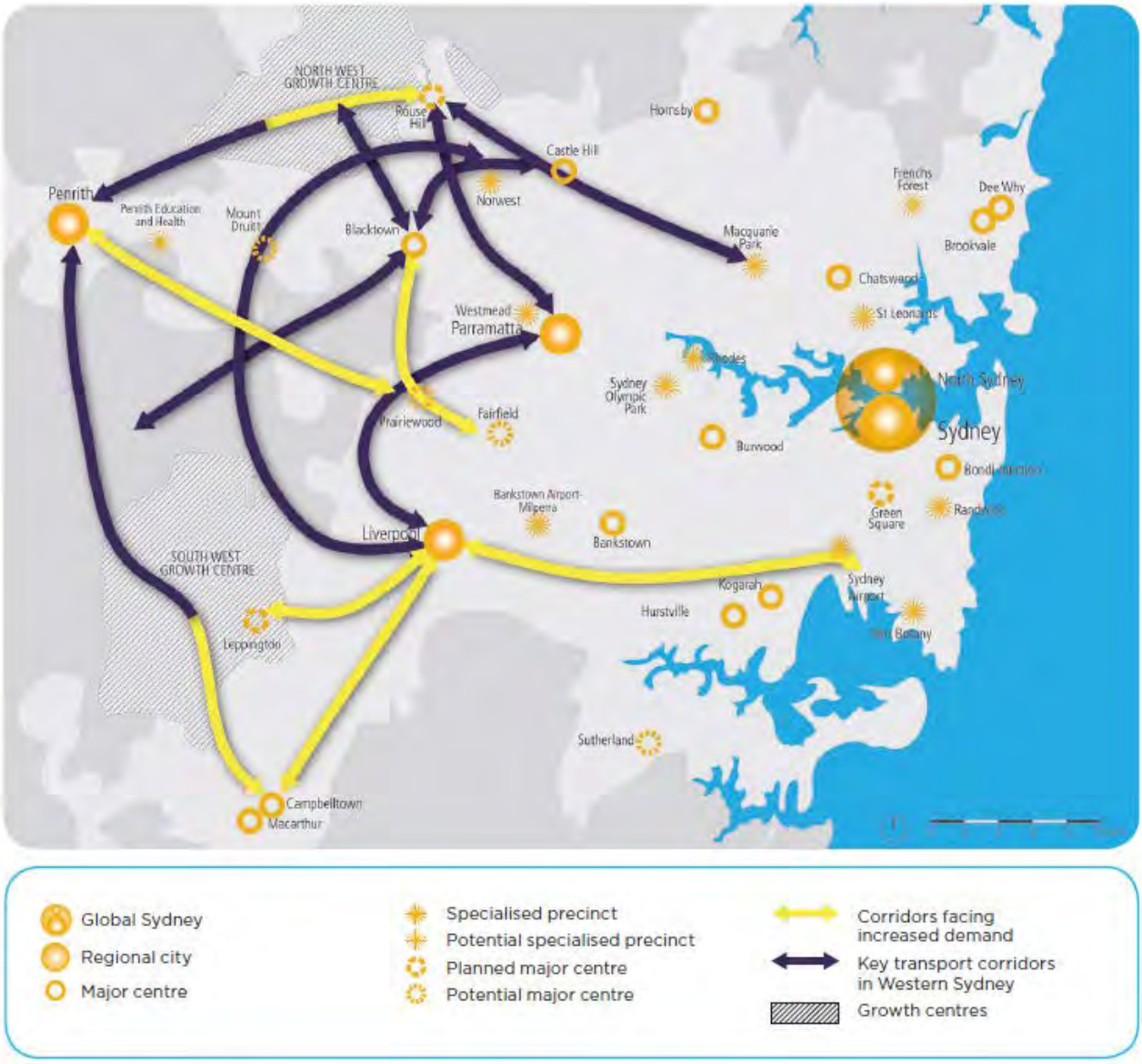

Figure 2-11 Western Sydney corridors experiencing increased demand

Source: *Long Term Transport Master Plan* (Transport for NSW 2012)

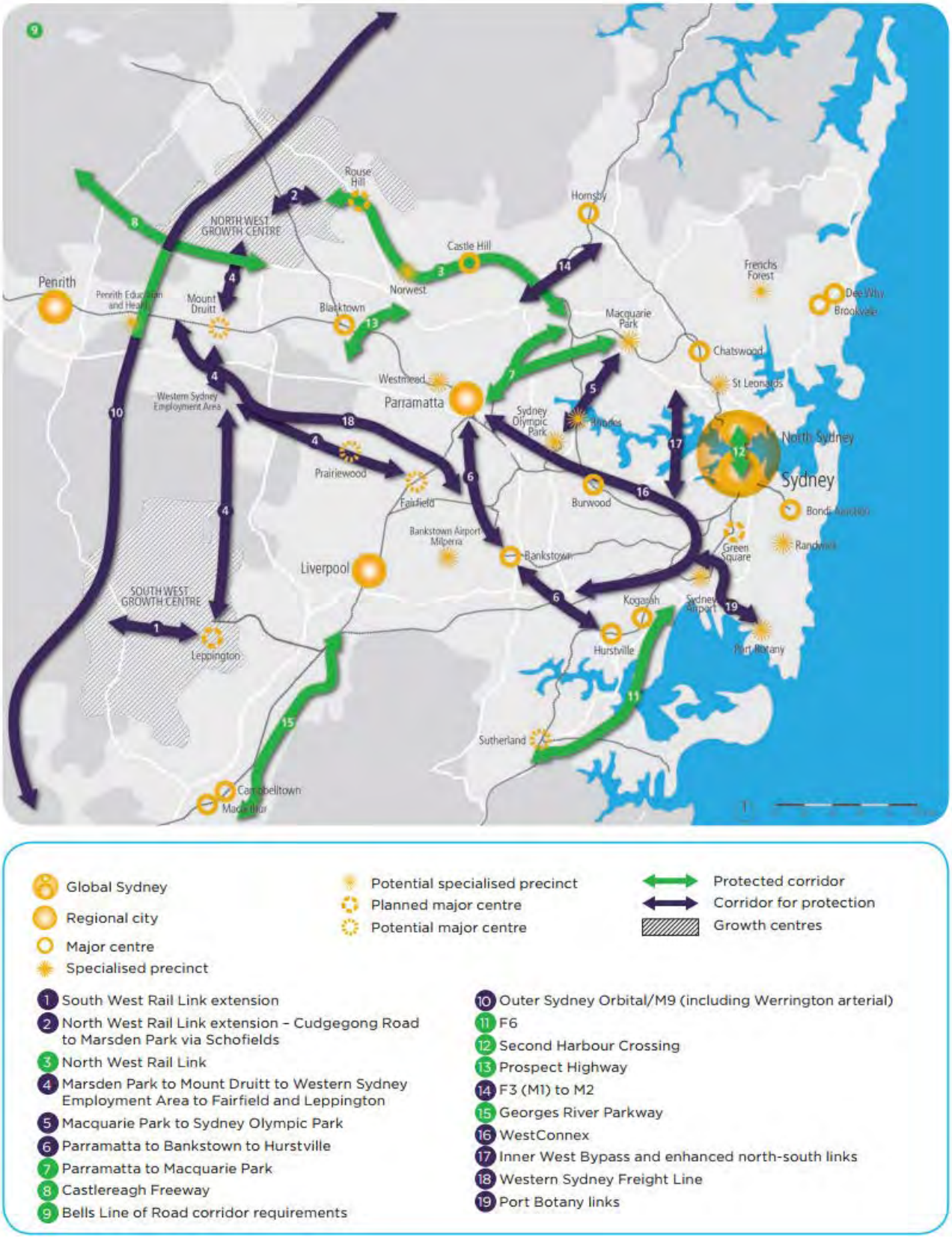

Figure 2-12 Long Term Transport Master Plan transport corridors for protection

Source: *Long Term Transport Master Plan* (Transport for NSW 2012)

2.5 Strategic alternative to corridor protection

The need for future rail connections as proposed in this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment is described above. Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors is consistent with Australian Government infrastructure priorities and NSW Government strategic land use and long-term transport plans. It is also supported by the *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study*, which identifies the recommended corridors as a critical city-shaping link to support the Western Economic Corridor and the establishment of the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis.

This section considers the strategic alternative to statutory protection of the recommended corridors.

The only alternative to corridor protection is the base case or 'do nothing' scenario, which would involve not protecting the recommended corridors for a future railway. In this scenario, urban expansion in western Sydney would build out areas where a future railway could have been constructed, resulting in:

- Higher property acquisition costs as a consequence of intensification of development, and changes in property values over time
- Significant community disruption through disturbance to new, denser, settlement patterns and potential separation of existing communities
- Higher compensation costs for relocation of community facilities, services and businesses
- Failure to integrate transport planning and land use planning.

The significant cost of land acquisition, always a major part of infrastructure projects, can often be a decisive factor in determining whether a project can proceed. A lack of strategic planning for corridors results in higher prices paid for land just prior to development that may delay infrastructure provision beyond when it is needed or jeopardise its delivery altogether. There would also be higher future costs associated with relocating incompatible development, local infrastructure, utilities and services.

As demonstrated in the relevant Australian Government, NSW Government and local strategic plans, a north-south rail connection will be key to supporting the future growth of western Sydney and failure to protect the recommended North South Rail Line corridor could result in poor strategic planning outcomes ultimately undermining the delivery of the 30-minute city.

Compulsory acquisition of land at the last moment results in higher acquisition costs because landowners make investment decisions unaware of the future proposed use of the land. Compulsory acquisition in this instance can also cause significant social disruption and public concern. These factors are emphasised in the most recent *Australian Infrastructure Plan* as well as in the *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* as a major driver for the need to undertake corridor protection for future infrastructure. With sufficient notice and good information, landowners can make informed investment and relocation decisions, reducing social disruption and financial hardship.

With consideration of the above matters, not protecting the recommended corridors now could result in:

- Inadequate public transport provided in the future, due to the significant financial, economic, and social implications of constructing the public transport infrastructure
- Public transport that is provided in the future with an at-grade solution (partially or entirely) having significant additional environmental (eg noise), financial, economic, and social implications
- Public transport that is provided in the future in a tunnel having significant additional financial costs due to the substantially higher whole of life cost of tunnel rail infrastructure compared to surface rail infrastructure. The much greater cost of developing rail infrastructure in tunnel can make rail projects unfeasible.

If public transport infrastructure is delayed because of financial, economic, or social implications then alternative transport investment would instead be carried out only for road transport infrastructure improvements such as road widening, intersection upgrades, and the provision of additional bus services, which would be needed over time to address increasing road congestion. However, these alternatives would have significant air quality implications and do not have the ability to fully cater for the future demand for western Sydney, nor do they fulfil the strategic objectives for Greater Sydney to create a liveable, productive and sustainable city where homes and jobs are located within 30-minutes.

3 Existing conditions and constraints within the northern study area

For the purposes of describing the existing conditions and constraints in the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has been divided into two sections separated by the future Western Sydney Airport site:

- A northern section from St Marys to the northern boundary of the future Western Sydney Airport site
- A southern section from the southern boundary of the future Western Sydney Airport site to Macarthur that also includes the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor.

This section describes the existing land uses and environmental features within the northern part of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. Similar information for the southern section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor and recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor is provided in Section 4.

A study area was defined for the northern part of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor that extends generally about two kilometres either side of the recommended corridor. The northern study area is entirely within Penrith local government area and includes the suburbs of St Marys, Werrington, Kingswood, Claremont Meadows, Caddens, Orchard Hills, Luddenham, Badgerys Creek and Kemps Creek.

Figure 3-1 shows the northern study area and overlays the key environmental and physical constraints within this area that influenced the selection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

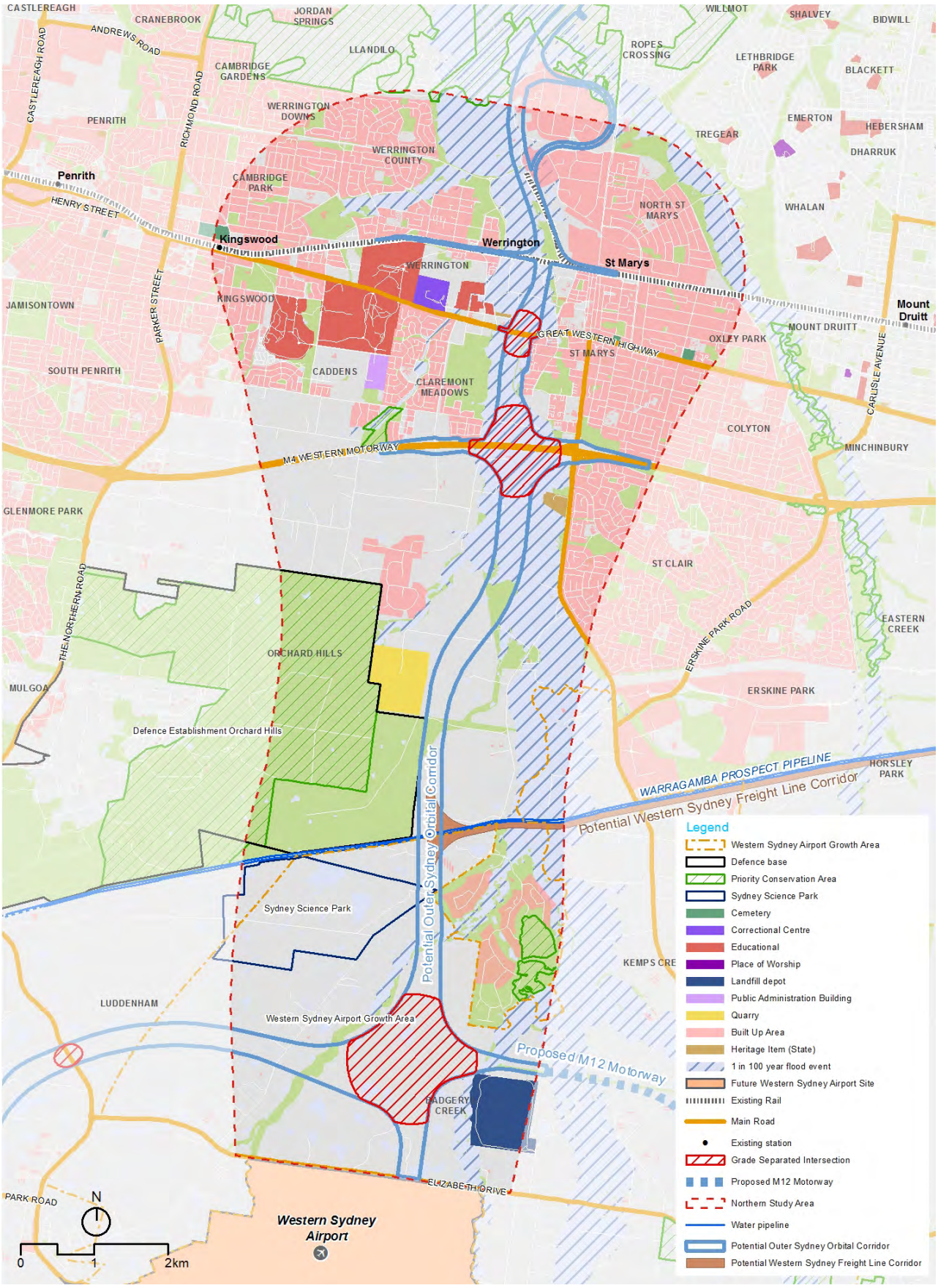

Figure 3-1 Constraints map of the northern study area

3.1 Topography and terrain

Topography and terrain are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects as they influence the ease of developing rail infrastructure at grade and on straight track and the extent of any earthworks and engineering structures to enable this. Where rail infrastructure is developed in steep terrain it can also require additional works to stabilise slopes.

The topography of the northern study area is shown in Figure 3-2. Between St Marys and Werrington, the land is relatively flat with higher ground toward Claremont Meadows in the south. Elevations are generally stable toward Orchard Hills, with slightly lower areas occurring along Blaxland Creek, which is shown in Figure 3-3.

Through Orchard Hills and Badgerys Creek the valley and floodplain of South Creek and its tributaries dominates the topography.

The topography of the northern study area to the east and west of the recommended corridor are more elevated, reaching between 80 and 100 metres in height. Between Orchard Hills and Luddenham, the northern study area is gently undulating.

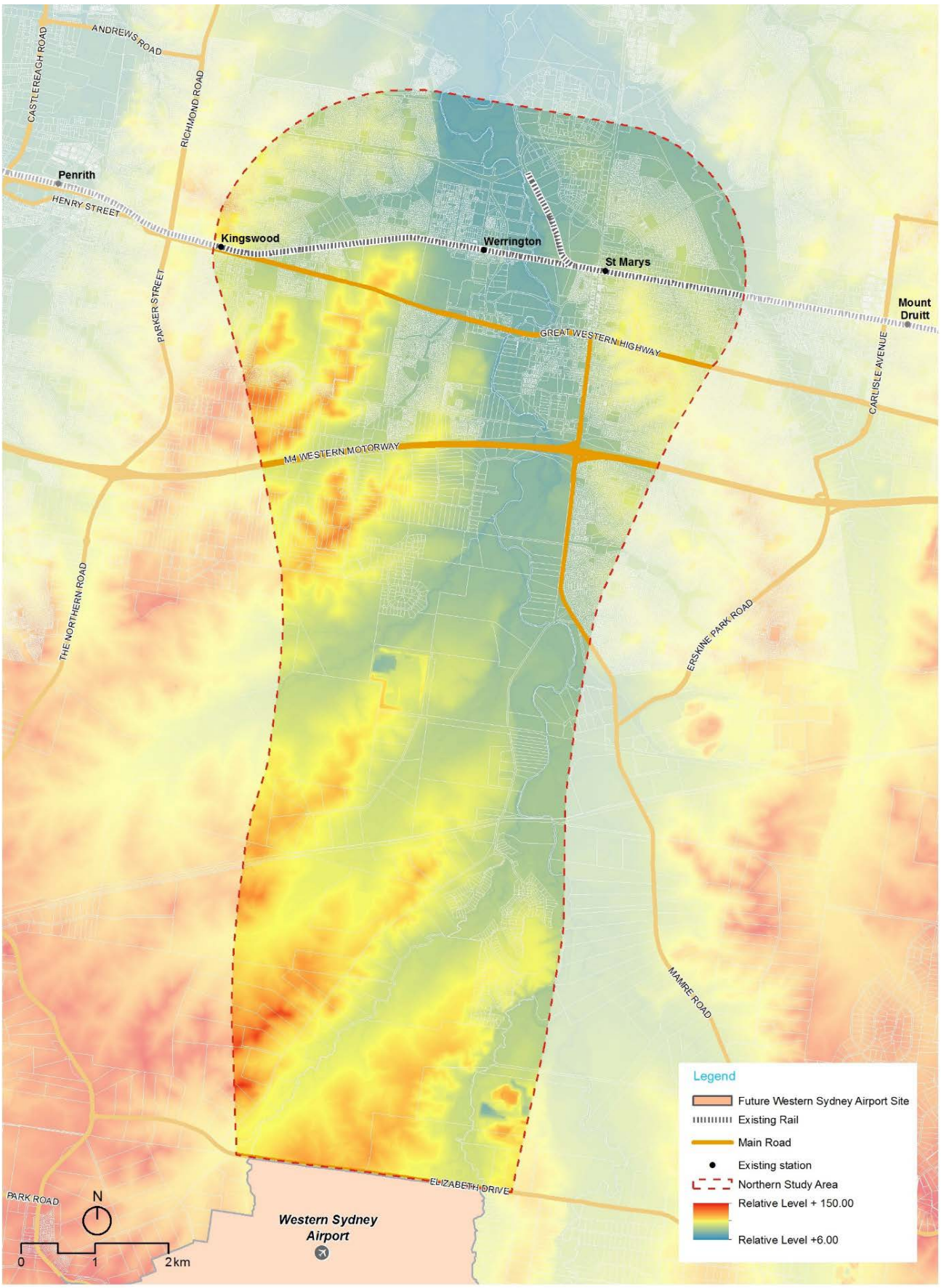

Figure 3-2 Topography of the northern study area

3.2 Hydrology

Hydrology is a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects as there are additional design matters to consider when developing rail infrastructure on flood prone land or across waterways. Rail infrastructure developed in low-lying areas and across waterways has the potential to affect flood behaviour. Also, developing rail infrastructure on alluvial soils can result in more costly design and construction requirements.

Hydrology within the northern study area is shown in Figure 3-3.

The northern study area is located within the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment. Watercourses and associated low-lying floodplain areas across the northern study area are primarily associated with South Creek and its tributaries. South Creek is a 400 square kilometre creek system that has its headwaters in the Camden area and flows 70 kilometres north to the Hawkesbury River. Major tributaries of South Creek within the northern study area include Ropes Creek and Kemps Creek. Minor tributaries within the northern study area, include:

- Werrington Creek
- Byrnes Creek
- Claremont Creek
- Blaxland Creek
- Cosgroves Creek
- Badgerys Creek.

These watercourses are shown in Figure 3-3.

Flooding events have occurred in the South Creek catchment in the past as a result of local catchment runoff breaking out of the main channel and spilling into the surrounding floodplain. The *Updated South Creek Flood Study* (Worley Parsons 2015) identified that the greatest extent of flooding within the northern study area occurs at the confluence of Blaxland Creek and South Creek on the southern side of the M4 Western Motorway in Orchard Hills. The Penrith Local Environment Plan 2010 identifies a flood area associated with South Creek that extends up to about 600 metres across the floodplains within the northern study area.

A number of large agricultural dams are located in the northern study area at Luddenham, Badgerys Creek and Kemps Creek, particularly in areas just north of the future Western Sydney Airport site. Of particular note is a dam on Kemps Creek just upstream of its confluence with South Creek, which controls inflow to South Creek from the east of the catchment.

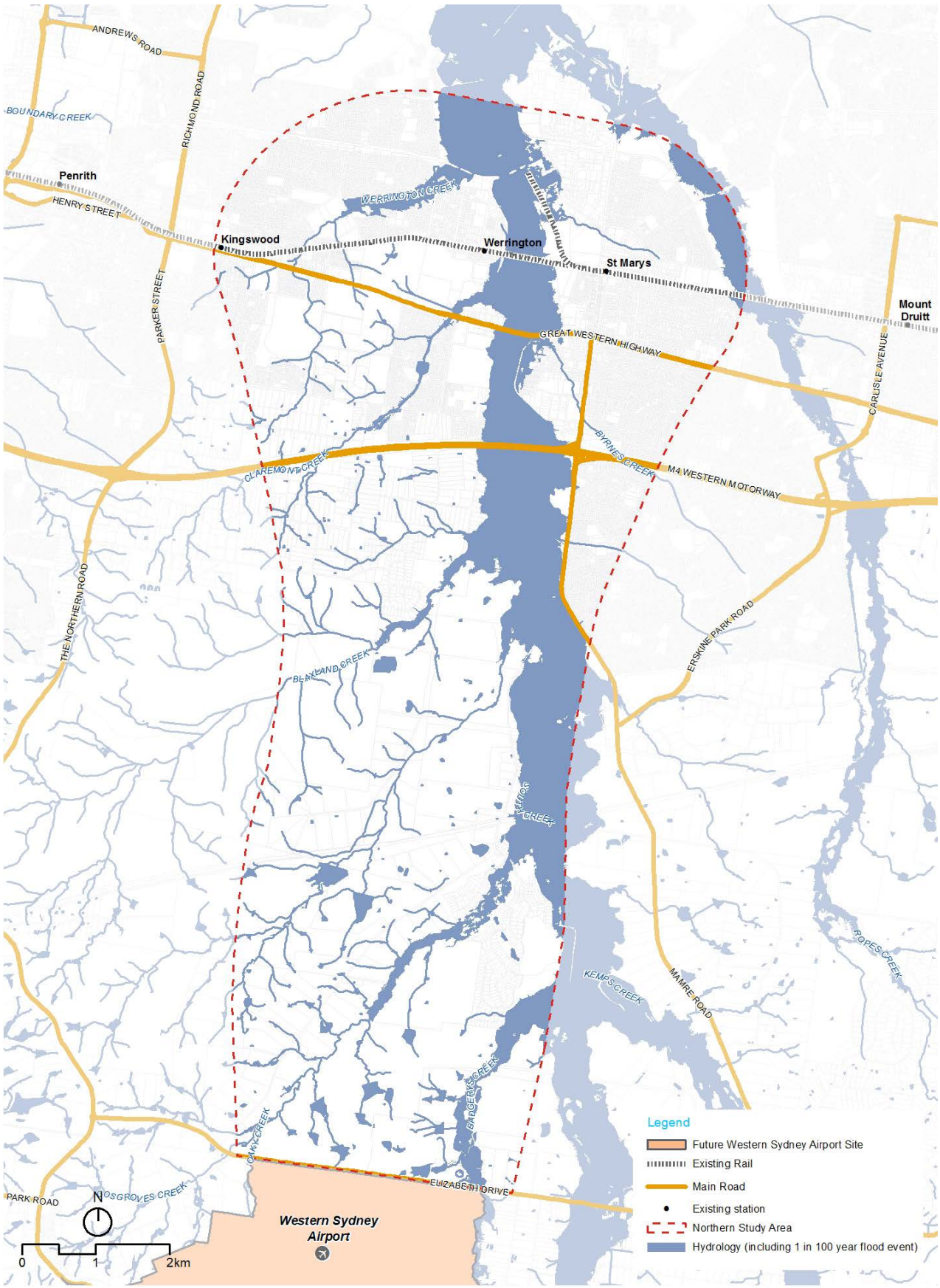

Figure 3-3 Hydrology of the northern study area

3.3 Geology and soils

Geology and soils are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects as they are a key factor influencing the ease of constructing cuttings and tunnelling. Soil conditions can also be a constraint for developing surface rail infrastructure, for example low strength soils that are subject to shrinking and swelling can increase the cost and duration of construction.

The Penrith 1:100 000 Geological Map shows that the geology of the northern study area is characterised by Triassic sedimentary rocks of the Wiannamatta Group and Hawkesbury Sandstone. The Wiannamatta Group in this area comprises Bringelly Shale underlain by Ashfield Shale units. The Wiannamatta Group is in turn underlain by Hawkesbury Sandstone.

Bringelly Shale can include shale, carbonaceous claystone, claystone, laminate and fine to medium-grained lithic sandstone.

The Narellan Lineament is the predominant geological feature within the northern study area. The Narellan Lineament is a north to south running surface expression of a deep seated, nearly vertical normal fault in the basement structure. It is comprised of fine-grained sand, silt and clay.

Dykes trending in a north-east direction in the vicinity of the M4 Western Motorway are indicated on the Penrith 1:100 000 Geological Map.

Bringelly Shale is generally low strength shale prone to slaking and weathering to highly reactive silty clay. The Bringelly Shale is likely to present difficulty due to its chemical and physical reactivity to changes in environment.

The underlying Ashfield Shale is a generally more competent rock.

There is no known occurrence of acid sulfate soils within the majority of the northern study area. However, there may be localised occurrences of potential or actual acid sulfate soils, and disturbance of such materials may result in environmental risks. Private dams can also be categorised as having a 'high probability' for the occurrence of acid sulphate soils. Severe environmental risks may occur if bottom sediments in the dams (and likely along drainage channels leading to dams) are disturbed.

Saline soils have been identified within the northern study area, particularly around Badgerys Creek (DPI 2016).

A search of the List of NSW Contaminated Sites Notified to Environmental Protection Authority (as of 10 November 2017) did not identify any known contaminated sites within 500 metres of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

3.4 Hydrogeology and groundwater

Hydrogeology and groundwater are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects where cutting or tunnel are proposed if there is potential for interference with aquifers. Alternative tunnel design and construction methods may be required where there is potential for cutting and tunnel to impact aquifers.

There are two known aquifer systems in the northern study area:

- An unconfined aquifer within localised quaternary alluvium deposits, located around main creeks and drainage features
- A confined aquifer that intersects the Bringelly Shale at around 20 metres below ground surface.

There is thought to be limited hydraulic connection between the unconfined and confined aquifers, as the porosity of the Bringelly Shale is low and likely hosts water in weathered interfaces.

The local direction of groundwater flow is likely to be dictated by the local surface waterbodies and presence of alluvium. Monitored well logs indicate that groundwater is around three to seven metres below surface level. The primary aquifers in the vicinity of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor are predominantly within the shallow alluvial deposits and porous rock aquifers.

Recharge of the groundwater is from rainfall infiltration, infiltration of stream runoff water in upper catchments and by inter-aquifer connectivity. There is some recharge of deep Hawkesbury sandstone aquifers from the overlying Wianamatta shales in areas with adequate fractures, however, the Hawkesbury aquifers are thought to recharge primarily through lateral groundwater flow.

Groundwater is typically characterised by low yields from the Hawkesbury Sandstone and alluvium with variable water quality. The aquifers are utilised primarily for livestock, domestic, recreation, and minor irrigation and is not used as a drinking water source. The groundwater quality is variable with quality typically decreasing with depth, which reflects the residence time of the groundwater. The quality of the groundwater is considered fresh around 600 – 800 µs/cm^2, however, it is brackish in several areas.

The salinity of groundwater found within the Wiannamatta Shale is too high for irrigation or stock watering purposes. The salinity is thought to be an attribute of the shales formed under brackish marine conditions.

Groundwater data from wells within Bringelly Shales at the future Western Sydney Airport site indicate that the groundwater water quality has elevated background concentrations of lead, zinc and copper. Total nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations were all above freshwater criteria for lowland rivers with some exceedances of the irrigation criteria. There are also some samples with elevated concentrations of nitrate above freshwater criteria and sulphate above human health drinking criteria.

Recreational water quality criteria and aesthetic human health criteria were generally exceeded by more than an order of magnitude for chloride and sodium. A comparison of the electrical conductivity results for groundwater with the surface water results indicates that groundwater salinity concentrations are generally an order of magnitude higher on average than surface water concentrations. This suggests that the overall contribution of groundwater to surface water inputs is small. The high electrical conductivity values also support a low groundwater flow environment, which also supports the assumption of low rainfall recharge to groundwater.

Elevated total dissolved solids values mean that the groundwater can be categorised as being unsuitable for watering all stock types.

Based on this data, it is concluded that:

- Groundwater in this area has low beneficial use potential for stock and potable purposes
- Groundwater contributions to surface water are expected to represent a minor proportion of the overall surface water flows in the area
- In terms of groundwater management, salinity, metals (particularly cadmium, copper, lead and zinc), sulphate, total nitrogen and phosphorus may require further consideration if discharge to surface water is being considered.

3.5 Land use and property

Land use and property are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects, particularly at the surface. Where rail infrastructure is developed at the surface it replaces the existing land use on the directly impacted land and generally prevents the use of that land for other purposes. There may be social and economic impacts associated with acquiring property to enable the future development of rail infrastructure. Also, many land uses are sensitive to the potential noise and vibration of train operations and visual impacts of rail infrastructure. Where railway stations are proposed, land use need to be integrated to maximise access to the station and opportunities for interchange to other transport modes.

3.5.1 Existing land use patterns

Land uses at key locations in the northern study area are described in the following sections.

St Marys Town Centre

St Marys Town Centre is one of the two main retail/commercial centres in the Penrith local government area. The town centre is bounded by the T1 Western Line to the north and the Great Western Highway to the south. The Queen Street shopping strip forms the central spine of the town centre, with street car parking provided on the blocks at the rear of the shops.

The town centre is described in the *St Marys Town Centre Strategy* (Penrith City Council 2006) and a more recent study by SGS Economics and Planning (2013) as an older style district-sized commercial centre with a total commercial and retail floor area of about 80,000 square metres. The main catchment area for the town centre is the suburbs of St Marys, Colyton, Oxley Park and Claremont Meadows, Erskine Park, Ropes Crossing and St Clair.

St Marys Station comprises two island platforms joined by an elevated footbridge that provides access to Harris Street and Station Street to the north and south of the station respectively. Commuter car parking is provided immediately north of the station and includes a multi-storey aboveground car park. There is a bus interchange next to the station on Station Street.

The south and east precincts of Dunheved Business Park are located on the northern side of the T1 Western Line at St Marys and comprise a mix of industrial premises. The relatively new residential release area of Ropes Crossing is located north of Dunheved.

Penrith Health and Education Precinct

The Penrith Health and Education Precinct is located on the Great Western Highway extending between Werrington and Kingswood, interspersed with residential and local commercial, industrial and retail development. The precinct includes Nepean Hospital, Western Sydney University Penrith Campus and Nepean College of TAFE Allied Health Facility. The Sydney Medical School Nepean is at Nepean Hospital and is one of eight clinical schools of the University of Sydney. Western Sydney University includes a 58 hectare business park, Werrington Park, which is in the early stages of being developed.

Primary and secondary schools in the vicinity of the precinct include Wollemi College, Penrith Valley Learning Centre and Kurrambee School.

Other land uses that adjoin the precinct include Cobham Juvenile Detention Centre and the Western Sydney Records Centre operated by State Records, which includes the Western Sydney Reading Room and Government Records Repository.

Caddens and Claremont Meadows

Caddens and Claremont Meadows are residential subdivisions bounded by the Great Western Highway to the north, South Creek to the east, the M4 Western Motorway to the south and Kingswood to the west. These suburbs are being developed in stages, with development of Caddens lagging that of Claremont Meadows. The developed areas of both suburbs are typical of residential subdivisions in western Sydney and are characterised by detached dwellings on relatively small lots. Claremont Creek runs in a north-easterly direction through Claremont Meadows and is a wide grassed channel that is subject to regular mowing. There are rows of trees and shared pedestrian and cycle paths along the edges of the green corridor.

Orchard Hills

Orchard Hills occupies the centre of the northern study area, extending from the M4 Western Motorway south to the Warragamba Prospect Pipeline. Penrith Local Environment Plan 2010 sets in place planning controls that aim to promote Orchard Hills as a rural landscape buffer area by protecting prime agricultural land and the scenic landscape quality of the area. However, a Housing Acceleration Program managed by Penrith City Council has recently endorsed planning for a residential precinct in Orchard Hills north of the M4 Western Motorway. Areas of Orchard Hills north of Blaxland Creek comprise rural lifestyle properties that are typically characterised by large residential dwellings on landscaped lots, including The Vines subdivision. Land use between Blaxland Creek and the Warragamba Prospect Pipeline is characterised by a mix of agricultural and rural residential land uses and also a waste management facility at a former quarry site. Agricultural land uses include an equestrian property and The Bill Spilstead Complex for Canine Affairs operated by Dogs NSW.

Defence Establishment Orchard Hills

The Defence Establishment Orchard Hills site is owned by the Department of Defence and is primarily used for munitions storage, maintenance and testing. The site is about 2000 hectares in area and is bounded by The Northern Road to the west and the Warragamba Prospect Pipeline to the south. Blaxland Creek runs in a north-easterly direction through the site. Much of the site contains native vegetation, particularly in the north-eastern corner of the site and along Blaxland Creek. This vegetation includes endangered ecological communities and is described in more detail in Section 6.7.

Luddenham, Badgerys Creek and Kemps Creek

Luddenham, Badgerys Creek and Kemps Creek are at the southern end of the northern study area, between the Warragamba Prospect Pipeline and the southern boundary of the northern study area at Western Sydney Airport. Existing land use is predominantly agricultural and includes a few equine and poultry facilities and market gardens. There is a waste management facility on the eastern side of Badgerys Creek.

The University of Sydney owns and operates two commercial farms in Badgerys Creek and Kemps Creek that provide teaching and learning opportunities and generates funds to support education and research. McGarvie Smith Farm and Fleurs Farm comprise 344 hectares of beef cattle fattening enterprises, with limited use by teaching and research staff.

A rural residential estate, Twins Creek Estate, is being developed around the Twins Creek Golf Course and Country Club in the north-eastern corner of Luddenham.

3.5.2 Zoning and development

Current land use zones are shown in Figure 3-4 and are described in the following sections.

St Marys to Orchard Hills

Land throughout St Marys, Werrington, Kingswood and Claremont Meadows mainly comprises General (R1), Low (R2), Medium (R3) and High Density (R4) Residential land, with pockets of Public Recreational (RE1) throughout each suburb. St Marys Town Centre is zoned Mixed Use (B4), with Dunheved Business Park zoned General Industrial (IN1).

Land in the Penrith Health and Education Precinct is predominantly Infrastructure (SP2 Educational Establishment) and Business Park (B7).

South Creek through this area is zoned Environmental Conservation (E2) and is within a green corridor zoned Public Recreation (RE1).

Orchard Hills

The northern part of Orchard Hills is predominantly zoned Primary Production Small Lots (RU4) and Rural Landscape (RU2).

Defence Establishment Orchard Hills is zoned Special Activities (SP1 Defence) and Environmental Conservation (E2). Warragamba Prospect Pipeline is zoned Infrastructure (SP2 Water Supply System).

South Creek and its tributaries are zoned Environmental Conservation (E2). Land at the confluence of South Creek and Blaxland Creek, which includes Mamre Homestead, is zoned Public Recreation (RE1).

Luddenham and Badgerys Creek

Sydney Science Park in Luddenham is zoned Business Park (B7), Mixed Use (B4) and Public Recreation (RE1) to reflect the master plan for this site. Land in Luddenham to the east and west of the site is predominately zoned Rural Landscape (RU2). Twins Creek Estate is zoned Environmental Living (E4).

Land in Badgerys Creek to the north of Elizabeth Drive is zoned Rural Landscape (RU2). As elsewhere in the northern study area, South Creek and Badgerys Creek are zoned Environmental Conservation (E2).

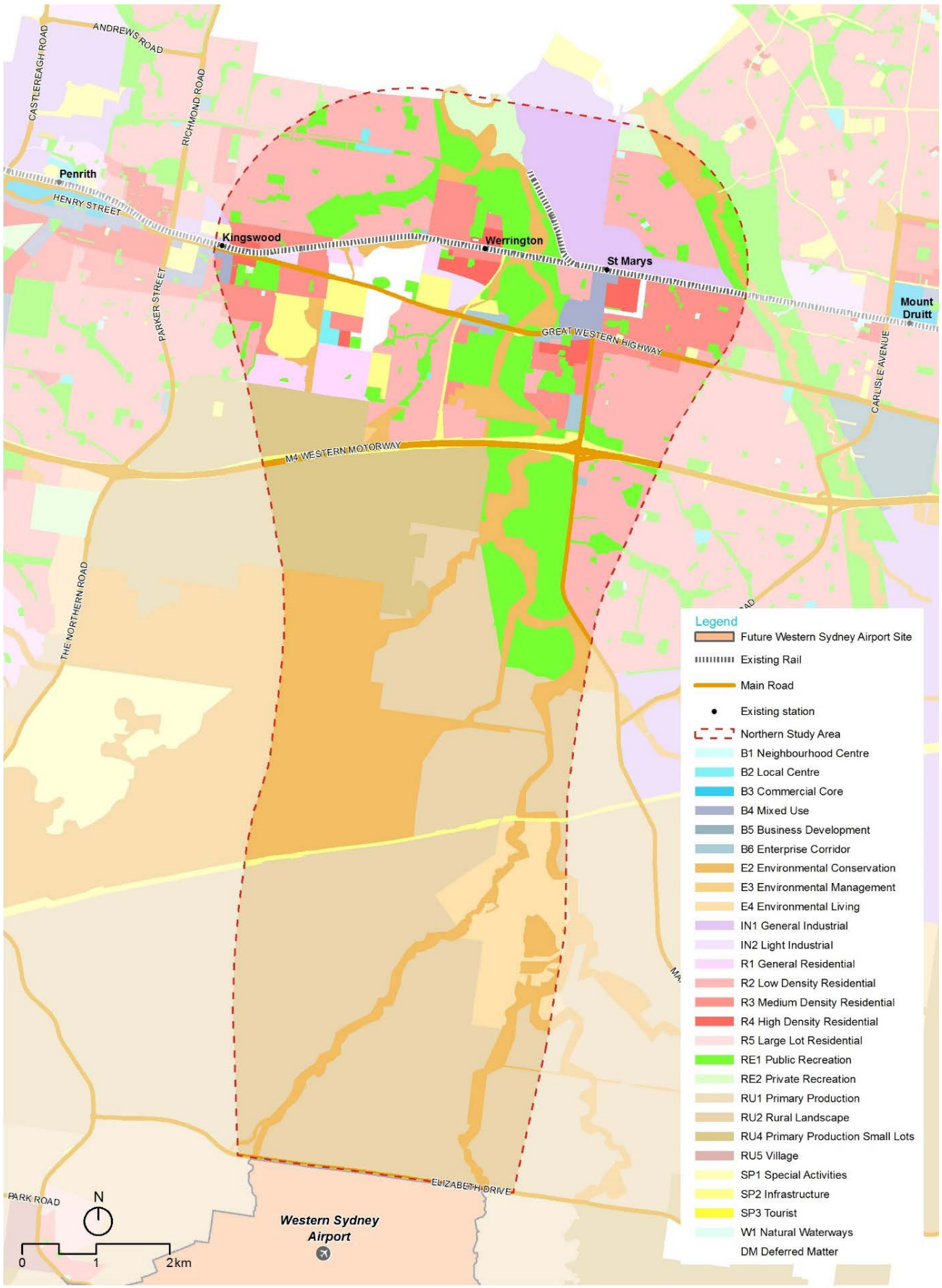

Figure 3-4 Land use zones in the northern study area

3.5.3 Road infrastructure

Key road infrastructure in the northern study area is shown in Figure 3-5.

The M4 Western Motorway is the main road link between Inner West Sydney and western Sydney. The motorway crosses the northern study area in an east-west direction between Claremont Meadows and Orchard Hills. There is a motorway interchange just to the west of the northern study area at The Northern Road.

The Great Western Highway is located to the north of the M4 Western Motorway and also crosses the northern study area in an east-west direction. It provides a link between St Marys Town Centre and the Penrith Health and Education Precinct and also to Parramatta and Penrith centres.

Other classified roads in the northern study area are identified in the *Schedule of Classified Roads and State and Regional Roads* (Roads and Maritime Services 2017a) and include:

- Mamre Road, which crosses the eastern side of the northern study area in a north-south direction and provides a link between St Marys Town Centre, Erskine Park and Kemps Creek
- Elizabeth Drive, which forms the southern boundary of the northern study area.

The Northern Road is located outside the northern study area, however, it requires mention due to its importance to the area's road network. The Northern Road runs in a north-south direction to the west of the northern study area and provides a link between Penrith and Campbelltown Centres.

3.5.4 Rail infrastructure

The T1 Western Line crosses the northern extent of the northern study area and runs in an east-west direction providing a link between Penrith, Blacktown, Parramatta and Sydney Central Business District. St Marys, Werrington and Kingswood Stations are located in the northern study area. The T1 Western Line is used by both passenger and freight trains.

St Marys Station includes a bus interchange with bus services mainly operating to Penrith and Mount Druitt. Most of these bus services act as feeders to the rail network. Some destinations that bus services connect to include the Penrith Health and Education Precinct and Erskine Park employment area. Western Sydney University operates its own shuttle bus service to link Penrith and Kingswood campuses to Kingswood Station.

A couple of feeder bus services operate from Werrington Station to Penrith. Werrington Station is located between St Marys and Kingswood Station, and can be accessed via Railway Street to the south, or Kazanis Court to the north. Commuter carparks are located on each side of the rail corridor. Bus services run from Kanzanis Court, to Penrith and Cambridge Gardens via St Marys and Cambridge Park. Kiss and ride facilities are located on Railway Street, south of Werrington Station.

Kingswood Station is located to the west of the northern study area, forming part of the T1 Western Line. Commuter car parks are located on either side of the rail corridor, which can be accessed via the Great Western Highway in the south, or Richmond Road in the north. There are two bus interchanges located on either side of the station, located on Park Avenue and the Great Western Highway.

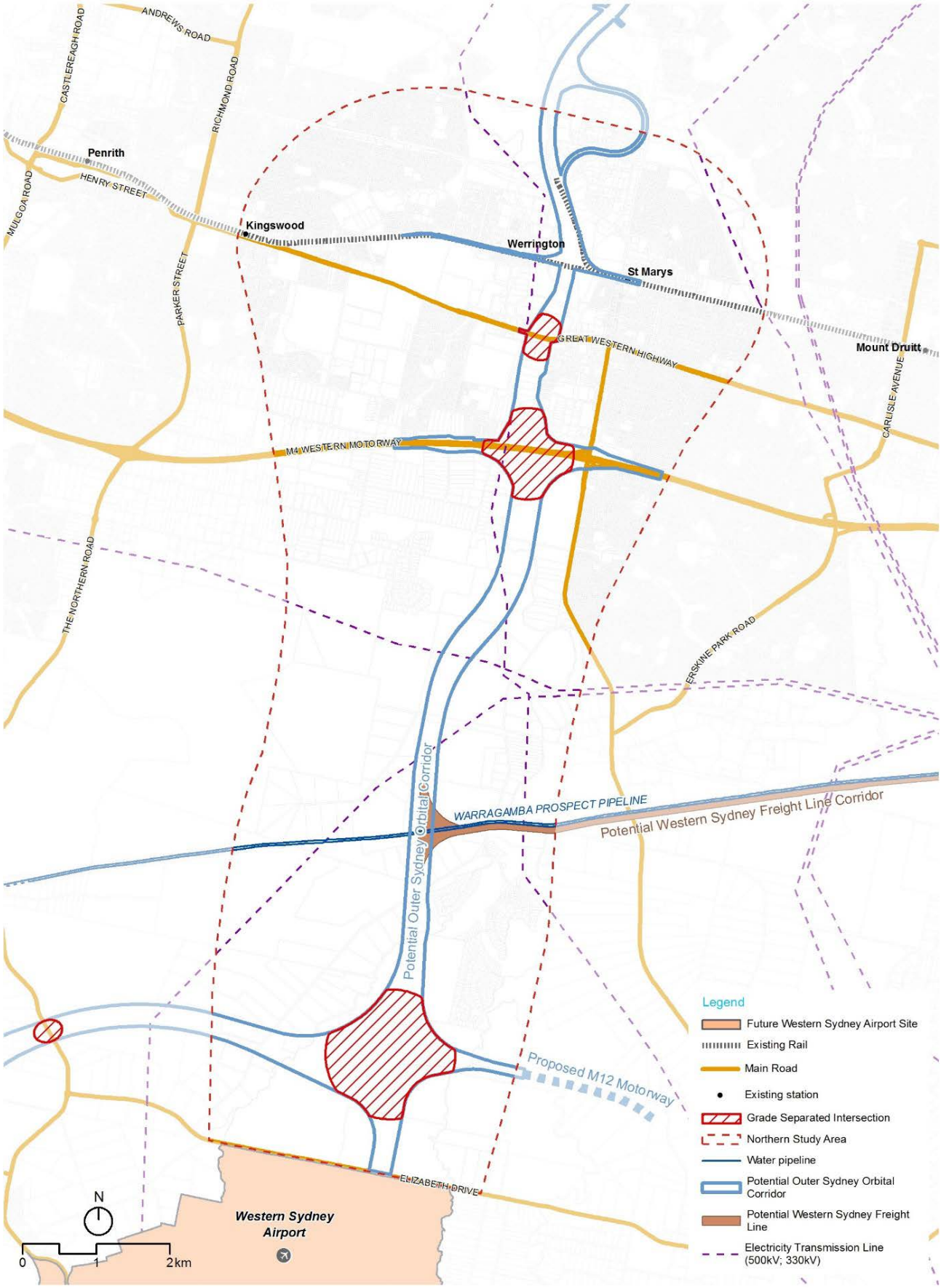

Figure 3-5 Existing and planned infrastructure and utilities in the northern study area

3.6 Utilities

Utilities are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects as relocating utilities can increase the cost of construction. Also, additional engineering structures may be required to avoid impacts to utilities, for example by grade separating rail infrastructure from utilities that intersect rail corridors. Additionally, utility crossings of rail corridors can reduce the ease of rail maintenance works, for example if power isolations are required.

Major local utilities in the northern study area are described in Table 3-1 and shown in Figure 3-5.

Table 3-1 Major utilities in the northern study area

Location	Utility	Description
Werrington to Kemps Creek	500kv	High voltage electricity transmission lines that traverse the northern study area in a north-south direction, following the South Creek riparian corridor through Orchard Hills
Orchard Hills	330kv	High voltage electricity transmission lines that traverse the northern study area in an east-west direction from Erskine Park to Defence Establishment Orchard Hills
Orchard Hills	330kv	High voltage electricity transmission lines that traverse the northern study from Erskine Park in the east to south of Defence Establishment Orchard Hills
Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Kemps Creek	Warragamba Prospect Pipeline	Twin pipes that cross the northern study in an east-west direction on the surface. The pipes form the suburb boundary between Orchard Hills in the north and Luddenham and Kemps Creek in the South. The pipes go underground to the west of the study area under The Northern Road

Local utilities in the northern study area, include local distribution networks for electricity, potable water, sewage and gas.

3.7 Aboriginal heritage

Aboriginal heritage items are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects and impact on these items should be avoided wherever possible. The locations of previously identified Aboriginal heritage items are recorded on the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System, which is a database of Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal Places maintained by the Office of Environment and Heritage. Aboriginal artefacts are more likely to be located in certain landscapes, such as along watercourses, and these landscapes can also form a constraint.

A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System was undertaken on 17 November 2017. The search found a total of 105 items of Aboriginal heritage recorded within the northern study area. The known distribution of Aboriginal sites within the northern study area is largely clustered around waterways and road verges. This distribution reflects locations that have been the subject of targeted Aboriginal heritage investigations for the purposes of development, for example, roadways (and particularly State roads subject to upgrade investigations), greenfield sites such as the future Western Sydney Airport and recently developed urban land.

The Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council has representation for the northern study area. The Darug People's Advisory Committee also has an interest in the northern study area.

3.8 European heritage

European heritage items are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects and impact on these items should be avoided wherever possible. European heritage items are recorded on the World Heritage List, National Heritage List, Commonwealth Heritage List, State Heritage Register or local environmental planning instruments according to the significance of the item.

European heritage items in the northern study area that are listed on the State Heritage Register or in Penrith Local Environment Plan 2010 are identified in Table 3-2 and shown in Figure 3-6 and Figure 3-7.

Table 3-2 State and local heritage items in the northern study area

Item name	Address	Significance	Item no.
Mamre	181–275 Mamre Road, Orchard Hills	State	00264
St Marys Railway Station	Corner Station and Queen Streets, St Marys	State	01249
Rose Cottage and early slab hut	Corner of Water Street and Tennant Road, Werrington	State	01392
Penrith General Cemetery	Land bounded by Copeland and Phillips Streets, Richmond Road and Cox Avenue, Kingswood	Local	97
Kingswood Public School	46–54 Second Avenue, Kingswood	Local	98
Federation house and garden	6 First Street, Kingswood	Local	100
St. Phillip's Anglican Church	32 Bringelly Road, Kingswood	Local	101
Brick farmhouse	80–88 Caddens Road, Orchard Hills	Local	155
Orchard Hills Uniting Church	3 Frogmore Road, Orchard Hills	Local	156
Weatherboard cottage	71 Parker Street, Penrith	Local	175
"Mimosa", dwelling, fence and garden	13 Pages Road, St Marys	Local	219
"Mimosa", stables (former)	11 Pages Road, St Marys	Local	220
Moore Cottage	8 Sainsbury Street, St Marys	Local	221
"Margaret Farm", house, barn and tannery site	Pages Road, Barker, Wilson and Schleicher Streets, St Marys	Local	226
Memorial cairn	181–275 Mamre Road, Orchard Hills	Local	229
Leeholme Horse Stud Rotunda	391–395 Mamre Road, Orchard Hills	Local	232
Brick cottage	100–104 Saddington Street, St Marys	Local	234
"Thompson's Tannery" site, tannery pits (former) and well	94 Saddington Street, St Marys	Local	235
"Werrington House", dwelling, driveway and garden	108 Rugby Street, Werrington County	Local	248
Brick cottage	38 Gidley Street, St Marys	Local	298
"Bronte", villa	50 Gidley Street, St Marys	Local	299
"Mourilyan"	329–333 Great Western Highway, St Marys	Local	300
St Mary Magdalene Church, Hall, Cemetery and grounds	299–311 Great Western Highway, St Marys	Local	301
St Marys General Cemetery	175–191 Great Western Highway, St Marys	Local	303
Milestone	Great Western Highway (between Marsden Road and Day Street), St Marys	Local	304
St Marys Council Chambers (former)	2–6 Mamre Road, St Marys	Local	305
St Marys Public School	2-6 Princess Mary Street, St Marys	Local	307
Wagon Wheel Hotel	449 Great Western Highway, St Marys	Local	308
Brick cottage	18 Princess Mary Street, St Marys	Local	309
Victoria Park and memorial	Bounded by Great Western Highway, Pages Road, Putland and Princess Mary Streets, St Marys	Local	310

Item name	Address	Significance	Item no.
"Werrington Park House", garden and poplar avenue	653–729 Great Western Highway, Werrington	Local	315
Wool Pack Inn (ruin)	556 Great Western Highway, St Marys	Local	654
Water reservoir	197–207 Castle Road, Orchard Hills	Local	657
Teacher's residence (former)	56 Second Avenue, Kingswood	Local	670
Brick cottage	40 Gidley Street, St Marys	Local	797
Weatherboard cottage	20 Princess Mary Street, St Marys	Local	798
Weatherboard cottage	22 Princess Mary Street, St Marys	Local	799
Gothic revival cottage	24 Princess Mary Street, St Marys	Local	800
Brick cottage	31–33 Pages Road, St Marys	Local	801
Bennett Wagon	Pioneer Park, Great Western Highway, St Marys	Local	805
Shop	373 Great Western Highway, St Marys	Local	806
The Fleurs Radio Telescope site	885(a) Mamre Road, Kemps Creek	Local	832
Luddenham Road Alignment	Luddenham Road, Luddenham	Local	843
"Lindfield"	182–188 Caddens Road, Orchard Hills	Local	845
Canine Council dwelling	391–395 Mamre Road, Orchard Hills	Local	846
McGarvie-Smith Farm	1793–1951 Elizabeth Drive, Badgerys Creek	Local	857
Milestone	Great Western Highway, Claremont Meadows	Local	859
Milestone	Great Western Highway, Kingswood	Local	860
Milestone	Great Western Highway, Kingswood	Local	861
Milestone	Great Western Highway, Colyton	Local	862
Thompson's Tannery site (former)	Saddington Street, St Marys	Local	A236

There are no World Heritage, National Heritage or Commonwealth Heritage listed items located within or in proximity to the northern study area.

Sydney Water's section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register includes one item, Orchard Hills Reservoir (register number 4575813), present within the northern study area.

Figure 3-6 European heritage items in the northern study area

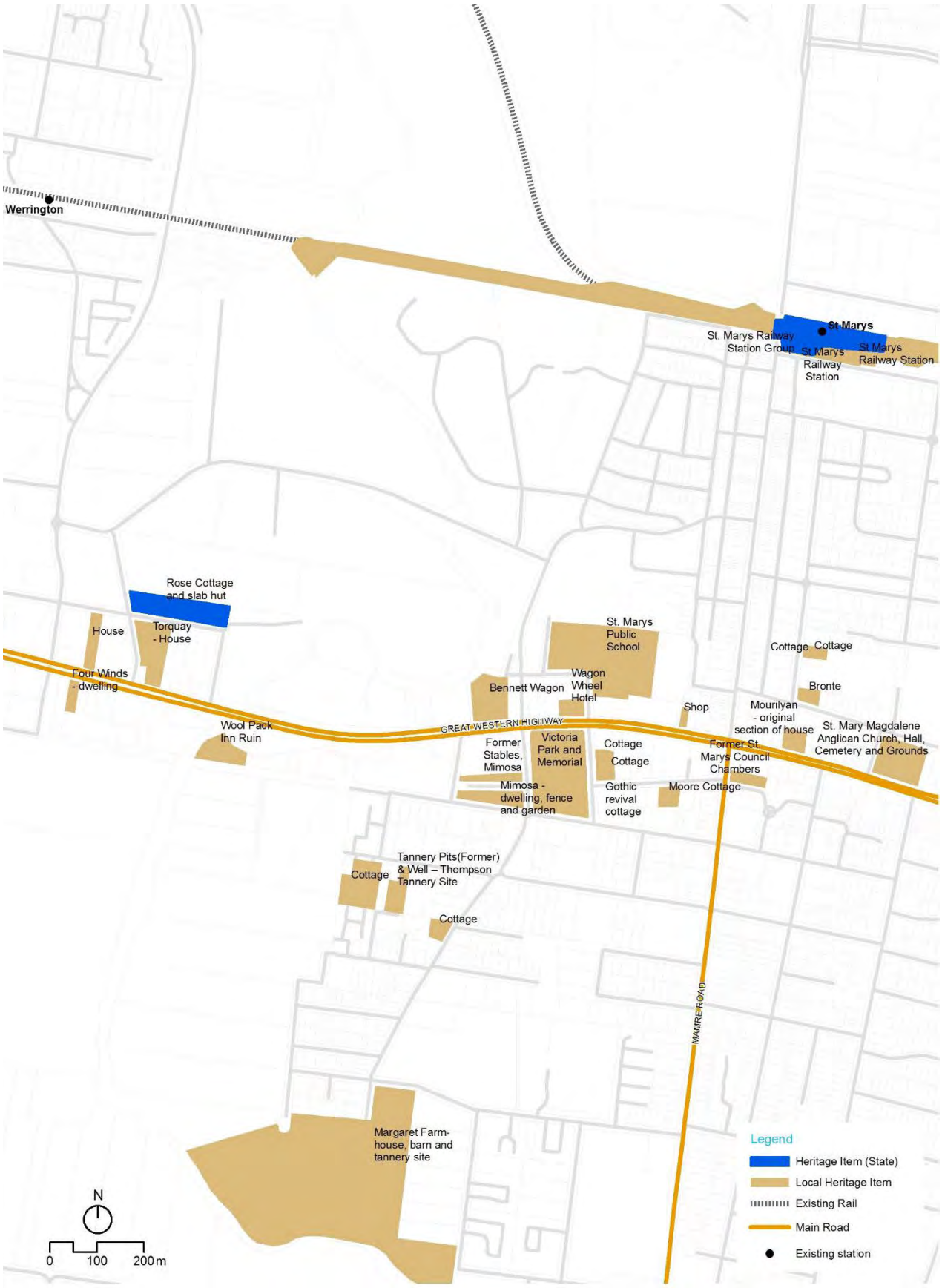

Figure 3-7 European heritage items in the vicinity of St Marys Town Centre

3.9 Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects and impact to significant vegetation and fauna habitat such as land clearing should be avoided wherever possible. Biodiversity of significance is protected under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and NSW *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, which require detailed assessment of impacts to threatened species and ecological communities.

Around Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Badgerys Creek the northern study area is characterised by a predominantly cleared and disturbed rural landscape with interspersed stands of native vegetation, mostly located around the riparian areas. The biodiversity of these areas was assessed in 2013 as part of the *Broader Western Sydney Employment Area – Ecology Study*. Eco Logical (2013) identified that the vegetation communities in their study area include subsets of the Cumberland Plain Woodland Critically Endangered Ecological Community, as well as other native ecological communities and isolated native flora species.

Any vegetation that would be impacted by the future development of a rail line would be the subject of an ecological assessment at the planning approval phase. In accordance with relevant legislation that applies at the time, biodiversity offsets are likely to be required to mitigate any unavoidable vegetation removal required to develop a rail line.

There are three locations in the northern study area that are mapped as priority conservation lands in the *Cumberland Plain Recovery Plan* (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water 2010):

- An area of vegetation alongside Claremont Creek on the northern side of the M4 Western Motorway in Claremont Meadows
- Some vegetation areas within the Defence Establishment Orchard Hills site
- An area of vegetation between Pennard Crescent and South Creek in Twins Creek Estate in Luddenham.

The plan emphasises the importance of priority conservation lands to the long-term protection of Cumberland Plain ecology.

Biodiversity and vegetation within the northern study area is shown in Figure 3-8.

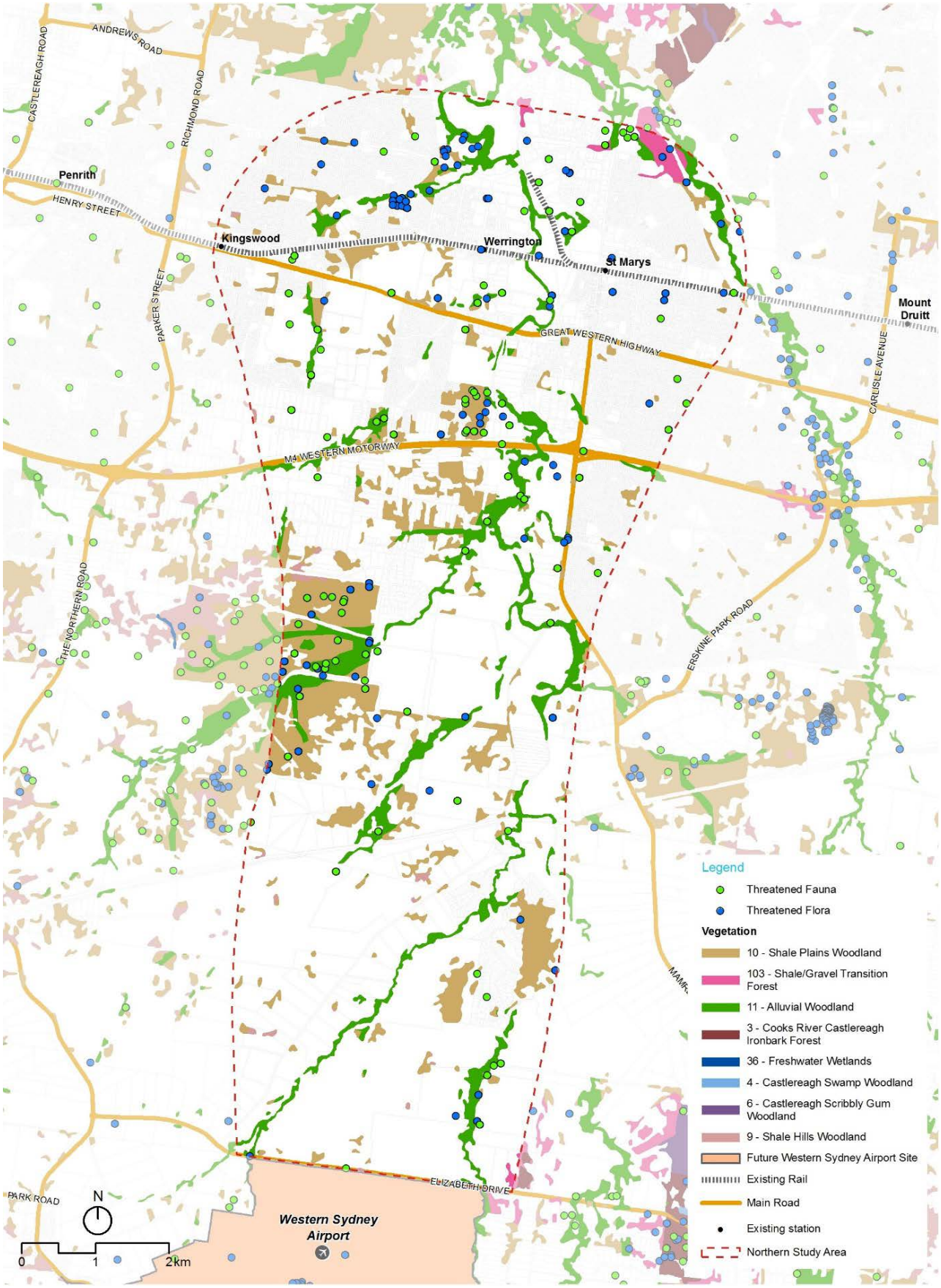

Figure 3-8 Biodiversity in the northern study area

3.9.1 Vegetation and habitat

Eco Logical (2013) identified seven native vegetation communities within the Broader Western Sydney Employment Area, all of which are listed as either vulnerable or endangered under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*:

- Alluvial Woodland, an endangered ecological community
- Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland, a vulnerable ecological community
- Castlereagh Swamp Woodland, an endangered ecological community
- Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest, an endangered ecological community
- Shale/Gravel Transition Forest, an endangered ecological community
- Shale Hills Woodland, a critically endangered ecological community
- Shale Plains Woodland, a critically endangered ecological community.

Additionally, three of these vegetation communities potentially meet the definition of Cumberland Plain Woodland and Shale /Gravel Transition Forest, which is listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The most substantial wildlife movement corridor through the northern study area lies within the vegetated riparian areas of South Creek and it is likely that a range of terrestrial and aquatic fauna groups could utilise this corridor for habitat and movements through the area. To support this, the riparian corridor of South Creek is mapped as 'Regional Biodiversity Corridor 5' under the *Biodiversity Investment Opportunities Map, Mapping Priority Investment Areas for the Cumberland Subregion* (Office of Environment and Heritage 2015).

3.9.2 Flora and fauna

Eco Logical (2013) conducted a search of the NSW Wildlife Atlas and identified 169 records of six separate threatened species within the Broader Western Sydney Employment Area:

- *Dillwynia tenuifolia*, listed as vulnerable under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
- Juniper leaved Grevillea (*Grevillea juniperina subsp. Juniperina*), listed as vulnerable under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
- *Hypsela sessiliflora*, listed as extinct under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- Nodding Geebung (*Persoonia nutans*), listed as endangered under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- Spiked Rice-flower (*Pimelea spicata*), listed as endangered under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Pultenaea parviflora*, listed as endangered under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Eco Logical (2013) also identified 16 threatened fauna species that have been recorded within the Broader Western Sydney Employment Area, including:

- One amphibian species, Green and Golden Bell Frog (*Litoria aurea*), which is listed as endangered under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- Three bird species, Square-tailed Kite (*Lophoictinia isura*), Varied Sittella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*) and Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*), all of which are listed as vulnerable under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
- Five migratory bird species identified in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

- Six bat species listed as vulnerable under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, one of which is the Grey-headed Flying-Fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) which is also listed as vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- One invertebrate species, Cumberland Plain Land Snail (*Meridolum corneovirens*), which is listed as endangered under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

Further detailed analysis of potential impacts to threatened flora and fauna would be required as part of any future approval process for rail infrastructure.

3.10 Landscape and visual

Landscape and visual impacts are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects as new rail infrastructure can substantially change the visual amenity of a locality and adversely affect sensitive visual receivers. Sensitive landscapes can include areas of elevated topography, patches of remnant vegetation, waterways and associated floodplains, rural landscapes and heritage sites such as historic rural estates or heritage conservation areas.

The northern study area straddles the fringe of metropolitan Sydney's urban development and includes some areas that are undergoing rapid urban transformation. The landscapes either side of the M4 Western Motorway differ due to the higher level of development to the north of the motorway relative to areas to the south of the motorway.

The landscape to the north of the M4 Western Motorway is characterised by low-density residential dwellings in St Marys, Claremount Meadows, Caddens and Kingswood, with some medium density residential development around the edges of St Marys Town Centre including south of the Great Western Highway. The Penrith Health and Education Precinct has a campus style landscape with wide open spaces between commercial buildings, particularly at Western Sydney University Penrith Campus, Nepean College of TAFE Allied Health Facility and Werrington Park.

The landscape to the south of the M4 Western Motorway is a mix of acreage residential development and farm land, as well as undeveloped land in the northern and eastern parts of the Defence Establishment Orchard Hills site. Acreage residential development in the area comprises The Vines subdivision in Orchard Hills and Twins Creek Estate in Luddenham. These developments are characterised by large dwellings on landscaped lots.

The landscape of farm land in Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Badgerys Creek is mostly grazing land with native vegetation generally only remaining along the banks of creeks and low-lying areas and some roadsides.

The undeveloped areas in the northern and eastern parts of the Defence Establishment Orchard Hills site comprise one of the largest areas of native vegetation in Western Sydney.

South Creek forms a green north-south corridor through the study area, particularly through St Marys where parks and recreational facilities are located next to the creek.

3.11 Noise

Noise is a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects where construction works and rail operations are proposed in proximity to sensitive noise receivers including residential dwellings and educational, health and community facilities. Also, there is potential for ground-bourne noise and vibration where sensitive land uses are located over shallow tunnel.

Background noise levels in the northern study area are currently influenced by a range of noise sources. These include localised sources such as motor vehicles, public transport, construction activities, residential properties, farming and agricultural activities and some commercial and industrial activities.

The planned urban development of land within the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area would increase background noise levels over time, including traffic noise associated with increased traffic volumes on the upgraded arterial road network. Ultimately, the areas around Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Kemps Creek, which currently reflect noise levels associated with a rural environment, would be expected to experience typical suburban background noise levels.

Noise sensitive receivers throughout the northern study area include existing residences, educational facilities, places of worship, aged-care facilities and other community facilities such as areas of open space used for recreation.

3.12 Air quality

Air quality is a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects where construction works are proposed in proximity to sensitive noise receivers including residential dwellings and educational, health and community facilities. Potential air quality impacts include dust emissions from construction work sites.

Existing sensitive receivers in the vicinity of the above ground section of the proposed rail corridor, such as residential dwellings, are generally limited to areas around the northern parts of Orchard Hills. Further urban development of Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Kemps Creek may occur in the future, which would result in more sensitive receivers within the northern study area.

Existing air emissions sources in the northern study area include:

- Emissions from traffic on the State road network comprising the Great Western Highway, M4 Western Motorway, The Northern Road, Mamre Road and Elizabeth Drive – as well as emissions from traffic on regional and local roads. It is expected that traffic generated air emissions will increase commensurately with the increase in traffic forecast to occur as the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area is developed and if the potential Greater Penrith to St Marys Growth Area is declared.
- Emissions from existing rural industries – including horse studs in Kemps Creek, quarries and waste management facilities. In the longer term it is expected that air emissions from rural industries would reduce as these land holdings are developed in accordance with the South West Growth Area.

3.13 Socioeconomic

Socioeconomic factors are a potential constraint for rail infrastructure projects as they can be a key factor influencing the local demand for public transport and, therefore, the timing of infrastructure development.

The key socioeconomic characteristics of the northern study area are described in the following sections.

3.13.1 Population and demographics

At the 2016 Census, there were 37,381 people living in St Marys, Kingswood, Werrington, Claremont Meadows, Caddens, Mulgoa, Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Badgerys Creek (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). A majority of these residents resided in St Marys and Kingswood. Results of the 2016 Census demonstrated a 12 per cent increase in residents since the 2011 Census, reflecting recent residential development occurring within the northern study area.

Family households in Australia (including couples without dependent children) are projected to increase from 6.0 million in 2011 to between 8.7 and 8.8 million in 2031, remaining the most common household type in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015). Within the northern study area, 72 per cent of households at the 2016 Census were families, which is relatively similar to the Greater Sydney statistical area with a family household composition of 74 per cent.

3.13.2 Housing

At the 2016 Census there were 13,653 dwellings within the northern study area. Of these dwellings, 68 per cent had three or more bedrooms, compared to 60 per cent of dwellings in the Greater Sydney statistical area.

3.13.3 Employment and economic base

Within the northern study area, 92 per cent of the total labour force were employed in 2016, which is relatively similar to the 94 per cent of the labour force employed in the Greater Sydney statistical area.

In 2013, the NSW Government released the *Broader Western Sydney Employment Area Structure Plan* to identify opportunities for employment generating development within the Broader Western Sydney Employment Area. The plan highlights the demand for employment within the Broader Western Sydney Employment Area to 2046, and forecasts the opportunity for the area to generate around 57,000 jobs (Department of Planning and Environment 2013). The NSW Government is currently reviewing the opportunities for employment generating development in the area as part of the preparation of the Western Sydney Airport Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan.

4 Existing conditions and constraints within the southern study area

This section describes the existing land uses and environmental features within the southern part of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor, south of the future Western Sydney Airport site to Macarthur, and the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor to Leppington. References to Section 3 are provided where the existing conditions and/or constraints are similar to those in the northern section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between St Marys and the future Western Sydney Airport site.

A study area was defined for the southern part of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor and the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor that extends about 2 kilometres either side of the recommended corridors. The southern study area is within the Liverpool, Camden and Campbelltown local government areas and includes the suburbs of Bringelly, Rossmore, Leppington, Catherine Fields, Oran Park, Cobbitty, Harrington Park, Smeaton Grange, Narellan, Currans Hill, Spring Farm, Blairmount, Mount Annan and Macarthur.

Figure 4-1 shows the southern study area and overlays the key environmental and physical constraints within this area that influenced the selection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.

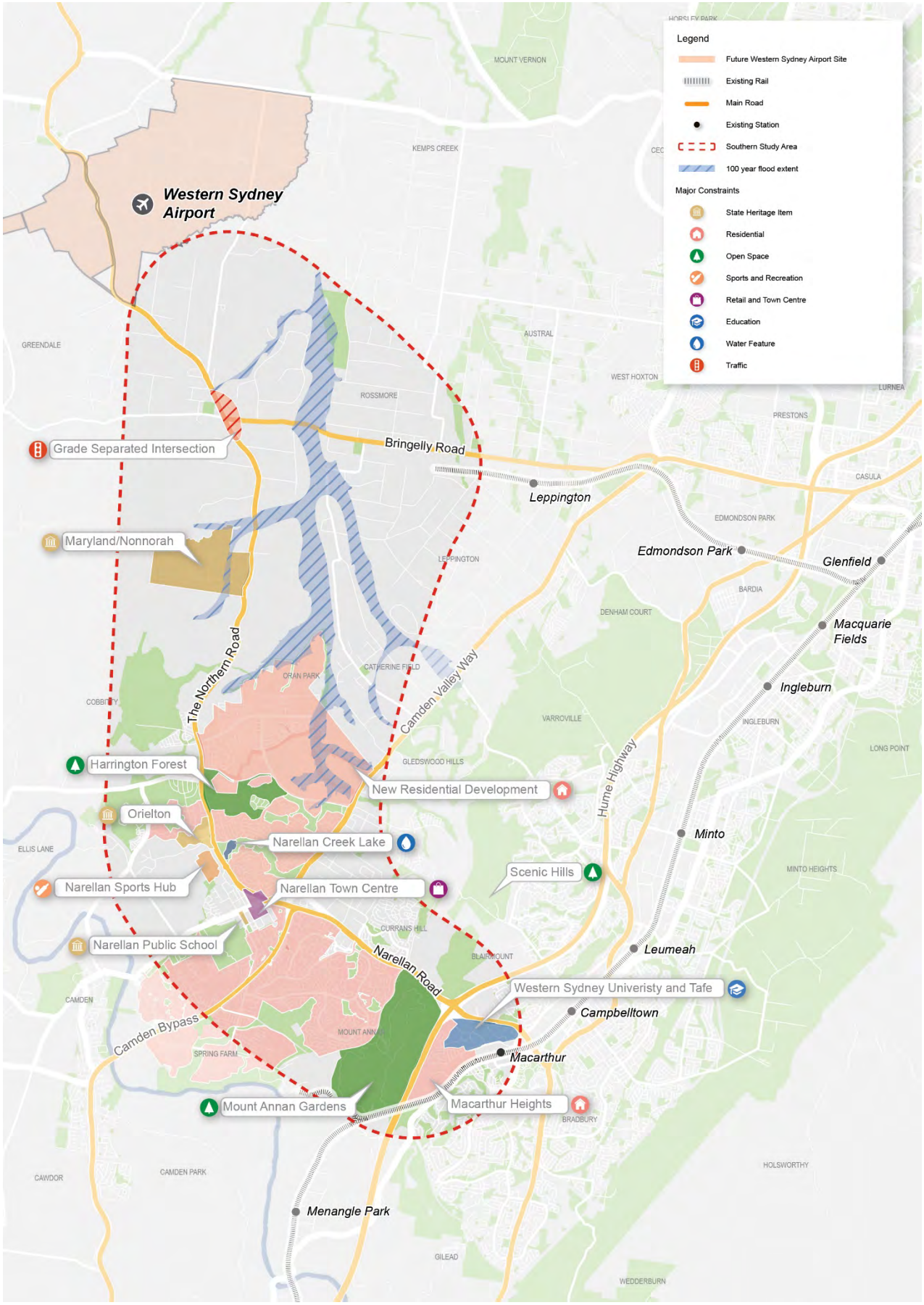

Figure 4-1 Constraints map of the southern study area

4.1 Topography and terrain

The existing topography of the southern study area is shown in Figure 4-2. Between Leppington and Bringelly the land is gently undulating with higher ground at Leppington/Rossmore and Bringelly divided by low lying land of the South Creek and Lowes Creek riparian areas. The intersection of Bringelly Road and The Northern Road is a high point, with land to the west of The Northern Road generally more undulating and higher than the lower, flatter land in the east in the vicinity of South Creek.

North of Oran Park the landform is lightly undulating with a series of relatively minor ridgelines generally running in a south-west to north-east direction. South Creek is east of Oran Park Town Centre and forms the low point in the area.

Heading south, the major topographical feature is the ridgeline south of Oran Park, which has a maximum height of around 140 metres. The land falls away quickly to the south, by as much as 70 metres, to Narellan Creek.

South-east of Narellan the topography is characterised by landforms rising to the east to high points in the Scenic Hills and Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, of up to 190 metres. The landform also rises to the east and south-east towards Spring Farm up to 160 metres, before dipping down towards the Nepean River in the south and Campbelltown–Macarthur in the east.

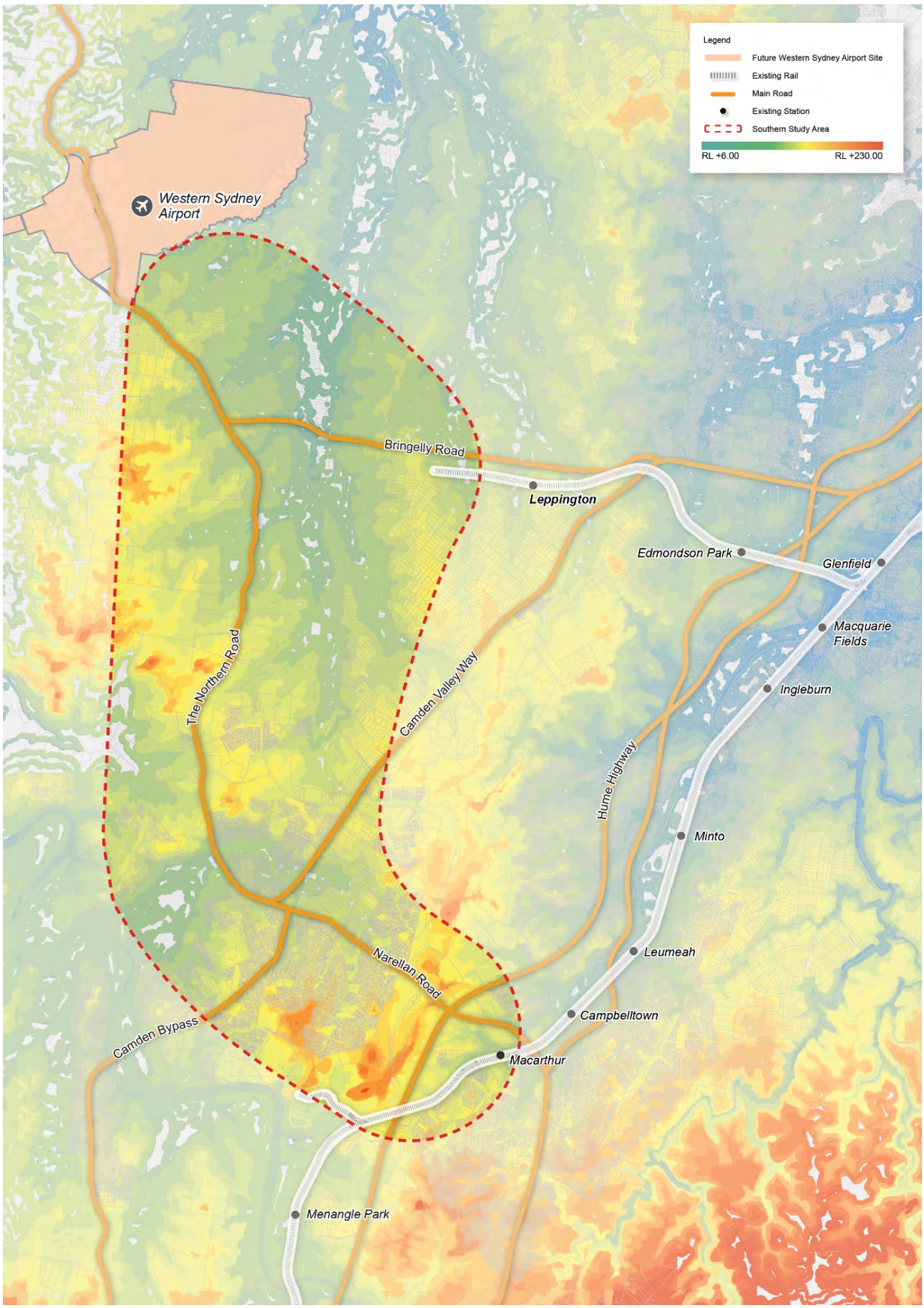

Figure 4-2 Topography of the southern study area

4.2 Hydrology

The key hydrological feature in the southern study area is South Creek, a 400 square kilometres creek system that has its headwaters in the Camden area and flows 70 kilometres north to the Hawkesbury River. The upper South Creek catchment extends south from the future Western Sydney Airport site and collects water from watercourses through the South West Growth Area which forms the southern extent of the South Creek catchment. The main tributaries of South Creek within the southern study area are:

- Badgerys Creek, which forms the southern boundary of the future Western Sydney Airport site
- Thompsons Creek, north of Bringelly Road
- Lowes Creek, South of Bringelly Road
- Rileys Creek, east of South Creek
- Kemps Creek, east of South Creek.

South of the future Western Sydney Airport site, South Creek is generally narrow and well-defined, with low flows and limited flooding impacts but extend to around 600 metres wide in the vicinity of Rossmore.

A number of confluences converge around Lowes Creek around 1.5 kilometres to the south of Bringelly Road, leading to a significant east-west flood plain connecting into the north-south South Creek flood plain. The flood extent of the upper South Creek catchment is a significant constraint influencing the location of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor, shown in Figure 4-3.

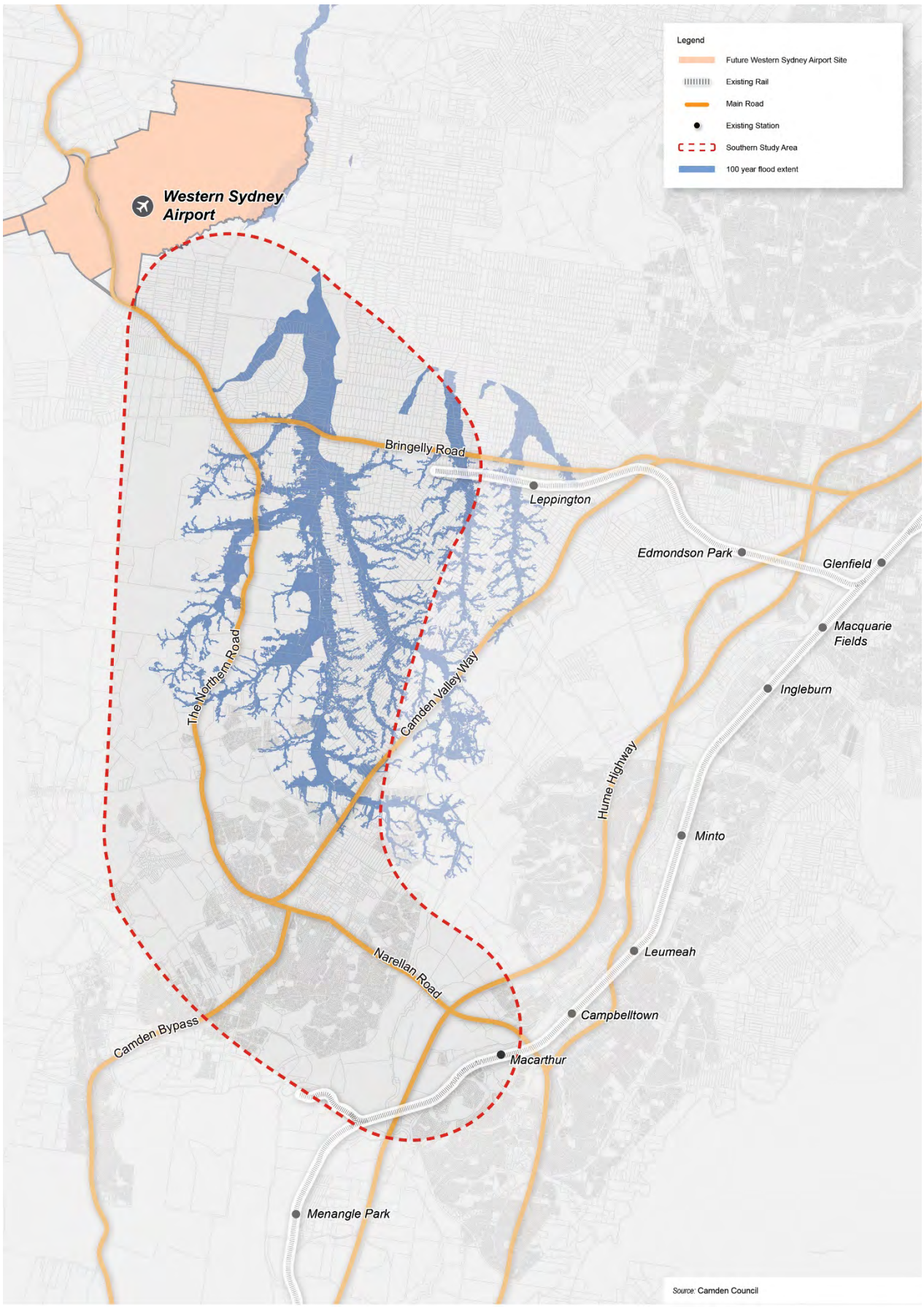

Figure 4-3 Hydrology of the southern study area

A number of large dams for agricultural irrigation are located between The Northern Road and Catherine Field Road around 1.5 to 3.0 kilometres north of Oran Park. These dams control inflow to South Creek from the west of the catchment and also provide a significant flood storage function. There are also a small number of other dams associated with agricultural uses within this area.

Due to the heavily developed nature of the suburbs surrounding Narellan, the surface water system in the southern part of the study area is a combination of natural channels and engineered channels. Narellan Creek flows in an east-west direction through Harrington Park, with a number of artificial water bodies created within Harrington Park to capture urban runoff and control inflow to this creek. This surface water system in Narellan, and the residential suburbs around Narellan, ultimately discharges into the Nepean River, south and southwest of the Narellan Town Centre. The Narellan Creek floodplain represents a significant hydrological constraint to the construction of the future infrastructure.

East of Narellan, the Scenic Hills provide a natural catchment boundary. East of the Scenic Hills, a series of watercourses convey water towards Bow Bowing Creek. North of Campbelltown, and through the built-up areas north of Campbelltown, the creek has been largely channelised. Ultimately, the creek/channel conveys water into the Georges River, east of Campbelltown.

The Sydney Water Supply Channel runs generally north-south between Narellan and Macarthur and is an important part of the Sydney's water supply system. While it is not a natural hydrological feature, it is visible as a prominent watercourse in the landscape.

4.3 Geology and soils

The bedrock geology in the southern study area is generally comprised of Wiannamatta Group Bringelly shales which are typically a repeating sequence of claystone, siltstone and laminate, except for parts of the Narellan and South Creek corridors which are comprised of quaternary alluvial sediments.

Key structural features in the southern study area include:

- Narellan Lineament – which continues from the northern study area
- Camden Syncline – a broad north-northeast plunging structure, the western limb is truncated by the north-south trending faults and fold of the Lapstone Structural Complex. Late Permian to mid-Triassic sedimentary succession thickens towards the axis of the Camden Syncline. It is likely a depocentre of basin evolution during the Late Permian to early Triassic (Bray et al 2010). The eastern limb of the syncline has a series of NW-SW trending anticlines and synclines superimposed
- Rossmore Anticline – is a local feature that runs northwest to south east and is around three kilometres long
- Luddenham Dyke – is a Jurassic aged olivine basalt dyke that is 8.5 kilometres long, 10-12 metres thick, dips to the south-west at around 850 metres
- Woronora Anticline – a northwest to southeast oriented anticline.

The structures associated with the Camden Syncline are likely to influence tunnel design. Specialised tunnelling methodologies and/or additional structure support may be required across this feature. Additionally, the Narellan Lineament should be taken into account as it is a relatively extensive structural feature.

The southern study area shares the same constraints associated with Bringelly Shale and risks of acid sulfate soils as documented in Section 3 for the northern study area.

No known contaminated sites are located within 500 metres of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors south of the future Western Sydney Airport site.

4.4 Hydrogeology and groundwater

Hydrogeology and groundwater in the southern study area is generally as described in Section 3.4 for the northern study area.

4.5 Land use and property

4.5.1 Existing land use pattern

South West Growth Area

Around Bringelly and Rossmore existing land use is comprised of a mixture of market gardens, rural industries and rural-residential properties. Land use to the west of South Creek is predominantly rural in character, with a rural-residential subdivision at Kelvin Park and Bringelly village (located at the intersection of Bringelly Road and The Northern Road) providing local retail facilities. There is also a small existing neighbourhood centre at Rossmore located north of Bringelly Road, and Rossmore Public School on the south side of Bringelly Road.

There are a small number of large-scale land uses within this part of the southern study area that vary from this prevailing land use pattern. Rossmore Stabling Yard is located east of Rossmore, and a 55 hectares brick and paver production facility is located around 750 metres to the west of Bringelly village. Near the Western Sydney Airport boundary is a shale quarry and waste management facility on Badgerys Creek Road, as well as a number of intensive agriculture facilities, including chicken farms.

South of Bringelly the land use is characterised by an agricultural landscape, with low-intensity farming activities representing few land use constraints, and a number of large irrigation ponds.

Land from Oran Park south takes on a more urban character, with more significant land use constraints. Oran Park is located between The Northern Road and Catherine Fields and is currently being developed as a major residential suburb with a mixed use town centre, comprising retail, commercial and civic uses. The Oran Park Master Plan is shown in Figure 4-5.

Development of land within Oran Park is currently occurring at the town centre and to the west and southwest of the town centre. Areas to the north of the town centre are currently undergoing design and planning for residential and commercial development, as well as community infrastructure. In particular it is noted that the development application for the expansion of the Oran Park High School and Primary School at 400F The Northern Road, Oran Park was exhibited from 20 April 2017 until 5 June 2017. The expansion of the high school will comprise alterations and additions to the existing school, as well as five new buildings.

The current development status of precincts in the South West Growth Centre is shown in Figure 4-4.

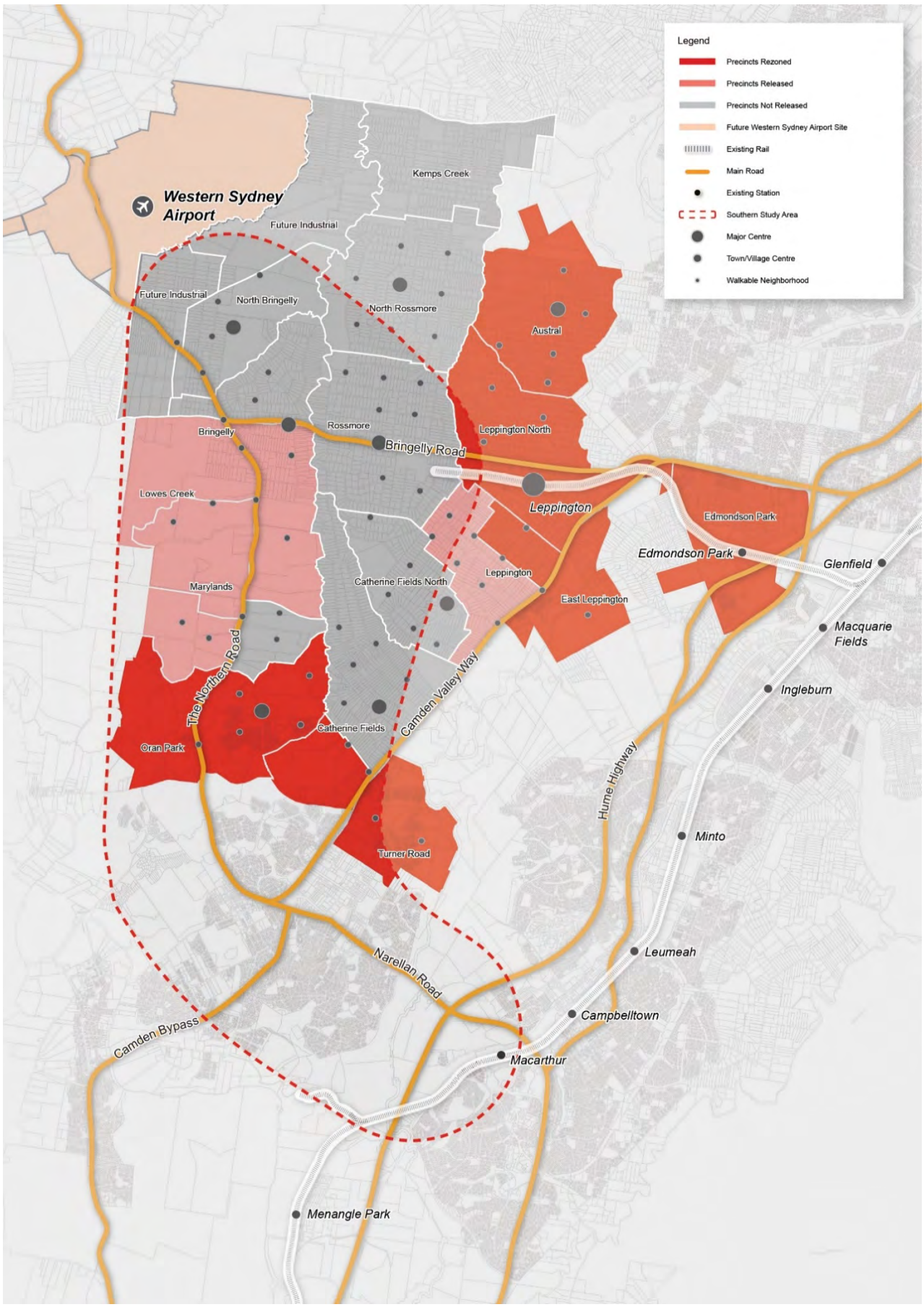

Figure 4-4 Development status of precincts in the South West Growth Centre

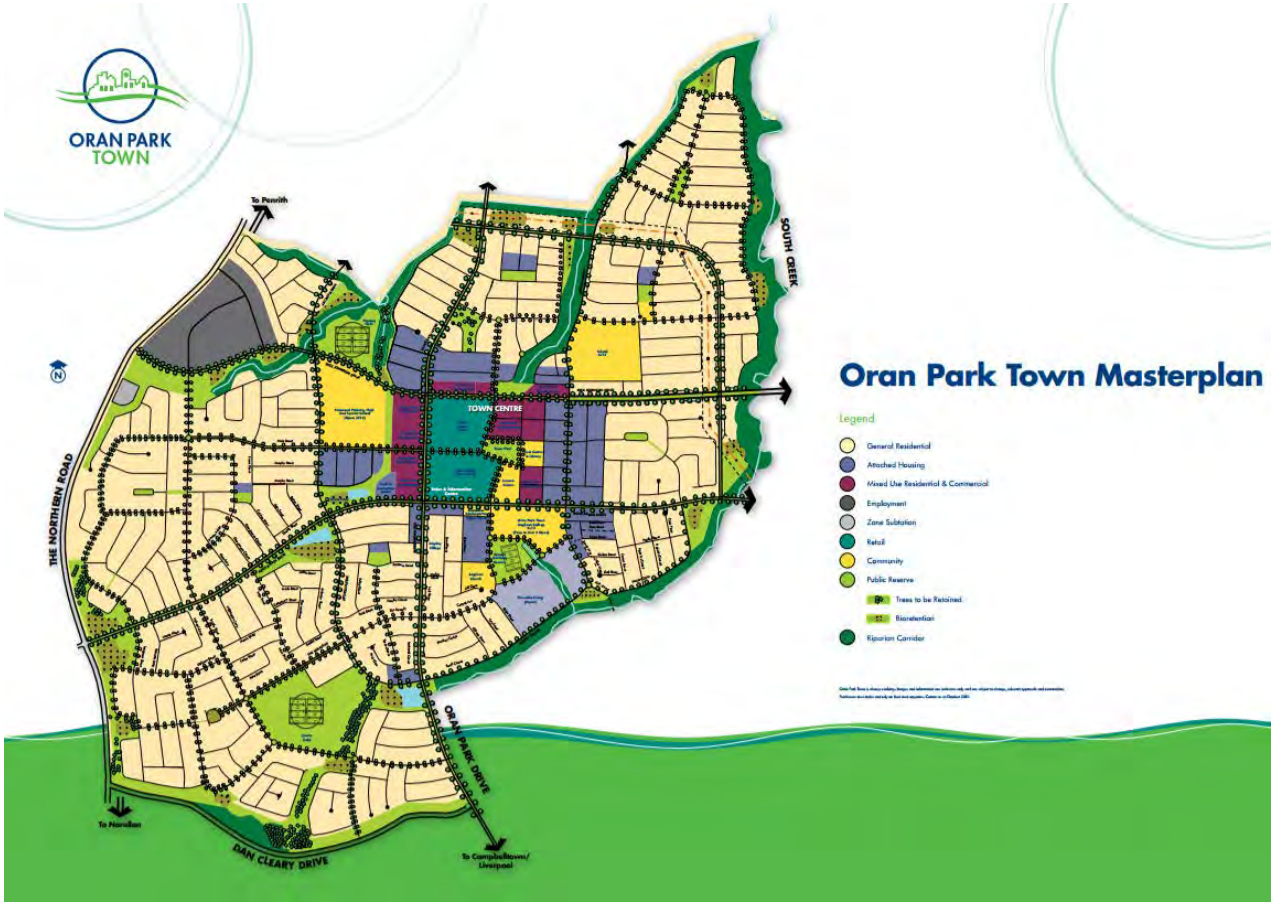

Figure 4-5 Oran Park Master Plan

Source: http://www.oranparktown.com.au/masterplan/

Harrington Park

The established residential suburb of Harrington Park is located around three kilometres to the south of Oran Park with around 2,500 dwellings, recreational and civic facilities and a shopping centre. Harrington Park adjoins the Narellan Town Centre which is located to the south.

Between Harrington Park and Oran Park there are a number of new residential precincts comprising the Harrington Grove Estate. Further development within Harrington Grove continues with new residential areas being developed west of The Northern Road (comprising the Laurina and Michelia precincts), south of Cobbitty Road (comprising Wildfire and Precinct J precincts) and west of the intersection of Oran Park Drive and Camden Valley Way (comprising the Magnolia Precinct). The Harrington Grove Development Structure Plan is shown in Figure 4-6.

These new residential precincts around Oran Park and Harrington Grove, as well as the existing residential area of Harrington Park, represent key land use constraints that contributed to the decision by the Minister of Transport to commit to a tunnelled corridor south of Oran Park.

Figure 4-6 Harrington Grove Development Structure Plan

Source: http://masterplan.harringtongrove.com.au

Narellan

Narellan is a focal point of the regional road network, and is centred on a large enclosed shopping mall, with a number of low density housing surrounding the town centre. A 50 hectare business and light industrial precinct forms the north-west sector of the suburb, with the new industrial estate of Smeaton Grange located northeast of the town centre. North of Narellan Town Centre Council is the new Narellan Sports Hub, which will comprise major recreational facilitates catering for a wide-range of sports. Development along the Northern Road continues to expand north of Bunnings, with site preparation for work for an approved residential subdivision currently underway.

Land uses south and east of the Narellan Town Centre are dominated by the established residential suburbs of Narellan Vale, Mount Annan and Currans Hill. East of Smeaton Grange and Currans Hill, the land use is dominated by low scale agricultural activities, including pasture. St Gregorys College is the only non-agricultural land use within the Scenic Hills. East of the Scenic Hills are the residential and industrial areas that form the western edge of Campbelltown.

Spring Farm is a new residential suburb under construction located south of Narellan Vale. South of Spring Farm is the Jacks Gully Waste Management Facility and the Glenlee Colliery, which is currently the subject of a planning proposal for industrial development.

East of Mount Annan and Spring Farm is the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan. The Australian Botanic Garden (south of Narellan Road) and the Scenic Hills (north of Narellan Road) are significant landscapes that are zoned for protection. The north-western part of the Australian Botanic Garden contains the Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living, which is a joint initiative by the Royal Botanic Gardens & Botanic Gardens Trust as well as Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly councils.

Campbelltown–Macarthur

Beyond the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, is the Hume Highway, and then the Western Sydney University Campbelltown Campus which is part of the Campbelltown–Macarthur urban area and is currently being developed by Landcom as a new residential suburb of Macarthur Heights. The current Macarthur Heights Master Plan is shown at Figure 4-7. There is also a development site located adjacent to Macarthur Station, which is currently being developed for higher density residential.

The existing T8 South Line forms the eastern boundary of the UWS Campbelltown Campus. North of the Western Sydney University Campbelltown campus is the TAFE NSW Campbelltown College and Narellan Road.

Campbelltown–Macarthur is identified as part of the Metropolitan City Cluster in the *Draft Western City District Plan*, due to the presence of knowledge economy jobs, transport options and other employment opportunities. While Campbelltown and Macarthur are two major centres with different characteristics and functions, they are often regarded as a single centre due to their close proximity. Macarthur provides a major destination for retail, tertiary education and health services while Campbelltown is the major business and cultural centre, with a mix of commercial, cultural, retail, civic and open space activities.

Figure 4-7 Macarthur Heights Master Plan

Source: http://www.landcom.com.au/assets/Projects/Macarthur-Heights/MacHeights-Masterplan.pdf

4.5.2 Zoning and development planning

Current land use zones are shown in Figure 4-8 and are described in the following sections.

South West Growth Area

Land through Rossmore and Bringelly is predominantly zoned RU1 Primary Production and RU4 Rural Small Holdings under the Camden Local Environmental Plan 2010 (south of Bringelly Road) and the Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008 (north of Bringelly Road). The Bringelly village centre is zoned B1 Neighbourhood Centre. Land to the north of Oran Park is predominantly zoned RU1 Primary Production. These areas are located in South Creek West, which was announced by the Minister for Planning on 22 November 2017 as being released for rezoning under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006. Precinct planning for Lowes Creek Marylands Part Precinct is ongoing.

Land north of Bringelly Road includes two large former Australian Government-owned sites that are zoned SP2 Telecommunications and Defence respectively.

Oran Park is predominantly zoned R1 General Residential under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006, with some land also zoned B2 Local Centre, R3 Medium Density Residential, E4 Environmental Living, RE1 Public Recreation and RE2 Private Recreation. Land within the Catherine Fields (Part) precinct directly to the south-east of Oran Park was rezoned in December 2013 and is now predominantly zoned R2 Low Density Residential.

State and regional roads, including The Northern Road and Bringelly Road are zoned SP2 Infrastructure 'Classified Road'.

Harrington Park and Narellan

Land to the south of Oran Park, including Harrington Grove, Harrington Park and Narellan, are zoned under the Camden Local Environmental Plan 2010. Harrington Grove and Harrington Park are predominantly zoned R2 Low Density Residential, with some small areas of R3 Medium Density Residential distributed throughout the suburb and pockets of E4 Environmental Living and R5 Large Lot Residential located on the periphery. Areas of Harrington Grove and Harrington Park are also zoned for E2 Environmental Conservation, RE1 Public Recreation and B1 Neighbourhood Centre.

Narellan has two designated industrial precincts located to the north-west and north-east of the Narellan Town Centre which are zoned IN1 General Industrial. Land within the Narellan Town Centre is generally zoned B2 Local Centre and B5 Business Development, with areas of R2 Low Density Residential and R3 Medium Density Residential to the south, south-west and south-east of the town centre. The established residential suburbs around Narellan are generally zoned as R2 Low Density Residential with small pockets of R3 Medium Density Residential. Spring Farm is zoned R1 General Residential.

State and regional roads, including The Northern Road, the Camden Bypass, Camden Valley Way and Narellan Road, are zoned SP2 Infrastructure 'Classified Road'.

Campbelltown–Macarthur

The Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, is within the Camden and Campbelltown local government areas and is zoned for special uses under both the relevant local environmental plans. East of the Hume Highway, Macarthur Heights is Zoned R3 Medium Density Residential. The T8 South Line is zoned SP2 Railway Corridor.

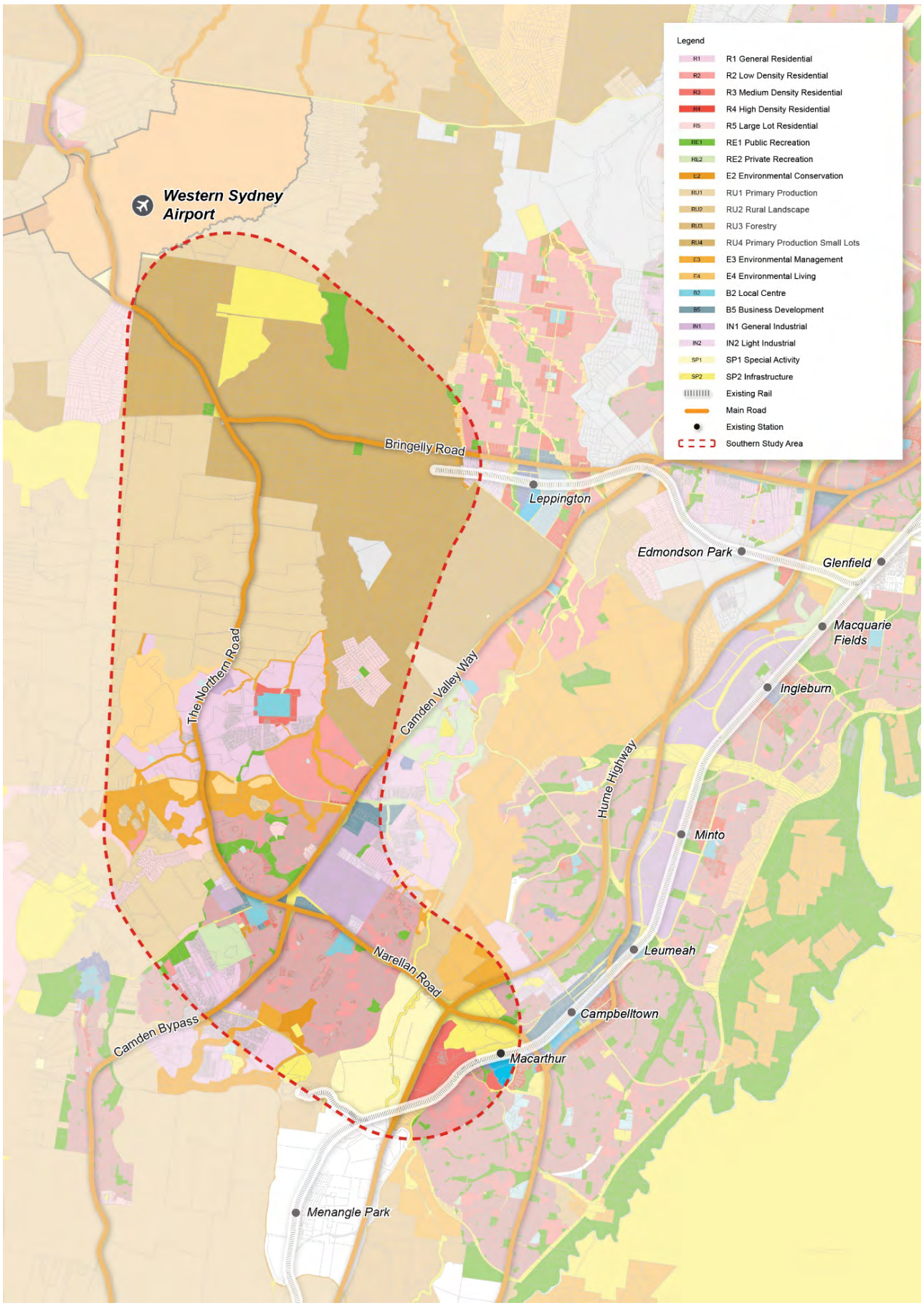

Figure 4-8 Land use zones in the southern study area

4.5.3 Road infrastructure

Key road infrastructure in the southern study area is shown in Figure 4-9.

Classified roads in the southern study area are identified in the *Schedule of Classified Roads and State and Regional Roads* (Roads and Maritime Services 2017a) and include:

- Bringelly Road, which is the key east-west road connecting Leppington with The Northern Road through Rossmore and Bringelly. Bringelly Road currently accommodates around 10,000 vehicles per day, of which around 10-15 per cent are heavy vehicles. Projected future traffic volumes along Bringelly Road are about 25,000 – 30,000 vehicles per day. The Roads and Maritime Services is currently upgrading Bringelly Road as part of the *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan* (Roads and Maritime Services 2017b). About 10 kilometres of Bringelly Road from Camden Valley Way to The Northern Road is being widened from a two-lane road to a minimum four-lane road, with potential for future expansion to six lanes. Construction is expected to continue until 2018-2019.
- The Northern Road, which is the key north-south road link running between Narellan and Londonderry. The Northern Road currently accommodates around 15,000 vehicles per day (south of Bringelly Road), of which around 10 per cent are heavy vehicles. Projected future traffic volumes along The Northern Road are about 25,000 vehicles per day. The Roads and Maritime Services is currently upgrading The Northern Road as part of the *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan* (Roads and Maritime Services 2017b) to a four-lane road between Harrington Park and Bringelly, with potential for future expansion to six lanes. Construction is expected to continue until 2019-2020. The upgrade works include a grade-separated intersection between Bringelly and The Northern Road.
- Narellan Road, is the major east-west link between Narellan and the Hume Highway and the urban area of Campbelltown–Macarthur. Narellan is a major focal point in the regional road network, being located at the intersection of The Northern Road, Camden Valley Way, Narellan Road and the grade-separated Camden Bypass. Narellan Road is highly constrained especially during peak periods when extensive queues can form. Narellan Road is currently the subject of an upgrade program by The Roads and Maritime Services, which will include improvements to the grade separated interchange between Narellan Road and the Hume Highway. Due to the constrained nature of Narellan Road, long-term road network planning envisages additional east-west links including upgrades to Badgally Road (through the Scenic Hills) and a Spring Farm Parkway connecting the Camden Bypass through Spring Farm to the Hume Highway near Menangle Park.

While the State road network is being upgraded now to accommodate future projected growth within the South West Growth Area (and elsewhere in Western Sydney), the future local road network within the South West Growth Area is still at the planning stage. However, existing local roads will be retained wherever possible and appropriate, and this approach will inform the land use planning process for each precinct.

The upgrades of Bringelly Road and The Northern Road have included the construction of new (or upgraded) intersections that will define the future key connections with the local road network. The location of these intersections has informed the identification process for the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors in terms of considering possible interactions with the likely future local road network.

4.5.4 Existing rail infrastructure

The South West Rail Link currently terminates at Leppington. The South West Rail Link consists of two tracks from Glenfield through Edmondson Park station to the city side of Leppington station, then four tracks through Leppington station. About 1.5 kilometres to the west of Leppington Station, the tracks converge to two tracks into Rossmore Stabling Yard. The width of the existing rail corridor west of Leppington Station is generally 60 metres, but increases to 160 metres at Rossmore Stabling Yard. The existing rail corridor generally makes provision for the extension of the South West Rail Link west of Leppington Station as far as Rossmore Stabling Yard.

Macarthur currently forms the southern extent of the electrified Sydney Trains suburban network, and is operated as part of the T5 Cumberland Line (which terminates at Campbelltown station) and the T8 South Line, which terminates at Macarthur Station.

South of Macarthur Station the T8 South Line continues as the Southern Highlands Line, which forms part of the intercity network (but is not part of the electrified Sydney Trains network).

The existing Glenlee Colliery (and proposed Glenlee industrial precinct) is currently connected by a rail siding to the T8 South Line.

In addition to the T8 South Line, the Southern Sydney Freight Line occupies part of the existing rail corridor commencing at Macarthur Station. The Southern Sydney Freight Line is a dedicated freight line (single track) next to the T8 South Line (located north/west of the T8 South Line) between Sefton Park Junction and south of Macarthur Station. The Southern Sydney Freight Line is operated by the Australian Rail Track Corporation.

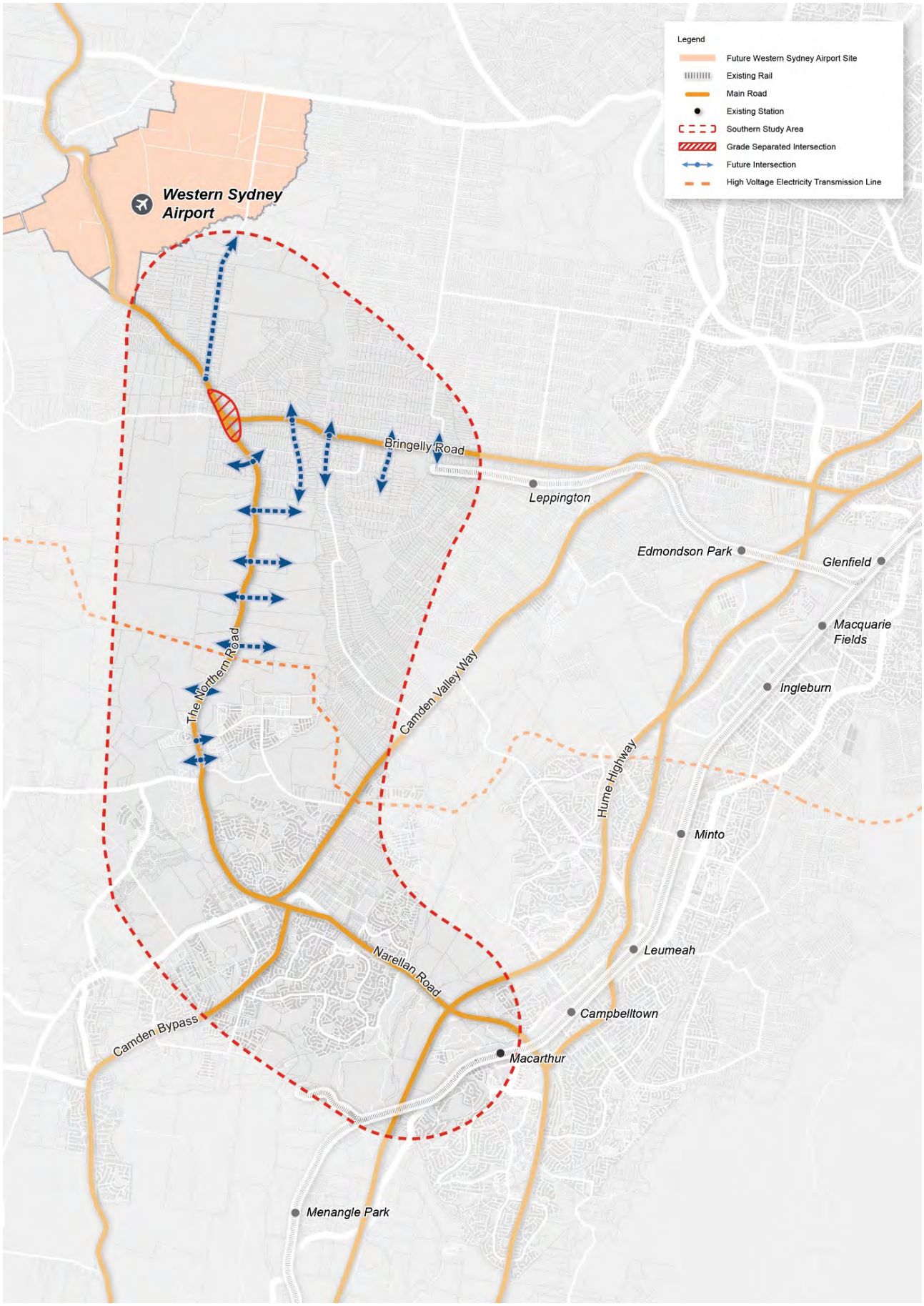

Figure 4-9 Existing infrastructure and utilities in the southern study area

4.6 Utilities

Major utilities in the southern study area are described in Table 4-1 and shown in Figure 4-8.

Table 4-1 Major utilities in the southern study area

Location	Utility	Description
Catherine Fields to Oran Park	330kv	High voltage electricity transmission lines that traverse the southern study area in a north-south direction through Catherine Fields and Oran Park, before turning to the west immediately north of the Oran Park Town Centre.
Curran Hills to Mount Annan	330kv	High voltage electricity transmission lines that traverse the southern study area in a north-south direction generally through the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, and east of Currans Hill.
Spring Farm	Nepean Zone Substation	Nepean Zone Substation is located on Glenlee Road near Springs Road. A number of smaller voltage electricity transmission lines converge on the substation.
Blair Athol	Campbelltown Zone Substation	Campbelltown Zone Substation is located near the corner of Narellan Road and Blaxland Road.
Blairmount to Mount Annan	Sydney Water Supply Canal	The Sydney Water Supply Canal traverses the southern study area in a generally north-south direction through the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, and the Scenic Hills. The canal serves an important water supply function between the southern drinking water catchments and Prospect Reservoir. The canal is listed on the State Heritage Register.

4.7 Aboriginal heritage

As with the northern study area, the known distribution of Aboriginal sites within the southern study area is largely clustered around waterways and roads. A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System found a total of 295 items of Aboriginal heritage recorded within the southern study area.

At Narellan, there is a cluster of Aboriginal heritage sites around Gundungarra Reserve, William Howe Regional Park, The Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, and the Western Sydney University Campbelltown Campus. There are also a small number of sites located through the Scenic Hills.

The Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council and Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council have representation for the southern study area. The Darug People's Advisory Committee also has an interest in the southern study area.

4.8 European heritage

European heritage items in the southern study area that are listed on the State Heritage Register or in a local environmental plan are identified in Table 4-2 and shown in Figure 4-10.

Table 4-2 State and local heritage items in the southern study area

Item name	Address	Significance	Item no.
Glenlee	Glenlee Road, Menangle Park	State	00009
Upper Canal System (Pheasants Nest Weir to Prospect Reservoir)	Prospect	State	01373
Kelvin Park Group	30 The Retreat, Bringelly	State	00046
Denbigh	421 The Northern Road, Cobbitty	State	01691
Orielton	181 – 183 The Northern Road, Harrington Park	State	01693
Camden Park Estate and Belgenny Farm	Elizabeth Macarthur Avenue, Camden South	State	01697
Kirkham stables and precinct	Kirkham Lane, Narellan	State	01411

Item name	Address	Significance	Item no.
Harrington Park	1 Hickson Circuit, Harrington Park	State	01773
Studley Park	Camden Valley Way, Narellan	State	00389
Rossmore Public School	629 Bringelly Road, Rossmore	Local	I138
Bellfield Farm Group	33 Rossmore Avenue, Rossmore	Local	61
Church of the Holy Innocents Group	Church Street, Rossmore	Local	60
Bringelly Public School	1205 The Northern Road, Bringelly	Local	7
Former Overseas Telecommunications Commission site	Badgerys Creek Road, Bringelly	Local	5
Water tanks and water supply to the Overseas Telecommunications Commission site	Badgerys Creek Road	Local	4
Mount Pleasant rural dwelling	3 Shannon Road, Bringelly	Local	6
Camden Park Estate	445 Remembrance Driveway, Camden Park	Local	I53 and I54
Burton Arms Inn	332 Camden Valley Way, Narellan	Local	I132
Struggletown Conservation Area	Narellan	Local	
Ben Linden historic house	311 Camden Valley Way, Narellan	Local	I131
Smeaton Grange homestead and landscape	1 Sedgwick Street, Smeaton Grange	Local	I140
Narellan Public School	290 Camden Valley Way, Narellan	Local	I130
St Thomas' Cemetery and Church	6 Richardson Road and 1A Wilson Crescent, Narellan	Local	I134 and I136
Menangle Gate Lodge	60 Woodbridge Road, Menangle	Local	I99

There are no World Heritage, National Heritage or Commonwealth Heritage listed items located within or in proximity to the southern study area.

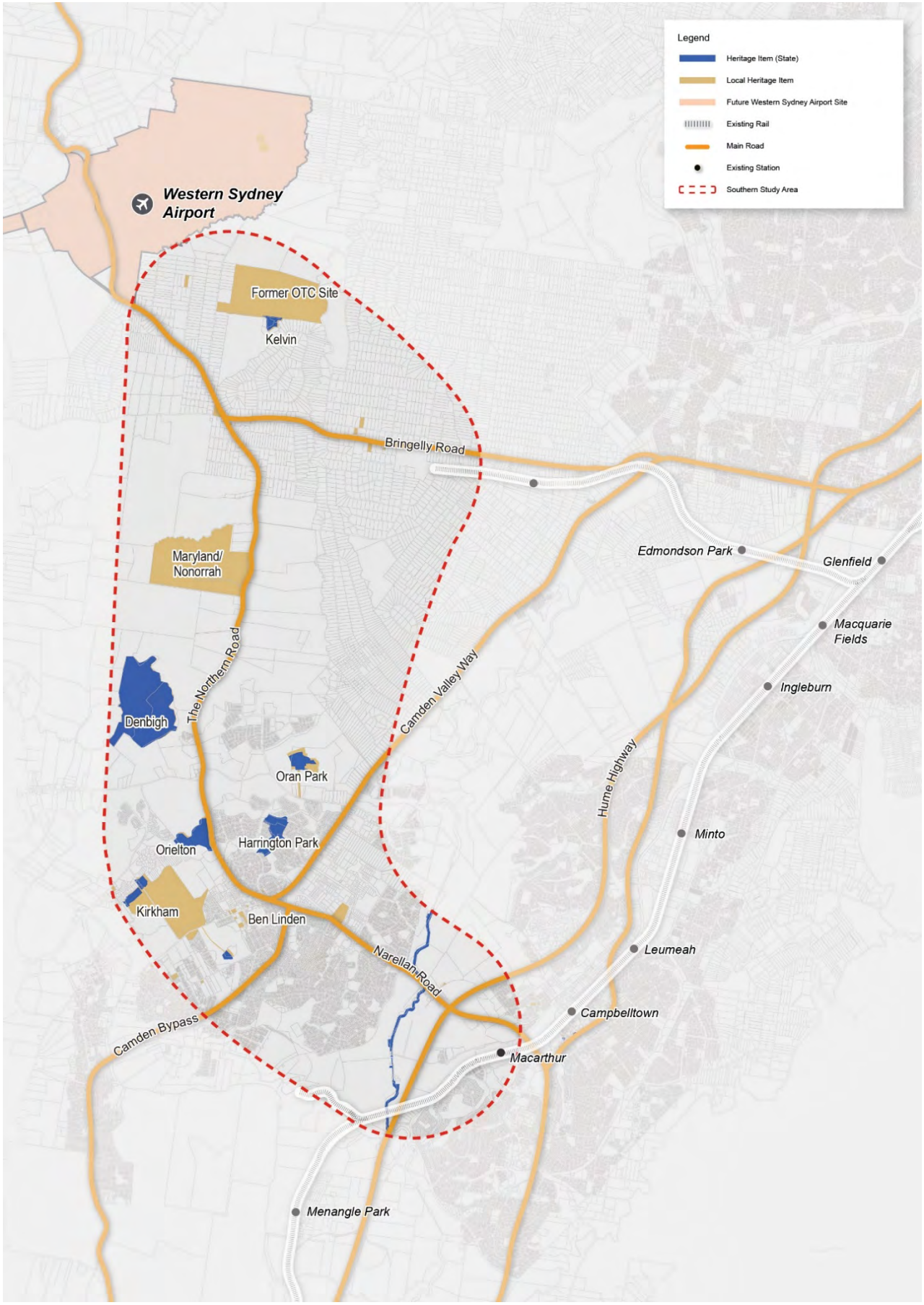

Figure 4-10 European heritage items in the southern study area

4.9 Biodiversity and vegetation

Around Rossmore, Bringelly and Maryland the area is characterised by a predominantly cleared and disturbed rural landscape with interspersed stands of native vegetation, predominantly located around the riparian areas. Vegetation communities include subsets of the Cumberland Plain Woodland Endangered Ecological Community, as well as other native ecological communities and isolated native flora species.

This part of the southern study area is entirely within the South West Growth Area, which is subject to an order of the Minister for the Environment conferring biodiversity certification (biocertification) through the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

Biodiversity certification removes the need for further threatened species assessments before development in areas identified in the order as 'certified'. Riparian areas along the South Creek watercourse and major tributaries are excluded from the certified area, and any proposal to impact on vegetation within these areas would require separate ecological assessment.

Areas in the southern study area that have been biocertified are shown in Figure 4-11.

South of Oran Park, approval of residential development at Harrington Grove was granted by the Australian Government's Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts in 2009 on land that was described as Harrington Forest, which contained areas of Cumberland Plain Woodland.

Numerous conditions of consent regarding biodiversity were implemented, including establishment of conservation covenants that must provide protection and active management of the Cumberland Plain Woodland offset areas, in perpetuity. The conservation covenants are registered on land identified as 'community reserve', 'council reserve' and 'cultural landscape'.

Harrington Forest is mapped as Priority Conservation Lands in the *Cumberland Plain Recovery Plan* (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water 2010). Management of the Cumberland Plain Woodland must complement the *Cumberland Plain Recovery Plan* and must also be in accordance with the Harrington Park Voluntary Planning Agreement with the NSW Department of Planning (reference 15266/15343/80056275). The existing Cumberland Plain Woodland and associated ecosystems of Harrington Forest are protected and managed as part of the consent conditions for Harrington Grove.

South of Narellan native vegetation is generally sparse and heavily disturbed, confined largely to parks and reserves including William Howe Regional Park, and along the limited number of naturalised riparian corridors. The largest stands of native vegetation are located within the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan.

While undeveloped for urban uses, only isolated and fragmented patches of native vegetation are present within the Scenic Hills.

East of the Hume Highway, native vegetation remains generally sparse and the urban landscape is heavily disturbed and generally limited to isolated fragments.

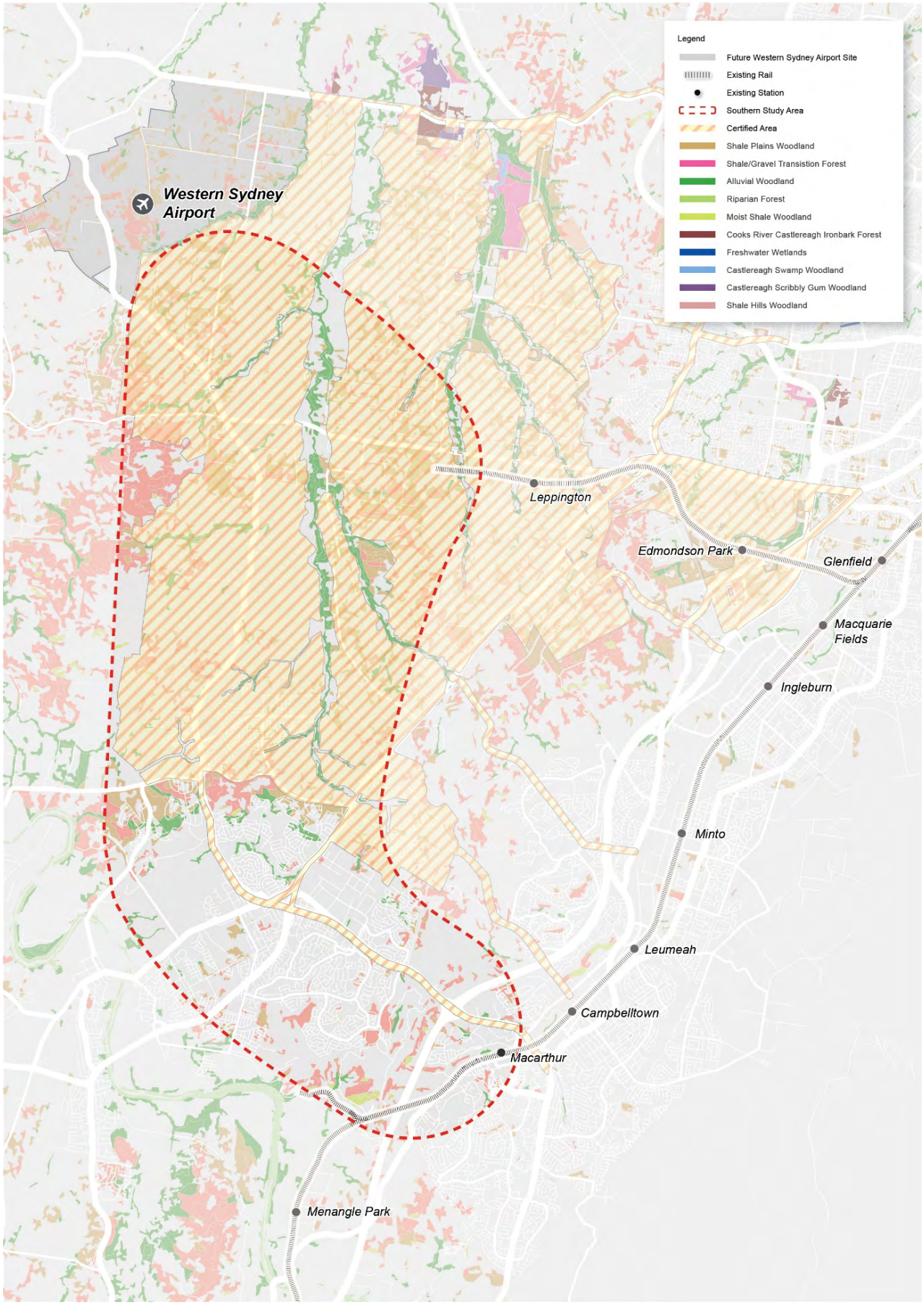

Figure 4-11 Biocertified areas in the southern study area

4.9.1 Vegetation and habitat

The southern study area is a moderately populated part of Sydney, which is largely urbanised and highly disturbed due to a history of agricultural activity. Most land within the southern study area is cleared and contains exotic pastures, with only occasional areas of native vegetation. The main habitat types in the southern study area include:

- Grassy woodlands, associated with stands of Shale Plain Woodland and Shale Hills Woodland
- Riparian forests, associated with narrow bands of vegetation mapped as Alluvial Woodland along some creeks and waterways
- Open grasslands, associated with cleared grazing land and other agricultural land uses
- Aquatic habitats within perennial and ephemeral creeks.

Protected ecological communities in the southern study area include:

- Alluvial Woodland, which is an endangered ecological community
- Shale Hills Woodland, which is associated with Cumberland Plain Woodland and is classified as a critically endangered ecological community
- Shale Plains Woodlands, which is associated with Cumberland Plain Woodland and is classified as a critically endangered ecological community.

Additionally, the Cumberland Plain Woodland associated vegetation communities meet the definition of Cumberland Plain Woodland and Shale /Gravel Transition Forest, which is listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Most of the remaining native vegetation in the southern study area is highly fragmented and predominantly confined to riparian areas of South Creek and its tributaries.

The most substantial wildlife movement corridor through the southern study area lies within the vegetated riparian areas of South Creek and it is likely that a range of terrestrial and aquatic fauna groups utilise this wildlife corridor for habitat and movements through the area. To support this, the riparian corridor of South Creek is mapped as 'Regional Biodiversity Corridor 5' under the *Biodiversity Investment Opportunities Map, Mapping Priority Investment Areas for the Cumberland Subregion* (Office of Environment and Heritage 2015).

4.9.2 Flora and fauna

Forty-three threatened flora species have been recorded within 20 kilometres of the southern study area. Two threatened species are recorded in the southern study area, being the Magenta Lilly Pilly and Spiked Rice-flower. The Magenta Lilly Pilly is listed as vulnerable under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, while the Spiked Rice-flower is protected under both the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The remaining species that could potentially be present in the southern study area are considered to have a low possibility of occurring.

Fifty-five threatened fauna species have been recorded within 20 kilometres of the southern study area, the majority of which are forest dependent. Of these:

- Only three species are expected to occur within the southern study area, being the Cumberland Plain Land Snail, Southern Myotis and Greater Broad Nosed Bat
- Sixteen species are terrestrial mammals, comprising nine microchiropteran bats, plus the Grey-headed Flying-fox, the Koala, Yellow-bellied Glider, Squirrel Glider, Eastern Pygmy-possum, Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby and Spotted-tailed Quoll. These species are unlikely to occur within the southern study area due to the limited amount of habitat for these species
- Three species are amphibians, being the Red-crowned Toadlet, Giant Burrowing Frog and Green and Golden Bell Frog. There are no records of these species occurring within the southern study area

- Two species are reptiles, being the Broad-headed Snake and the Rosenberg's Goanna. These species are unlikely to occur within the southern study area due to the limited amount of habitat for these species
- Thirty-three species are birds and could occur within the southern study area on a temporary basis. However, the southern study area is unlikely to constitute a significant habitat for these species due its fragmented nature and lack of native forest.

A number of other species are considered to have a moderate possibility of occurrence, due to habitat availability and high instance of records in the area.

4.10 Landscape and visual character

The southern study area is located at the fringe of metropolitan Sydney urban development and within an area undergoing rapid urban transformation. It is currently characterised by low-density residential dwellings interspersed with medium-scale commercial and retail development as well as large areas of undeveloped and rural land. The existing built form and rural landscape interfaces are shown in Figure 4-12 to Figure 4-17. Existing residential land use follows a precinct pattern of development.

The existing landscape around Rossmore, Maryland and Bringelly is predominantly rural, characterised by existing farm land and rural-residential dwellings, as shown in Figure 4-10 and Figure 4-13. These areas form part of the South West Growth Area and are expected to be subject to future rezoning to provide for urban development that will transform the visual context and character of the landscape.

The existing landscape around Bringelly and Greendale is characterised by pastoral and market gardening land uses. This area adjoins the South West Growth Area and there are long-term plans for urban development to occur that would substantially transform this existing rural landscape.

From Oran Park through Narellan to Macarthur the landscape comprises new and established urban development that transitions between residential, industrial and commercial development, as shown in Figure 4-12 to Figure 4-17. Oran Park and Macarthur will continue to transition to a predominantly urban character associated with NSW strategic planning policies for these areas, while the established town centre of Narellan continues to develop.

In addition to this, the vegetation and parkland of the Scenic Hills, Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, and William Howe Regional Park are significant landscape features that separate Campbelltown and Macarthur from the urban areas around Narellan.

Figure 4-12 Rural property near Rossmore

Figure 4-13 Rural area, Maryland

Figure 4-14 Oran Park

Figure 4-15 Macarthur

Figure 4-16 Narellan Town Centre

Figure 4-17 Oran Park Town Centre

4.11 Noise

Background noise levels in the southern study area are influenced by a range of noise sources. These include localised sources such as motor vehicles, public transport, construction activities, residential properties, farming and agricultural activities and some commercial and industrial activities.

The continuing urban development of land within the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area and South West Growth Area would increase background noise levels over time, including traffic noise associated with increased traffic volumes on the upgraded arterial road network – Bringelly Road and The Northern Road. Ultimately, the areas around Rossmore, Bringelly, Maryland and Oran Park, which currently reflect noise levels associated with a rural environment, would be expected to experience typical suburban background noise levels.

Noise sensitive receivers throughout the southern study area include existing residences, educational facilities, places of worship, aged-care facilities and other community facilities such as areas of open space used for recreation.

4.12 Air quality

Existing sensitive receivers around Rossmore and Bringelly are generally limited to schools and residential dwellings. These areas are expected to be of substantially higher density in the future when development of the South West Growth Area occurs. Existing higher density residential areas extend south from Oran Park through Narellan to Macarthur.

Existing air emissions sources include:

- Emissions from traffic on the State road network comprising Bringelly Road, The Northern Road, Camden Valley Way, Camden Bypass, Narellan Road and the Hume Highway – as well as emissions from traffic on local roads. It is expected that traffic generated air emissions will increase commensurately with the increase in traffic forecast to occur as the South West Growth Area continues to be developed
- Emissions from industrial areas at Narellan, Smeaton Grange and Campbelltown
- Emissions from existing rural industries – including chicken farms at Badgerys Creek, quarries and associated extractive materials manufacturing, for example, tiles, and waste management facilities. In the longer term it is expected that air emissions from rural industries would reduce as these land holdings are developed in accordance with the South West Growth Area.

In addition to the existing air emissions sources, it is highlighted that from the mid-2020s the Western Sydney Airport will also be a significant contributor to the emission of air pollutants in south-west Sydney.

4.13 Socioeconomic

The key socioeconomic characteristics of the northern study area are described in the following sections.

4.13.1 Population and demography

At the 2016 Census, there were around 68,000 residents living within Mount Annan-Currans Hill, Elderslie-Harrington Park and Cobbitty-Leppington (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). The majority of these resided in the area between Narellan and Macarthur. This is an increase of nearly 50 per cent on the population of the area since the 2011 Census, reflecting the large scale of recent residential development within the southern study area.

Eighty-seven per cent of households in the vicinity of the southern study area were families (including couples without dependent children), compared to only 74 per cent of households within the Greater Sydney statistical area.

The area formerly known as the South West Growth Centre is expected to accommodate around 290,000 residents once all precincts are released and developed.

4.13.2 Housing

At the 2016 Census there were around 22,000 dwellings within Mount Annan-Currans Hill, Elderslie-Harrington Park and Cobbitty-Leppington. Of these dwellings, 96 per cent had three or more bedrooms, compared to 65 per cent of dwellings in the Greater Sydney statistical area.

The former South West Growth Centre was expected to provide for around 108,000 new dwellings to be accommodated over the life of precinct delivery. The final number of dwellings delivered is likely to change as a result of more detailed precinct planning and changes in residential development patterns and market preferences over time. In particular, the *Priority Growth Areas Housing Market Needs Analysis Final Draft* (Department of Planning and Environment 2015) identified that there continues to be strong demand new residential products in the South West Growth Area as well as a response by developers to meet the market in terms of housing diversity and affordability issues resulting in a broader range of product which includes small lot housing and unit/apartments.

The report identifies that while medium sized lots (350 square metres to 450 square metres) are still the dominant type of lot produced (in part for planning reasons), small lots (250 square metres to 350 square metres) are the most popular in the market, selling swiftly on release. Where they are able, developers are consequently incorporating higher proportions of small lot housing into the overall residential mix.

The report concludes that a structural change in market preference and demand supports a case for a review and increase of residential density levels, with those precincts already benefiting from keen market interest and those focused around train stations being logical priorities for denser residential product. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that future population densities will ultimately be achieved in the South West Growth Area in excess of the initial population targets.

4.13.3 Employment and economic base

As of the 2011 Census, 12,100 persons were employed in the southern study area, excluding Macarthur.

The South West Growth Centre Structure Plan 2006 identifies over 1300 hectares of dedicated employment land, with additional employment and business areas to be located within new town centres created throughout the region. Leppington is identified as a 'Major Town Centre' in the South West Growth Centre Structure Plan, while Oran Park, Rossmore and Bringelly are identified as 'Town/Village Centres'. The NSW Government is currently reviewing the opportunities for employment generating development in the South West Growth Area and Western Sydney Airport Growth Area as part of the development of Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plans for these growth areas.

Oran Park has already exceeded its expectations in terms of employment generating retail development and major social infrastructure, with the relocation of Camden Council's civic centre.

5 Corridor identification and consultation

This section outlines the key steps in the process of identifying recommended corridors and provides a description of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. This section:

- Describes business requirements, including corridor widths, strategic connections to the existing rail network and strategic design requirements
- Describes the key consultation phases undertaken throughout the corridor identification process, as outlined in Figure 5-1
- Provides a detailed description of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.

The investigation of the North South Rail Line corridor north of the future Western Sydney Airport site was delayed to coordinate it with planning for both the Outer Sydney Orbital and the Western Sydney Airport. Where there are differences between the development and consultation of the northern and southern sections of the North South Rail Line corridor these are outlined in the sections below.

The corridor alignment through Western Sydney Airport is being determined by a separate process led by the Australian Government. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor shown in this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment is consistent with the Australian Government's alignment.

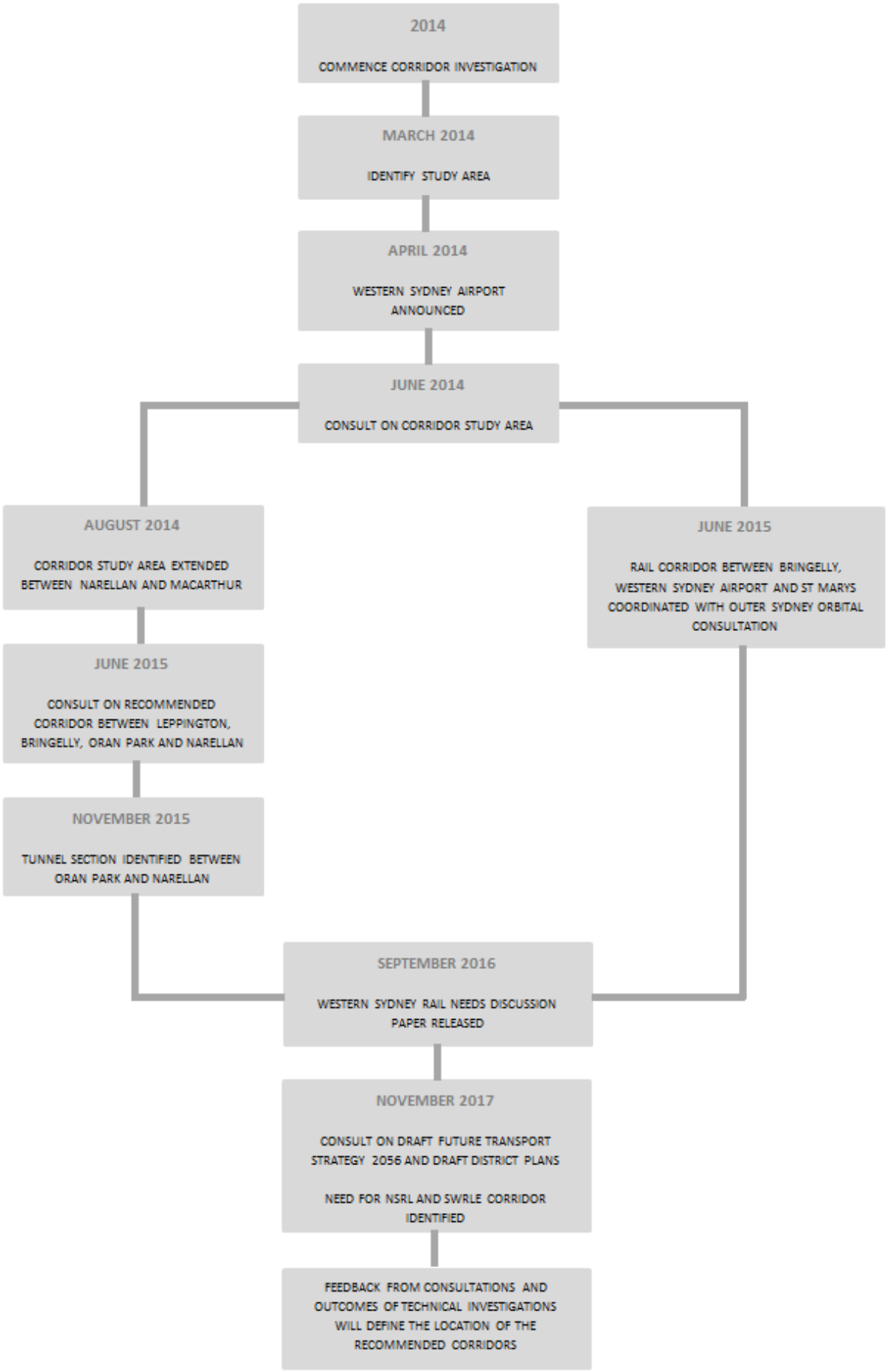

Figure 5-1 Key consultation phases

5.1 Initial investigation

Transport for NSW commenced corridor investigations in early 2014 and identified the potential for the South West Rail Link corridor to be extended northwards to the Main West Line via the future Western Sydney Airport site, and to the south via Oran Park and Narellan. Initial consultation in 2014 also identified the strategic benefits of extending the corridor to the Main South Line near Macarthur.

The investigation process took into consideration data relating to demographics, future population forecasts, employment growth, development trends and travel patterns across western Sydney to establish key priorities for future rail connections. The process that was followed is outlined in the following sections.

5.1.1 Business requirements and design principles

A strategic business requirements specification for future transport infrastructure was developed to inform the development and assessment of the corridors. The strategic business requirements established assumptions and expectations for the following matters:

- Corridor widths, including:
  - The South West Rail Link Extension corridor is to be a 60 metre corridor providing for twin track passenger railway with provision for future quadruplicating of the railway
  - Ancillary infrastructure, such as signalling equipment, access roads allowing for maintenance access for the operator on both sides of the corridor and substations, are to be accommodated within the corridor
  - The 60 metre corridor is to include allowance for station platforms and paid areas, but not for station concourses, buildings, or interchange or car parking facilities
  - Between Bringelly Y Junction and Macarthur it is intended to provide for two tracks, so a 40 metre corridor width is to be adopted
- Likely future rolling stock and operating speeds, which influence the design (see strategic design principles below)
- Stabling, maintenance and construction requirements:
  - The recommended corridors shall include sufficient space at an appropriate location for a secure train facility to perform all necessary stabling, inspections, repairs, maintenance, cleaning (inside and out), administration and operations control for all trains serving the corridor. The exact requirements of stabling facilities will depend on the outcomes of detailed operational assessment. Some potential exists for expansion of the Rossmore Stabling Yard, and this has been allowed for
  - Construction sites of various sizes are needed for future construction. Primarily, these would be adjacent to specific work areas near structures, adjacent to main roads or under/ overpasses, and at the location of new stations and/or tunnel portals. Along the corridor, additional temporary construction compounds and access would be required
- Station locations, informed by long-term strategic plans (see Section 2)
- Expected major arterial road upgrades to be accommodated (see Section 2)
- Identification of other key constraints expected to influence the corridor location and shape (see Section 3).

Building on the strategic business requirements specification, a number of planning and design principles were developed to inform the identification and analysis of the rail corridor alignments, they include:

- Strategic design principles:
  - Corridor design standards as detailed in Table 5-1
  - The corridors should facilitate integrated rail operations for customers
  - The corridors should be at-grade wherever possible; elevated track and tunnels should be minimised

- Platforms should allow for 12-carriage suburban train sets and preferably be 245 metre long island platforms
- The corridor should facilitate efficient and cost-effective delivery and operation of the future infrastructure. Construction risks associated future infrastructure delivery should be minimised and/or manageable
- Earthworks and engineering structures should be minimised, and optimised across the length of the corridors
- The corridors should facilitate future network expansion
- The corridors should promote efficient operation and maintenance of rail infrastructure

- Strategic planning principles:
  - The corridors should facilitate station locations that provide opportunities for integrated land use development around them.
  - The corridors should provide opportunities for well-located stations that serve their identified or assumed role in the transport network appropriately. A station spacing of 2.5 to 4 kilometres should be the target station spacing where achievable.
  - Stations are preferably situated in cuttings to minimise impact on surrounding road networks and development, also reducing amenity impacts.
  - Stations should be located on straight track, and where possible the straight track at stations should extend beyond the platform ends to allow station locations to be optimised up or down the line in response to land use planning outcomes.

Table 5-1 Corridor design criteria

Criteria	Value
Design speed	125 kilometres per hour
Curvature (minimum)	800 metres
Gradient (maximum)	1.5 per cent
Surface station gradient	0.5 per cent
Underground station gradient	0.0 per cent

5.1.2 Initial public consultation

In 2014 Transport for NSW consulted with stakeholders and the community on a corridor study area to help identify the constraints and opportunities.

The consultation program was supported by an advertising campaign to raise awareness and to encourage community participation by attending a community information drop in session and providing feedback. Four community information and feedback sessions were held and more than 650 community members attended the sessions.

Other consultation activities included:

- Local government briefing session
- Meetings with key stakeholders including industry groups and major land owners
- A Business Industry forum

Key outcomes from these preliminary consultations were:

- That the North South Rail Line north of the future Western Sydney Airport site should be deferred and coordinated with the Western Sydney Airport and Outer Sydney Orbital
- A study area was identified south of Narellan towards the T8 South Line in the vicinity of Macarthur (see Figure 5-3).

5.1.3 Corridor identification and assessment process

The corridor identification and assessment process is summarised in Figure 5-2. The process focussed on identifying and assessing the best possible at-grade or surface corridors to meet the strategic business requirements.

Rail corridor alignments were developed following detailed mapping and assessment of land use, environmental, infrastructure and other constraints. The process of refining and assessing potential corridor alignments took into consideration feedback, comments and suggestions captured during public consultations with other NSW Government agencies, stakeholders and the community (see Section 5.3 for further details of the consultation undertaken.

Potential corridor alignments progressed through a review and filtering process to identify major flaws or non-compliances in relation to strategic business requirements and design principles. The alignments were then put through a qualitative assessment to generate a short-list of suitable alignments.

The final stages of the assessment involved a multi-criteria assessment that was used to rank alignments on the short list. The criteria covered transport, land use planning and environmental criteria.

Consultation within government and other key stakeholders was ongoing through the multi-criteria assessment process.

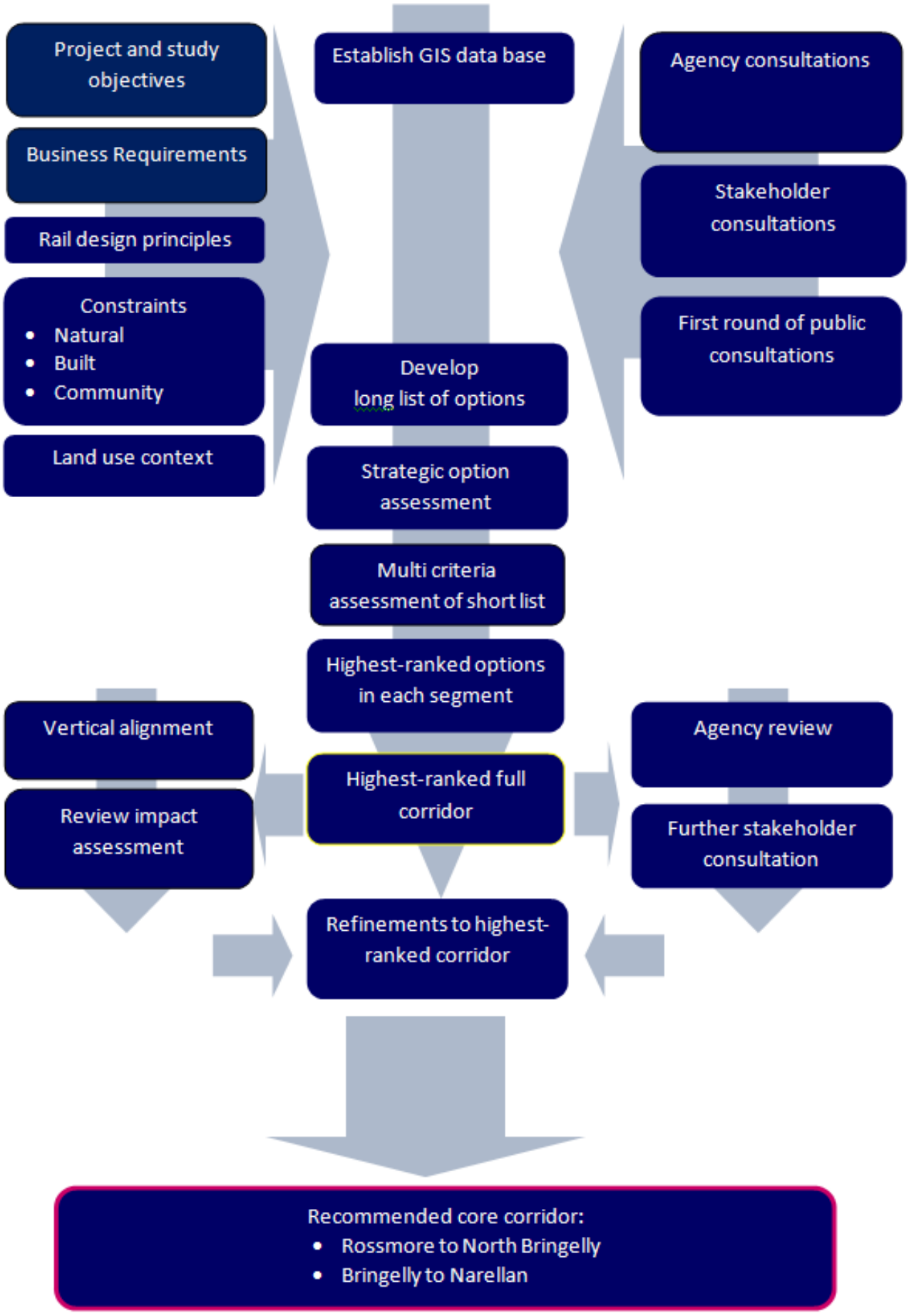

Figure 5-2 Corridor identification study approach

5.2 The 2015 Recommended Corridor

The highest-ranked corridor between Rossmore, Bringelly and Narellan was displayed for community consultation in 2015. This corridor is known as the '2015 Recommended Corridor' and is shown in Figure 5-3. The location of the corridor north of Bringelly was informed later by the requirements of the Western Sydney Airport and the Outer Sydney Orbital corridor investigation, indicatively shown by the red hatched area. Earlier feedback on the extension of the study area between Narellan and the T8 South Line near Macarthur were also captured and shown as the blue hatched area in Figure 5-3.

Consultations consisted of briefings to councils, stakeholders and key interest groups, drop-in sessions for the general community, and a broad community awareness campaign through printed and electronic media, inviting feedback. Landowners within the recommended corridors were offered one-on-one briefings to explain the corridor identification and protection process, and to ensure that they were informed of next steps.

The corridor identification team at Transport for NSW monitored the progress of local developments and could not halt or influence the timing of development or subdivisions. This led to the unfortunate and distressing circumstances of the 2015 Recommended Corridor being located on land that was to be developed, as in the case of the Anglicare Retirement Village and Harrington Grove's Wildfire Estate, which was subdivided and sold just prior to the announcement of the recommended corridor.

More than 1,500 submissions were received from landowners, the broader community, councils, stakeholders, industry and interest groups, and other government agencies during and after the community consultation period.

Nearly all of the submissions received in relation to the 2015 Recommended Corridor between Oran Park and Narellan were opposed to a surface corridor and suggested a tunnel section to avoid existing and planned housing.

Many submissions argued that the extent and speed of urban development in these areas meant that it was too late to find a surface corridor. The overwhelming view was that a suitable surface corridor could not be identified without unacceptable socio-economic, environmental and financial impacts on the local community.

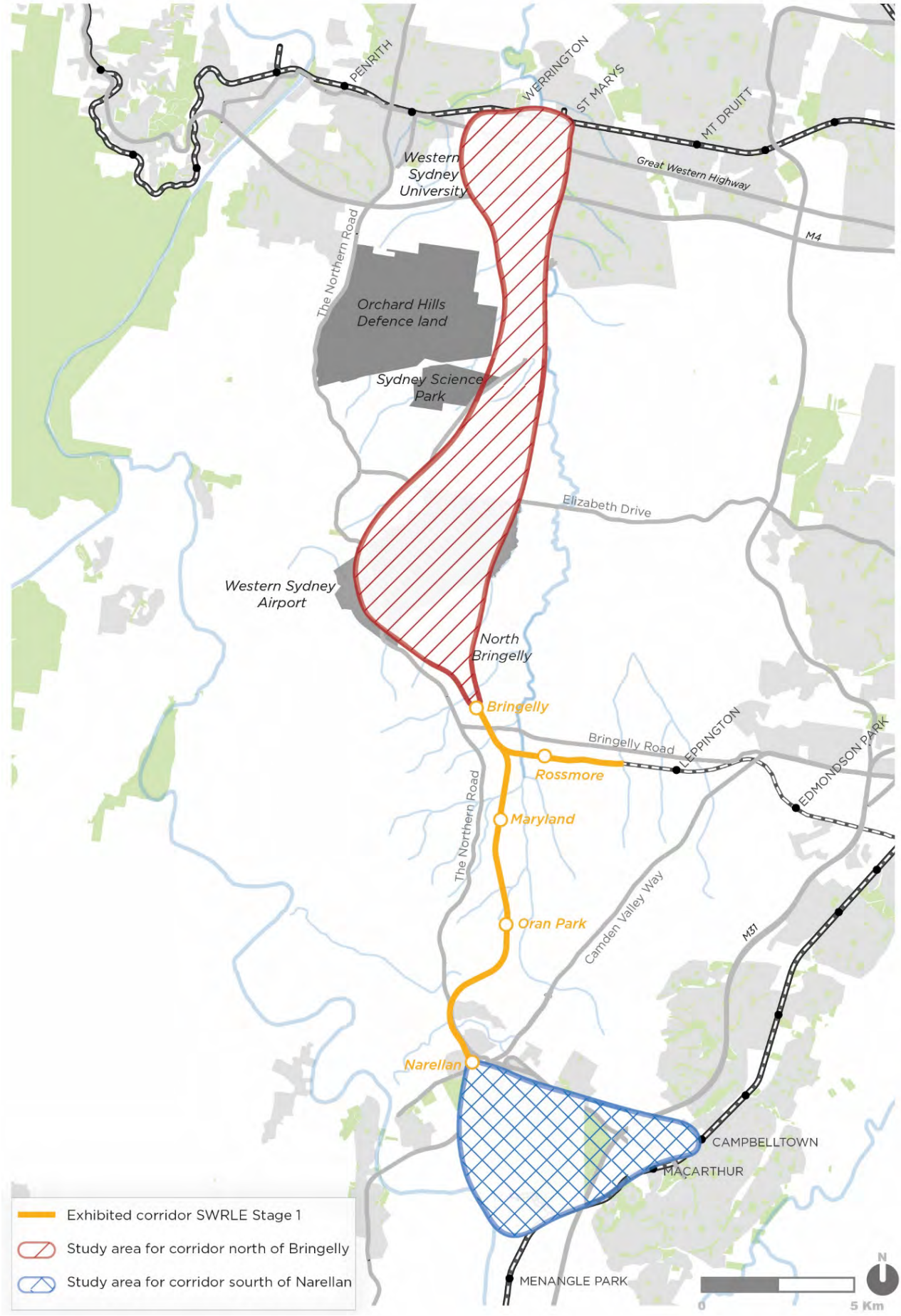

Figure 5-3 2015 Recommended Corridor

Source: Transport for NSW 2015

5.3 The corridor review process

The 2015 Recommended Corridor has been reviewed, and where appropriate refined, in light of the feedback obtained during the community consultation period. The key refinements made to the 2015 Recommended Corridor as a result of this corridor review process are described below.

5.3.1 Rossmore to Bringelly

West of the Rossmore Stabling Yard the South West Rail Link Extension corridor was straightened to reduce rail operating and maintenance costs, and to improve the opportunity for a possible future Rossmore Station.

5.3.2 Bringelly to Narellan

The most significant refinement to the 2015 Recommended Corridors south of Bringelly was a commitment made by the NSW Government on 23 November 2015 that any future rail line between Oran Park and Harrington Park would be in tunnel. A potential future tunnel south of Oran Park would be limited to a single track in each direction (i.e. a twin track tunnel).

The decision to consider a tunnel corridor south of Oran Park significantly reduces the direct impacts on existing and proposed land uses in Oran Park and Harrington Park, as well as reduces impacts on significant environmental and heritage constraints. A large number of submissions advocated for a tunnelled railway south of Oran Park, and the decision to commit to this is a key measure taken in response to the concerns raised by the community. However, the whole of life cost of tunnel rail infrastructure is substantially higher than for surface rail infrastructure. The much greater cost of developing rail infrastructure in tunnel can make rail projects unfeasible.

A tunnel corridor also means that an alternative station location could be identified closer to Oran Park Town Centre. The proposed station location is now immediately west of the town centre (see Section 7 for land use details of Oran Park Station). This location offers a direct connection to the existing and future Oran Park Shopping Centre, is more conveniently located for access to town centre functions and is more centrally located in the context of the Oran Park precinct. The proximity to Oran Park Drive also provides good walking access from residential areas to the north and west, and supports the function of the station as a bus/rail interchange with good access to The Northern Road via Peter Brock Drive.

The selection of the station location at Narellan was determined by a number of factors, including:

- The likely role of a Narellan Station as a town centre station with both a walk-up catchment, and a wider potential catchment requiring bus and park and ride access
- Access to the existing and proposed Narellan Town Centre
- Vehicle and pedestrian access to and from Camden Valley Way, Old Northern Road, and The Northern Road
- Heritage constraints of Ben Linden local heritage item
- The potential to support urban renewal and transit-oriented development in Narellan Town Centre
- The potential extension of the North South Rail Line corridor to the south.

The proposed future station location at Narellan is an optimal location as it is within walking distance of a thriving town centre, with good access to two major roads, having potential space for station and transport interchange facilities, and with the long term potential for urban renewal and transit-oriented development Its location did not substantially change as a result of the decision to place the corridor in a tunnel although a minor shift was made to the station location to the north and the east to provide for the possible future extension of the rail south of Narellan.

The proposed location of future stations at Oran Park and Narellan provide fixed points for a future tunnel connection. At this stage, the location of a tunnel between Oran Park and Narellan and further south to Macarthur is indicative only. To identify a future tunnel location, significant geotechnical investigations are required together with detailed engineering design. This work is required closer to the time when rail infrastructure is needed, which is likely still decades away.

5.3.3 Key considerations for the 2015 Recommended Corridor

A summary of the key issues raised in submissions on the 2015 Recommended Corridors is listed in Table 5-2, including how the issue has been considered in finalising the recommended corridors.

Table 5-2 2015 Key issues raised in submissions on the 2015 Recommended Corridor

Issue raised in submissions	How issues were addressed	Reference
Impacts on vegetation immediately west of Rossmore Stabling Yard	Vegetation on this property has already been bio-certified under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006.	Section 4.9 Section 7.7
Corridor alignment and station location between Rossmore Stabling Yard and South Creek, and related property impacts	Corridor has been realigned to improve operations and share property impacts.	Section 7.1
The need and potential for a three-way junction at Bringelly	Three-way Bringelly Junction is unlikely to be required based on likely future operational services.	Section 5.4.2.2
The crossing of Bringelly Road	The crossing location minimises impacts on Bringelly Road.	Section 7.3
Crossing of flood storage dams	Flood storage dams have been avoided by relocating Oran Park Station location to the west.	Section 7.6
Interactions of the rail corridor with Jersey Road	The corridor has been designed to require only a single crossing of Jersey Road.	Section 7.3
Implications for housing delivery at Oran Park	The corridor has been moved into areas subject of future precinct planning, and away from areas where it will impact on the short-term delivery of housing at Oran Park.	Section 7.1
Impacts on Anglicare Retirement Village at Oran Park	This section of the corridor is now a tunnel and moved to the west and will not impact on the Anglicare Retirement Village.	Section 7.1
Impacts on existing landowners and/or residents in Oran Park	This section of the corridor is now a tunnel and will not impact on existing landowners and/or residents in Oran Park.	Section 7.1
Impacts on existing residences and subdivisions under development in Harrington Grove	This section of the corridor is now a tunnel and will not impact on existing landowners and/or residents in Harrington Grove.	Section 7.1
Impacts to Harrington Forest	This section of the corridor is now a tunnel and will not impact on Harrington Forest.	Section 7.7
Impacts to the Orielton Homestead	This section of the corridor is now a tunnel and will not impact on the Orielton Homestead.	Section 7.8
Impacts to the future Narellan Sports Hub	This section of the corridor is a tunnel and will not impact on the Narellan Sports Hub.	Section 7.1
Impacts to businesses fronting The Northern Road and within the Narellan industrial area	The construction of a tunnel and new Narellan Station will still provide an opportunity to deliver revitalisation of the Narellan industrial area. Until the land is required for construction of the infrastructure, existing business will be able to continue operating.	Section 7.1

5.4 Description of the recommended corridors

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would provide connections between the Main West Line near St Marys, Western Sydney Airport, Oran Park, Narellan and the Main South Line near Macarthur. The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor extends from Leppington to Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis Station for connection to the North South Rail Line. These parts of the recommended corridors are described below and are shown in Figure 5-4.

5.4.1 North South Rail Line northern section

A 60 metre wide corridor is proposed for the North South Rail Line between St Marys and the future Western Sydney Airport site.

The North South Rail Line is proposed to be in tunnel from St Marys to Orchard Hills. No land take is required at the surface in this section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. Further land may be required in the future to facilitate stations and interchange facilities.

The North South Rail Line would surface near Landsdowne Road, Orchard Hills. The surface rail corridor would then follow a southerly direction, co-locating with the Outer Sydney Orbital, through agricultural land, passing to the east of Erskine Park Quarry and Stockdale Road and crossing over Blaxland Creek.

Just north of the Warragamba Prospect Pipeline the recommended corridor curves slightly to the west and then continue across the twin pipes to enter the Sydney Science Park site. The recommended corridor would pass through the eastern section of the Sydney Science Park site and then curve towards the east where it crosses Cosgroves Creek.

On the southern side of Cosgroves Creek, the recommended corridor continues in a southern direction to the west of Badgerys Creek. The corridor enters the future Western Sydney Airport site just east of the intersection of Elizabeth Drive and Badgerys Creek Road.

5.4.2 North South Rail Line southern section and South West Rail Link Extension

5.4.2.1 Rossmore to Bringelly

The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor would accommodate a future railway from the existing Rossmore Stabling Yard, extending west and north-west, before terminating at Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis Station.

The corridor is proposed to be 60 metres wide to accommodate up to four railway tracks (two in each direction).

5.4.2.2 Bringelly Y Junction

A two-way rail junction at Bringelly has been provided for with direct connections between Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis Station and Rossmore and between Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis Station and Oran Park. The junction would be located west of South Creek and south of Bringelly Road, away from the Bringelly and Rossmore Town Centres.

5.4.2.3 Bringelly Y Junction-Oran Park

This section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor branches from the Rossmore-Bringelly corridor at Bringelly Y Junction, near South Creek. It travels due south to Oran Park. This corridor is proposed to be 40 metres wide, with the capacity for two railway tracks (one in each direction).

5.4.2.4 Oran Park-Macarthur

This section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is indicatively identified only. It would commence at Oran Park heading south to Narellan Station, then south-east before emerging to the surface within the existing rail corridor near Macarthur Station.

The tunnel section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would generally not require land take at the surface, with the exception of station, portal and construction sites at Narellan and Macarthur. It is likely that the proposed tunnel will be bored at depths exceeding 30 metres in most places.

The southernmost end of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor near Macarthur Station would be above ground and would be predominantly located within the existing T8 South Line rail corridor. A section of the existing rail corridor alongside Menangle Road to the west of Macarthur Station would need to be widened to accommodate the North South Rail Line.

At this stage, no additional stations have been identified between Narellan and Macarthur. South of Narellan, the potential impacts on existing residential areas as a result of any future station development would be significant.

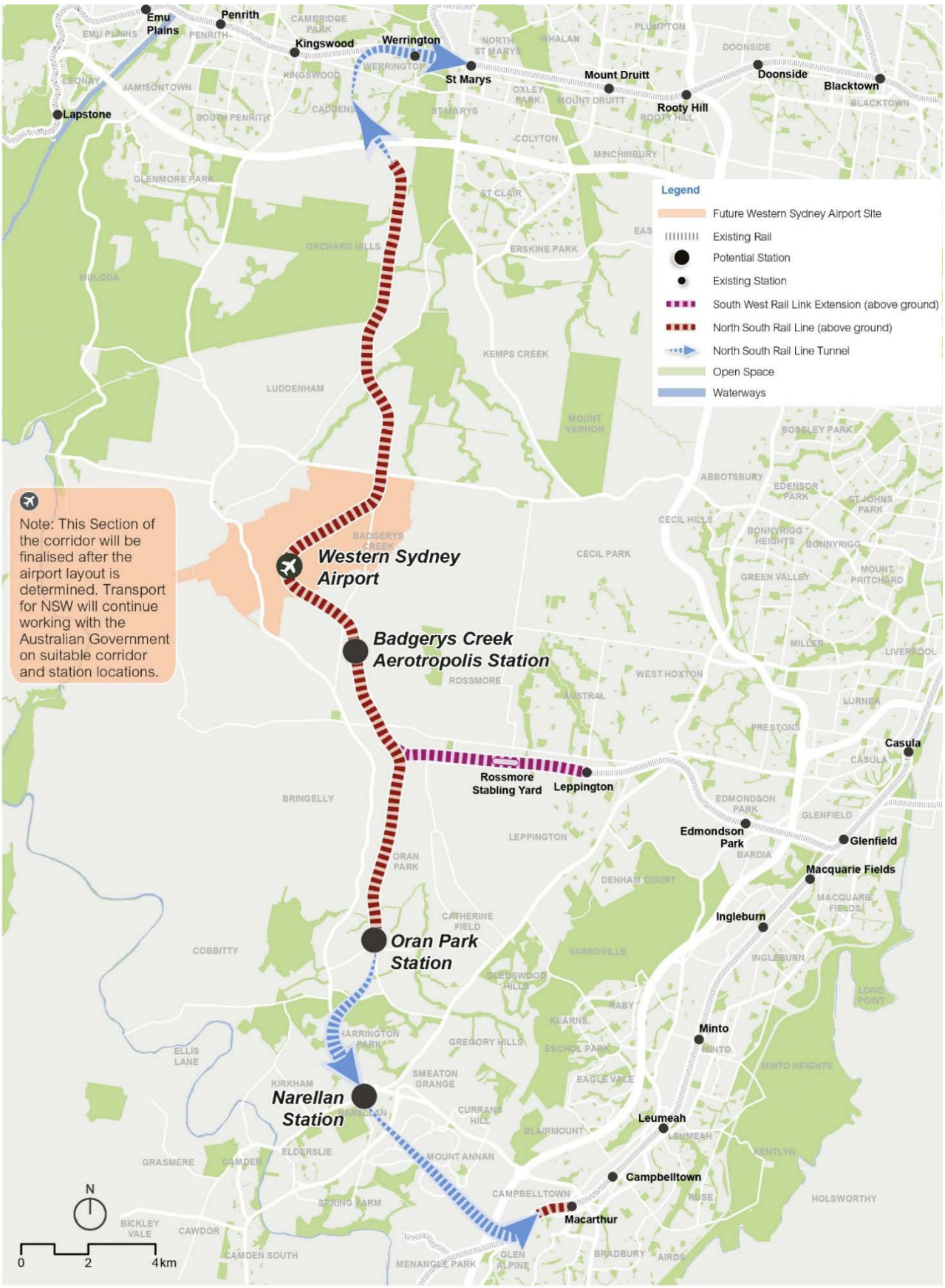

Figure 5-4 Recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors

5.4.3 Railway stations

Station locations need to align with the overall precinct planning objectives, taking into account factors such as transfers between modes and lines, as well as urban planning for existing or new town centres, local transport access, future property ownership boundaries and topography. Stations within urban areas are preferably situated in cuttings to minimise impact on surrounding road networks and development, also reducing amenity impacts.

Further detailed understanding of the station catchments and passenger demand, as well as the broader network operational analysis, will allow further refinement of station characteristics including platform size and numbers.

With consideration of these design principles, future station design is likely to reflect the existing stations on the South West Rail Link, such as the Edmondson Park Station, shown in Figure 5-5.

As part of the consultation associated with the recommended corridors, there are likely to be comments on the location of additional stations. The corridor width can accommodate a standard station layout and station locations can 'slide' along the corridor to meet the final desired locations. The location of additional stations will be considered during the analysis undertaken to support the business cases for the future rail lines.

Figure 5-5 Edmondson Park Station

5.5 Future consultation

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors will be subject to consultation as part of the process for securing statutory protection of the corridor. Landowners within the recommended corridors will receive a letter containing information about the corridors location and mapping information. Landowners within the recommended corridors will be invited to attend a landowner information session to learn more about the corridor identification process and to speak with members of the project about next steps. There will also be opportunity for general community information sessions for the broader community to learn more about corridor identification process and the future infrastructure needed to support western Sydney.

6 Environmental assessment of northern study area

This section provides a strategic assessment of each of the potential environmental impacts associated with protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in the northern study area. An assessment is provided for the following environmental factors:

- Land use and property impacts
- Economic impacts
- Traffic and transport
- Noise and vibration
- Visual amenity, built form and urban design
- Soil and water
- Biodiversity
- Heritage
- Air quality
- Social impacts.

6.1 Land use and property impacts

This section identifies the existing land uses and potential property impacts within and next to the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. It describes how potential impacts have been avoided, minimised or offset to reduce any impact associated with the protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. This section also considers possible future land use changes or opportunities as a result of potential future infrastructure within the recommended North South Rail Line corridor, and any measures to minimise any future impacts.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying land use in the northern study area is shown in Figure 6-1.

6.1.1 How impacts have been avoided

The portion of the northern study area north of the M4 Western Motorway is highly developed, which presents a constraint to future development of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. To reduce land use and property impacts, the corridor between St Marys and Orchard Hills is proposed to be located in tunnel. A future tunnel would minimise land use and property impacts at the surface by avoiding the need to protect a corridor for the North South Rail Line in this area.

6.1.2 Property impact assessment

Where the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel between St Marys and Orchard Hills, the future tunnelled infrastructure would be designed to avoid direct impacts to existing buildings and structures. As described in Section 6.5, a range of measures can be adopted in the future design of potential tunnel connections that mitigate surface impacts.

Surface property impacts would occur within and surrounding the surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between Orchard Hills and the future Western Sydney Airport site as a result of the construction and operation of the North South Rail Line. Specific impacts at key locations along the recommended corridor are described in the following sections.

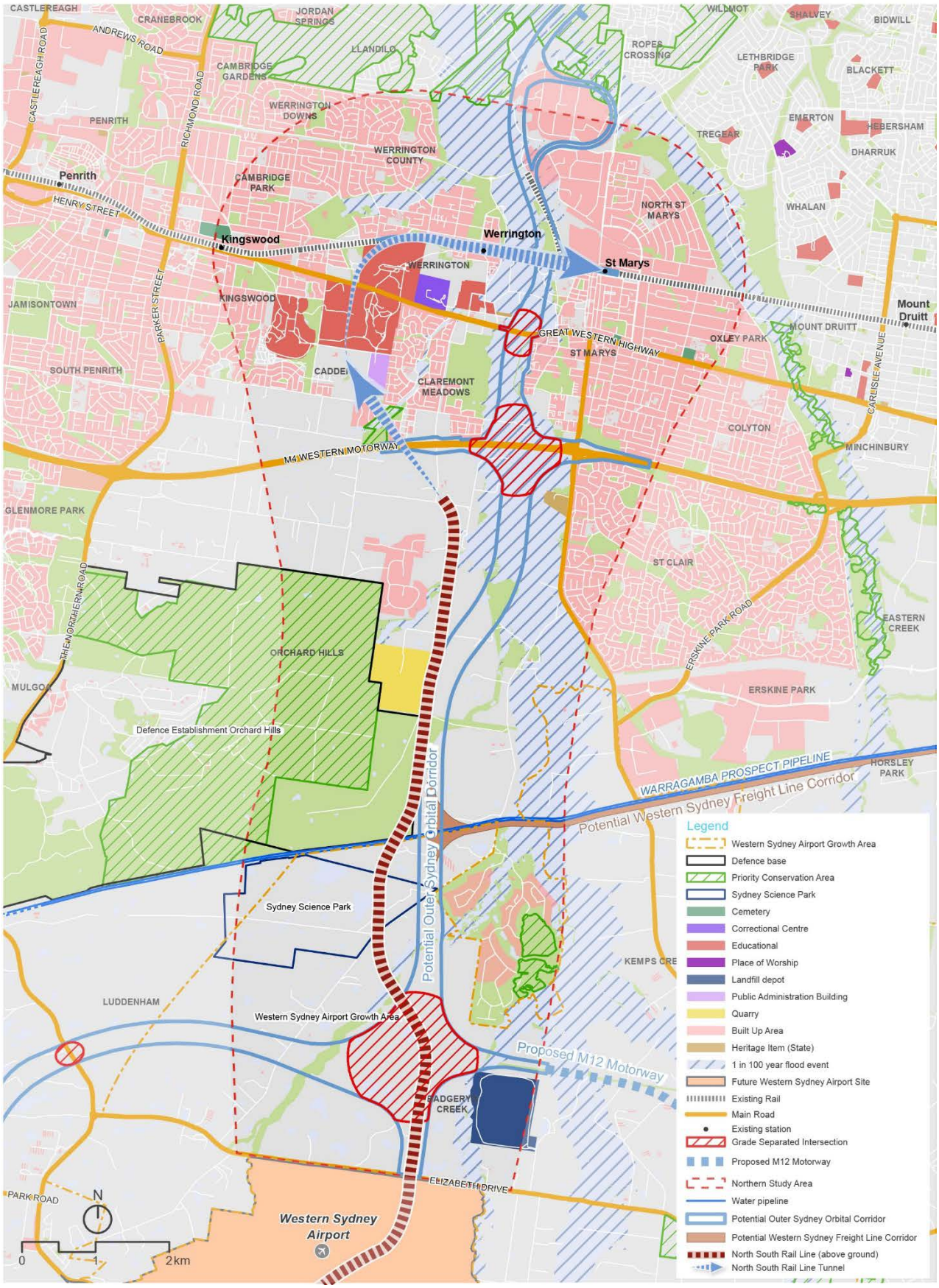

Figure 6-1 Recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying land use in the northern study area

St Marys Town Centre

St Marys is identified as a strategic centre in the *Draft Western City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission 2017b). Penrith City Council has identified St Marys to be one of the two core centres within the Penrith local government area. Council developed the *St Marys Town Centre Strategy* (2006) which identifies initiatives to support development and growth within the region as well as improve access to the town centre. Implementation of the Strategy has commenced with the reclassification of some community land as operational land and with the introduction of mixed use and high density residential zones. The North South Rail Line would support the further implementation of the Strategy by improving access and connectivity to the town centre, which would make it a more attractive destination and provide residents with easier access to future employment areas.

The North South Rail Line would also improve access to the Penrith Health and Education Precinct and support the future development of Werrington Park.

St Marys Town Centre is shown in Figure 6-2.

Figure 6-2 St Marys Town Centre

Orchard Hills to Badgerys Creek

The surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between Orchard Hills and the future Western Sydney Airport site would directly impact 29 properties, most of which are rural residential and agricultural properties in Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Badgerys Creek. The majority of these properties are located within proposed or potential urban development areas and are expected to experience vast land use changes in the future.

As discussed in Section 2.3, land between Orchard Hills and Badgerys Creek has been identified for future urban development as part of the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area and potentially in the Greater Penrith to St Marys area.

Given the major future land use change that may occur around the directly impacted properties, a viability assessment on the residual land parcels has not been carried out. It is expected that residual parcels would be amalgamated as part of a possible future precinct planning and development process.

Land use between Orchard Hills and Badgerys Creek would also be impacted by other potential new transport corridors that have also been identified for this area including:

- Outer Sydney Orbital corridor
- Western Sydney Freight Line corridor
- Bankstown to Liverpool Metro link, which is a potential extension of Sydney Metro City and Southwest to Liverpool.

The potential land use impacts of these transport corridors are proposed to be minimised by locating the North South Rail Line within the corridor being investigated for the Outer Sydney Orbital and Western Sydney Freight Line within Orchard Hills and Badgerys Creek, as shown in Figure 6-4. Thirteen of the 29 properties directly impacted by the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between Orchard Hills and Badgerys Creek are also directly impacted by the potential Outer Sydney Orbital corridor.

The potential co-location of future road and rail infrastructure should minimise land take for transport infrastructure compared to it being developed in separate corridors. It should also reduce the occurrence of property severance. Co-location of road and rail infrastructure would also concentrate the potential future noise, air quality and visual impacts of the construction and operation of this infrastructure, which should reduce the number of potentially impacted sensitive receivers compared to this infrastructure being developed in separate corridors.

The *Draft Western City District Plan* and *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* provide a coordinated approach to planning for urban development areas and transport corridors within the growth areas, including land between Orchard Hills and Badgerys Creek. This coordinated approach should minimise the future potential land use impacts of the North South Rail Line by ensuring that the development of land near the corridor is compatible with a future railway.

Sydney Science Park, Luddenham

Sydney Science Park is located within the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area at Luddenham. The planned research and development centre is set over 280 hectares on a site that is bounded by the Warragamba Prospect Pipeline to the north, Twins Creek Estate to the east, and rural residential properties to the west. The proposed Outer Sydney Orbital Motorway would run along the eastern boundary of the site.

The development of Sydney Science Park is focused on providing education, research and development facilities, science based companies and employment opportunities, and some mixed residential and student accommodation within the town centre (Elton Consulting 2013). The Sydney Science Park Master Plan is shown in Figure 6-3.The master plan includes the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

Western Sydney Airport

The Western Sydney Airport will deliver up to 3200 jobs during construction and around 9,000 airport jobs during operation over the next 20 years. The Airport is expected to support around 28,000 jobs by 2031, which will grow to nearly 48,000 by 2041. This includes 5,600 jobs in manufacturing, 6450 in retail and 5600 in professional, scientific and technical services.

At full operation, the airport will create at least 60,000 jobs, as well as logistics, trade, aerospace and defence, advanced manufacturing and tourism. The ultimate ambition is for Western Sydney Airport to be the catalyst for the development of the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis.

Figure 6-3 Sydney Science Park Master Plan

Source: Penrith City Council (2015b) Planning Proposal - Sydney Science Park Volume 1

6.1.2.1 Future railway stations

Potential railway stations will be investigated along the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. The consideration will require a strong focus on integrating land use and transport planning to ensure land uses near stations are compatible with the potential noise, traffic and visual impacts of stations and opportunities for transport interchange are maximised.

6.1.2.2 Crown land

No Crown land is impacted by the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between St Marys and the future Western Sydney Airport site.

6.1.3 Mitigation measures

The tunnel parts of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would avoid impacts to existing land use between St Marys and Orchard Hills. Tunnelling would avoid impacts for hundreds of properties, including residential properties, schools and heritage items, along the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. Further work, including geotechnical investigation and engineering design, would be required to finalise the tunnel's alignment.

Transport for NSW will continue to be involved in land release and precinct planning processes to ensure that new land uses are compatible with a future railway. Potential land use controls for inclusion in the relevant environmental planning instrument are discussed in Section 9, and would be subject to consultation with the relevant councils, the Department of Planning and Environment and the broader community.

To minimise land use conflicts associated with amenity impacts of the future infrastructure components and railway operations, planning authorities should consider locating employment, industrial and regional open space uses adjacent to the recommended North South Rail Line corridor where it is reasonably likely that the future railway would be elevated on embankments or structures.

6.2 Economic impacts

This section provides an overview of the potential future economic impacts and opportunities that may be created by the future North South Rail Line infrastructure in the northern study area. This section also considers economic impacts of future North South Rail Line infrastructure on the wider region, with a view to short, medium and long-term impacts.

6.2.1 Expected economic benefits

The future provision of public transport infrastructure and services within the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is expected to be a catalyst to the transformation of western Sydney into the Western Economic Corridor envisaged in the *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* and *Draft Western City District Plan*. Future North South Rail Line infrastructure will form the backbone of the public transport system in the Western Economic Corridor by enabling the movement of large numbers of people efficiently and effectively. The North South Rail Line will be a major contributor to the sustainable and efficient economic development of the Western Economic Corridor by bringing people closer to jobs, health and education services and leisure activities.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would facilitate future public transport infrastructure connecting to key existing and planned housing and employment centres, as well as providing for potential further expansion and additional public transport connections. In particular, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor responds to the need to connect workers and residents to the Western Economic Corridor including to the future Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis, Western Sydney Airport and Western Sydney Airport Growth Area. The potential future provision of public transport infrastructure to these centres would have a number of benefits for employment capacity and the economy:

- Delivering additional development capacity for employment-generating land uses
- Delivering additional dwellings in transit oriented development around new transport nodes, increasing the demand for local employment-supporting services
- Increasing the broader population catchment able to access the region for employment by public transport, increasing the ability of businesses to access potential employees and customers.

According to the *State Infrastructure Strategy*, congestion costs Sydney around $5 billion a year, and is set to grow to $8 billion a year by 2020 if no mitigating action is taken. Major expansions of the public transport network such as a future North South Rail Line will provide the key to mitigating the future cost of congestion.

The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Study* has identified the need for additional rail investment in western Sydney over the longer term to address capacity constraints on the existing rail network, expand the coverage of the network and shape the development of western Sydney. The provision of rail in western Sydney will cater for the forecast population growth, offer opportunities for the development of increased housing supply, increase access to jobs and provide the necessary transport infrastructure to support the growth of the region over the coming decades.

Rail links in western Sydney could drive employment to mitigate the need to travel east towards the Harbour CBD. Rail links, with complementary land use planning, can provide local jobs based around new and existing centres with increased accessibility. Western Sydney Airport will also help generate jobs directly and indirectly related to its construction and operation phases.

The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study* specifically discusses the options for a rail public transport connection to the future Western Sydney Airport. Western Sydney Airport will deliver a major economic boost to the region and an effective public transport connection is seen to be key to the success of the airport, as well as to support the forecast growth of western Sydney.

The future Western Sydney Airport is expected to generate 9000 direct jobs by the early 2030s and this is expected to increase to 60,000 jobs by 2063. In addition to this, Western Sydney Airport is expected to directly generate $77 million, and $145 million for the rest of Sydney by the 2030s. By 2063, Western Sydney Airport will boost the western Sydney economy by $1.5 billion a year and $4.6 billion Sydney-wide.

Based on these forecast economic benefits, it is evident that a rail connection will enable the successful operation of the future Western Sydney Airport. The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study* notes that areas of economic activity in western Sydney have the potential to grow as a result of the Western Sydney Airport, however businesses often cite poor transport connections as a barrier to relocating to western Sydney. As a result, an efficient and reliable public transport network is needed to bring homes and businesses closer together. In response to this, the *Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study* identifies that corridor protection is a key component of planning for Western Sydney and the future Western Sydney Airport as it will support road upgrades being undertaken as part of the *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan*, provide certainty to communities and businesses in the area and reduce costs for the delivery of potential rail infrastructure.

6.2.2 Potential economic impacts of 'no corridor'

Potential negative impacts of failing to protect the recommended North South Rail Line corridor include:

- Increase in costs if the absence of a surface corridor results in greater use of tunnel, which has substantially higher whole of life costs than rail infrastructure developed at the surface. The much greater cost of developing rail infrastructure in tunnel can make rail projects unfeasible
- Increase in property acquisition costs arising from underlying land value increases and additional cost associated with uncontrolled land improvements
- Increase in relocation and mitigation costs associated with relocating residents, businesses and infrastructure located within the recommended North South Rail Line corridor and additional mitigation costs associated with land uses and local infrastructure located next to the corridor
- Inefficient land use arising from a lack of information regarding long term planning for a transport corridor
- Poor integration of road and public transport networks
- Increased risk of project delays and incurring additional acquisition, construction and operational costs where future constraints prevent the delivery of the best available alignment for future infrastructure.

These negative impacts would likely result in delays to the delivery of future infrastructure, leading to increased road traffic congestion and increased travel times for the future residents of south-west Sydney. As such, while there are some short-term impacts from protecting the corridor at this time, these are considered to be outweighed by the longer-term impacts of not protecting the corridor.

6.2.3 Potential effects on related infrastructure projects

The protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor for potential future public transport infrastructure is expected to directly and indirectly affect related infrastructure projects in western Sydney. In the northern study area, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has the potential to affect the potential Outer Sydney Orbital and proposed Western Sydney Airport.

6.2.3.1 Outer Sydney Orbital

Planning for the recommended North South Rail Line corridor and potential Outer Sydney Orbital corridor has occurred in tandem, which has enabled opportunities for co-locating infrastructure to be identified and investigated. Co-location of transport infrastructure can deliver land efficiency benefits by minimising land take and severance. It can also provide environmental benefits by limiting the number of sensitive receivers effected by noise, air quality and visual impacts.

6.2.3.2 Western Sydney Airport

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor does not directly affect the land identified for the Western Sydney Airport at Badgerys Creek. The northern-most extent of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is located some 3.5 kilometres to the south of the southern airport boundary. The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study – Discussion Paper* includes two potential options for heavy rail servicing of the airport that could rely on the recommended North South Rail Line corridor if required, being options to connect to Leppington via the North South Rail Line and an option for a north-south link to Macarthur. To this effect, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has the potential to facilitate rail servicing of the Western Sydney Airport in the future if one of these options is progressed in either the short or longer term. In addition to this, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has the potential to support additional housing and employment growth within the region that is stimulated by the delivery and operation of the Western Sydney Airport.

6.3 Traffic and transport

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying the key existing and future transport infrastructure is shown in Figure 6-4.

6.3.1 How impacts have been avoided

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor between St Marys and Orchard Hills is proposed to be in tunnel, which would avoid impacts to existing and future surface traffic and transport infrastructure. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would tunnel under the Great Western Motorway and M4 Western Motorway, without interfering with traffic flows.

6.3.2 Assessment of road infrastructure impacts

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would not have an impact on existing traffic and transport conditions. Once protected, however, it is expected that subsequent traffic and transport planning near the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would take the corridor into account. Key principles for future road crossings include:

- No rail/road level crossings
- Crossings of all roads should be grade-separated, or roads diverted/truncated
- Crossings should be perpendicular where possible, to reduce the length of the structure
- Crossings should be positioned away from road intersections so as to minimise impact to pedestrians, access and traffic operations.

Table 6-1 identifies roads that the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would cross in the northern study area, including the proposed M12 Motorway and potential Outer Sydney Orbital corridor, and discusses how planning for these crossings will be considered in the future.

Table 6-1 Road crossings in the northern study area

Affected road	Future function	Future consideration
Outer Sydney Orbital, St Marys to Luddenham	Transport for NSW is investigating a corridor through western Sydney for a future motorway and freight rail line. The potential corridor is known as the Outer Sydney Orbital and would connect Box Hill in the north to the Hume Highway near Menangle in the south, with potential future links to the Illawarra and Central Coast (Roads and Maritime Services 2017c) Within the northern study area, the Outer Sydney Orbital would provide links to the Great Western Highway, M4 Western Motorway and future Western Sydney Airport site.	Planning for a North South Rail Line is occurring in tandem with the Outer Sydney Orbital. Co-location of the North South Rail Line and Outer Sydney Orbital is proposed where possible to minimise land use impacts and the number of sensitive receivers effected by noise, air quality and visual impacts. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor is located east of and parallel to the Outer Sydney Orbital through Badgerys Creek and Orchard Hills. The corridor intersects with the M12 Motorway to the east of the M12 – Outer Sydney Orbital interchange.

Affected road	Future function	Future consideration
M12 Motorway, Kemps Creek to Luddenham	The M12 Motorway would be about 16 kilometres long and connect the M7 Motorway, near Cecil Hills, to The Northern Road, near Luddenham. The M12 Motorway and Outer Sydney Orbital would coincide between Badgerys Creek and The Northern Road. A grade-separated interchange is proposed north of Western Sydney Airport with the Outer Sydney Orbital proceeding northward towards St Marys and the M12 proceeding to the east and the previously mentioned link to the airport heading south from the interchange.	Planning for North South Rail Line is occurring in tandem with the Outer Sydney Orbital and M12 Motorway. Co-location of future road and rail infrastructure is proposed where possible in the northern study area to minimise land use impacts and the number of sensitive receivers effected by noise, air quality and visual impacts.
Elizabeth Drive, Badgerys Creek	Elizabeth Drive, at Badgerys Creek. Elizabeth Drive is located at the southern end of the northern study area, along the boundary of the future Western Sydney Airport site. Elizabeth Drive is predominately a single lane in each direction with slip lanes for safe turning movements at some intersections.	The final layout of the future Western Sydney Airport site will be determined by the Australian Government in 2018. The airport layout will inform the design of the North South Rail Line at Elizabeth Drive. The North South Rail Line could remain at the surface or be in tunnel at the airport. Regardless of the design outcome, a crossing above or tunnelling below Elizabeth Drive would be required for the North South Rail Line to continue to the airport and further south.
Luddenham Road, Luddenham	Luddenham is an unclassified regional road (Roads and Maritime Services 2017a). It connects Mamre Road in St Clair to Elizabeth Drive in Luddenham. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor cross Luddenham Road in a north-south direction just south of Sydney Science Park. No future function for Luddenham Road has been identified.	Transport for NSW would liaise closely with the Department of Planning and Environment, councils and landowners during any future precinct planning and rezoning processes in Luddenham to ensure the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is well understood and properly accommodated in land use structure and access plans.
Patons Lane, Orchard Hills	Patons Lane, in Orchard Hills, currently provides access to Erskine Park Quarry. No future function for this road has been identified.	Transport for NSW would liaise closely with the Department of Planning and Environment, councils and landowners during any future precinct planning and rezoning processes in Orchard Hills to ensure the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is well understood and properly accommodated in land use structure and access plans.
Other roads	The recommended North South Rail Line corridor crosses some internal access roads on agricultural properties in Luddenham and Badgerys Creek. It is likely that these roads are predominantly utilised by local residents for rural property access. No future functions have been identified for these roads.	Transport for NSW would liaise closely with the Department of Planning and Environment, councils and landowners during any future precinct planning and rezoning processes in Luddenham and Badgerys Creek to ensure the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is well understood and properly accommodated in land use structure and access plans.

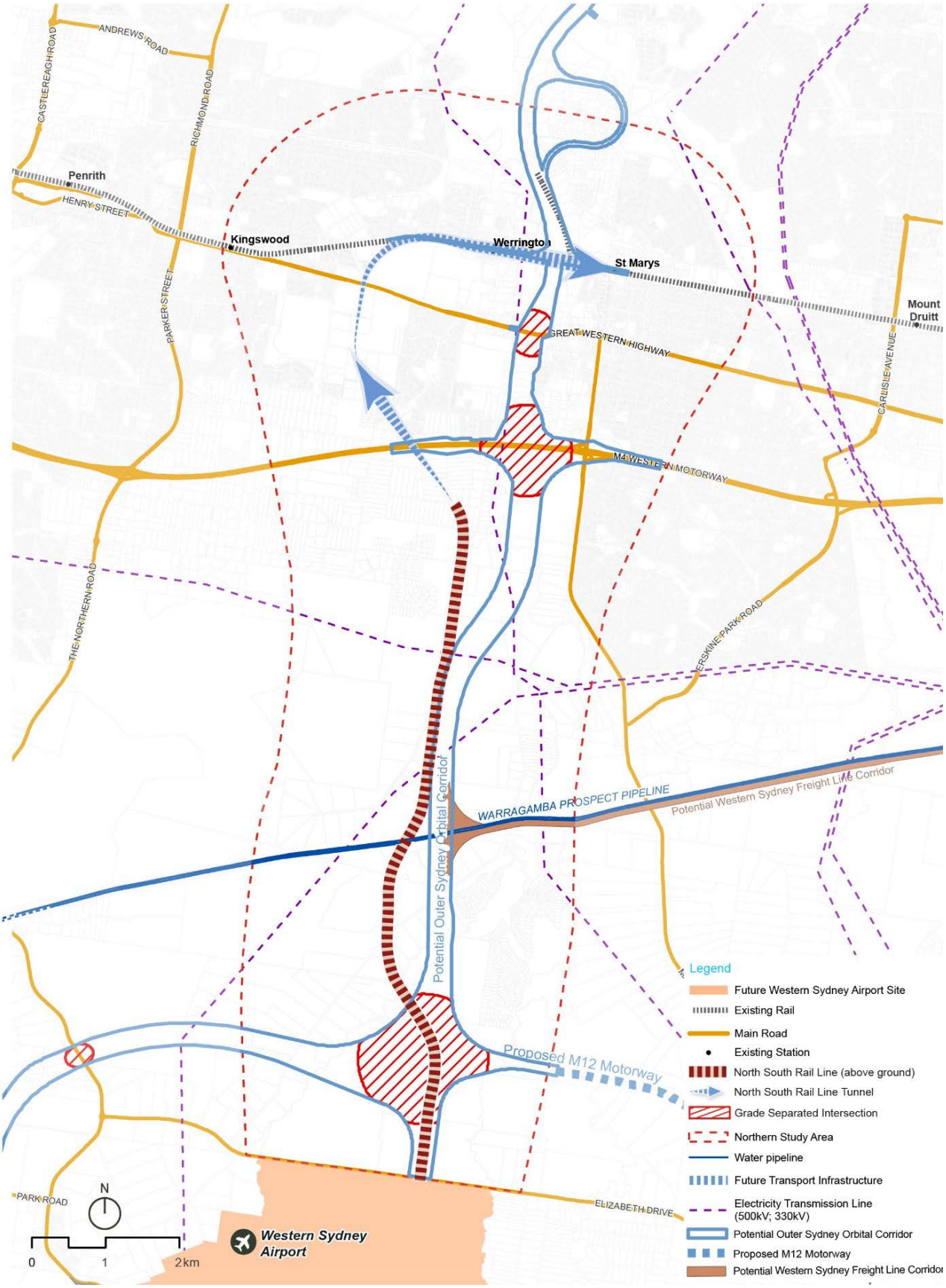

Figure 6-4 Recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying infrastructure in the northern study area

6.3.3 Mitigation measures

The provision of a tunnel would be the most significant traffic impact mitigation between St Marys and Orchard Hills. Tunnelling would avoid impacts to a number of State and local roads including the Great Western Highway and M4 Western Motorway.

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would allow road planning for the M12 Motorway, Outer Sydney Orbital, Western Sydney Airport Growth Area, Greater Penrith to St Marys investigations and development of Sydney Science Park to continue with confidence about the location of future rail infrastructure.

Transport for NSW would liaise closely with the Department of Planning and Environment, councils and landowners during precinct planning and rezoning processes to ensure the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is well understood and properly accommodated in land use structure and access plans. This would ensure that local transport arrangements can be designed to accommodate the future rail corridor without the need for costly local road diversions and realignments in the future.

A full traffic and transport impact assessment of the North South Rail Line would be prepared in the future, when the need to build and operate the new rail line is identified. This would allow for the assessment to incorporate the traffic environment at the time of development more accurately and to appropriately identify solutions to interactions between the local road network and railway stations.

It is highlighted that from the mid-2020s the Western Sydney Airport would also be a significant contributor to traffic in the northern study area.

Key factors to be considered in the planning and design of stations would be the intended role of the station, car parking arrangements, and their integration with other public transport modes, particularly buses. The design of future infrastructure would also account for the strategies for walking and cycling outlined in *Sydney's Cycling Future* (Transport for NSW 2013a) and *Sydney's Walking Future* (Transport for NSW 2013b), or the equivalent strategic policy at the time. This work may need to progress well before the detailed design and construction of future potential rail infrastructure.

6.4 Noise and vibration

This section assesses the potential noise and vibration impacts of future infrastructure in the vicinity of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between St Marys and the future Western Sydney Airport site. Sensitive land uses surrounding the corridor are identified as well as how the corridor has avoided, minimised or offsets impacts.

6.4.1 How impacts have been avoided

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor is proposed to be in tunnel from St Marys to Orchard Hills, which would avoid airborne noise impacts to sensitive receivers in this section of the corridor.

The potential for ground borne noise and vibration from tunnels would be determined at the next stage of planning for the North South Rail Line. A range of mitigation strategies can be implemented to ensure that surface impacts are avoided and noise and vibration criteria can be achieved.

Future infrastructure from Orchard Hills to Badgerys Creek would be located through a currently greenfield area. Sensitive receivers near the corridor include dwellings on the eastern edge of The Vines subdivision and dwellings on rural properties. These sensitive receivers are fairly widely dispersed in Luddenham and Badgerys Creek. The future development of Western Sydney Airport Growth Area including Sydney Science Park and potential development of the Greater Penrith to St Marys area is likely to result in more sensitive receivers in proximity to the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

It is highlighted that from the mid-2020s the Western Sydney Airport would also be a significant contributor to the emission of noise in the northern study area.

6.4.2 Strategic environmental assessment

There would be no noise impact associated with the protection of the rail corridor. However, the future construction and operation of the North South Rail Line would result in noise impacts to surrounding areas. Early protection of the corridor provides the opportunity for the surrounding areas to be planned and designed in the full knowledge that a rail line would ultimately be built within the corridor. A conceptual analysis of the likely noise impacts of the future infrastructure has been carried out to determine if the recommended North South Rail Line corridor can be adequately mitigate against future impacts as part of the future design and environmental impact assessment, and to inform strategic planning for the areas around the corridor in the intervening period.

6.4.2.1 Noise assessment criteria

Once a project is identified for construction, operational noise trigger levels for the project would be based on the *Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline* (Environment Protection Authority 2013). There is no rail line currently in operation within this area, as such, the new rail line development criterion for airborne noise would be applicable to a future railway infrastructure project.

The *Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline* provides air-borne noise trigger levels relating to the overall noise levels (L_{Amax} and L_{Aeq}), as well as the increase in noise levels as a result of heavy rail infrastructure projects. To initiate an assessment of rail noise impacts and to investigate mitigation measures, both the increase in rail noise levels as a result of a project and the overall level of rail noise must exceed the trigger levels. For residential and other sensitive receivers the applicable noise trigger levels are provided in Table 6-2 and Table 6-3 respectively.

The noise trigger levels apply both immediately after operations commence and for projected traffic volumes at an indicative period into the future to represent the expected typical level of rail traffic usage, for example, 10 years or similar period into the future after the commencement of operation of train services.

Ground-borne noise (or regenerated noise) occurs during a train pass-by when vibration energy is transmitted through the track support system (including in tunnels), which in turns excites the surrounding ground and creates vibration waves that can propagate through the ground to the foundations of nearby buildings causing the walls and floors to faintly vibrate and radiate noise.

The *Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline* provides ground-borne trigger levels for heavy rail infrastructure projects. Where the assessed ground-borne noise levels are above the trigger levels, the project is to identify feasible and reasonable mitigation measures to control ground-borne noise levels with the objective of meeting the trigger levels. Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline ground-borne noise trigger levels are provided in Table 6-4.

Table 6-2 Trigger levels for noise impact assessment for residential receivers

Type of development	**Residential noise trigger levels**	
	Day (7am – 10pm)	**Night (10pm – 7am)**
New rail line	Resulting rail noise levels exceed:	
	60 $L_{Aeq(15hour)}$ 80 L_{Amax}	55 $L_{Aeq(9hour)}$ 80 L_{Amax}
Redevelopment of existing rail line	Development increases existing rail noise levels AND Resulting rail noise levels exceed:	
	65 $L_{Aeq(15hour)}$ 85 L_{Amax}	60 $L_{Aeq(9hour)}$ 85 L_{Amax}

Source: *Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline* (Environment Protection Authority 2013)

Table 6-3 Trigger levels for noise impact assessment for other sensitive receivers

Sensitive land use	Noise trigger levels for new rail line	Noise trigger levels for redevelopment of existing rail line
	Resulting in rail noise levels exceed:	**Development increases existing rail noise levels by 2.0 dB or more in L_{Aeq} in any hour AND Resulting rail noise levels exceed:**
Schools, educational institutions - internal	40 $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$	45 $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$
Places of worship – internal 1	40 $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$	45 $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$
Hospitals – internal	35 $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$	40 $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$
Hospitals – external	60 $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$	65 $L_{Aeq(1hour)}$
Passive recreation areas	60 $L_{Aeq(15hour)}$	65 $L_{Aeq(15hour)}$
Active recreation areas	65 $L_{Aeq(15hour)}$	65 $L_{Aeq(15hour)}$

Source: *Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline* (Environment Protection Authority 2013)

Table 6-4 Trigger levels for ground-borne noise impact assessment

Sensitive land use	Time of day	Internal noise trigger level
Residential	Day (7am – 10pm)	Development increases existing rail noise levels by 3.0 dB or more in L_{Aeq} in any hour AND 40 dBA
	Night (10pm – 7am)	Development increases existing rail noise levels by 3.0 dB or more in L_{Aeq} in any hour AND 35 dBA
Schools, educational institutions, places of worship	When in use	Development increases existing rail noise levels by 3.0 dB or more in L_{Aeq} in any hour AND 40 – 45 dBA

Source: *Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline* (Environment Protection Authority 2013)

6.4.2.2 Vibration assessment criteria

Operational vibration trigger levels for the project would be based on *Assessing Vibration: A Technical Guideline* (Department of Environment and Conservation 2006). This guideline provides acceptable vibration criteria relating to the comfort of building occupants. These criteria are significantly more stringent than the guideline's criteria for structural damage.

For intermittent vibration at residential receivers, vibration trigger levels are expressed in terms of the vibration dose value during the daytime and night-time periods. The vibration dose value is a measure that takes into account the overall magnitude of the vibration levels during a train pass-by, as well as the total number of train pass-bys during the daytime and night-time periods. For residential receiver locations, the guideline nominates 'preferred' vibration dose values of <0.2 $m/s^{1.75}$ (daytime) and < 0.13 $m/s^{1.75}$ (night-time) and 'maximum' vibration dose values of 0.4 $m/s^{1.75}$ (daytime) and 0.26 $m/s^{1.75}$ (night-time). For offices, schools, educational institutions and places of worship, the guideline nominates vibration dose values twice the residential daytime levels, for example 0.4 m/ $s^{1.75}$ during the daytime and night-time periods.

6.4.2.3 Assessment of impacts of surface corridor sections

Depending on the surrounding terrain, future dwellings next to the future North South Rail Line would be expected to have predicted noise levels that may exceed the planning L_{Aeq} daytime noise levels for a new rail line.

Potential vibration impacts can be managed at the time of detailed design.

6.4.2.4 Assessment of impacts of tunnel corridor sections

Tunnel sections have not yet been designed and further detailed investigation is needed to inform the ground-borne noise impacts. Tunnelling design would need to include identification and adoption of appropriate mitigation strategies to avoid surface ground borne noise and vibration impacts. This may involve consideration of the horizontal and vertical location of the tunnel combined with track attenuation.

In the case of railway tunnels, the ground-borne noise trigger levels almost always dictate lower vibration levels than the vibration objectives. As such, compliance with the ground-borne noise trigger levels should ensure that the above vibration design objectives would also be achieved.

6.4.3 Mitigation measures

The provision of a tunnel between St Marys and Orchard Hills would be the most effective form of noise mitigation. Tunnelling would avoid airborne noise impacts for hundreds of properties, including residential properties, schools and heritage items, along the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. Further work would be required to locate and design the tunnel to avoid surface impacts as part of detailed investigations for potential rail infrastructure in the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

6.4.3.1 Land use integration

As part of the land release and rezoning process, planning authorities and landowners should establish land use structure plans that minimise the location of sensitive buildings in close proximity to the likely noisiest parts of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. Transport for NSW should be involved in land release and rezoning processes to ensure that new land uses are compatible with potential future rail infrastructure and that appropriate noise mitigations are incorporated into subdivision patterns, development layout and design.

6.4.3.2 Design mitigation

If the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is zoned SP2 Infrastructure, clause 102 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (or similar controls) would apply, defining internal noise goals for residential buildings. In addition, development controls should be introduced as part of any future precinct plans to ensure that new residential areas contain appropriate noise mitigations, and that buildings located near the recommended North South Rail Line corridor are constructed in a way that attenuates future adverse rail noise impacts for building users. The *Interim Guideline for Development Near Rail Corridors and Busy Roads* (Department of Planning 2008) should be used to inform these development controls. Design approaches to mitigate future noise impacts could include:

- Establishing the external noise levels to determine appropriate building designs. This could be done individually for each dwelling as part of individual building applications or pre-defined noise levels could be mapped and provided as an overlay as part of a project master plan, allowing, for example, a future home owner to understand the building design requirements for a sensitive building across all parcels of land for sale.
- Design within sensitive buildings may also place non-habitable rooms such as a laundry, bathroom or garage, at facades that directly face the rail corridor, negating the need for higher construction noise treatments that may be required for bedrooms and living spaces.

Transport for NSW would work with the Department of Planning and Environment and the relevant council to ensure future railway noise impacts are properly understood and are made available to landowners, developers and council to inform the design and development of new precincts.

6.4.3.3 Rail noise source mitigation

A full noise and vibration impact assessment would be prepared in the future, when the need to build and operate the North South Rail Line is identified. This would allow for the assessment to incorporate the noise source mitigation at the time of development more accurately and to appropriately identify solutions to noise impacts on existing or expected sensitive receivers.

Airborne noise from the rolling contact of steel wheels on steel rails results from vibration of the wheel, rail and sleepers. Consequently, control of airborne noise by up to 5 decibels can be achieved through dampening the vibration of the rails and the wheels during the train pass-by.

The provision of noise barriers may be considered in conjunction with land use planning processes and after consideration of alternative mitigation options as both the rail corridor and surrounding land use development progresses.

In relation to tunnels, ground borne noise and vibration can be managed by the installation of attenuating tracks sufficient to meet the design objectives. Standard attenuation is likely to be sufficient where the distance between the track and the sensitive receiver is more than 25 metres. Higher attenuation tracks would only be required in sensitive areas where the depth of the tunnel is particularly shallow.

6.5 Visual amenity, built form and urban design

This section discusses the visual impact of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between St Marys and Western Sydney Airport and particularly considers visual amenity, built form and urban design of the area surrounding the corridor. This section details how the corridor has avoided, minimised or offset visual impacts and outlines mitigation strategies to further reduce potential impacts.

6.5.1 How impacts have been avoided

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor is proposed to be in tunnel from St Marys to Orchard Hills, which would avoid visual impacts to sensitive receivers in this section of the corridor. From Orchard Hills to Badgerys Creek, the corridor passes through a rural landscape.

6.5.2 Strategic environmental assessment

Corridor protection would not have any impact on the landscape as it would not involve any physical work. However, protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor could result in retention of certain landscape values while urban development takes place around the corridor within the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area including Sydney Science Park and potential development of the Greater Penrith to St Marys area.

The visual, built and urban form impacts of potential future infrastructure have been assessed with reference to the physical parameters of infrastructure required for a future rail line, the extent of visual modification that would be required to accommodate a future rail line and the visual sensitivity of surrounding land uses.

From Orchard Hills to Badgerys Creek, the northern study area is currently open and rural, comprising cleared pastureland and large agricultural properties. Vegetation density differs throughout the landscape, with some scattered vegetation on agricultural properties and denser vegetation along creek lines. Although the study area is undulating, the future development of a rail line would introduce a new dominant feature to the landscape. If the future design of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor includes viaducts and other elevated structures (particularly in the vicinity of flood prone land such as at the crossings of Blaxland Creek, Cosgroves Creeks and other smaller tributaries of South Creek), visual impacts would potentially be high.

6.5.3 Mitigation measures

The tunnel section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor proposes the most effective mitigation to visual and landscape impacts from St Marys to Orchard Hills. The surface section from Orchard Hills to Badgerys Creek would present visual impacts to those within the surrounding study area. The surrounding study area is likely to experience growth and development in the future as part of the Western Sydney Growth Area and establishment of the Sydney Science Park. This would reduce visual impacts of the future rail line as land use changes would result in more residential and commercial development within the surrounding study area, resulting in the corridor being less of a dominant feature in the landscape.

Industrial and commercial uses have a lower level of visual impact from a future rail line, as they are less visually sensitive. As such, planned industrial areas where visual sensitivity to a rail line is low should be located adjacent to existing parts of the corridor likely to have the greatest future visual impact.

Neighbourhood and town centres comprising a mix of commercial, retail and residential uses can also be compatible with the potential impact of a future rail line. For example, activities that take place within a local centre are limited to business hours and are not generally activities that would be sensitive to a visual impact.

Where more visually sensitive land uses are proposed adjacent to the corridor, the following mitigation measures should be considered as part of the rezoning and precinct planning processes:

- Setback of visually sensitive land uses – by locating roads or public open spaces in between
- Landscaped buffers
- Streets adjoining future stations should be landscaped to include public open space to provide for future station precinct amenity.

A detailed visual impact assessment would be undertaken with the detailed design of a future rail line. This would ensure that an accurate visual impact assessment is undertaken that considers both proposed rail infrastructure and the adjoining uses for each part of the corridor. Where the visual modification of the landscape is high, the future railway infrastructure should be suitably and proportionately screened with landscaping.

6.6 Soil and water

This section identifies soil and water impacts in the vicinity of the corridor, with a key focus on geology, hydrology, water supply, acid sulphate soils and contaminated land. Based on these conditions, this section discusses how the corridor has avoided, minimised or offset impacts on soil and water and mitigation measures to further reduce any potential impacts.

6.6.1 How impacts have been avoided

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor has been aligned to generally avoid flood prone land and is mostly located above the 1 in 100 year flood levels. However, it is necessary for the alignment to traverse watercourses and parts of the South Creek flood plain.

The surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is aligned to avoid many of the existing small dams and water storage areas in Orchard Hills, Luddenham and Badgerys Creek. The corridor travels through some small dams located on agricultural land as well as Cosgroves Creek and South Creek. The soil landscape of South Creek is known to include moderate to highly erodible soils and suitable erosion and sediment control measures would be implemented during construction.

6.6.2 Strategic environmental assessment

Corridor protection would have no immediate impact on geology, soil or water resources. However, construction and operation of the railway would result in soil and water impacts that would need to be taken into account as part of rail design, construction, and planning.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor has been selected to avoid disturbance to existing dams, drainage channels and other water courses/water bodies as much as possible, to minimise possible future soil and water impacts during construction.

6.6.2.1 Geology

The majority of the tunnel alignment would intersect Bringelly Shale which is characterised by sandstone, siltstone, claystone and interbeds of siltstone and fine-grained sandstone (laminites), forming prominent benches, for example, the Potts Hill Sandstone Member, in the upper level of exposures in Sydney. The lower levels of the Bringelly Shale within the project area are marked by thin bituminous coal seams and carbonaceous siltstone-claystone beds up to 0.3m in thickness.

The preliminary geological assessment indicates there are geological aspects that would require further geotechnical investigation to adequately inform the detailed project design. These aspects include, but are not necessarily limited to, extensive shale bedrock deposits, presence of anticlines and synclines and clays with high shrinkswell capacities.

Parts of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in the northern study area are also likely to intersect the Narellan Lineament around Werrington, Caddens and Claremont Meadows (as per the Penrith 100:000 Geological Sheet).

6.6.2.2 Soils

The majority of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is within areas considered to have 'no known occurrence' of acid sulfate soils materials. Acid sulfate soil assessments would still be conducted and an acid sulfate soils management plan prepared at the time of project construction.

The soil landscape of South Creek is known to include moderate to highly erodible soils. This is relevant to the selection of suitable erosion and sediment controls during the construction phase.

6.6.2.3 Contamination

Sites with soil contamination impacts can present a localised risk to human health and the environment, as well as risks to downstream receptors if contaminants are migrating off-site, for example, via contaminated groundwater, surface water/runoff, or vapour migration. If not managed appropriately, construction activities which disturb soils and/or groundwater on contaminated sites have the potential to spread (or exacerbate the spread) of contamination impacts, increase the likelihood and severity of risks posed by contaminated materials and increase the extents and costs of remediation.

A desktop analysis of aerial photography has identified potential areas of environmental concern resulting from current or historical land uses. These areas include:

- Aimix Chemicals Pty Ltd – Chemical Plant, St Marys
- Erskine Park Quarry, Orchard Hills
- SUEZ Kemps Creek Resource Recovery Park – Recycling Centre and Waste Management Service, Luddenham
- SUEZ Elizabeth Drive Landfill, Kemps Creek.

It is likely that other areas of contamination may be present within the northern study area, however due to the level of assessment (desktop based) further investigations would need to be conducted.

6.6.2.4 Hydrology and aquifers

The impact of future surface rail infrastructure on groundwater level is likely to be low, as cut and fill would be engineered with perimeter drainage which would act to preserve the regional groundwater levels near the existing levels. These existing hydrogeological conditions would be subject to future investigation and impact mitigation subject of future project design.

Minimal change to local groundwater recharge would be expected as the existing shale derived clay soils have low permeability resulting in the majority of rainfall falling along the recommended North South Rail Line corridor being released as stormwater run-off rather than infiltrating to groundwater. It is not expected that existing farm dams at the site contribute a large amount to groundwater.

Changes in groundwater levels from re-profiling the landscape and from reduced recharge beneath paved areas may result in a small reduction in discharge to surface water features. The impacts to these systems are expected to be minor because:

- Historical water quality and hydrogeological data suggest overall groundwater inputs to surface water are small, so reductions in recharge are not expected to create adverse impacts. Further, groundwater in this area is highly saline and a small reduction in flows may reduce salt loads to surface water features, improving overall water quality.

- Rainfall recharge to the alluvial aquifer is not affected. Further, groundwater in the alluvial aquifer systems appears to have limited contact with groundwater in the shale aquifers intersected by the recommended North South Rail Line corridor, and do not rely on the shale aquifer for water supply.
- While recharge to groundwater might change, it is unlikely that groundwater elevations at discharge points would fall significantly (as they would still be a point of discharge). As such, it is not expected that stagnant pools present in surface waters during dry periods would be prone to drying up as a result of the proposed development.
- There would be localised impacts around excavations for the rail cuttings. This is not however expected to result in significant dewatering of riparian areas.

The impact of a tunnelled section on groundwater is more complex. Based on previous experience within the Sydney Basin, the permeability of the intact shale and sandstone is expected to be low, with some areas of higher permeability associated with isolated defects in the rock. Groundwater inflows would primarily occur via geological features, such as highly fractured rock, joint swarms and residual soil interfaces. In these areas, the expectation is that ground treatment would be conducted such that the overall groundwater inflow would be limited to less than 1 litre /second/km (which has become an accepted criteria for transport infrastructure tunnels in Sydney).

If a drained tunnel concept is adopted, a tunnel groundwater management strategy is required that involves the collection of groundwater inflow at low point sumps within the tunnel/s. This water can then be pumped to a water treatment plant located in the vicinity of a portal. The long-term cost for groundwater treatment and pumping needs to be assessed when doing the cost estimation of the project.

The rate of inflow is a function of the ground conditions and influences the type of tunnel support that can be adopted. The groundwater table measurements derived from geotechnical boreholes indicate that the stable ground water table is relatively low and the anticipated ground water inflow during tunnel excavation would be low, and below the criteria of 1 litres/sec/km.

As part of a future design phase, detailed groundwater assessment would be required to estimate accurate groundwater inflow and drawdown for the proposed tunnel.

6.6.2.5 Groundwater quality

As the underlying aquifer system is of low beneficial use, adverse impacts may only potentially emerge when impacted groundwater migrates beneath areas of groundwater reliant vegetation (located in creek riparian areas) and/or discharges into creeks.

Groundwater flow velocities are expected to be slow and as such the emergence of any impacts would be slow. A groundwater monitoring approach is considered to be suitable to manage the identification of groundwater quality impacts.

Groundwater seepage would be either transported away from active construction areas and discharged back to the environment, and/or removed/discharged offsite to an appropriately licensed treatment facility. While seepage volumes to the subsurface rail corridor, caverns, and at cuttings are expected to be small, seepage minimisation methods may also be adopted to either eliminate or minimise the amount of groundwater seepage generated.

6.6.2.6 Impact on groundwater receptors

Impacts to surrounding registered water bores would be negligible as they are expected to be hydraulically separated from a construction site by the saline, low hydraulic conductivity shale aquifer.

The impact of the rail corridor on groundwater dependent ecosystems is likely to be low. No creeks within or immediately adjoining the recommended North South Rail Line corridor are listed as being reliant on groundwater inflow. This information is supported by the electrical conductivity data, which suggests that groundwater inflow is a minor component of creek flow.

The water sharing plan for the greater metropolitan groundwater resources lists two high priority groundwater dependent ecosystem types (being wetlands and vegetation communities) within the Sydney central basin porous rock groundwater source. Other than Cumberland Plain Woodland, these features are located outside the catchments intersected by the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

6.6.2.7 Hydrology and flooding

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor has been aligned to generally avoid flood prone land, and is mostly located above the 1 in 100-year flood level. However, it is necessary for the alignment to traverse watercourses and parts of the South Creek flood plain.

A future infrastructure assessment would need to consider flooding and hydrology conditions at the time, as ongoing urban development may impact on current flooding and hydrology conditions. Key considerations to be addressed through the design of the surface water management system are:

- Amendment of existing surface levels along the corridor may result in minor modifications to site flow paths and sub-catchment boundaries, which could increase discharges onto adjacent land.
- Capture of site runoff to implement water quality controls may result in a potential minor decrease in discharges onto adjacent land, however this is subject to further design to mitigate downstream impacts.
- Increase in the quantity and peak flows of rainfall runoff resulting from impervious surfaces might cause higher flood levels, reduce stream stability, and increase flooding risk to people.
- Concentration of discharges and higher velocities at culvert outlets may cause localised scouring of stream beds downstream of discharge points, particularly since the South Creek landscape is known to contain moderately to highly erodible soils.

6.6.2.8 Surface water quality

Water quality impacts during construction would be typical of large linear infrastructure projects, and can be mitigated by the implementation of standard stormwater practices, and adherence to industry standards for the storage and handling of chemicals.

Endorsed environmental values for the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment include aquatic ecosystem protection, recreational water use, raw drinking water, irrigation and general use. The cumulative impact from urbanisation and other land-uses within the upper catchments of the Hawkesbury and Nepean Rivers is a recognised issue, and the *Lower Hawkesbury-Nepean River Nutrient Management Strategy* (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water 2010) provides a catchment wide policy framework to coordinate and guide actions aimed at reducing nutrient loads, and preserving the environmental values of this river system.

The receiving waters are 'NSW lowland rivers' and should be classified as 'slightly modified fresh water systems', with a 95 per cent protection level for freshwater ecosystems, as recommended in the ANZECC Guidelines. The guideline's default water quality trigger values for Lowland Rivers should be considered when selecting required water quality treatments for project discharges.

Information on the groundwater quality should be assessed during the design phase of the project to ascertain any requirements for treatment prior to release to surface water receiving environments.

Recreational water uses are only likely well downstream in the Hawkesbury River and are unlikely to be affected.

Drinking water catchment are unlikely to be affected as the surface sections of the corridor are downstream of any drinking water catchments and Sydney Water's Upper Canal.

6.6.3 Mitigation measures

6.6.3.1 Geology and soils

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would include a number of embankments and cuttings. Alluvial deposits are likely to exist around the creeks along the corridor. These have intrinsic geotechnical problems related to their shrink-swell properties and dispersiveness. Removal or improvement and strengthening of the track foundation may be required and should be considered as part of future project design.

6.6.3.2 Acid sulfate soils

It is recommended that where the recommended North South Rail Line corridor intersects existing dams, drainage channels and other water courses/water bodies, detailed acid sulfate soil assessments should be undertaken on the affected properties and, if required, an acid sulfate soils management plan(s) be prepared, as part of future project design.

6.6.3.3 Contamination

It is expected that land contamination issues identified along the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would be remediated, or addressed, to the extent required to render the land suitable for use as a rail corridor. Remedial action plans should be prepared (if required) to detail the actions required to address identified contamination issues.

For areas when the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel, assessment of surface soils may not be required. However, the quality of local groundwater should be reviewed to identify potential groundwater and/or deep soil impacts over tunnel sections.

6.6.3.4 Groundwater

Overall, drawdown impacts are expected to be minor and any mitigation measures should be linked to groundwater monitoring at key sites. Baseline monitoring is recommended for determining existing conditions on which the emergence of impacts could be identified.

The proposed locations for groundwater monitoring should focus on the early detection of impacts and the protection of sensitive environmental receptors. As such monitoring, should occur:

- Around and down-gradient of major infrastructure and at depths equivalent to the depth of construction and operation impacts. It is noted that the key sources of groundwater quality impacts would be different during construction and during operation and as such, the monitoring network would need to change also
- Within areas of identified sensitive vegetation in creek riparian areas and around creeks.

Groundwater monitoring of both the alluvial aquifer and shale aquifers should be undertaken. Some monitoring of fill material should also be undertaken to assess the potential generation of a separate water table within the fill and intensified movement of salt.

Future project design should aim to minimise infiltration of contaminants to groundwater by redirecting any rainfall and run-off from the corridor through a surface water system that would prevent connection to the underlying groundwater systems. The design should include drainage systems and storage systems that are impermeable or that minimise leakage.

6.6.3.5 Hydrology and flooding

Detailed hydrological modelling of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor within the new landforms (and changed flood conditions) for each precinct would be required to:

- Ensure suitable flood immunity can be achieved
- Assess upstream and downstream flooding impacts
- Determine the size of detention basins.

Provision of water treatment controls and basins, including access to them for maintenance should be accounted for in the detailed hydrological modelling that would need to be carried out.

6.6.3.6 Surface water quality

The project would need to incorporate water sensitive urban design principles and measures to meet water quality objectives. These principles and measures are outlined in the publication *Water Sensitive Urban Design Technical Guidelines for Western Sydney* (URS 2003).

6.7 Biodiversity

This section evaluates the current ecological values within the corridor and identifies potential impacts on these values as a result of future infrastructure. The following also identifies how these offsets would be addressed through the process of corridor protection and other mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts.

6.7.1 How impacts have been avoided

Biodiversity impacts would be avoided between St Marys and Orchard Hills as the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is proposed to be located within a tunnel. Also, the majority of the surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor within the northern study area from Orchard Hills to the future Western Sydney Airport site would span across pre-cleared rural activity based land. This would avoid the removal of large amounts of vegetation.

6.7.2 Strategic environmental assessment

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor within the northern study area would have no immediate impact on biodiversity. Corridor protection would not result in any land use change and it is not expected to result in any adverse biodiversity impacts prior to potential future infrastructure construction within the corridor. Construction and operation of the railway would result in potential future biodiversity impacts that would need to be taken into account as part of rail design and planning.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor crosses a number of watercourses within the study area, including Blaxland Creek, Cosgroves Creek and other smaller tributaries of South Creek. These watercourses provide fish and regional riparian habitat which support various aquatic and terrestrial species within the study area. The Office of Environment and Heritage has identified riparian corridors to be major regional habitat connectivity linkages across the landscape and key areas for investment in habitat enhancement in western Sydney. Bridges and viaduct structures can reduce the physical impacts that built structures have on riparian and terrestrial environments. Shading from structures has the potential to impact these environments and the function of ecosystems within them. Form and height of structures can mitigate these impacts, as well as the strategic location of them within areas of dense vegetation and critical habitat.

The future construction of the North South Rail Line would result in some vegetation removal within the northern study area. The area of vegetation requiring removal and the vegetation communities affected are identified in Table 6-5. The removal of about 8.31 hectares of mapped native vegetation would be required within the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in the northern study area for the construction of the North South Rail Line.

Table 6-5 Impacted vegetation communities

Vegetation community	Area (square metres)	Area (hectares)
10 – Shale Plains Woodland	44,466	4.45
11 – Alluvial Woodland	38,579	3.86
Total	**83,045**	**8.31**

The *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* mandates the use of biodiversity offsets for the majority of projects across NSW as well as it identifies and protects threatened species, ecological communities and key threatening processes. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor has been selected to avoid and minimise impacts on threatened species identified under the Act. In addition to this, the NSW *Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Project*s sets standards for biodiversity impact assessment and offsetting for major projects approvals in NSW until the Biodiversity Offset Scheme under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* is established. Future environmental assessment for an infrastructure project may be required to consider the *Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects*. The corridor identification process has sought to avoid and minimise impacts, consistent with the principles of the policy.

Potential ecological impacts that are likely to arise as a result of the construction and operation of the North South Rail Line are summarised below:

- Removal of native vegetation could result in loss of habitat for existing biota, including some threatened species, however existing records of biota activity in the area as well as the potential design of the corridor indicates a minimal impact from any vegetation or habitat clearing
- The recommended North South Rail Line corridor could possibly limit connectivity through the area however the foraging behaviour and movement of species in the area are unlikely to be significantly altered
- Edge effects may include increased spread of weeds in areas of adjoining vegetation, localise changes to surface hydrology and reduction in habitat quality as a result of construction impacts, however the existing fragmented nature of the vegetation and habitats within the study area increase the likelihood that existing vegetation is already subject to substantial edge effects and the proposal is not likely to impose any significant additional edge effects
- Riparian and aquatic habitat is unlikely to be significantly affected as the linear nature of the corridor would only affect small widths of waterways and associated vegetation
- Future construction work have the potential to increase erosion of banks and sedimentation in waterways and ongoing operational impacts could cause runoff from a future railway line, however appropriate mitigation measures can be implemented to minimise these impacts.

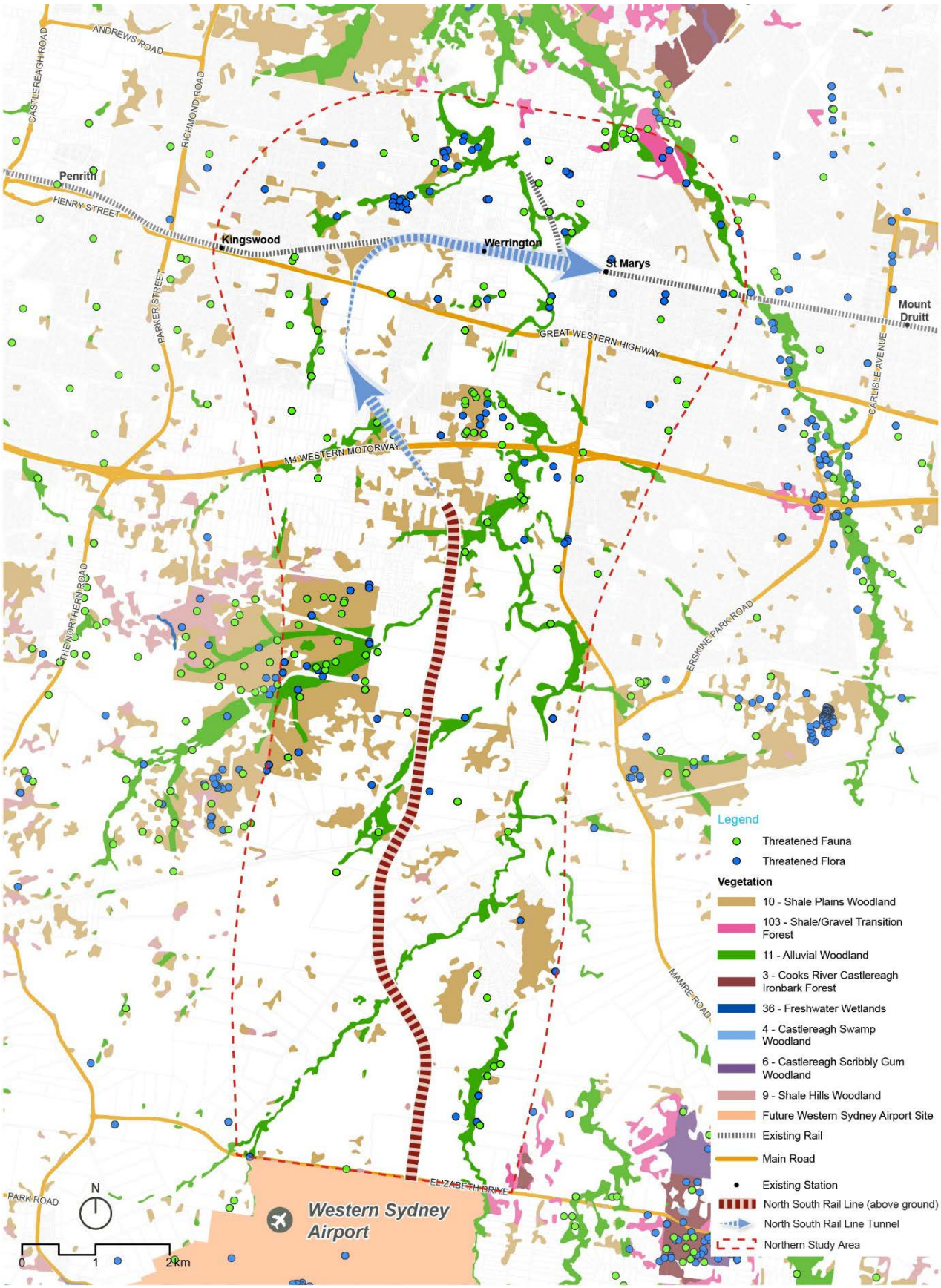

Figure 6-5 Recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying biodiversity in the northern study area

6.7.3 Mitigation strategies

The tunnel section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would avoid areas of established vegetation, including the dense riparian vegetation located along South Creek and Claremont Creek and the priority conservation land at Claremont Meadows identified in the *Cumberland Plain Recovery Plan* (Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water 2010). The corridor alignment also bypasses the defence establishment in the western section of the study area in Orchard Hills.

There is also the potential through detailed design to further avoid impacts for native and endangered vegetation. Further detailed work that would be required at the future environmental impact assessment stage includes field work, credit calculations, mapping and recording as well as further development of potential impact avoidance measures, impact mitigation measures and requirements for biodiversity offsets.

In addition to this, a future application would be referred to the Australian Government in accordance with the provisions of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* if required.

6.7.3.1 Mitigation measures

The following mitigation measures are likely to be required during the delivery of the potential future infrastructure to minimise the impacts on ecological values:

- Offset planting as part of a future biodiversity offsetting scheme
- Retention of existing hollow-bearing trees
- Retention or relocation of any ground habitat features
- Installation of temporary exclusion fencing prior to vegetation clearing
- Pre-clearance survey for threatened flora and fauna species prior to proposed clearing
- Vegetation clearing to be conducted under the supervision of a qualified ecologist
- Asset protection zone clearing to be conducted by hand to minimise disturbance to groundcover and soils
- Erosion and sedimentation controls to be installed prior to any earthworks or vegetation clearing
- Retention of a vegetation buffer around water bodies and riparian vegetation where possible
- Minimal the disturbance to the ground layer and topsoil during clearing activity.

6.7.3.2 Biodiversity offsets

Offsets are required for threatened species, populations, ecological communities and their habitat, however they are not required for vegetation below a certain condition level or vegetation that is not an endangered ecological community, critically endangered community or habitat for a threatened species or population. While the protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor does not require offsets, any future application for infrastructure development would need to undertake detailed flora and fauna surveys to determine offsets in accordance with the relevant biodiversity legislation. In accordance with the principles for corridor protection developed by Transport for NSW, biodiversity offsets would be secured early in the corridor protection process to minimise future costs and provide biodiversity benefits prior to any impacts on habitat.

The biodiversity values to be offset and the nature and quantity of offsets required would be set out in a Biodiversity Offset Strategy to accompany a future environmental assessment. Potential biodiversity values that would require offsetting are likely to include:

- Native vegetation above the nominated condition threshold level within surface rail sections on non-certified lands
- Threatened ecological communities within surface rail sections on non-certified lands
- Threatened species and their habitats, where the species generate species credits

- Aquatic habitats within creek lines, where marine vegetation and or/fish habitat are to be removed within surface rail sections on non-certified lands.

The proponent of a future rail infrastructure proposal would generally have to secure offsets prior to development commencing, or enter into a voluntary planning agreement should the offset be secured after development commences.

6.8 Heritage

This section identifies the impact on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage as a result of the corridor and outlines how the corridor has avoided, minimised or offset potential impacts.

6.8.1 How impacts have been avoided

The provision of an in tunnel section between St Marys and Orchard Hills would avoid heritage items on the surface of the northern study area. The tunnel location would also avoid most surface heritage impacts, reducing the potential impacts of ground borne noise and vibration.

Across the surface section of the northern study area, between Orchard Hills and Badgerys Creek, there are a limited number of heritage items that are likely to be impacted by the future construction of the North South Rail Line.

6.8.2 Strategic environmental assessment

6.8.2.1 Aboriginal heritage

There are no items recorded in the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System within the surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between Orchard Hills and the future Western Sydney Airport site. Also, there are no known native title claims associated with the land in the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

There is potential for there to be direct and indirect impacts on Aboriginal heritage as a result of future North South Rail Line infrastructure, however, no specific or significant impacts have been identified as no Aboriginal heritage items have been discovered within the corridor. It is considered that impacts would most likely occur during the construction phase, with future operation unlikely to result in more than negligible impacts to any surrounding Aboriginal heritage. Through the application of appropriate mitigation measures, impacts on Aboriginal heritage would be minimised or avoided completely.

Protecting the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would protect large tracts of land, remnant vegetation, Aboriginal objects and cultural landscapes. Certain Aboriginal sites, such as artefact sites, are currently considered to be common throughout the Cumberland Plain. However, as development of the Cumberland Plain increases, the number of intact Aboriginal sites decreases. As a result of this, all Aboriginal archaeological sites are likely to be rarer and therefore more valuable in the future, including those that may eventually be discovered within the recommended corridor.

6.8.2.2 Built heritage

Future construction of the North South Rail Line would impact two local heritage items located within the southern portion of the northern study area. The Luddenham Road Alignment (local heritage number 843) is located across the study area from Elizabeth Drive, in the south-west, to Mamre Road, in the north-east. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would traverse the Luddenham Road Alignment in Luddenham.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor travels through the McGarvie-Smith Farm (local heritage number 857) located on Elizabeth Drive, Badgerys Creek. McGarvie-Smith Farm was the first farm to be acquired by the University of Sydney in 1936 to support the teaching and research of veterinary science and agriculture (Jeffs & Rose 1995). The corridor travels through the property in a north-south direction.

While the impacts of construction of the North South Rail Line on surrounding heritage items would need to be investigated prior to a future detailed infrastructure application, it is considered that design and construction measures can be implemented to mitigate any impacts on the curtilage, fabric or setting of all affected heritage items. Upon completion of the North South Rail Line it is considered that there would be minimal impacts to the heritage values of the area provided that mitigation measures are implemented during design and construction.

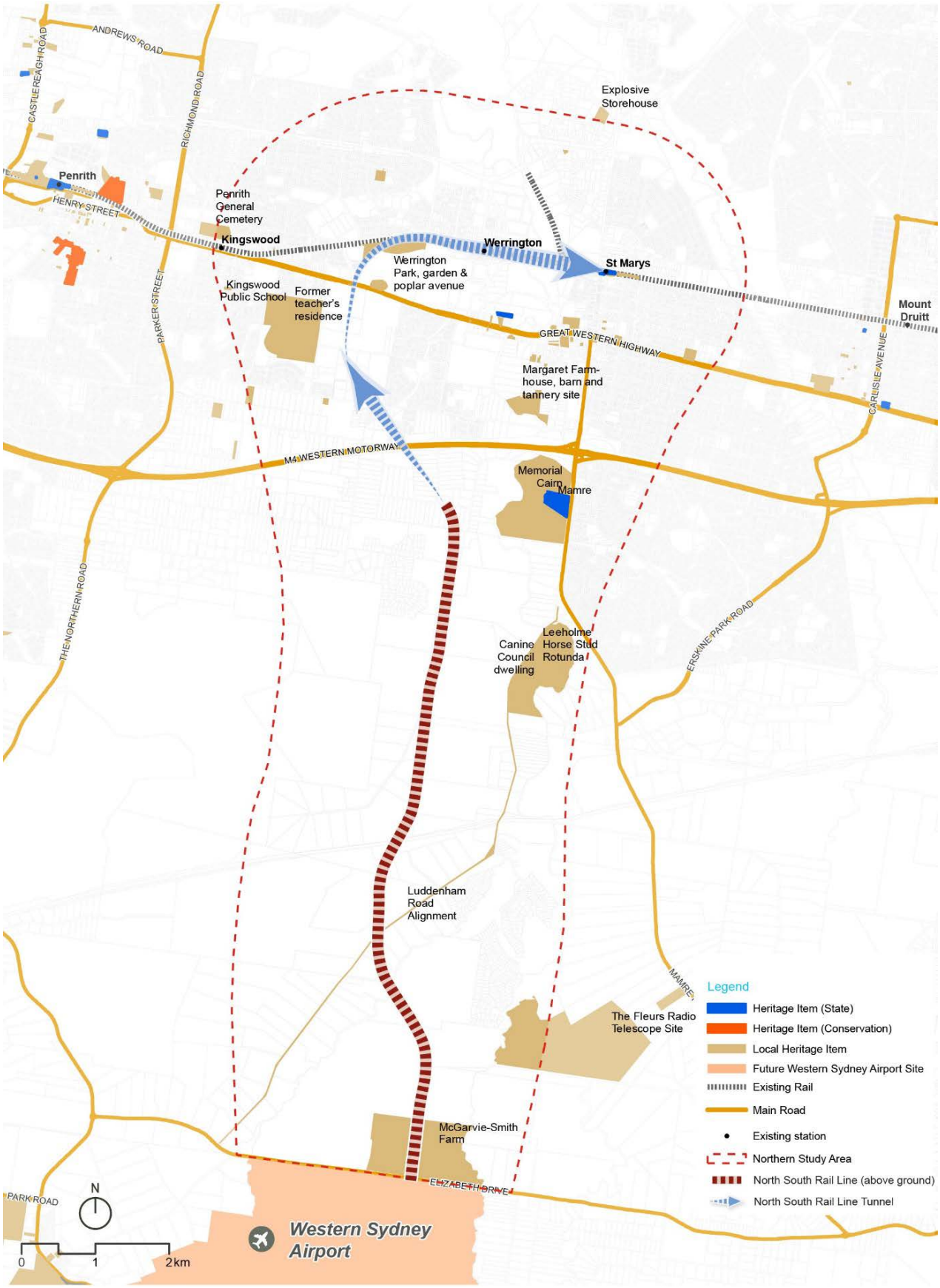

Figure 6-6 Recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying European heritage items in the northern study area

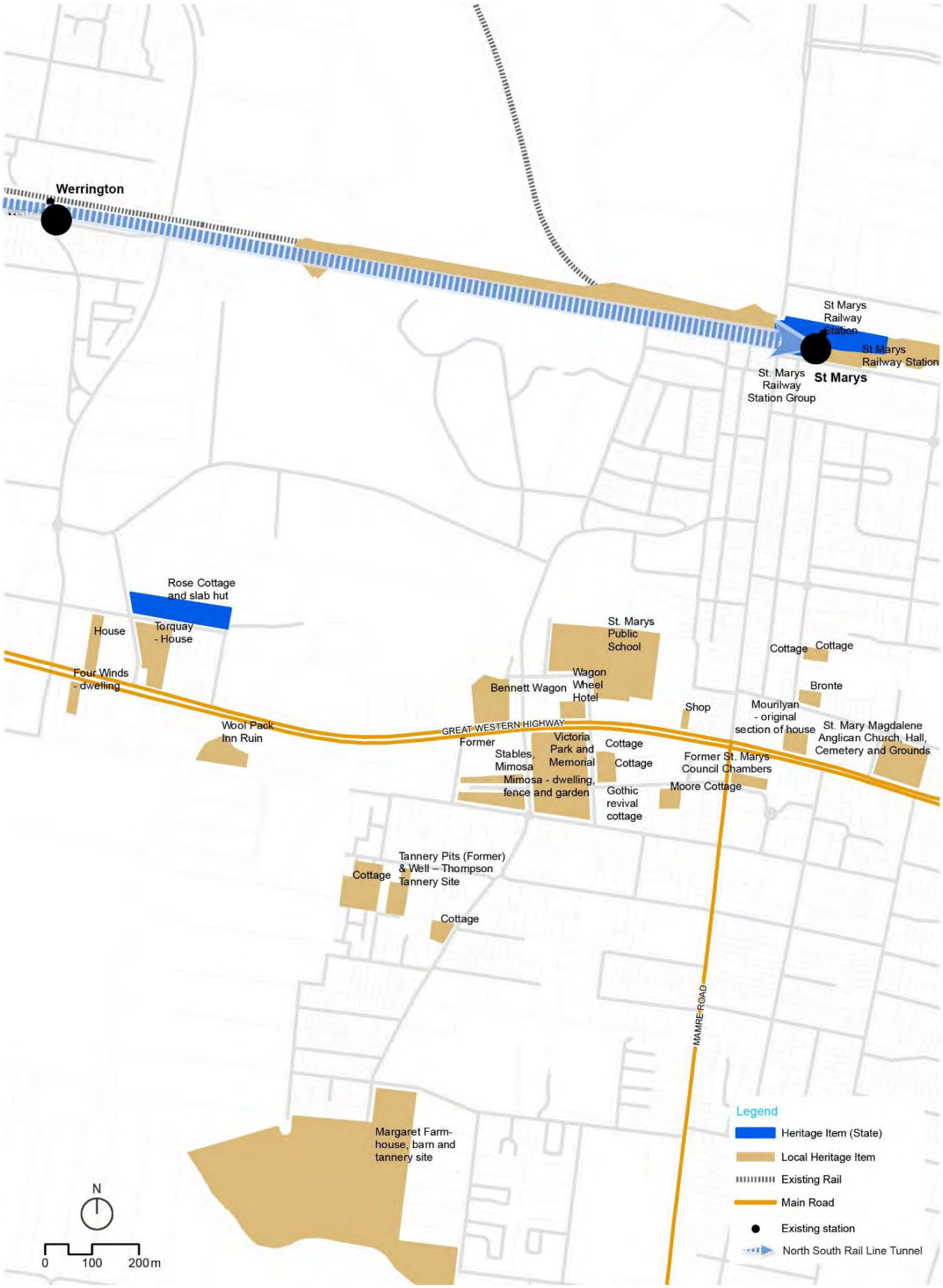

Figure 6-7 Recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying European heritage items in the vicinity of St Marys Town Centre

In addition to the presence of the known heritage items, further investigation would need to be undertaken to determine the significance of any archaeological sites. It is considered that future design and construction methods may be implemented to minimise any impacts to the heritage value of the area.

6.8.3 Mitigation strategies

6.8.3.1 Aboriginal heritage

The following mitigation measures would be considered as part of a future design phase:

- Consultation with the Office of Environment and Heritage and landowners regarding the Aboriginal sites affected by the recommended North South Rail Line corridor
- Consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders in accordance with the relevant Office of Environment and Heritage guidelines. Consultation should be conducted at various stages during further planning
- Investigation and assessment of Aboriginal heritage impacts in accordance with the relevant guidelines, including, but not be limited to, site visits, confirmation of registered Aboriginal sites, identification of unrecorded sites, areas which have been subject to little background research and an assessment of Aboriginal archaeological potential
- Construction phase mitigation measures may include test excavation, salvage excavation, detailed recording, reporting and artefact analysis, and heritage interpretation.

In addition to this, future investigations present a unique opportunity to conduct a large-scale comparative study of Aboriginal archaeology in differing local contexts. As a result of this, there would be an opportunity for interpretation of Aboriginal heritage values to be incorporated into future design or to be included in a future Heritage Interpretation Strategy.

6.8.3.2 Built heritage

The following mitigation measures would be considered as part of a future design phase:

- Prepare a statement of heritage impact for the McGarvie-Smith Farm as part of a future infrastructure application.
- The heritage significance of the Luddenham Road Alignment would need to be assessed in future heritage assessments and take into consideration during the urban development in the area.
- A detailed archaeological impact assessment should be prepared prior to a future infrastructure application to investigate the potential archaeological sites, including a site survey and documentary analysis.
- Once construction methodology and the detailed design of the future rail line are known, impacts to potential archaeology should be mitigated by undertaking test excavation, salvage excavation, archaeological monitoring, detailed recording, reporting and artefact analysis as well as the preparation of a Heritage Interpretation Strategy.

6.9 Air quality

6.9.1 How impacts have been avoided

This section identifies possible air quality impacts of future infrastructure in the corridor, with a particular focus on local and regional air quality. This section also outlines how the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has avoided, minimised or offset impacts and mitigation measures to further minimise any impacts.

6.9.2 Strategic environmental assessment

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would have a negligible impact on air quality and greenhouse gases within the air shed as there would be no direct changes to emission sources.

Construction of the railway would generate air quality and greenhouse gas impacts, from construction activities such as vegetation clearance, earthworks (including tunnelling activities), fuel combustion for construction vehicles (including for spoil storage and transport), and concrete batch plants and precast manufacturing facility activities.

Indirectly related energy consumption would also generate greenhouse gas emissions. However, as any future construction phase would be relatively short-term and localised in nature, greenhouse gas emissions are not expected to significantly impact climate change.

Particulate matter emissions produced from increased soil exposure and earthworks is expected to have the most potential to create air quality impacts within the air shed during any future construction phase due to the magnitude of emissions and high existing background concentrations of both PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. However, the following factors mean any impacts due to construction would be localised and short-term:

- The potential rail infrastructure in the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is small in the context of the entire Sydney air shed
- Any elevation of pollutant concentrations would be experienced in the near vicinity of the source, but would reduce in magnitude with distance from the source
- Construction would only occur over a short time-frame.

There are a range of mitigation measures that can be adopted as part of the detailed environmental impact assessment and implemented during construction to minimise and manage emissions.

Operation of the potential future rail infrastructure is not expected to generate significant quantities of air emissions, as rolling stock would be electrically powered. The following aspects of railway operation would produce greenhouse gas emissions:

- Use of electricity for powering rolling stock and operational electrical systems including rail corridor lighting, communications, controls and electronic signage
- Combustion of fuel for operation of maintenance equipment and use of materials for railway maintenance.

It is highlighted that one of the principal objectives of the future railway infrastructure is to provide efficient and effective public transport to the new development areas of the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area. The provision of public transport is expected to result in substantive trip diversion resulting in reduced passenger vehicle trips on the local and regional road network, resulting in lower air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions than would otherwise have been the case.

It is highlighted that from the mid-2020s the Western Sydney Airport would also be a significant contributor to the emission of air pollutants in the northern study area.

6.9.3 Mitigation strategies

The scope of air quality impact assessment would be determined as part of the future infrastructure application process, including whether air pollutant modelling is warranted in terms of identifying suitable mitigation and management measures to be implemented during construction.

Management of greenhouse gas emissions for the construction and operation of any future railway in the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would be an important consideration in minimising any future contribution towards climate change, acknowledging that climate change science, technology and management approaches are likely to progress and improve in the future. Any future project level environmental impact assessments should include calculation of predicted greenhouse gas emissions for construction, and operation and maintenance of the railway.

6.10 Social

This section evaluates the impacts of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor alignment and subsequent infrastructure on directly affected communities, community facilities and services. Through an assessment of the social impacts of the corridor, opportunities to avoid, minimise or offset impacts are discussed.

6.10.1 How impacts have been avoided

Potential social impacts would be assessed at the time of infrastructure delivery, accounting for the current land uses surrounding the corridor and the impact on the community at the time a project is proposed. A future environmental impact statement would need to be accompanied by a social impact assessment.

6.10.2 Strategic environmental assessment

The design and location of the corridor have been carefully selected to ensure that social benefits are maximised. To this extent, locating parts of the corridor in tunnel would minimise disruption to existing communities and ensure that the overall impact of corridor protection is beneficial. By protecting a corridor, the community can be given confidence about the location of future transport infrastructure and would be able to appropriately plan for this.

The surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between Orchard Hills and Badgerys Creek is expected to be the subject of substantial urban transformation in the coming years.

There is a clear opportunity for the recommended North South Rail Line corridor protection process to ensure that future land use in the area can be distributed according to what land uses would be sensitive to a future rail line. It is considered that in areas that are yet to be developed, future integrated transport and land use planning has the opportunity to centre commercial and industrial development around segments of a future rail line that are likely to result in the most significant visual and noise amenity impacts. Future residential development may also be located so that any visual impact arising from a future rail line is minimised.

In particular, the Sydney Science Park and Western Sydney Airport Growth Area will be key drivers of growth surrounding the corridor. The recommended North South Rail Line corridor travels through the western portion of the Western Sydney Employment Area, which has been identified as the largest new employment space in Sydney. The location of the corridor within this precinct could provide benefits to businesses and industries that are yet to be developed.

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would not have an impact on the existing community facilities or services. Once protected, however, it is expected that subsequent social planning undertaken in the vicinity of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would take it into account.

In particular, corridor protection would maximise the opportunity to integrate the recommended North South Rail Line corridor into future urban and employment areas and minimise impact to existing and future communities. The identification and protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would enable continued development of the rapidly growing and changing land use areas in the Western Sydney Airport Growth Area, protect the corridor from development encroachment and facilitate forward planning to accommodate the potential impacts of a future railway.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would facilitate future potential mass public transport infrastructure connecting to key existing and planned housing and employment centres, as well as facilitate potential further expansion/connection of public transport to other areas outside of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. This is consistent with the *Draft Western City District Plan* and other strategic planning policies for the area. The potential future provision of public transport infrastructure to these centres would have a number of benefits for employment capacity, as well as reduce pressure on the existing transport network. Overall, these benefits would support the future growth of western Sydney and the future Western Sydney Airport.

6.10.3 Mitigation strategies

Transport for NSW should be involved in land release and rezoning processes to ensure that new land uses that would be compatible with a future railway. Potential land use controls for inclusion in the relevant environmental planning instrument are discussed in Section 10, and would be subject to consultation with the relevant councils and the Department of Planning and Environment.

7 Environmental assessment of the southern study area

This section provides a strategic assessment of each of the potential environmental impacts associated with protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors in the southern study area. An assessment is provided for the following environmental factors:

- Land use and property impacts
- Economic impacts
- Traffic and transport
- Noise and vibration
- Visual amenity, built form and urban design
- Soil and water
- Biodiversity
- Heritage
- Air quality
- Social impacts.

7.1 Land use and property impacts

This section identifies the existing land uses and potential property impacts within and next to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. It describes how potential impacts have been avoided, minimised or offset to reduce any impact associated with the protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. This section also considers possible future land use changes or opportunities as a result of potential future infrastructure within the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors and measures to minimise any future impacts.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying land use in the northern study area is shown in Figure 7-1.

7.1.1 How impacts have been avoided

To minimise land use and property impacts on existing urban areas, future rail infrastructure between Oran Park and Macarthur will be located in tunnel which would avoid impacts for hundreds of properties, including residential properties, schools and surface heritage items, along the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been selected to maximise flexibility in the design and function of future precincts within the growth areas. Particularly, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is located at least 400 metres from major roads where possible, enabling the future local road network to be designed to support future residential and commercial precincts.

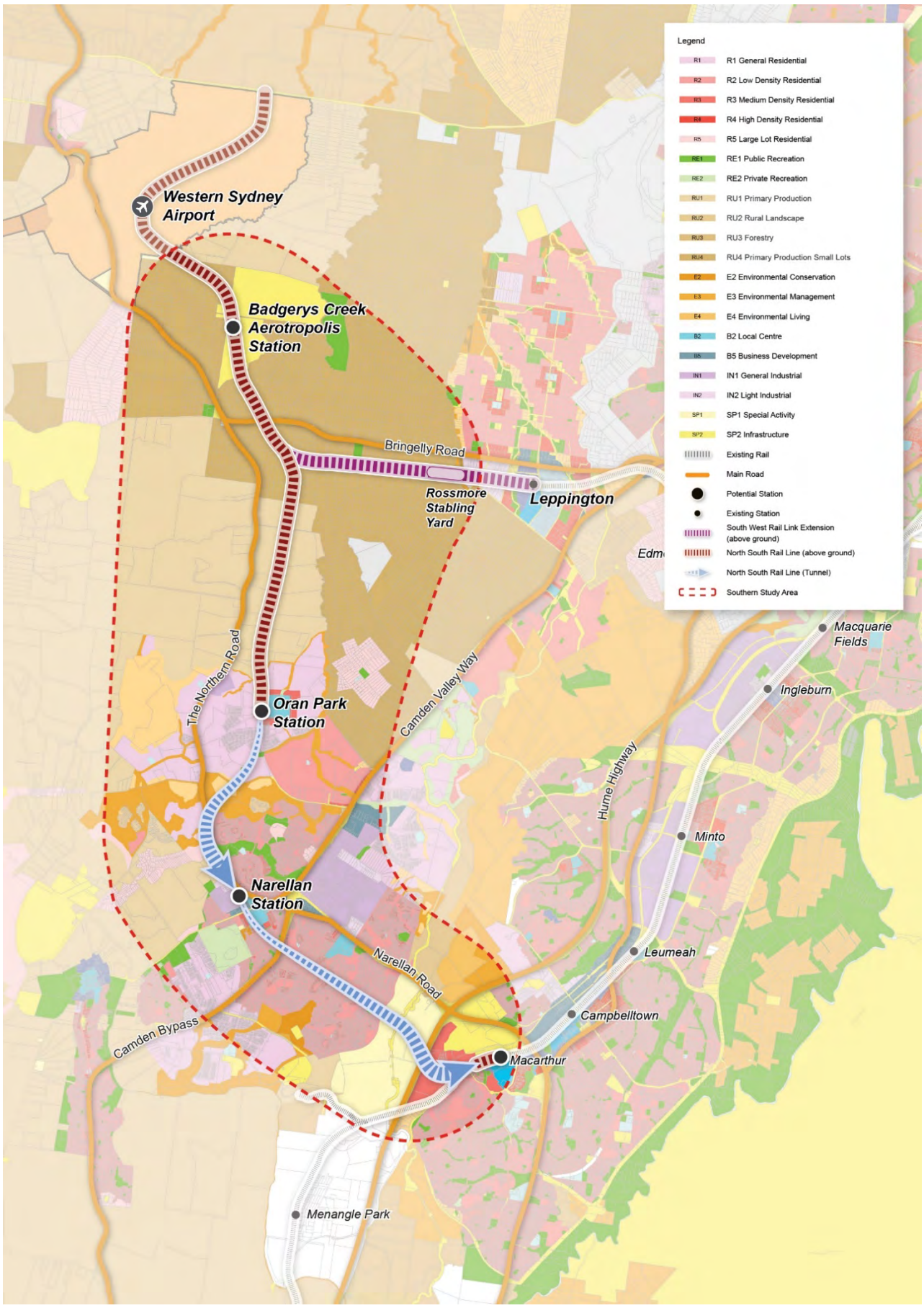

Figure 7-1 **Recommended North South Rail Line corridor overlaying land use in the southern study area**

7.1.2 Property impact assessment

Where the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel, the future tunnelled infrastructure would be designed to avoid direct impacts to existing buildings and structures.

Land use and property impacts are limited to above ground sections of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors – located between Leppington, Western Sydney Airport and Oran Park as well as the station precinct and construction staging compounds at Narellan, Oran Park and Macarthur.

7.1.2.1 Existing property impacts north of Oran Park

The surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between Oran Park and the future Western Sydney Airport site would impact 66 properties. The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor would impact an additional 37 properties between Leppington and Bringelly Junction Most of these properties are rural-residential properties, but also including the following rural industries:

- Australia Koi Farm (83 Jersey Road)
- Sydney Watergardens Nursery (909 Bringelly Road)
- Market gardens (around Robinson Road, Mersey Road, Derwent Road and Badgerys Creek Road).

Given the major land use change that will occur in these areas, a viability assessment on the residual land parcels has not been carried out. It is expected that residual parcels would be amalgamated as part of the precinct planning and development process.

While direct impacts with existing utilities infrastructure have largely been avoided, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would intersect with the existing 330kV transmission line immediately to the north of Oran Park Town Centre.

7.1.2.2 Land use integration north of Oran Park

While these properties are currently used for rural residential or agricultural land uses, they are located within the South West and Western Sydney Airport Growth Areas, and are expected to undergo significant future land use change in the near future to provide for new residential suburbs, with associated business, retail and employment areas as part of the development of the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis.

The loss of developable land due to protection of infrastructure corridors may be addressed as part of the land release and rezoning processes of future precincts by allowing higher land use densities on land within 800 metres walking distance of the new stations.

As described in Section 4.13.3 recent analysis commissioned by the Department of Planning and Environment identifies that there continues to be strong demand for new residential products in the South West Growth Area including higher proportions of small lot housing in the overall residential mix. Structural change in market preference and demand already supports a case for increased residential density levels, with precincts benefiting from train stations being logical priorities for denser residential product. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that future population densities will ultimately be achieved in the South West Growth Area in excess of the initial population targets, offsetting the land set aside for future infrastructure and ultimately contributing to demand for the future delivery of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension.

Early planning will therefore maximise the opportunity to integrate the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors into future urban areas and minimise disruption to existing and future communities. The protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would enable continued development of these rapidly growing areas in western Sydney while facilitating forward avoidance or minimising the potential impacts of a future railway.

The railway infrastructure would need to be elevated on embankments or structures (such as bridges) over South Creek and over the Lowes Creek flood plain. The railway would also require elevated structures for the rail flyover component of the Bringelly Y Junction that is located between these two elevated sections. From a land use compatibility perspective, it may be appropriate to locate employment, industrial and regional open space uses in these areas to minimise possible future land use conflicts. Transport for NSW would work with Camden and Liverpool Councils, and the Department of Planning and Environment towards achieving appropriate land use outcomes as part of the South West Growth Area precinct planning process.

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have also sought to minimise 'land locking', which can occur where roads are elevated above or sunk below surrounding land parcels, hindering property access and constraining development opportunities.

7.1.2.3 Land use integration at proposed Oran Park Station

Consultation with Greenfields Development Company has identified a development site that can be protected for the future development of the Oran Park Station, adjacent to the town centre.

A tunnel staging and temporary construction site would be required at Oran Park. The Oran Park construction site would be located predominantly within the potential future station site, also comprising land within the block immediately to the south. The extent of the Oran Park construction site is shown in Figure 7-2. It is anticipated that Transport for NSW and Greenfields Development Company would agree on an interim land use for this site ensuring that it could be made available for station construction, and as a temporary tunnel construction site, when it is required.

South of Peter Brock Drive the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is in tunnel. However, subject to design of the future infrastructure, restrictions on the nature and depth of buildings on this site may be required to avoid impacting on the viability of the future infrastructure.

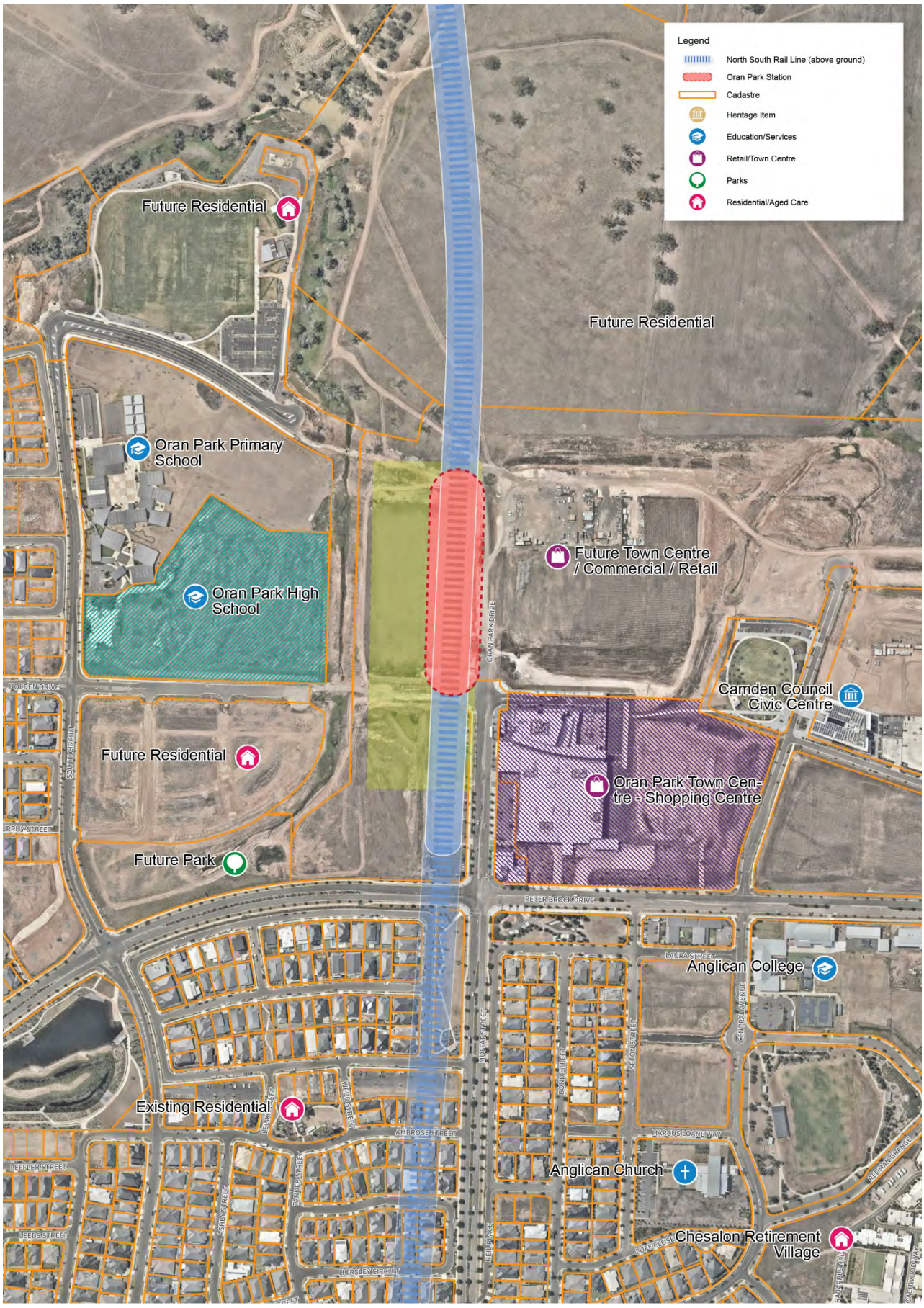

Figure 7-2 Proposed Oran Park Station and temporary construction site

7.1.2.4 Land use integration at proposed Narellan Station

At Narellan, 19 industrial and commercial properties would be directly impacted by the future Narellan Station or as part of the temporary tunnel construction site.

A major tunnel staging and construction site would also be required at Narellan. The extent of the Narellan construction site is shown in Figure 7-3. Existing uses will be able to continue to operate but future applications for development will need to have regard for the future expected uses of the land in support of a new station.

The future development of a railway station within the Narellan industrial area is expected to provide an opportunity to reconsider the longer-term planning objectives of this area, particularly the area located closest to the Narellan shopping centre.

Figure 7-3 Proposed Narellan Station and temporary construction site

7.1.2.5 Land use integration at Macarthur

At Macarthur, land use impacts would be limited to land within the existing rail corridor and already owned by Transport for NSW or associated Government transport entities, except for a parcel of land described as Lot 1211 DP1136122. This lot is owned by Landcom, and is located between the existing T8 South Line rail corridor and Menangle Road (see Figure 7-4). This portion of land may be required to accommodate future construction and/or rail corridor widening associated with the North South Rail Line approach to Macarthur Station.

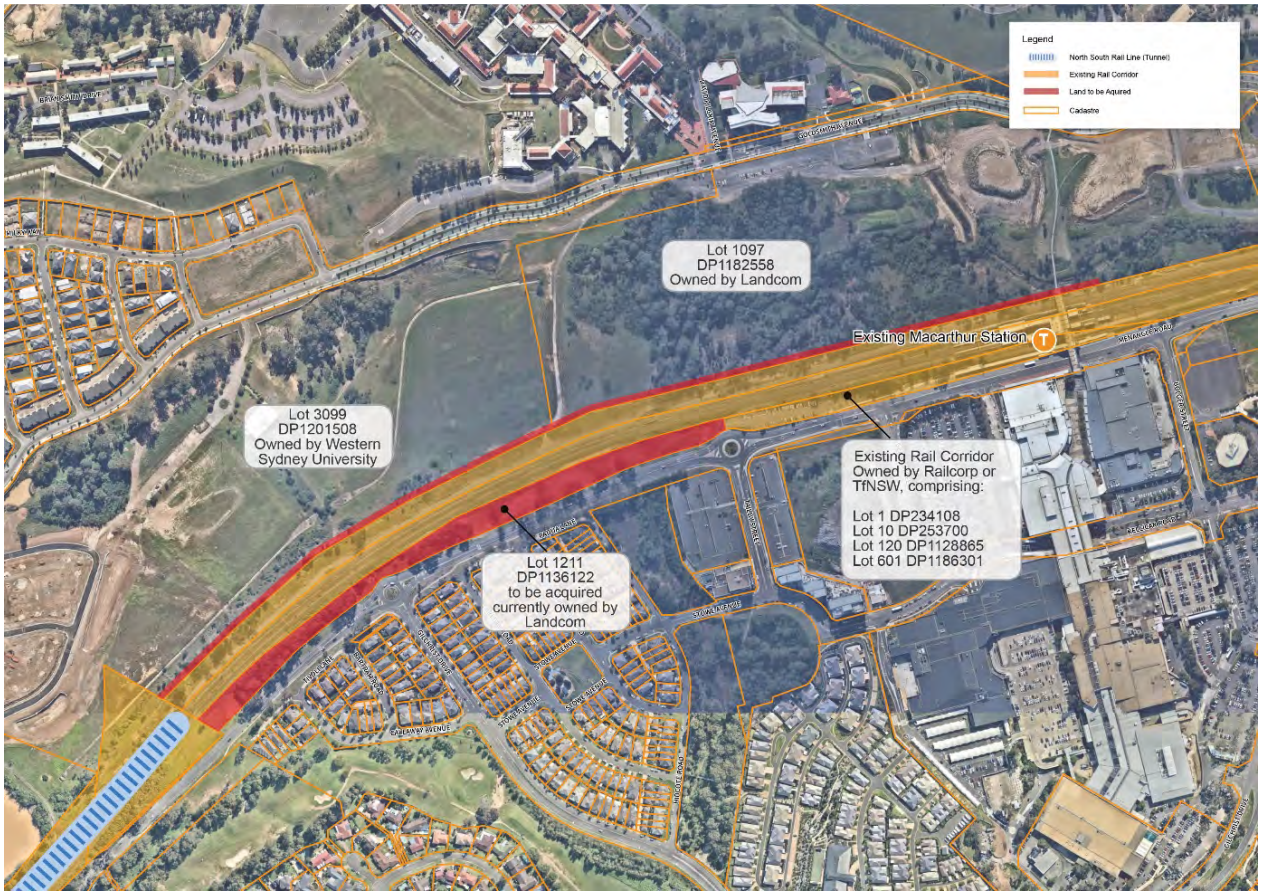

Figure 7-4 Macarthur rail corridor widening

7.1.2.6 Crown land

No Crown land is impacted by the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors in the southern study area.

7.1.3 Mitigation measures

The most significant land use impact mitigation is the decision to underground the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in tunnel between Oran Park and Macarthur.

Protecting the recommended corridors now will enable planning authorities to consider the future rail infrastructure when undertaking precinct planning processes and when assessing development applications. This will help to ensure that new development surrounding the recommended corridors is compatible with the future rail infrastructure and is appropriate for being serviced by rail. Protecting the corridor will also assist planning authorities to ensure that conflicts between new sensitive land uses and the future rail infrastructure can be avoided, or mitigation measures incorporated where appropriate.

To minimise the potential land use conflicts associated with amenity impacts of future train operations, planning authorities should consider locating employment, industrial and regional open space uses adjacent to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors where it is reasonably likely that the future railway will be elevated on embankments or structures, including around Bringelly Y Junction and the crossing of South Creek.

Once protected, Transport for NSW will work with councils, landowners/developers and relevant agencies across the NSW Government to ensure that land use planning and transport planning processes around the protected corridors are integrated and coordinated. In particular, Transport for NSW will work with Liverpool City Council, Campbelltown City Council and Camden Council in relation to future planning around potential station precincts to ensure that future land use opportunities are fully explored.

Prior to construction of the future rail infrastructure, an environmental impact statement would assess impacts of the proposed infrastructure in the recommended corridors on adjoining and surrounding land uses, and would detail measures to avoid or mitigate potential impacts.

Interim land uses will also need to be established in consultation with the Department of Planning and Environment and the relevant councils and landowners for the short to medium term.

7.2 Economic impacts

7.2.1 Expected economic benefits

The addition of 300,000 new residents within the South West Growth Area, as well as additional population growth in established centres such as Narellan and Macarthur, will generate demand for additional transport capacity if additional congestion costs are to be avoided.

The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study* indicated that extending the South West Link from Leppington to an interchange located to the south of the airport, within the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis will be important for supporting the growth of Greater Sydney's south-west, acting as the principal rail link between Western Sydney Airport and development in the region through to Liverpool.

The *Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study* specifically discusses the options for a rail public transport connection to the future Western Sydney Airport. Western Sydney Airport will be a catalyst for economic growth in the region and an effective public transport connection is seen to be a key to the success of the airport, as well as to support the forecast growth of western Sydney. In the early years of airport operations, road transport links will play the most important role in providing connectivity for Western Sydney Airport customers and workers. These road links, including those delivered under the Australian and NSW Governments' $3.6 billion *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan*, will also be important in fostering economic growth in the region.

7.2.2 Potential economic impacts of 'no corridor'

The potential negative impacts of failing to protect a corridor are set out in Section 6.2.2 and would equally apply to the southern section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor and the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor, in particular through the Western Sydney Airport and South West Growth Areas where precinct planning is yet to commence.

7.2.3 Potential effects on related infrastructure projects

South of Western Sydney Airport, the protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor for potential future public transport infrastructure is expected to directly and indirectly affect related infrastructure projects in western Sydney, including The Northern Road and Bringelly Road upgrades.

The potential effects of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor on these related infrastructure projects is discussed in the following sections.

7.2.3.1 The Northern Road and Bringelly Road

The *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan* provides for upgrades to, among a range of projects, Bringelly Road and The Northern Road in the immediate vicinity of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor. Construction of both projects has commenced, and it is expected that the work in the immediate vicinity of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor will be completed prior to any North South Rail Line work. The protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor will not directly affect these roads or the upgrade process, however, future road work may be required to facilitate a grade-separated crossing of Bringelly Road at the time that the North South Rail Line infrastructure is delivered.

7.3 Traffic and transport

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors overlaying the key existing and future transport infrastructure is shown in Figure 7-5.

7.3.1 How impacts have been avoided

The location of the crossing of Bringelly Road was carefully selected to avoid impacts on key future intersections, including the grade-separated intersection between Bringelly Road and The Northern Road.

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are located to minimise impacts on the likely future local road network, including by maximising the potential for future rail infrastructure to be in cut to reduce any impact on the existing or likely future road network. The Bringelly Road crossing is in a location where future rail infrastructure could be designed to be in a cutting to travel underneath the road surface.

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are generally at least 400 metres from major roads, enabling the future local road network to be designed to support future residential and commercial precincts.

Locating the corridor in tunnel between Oran Park and Macarthur will further reduce any impacts on the road network.

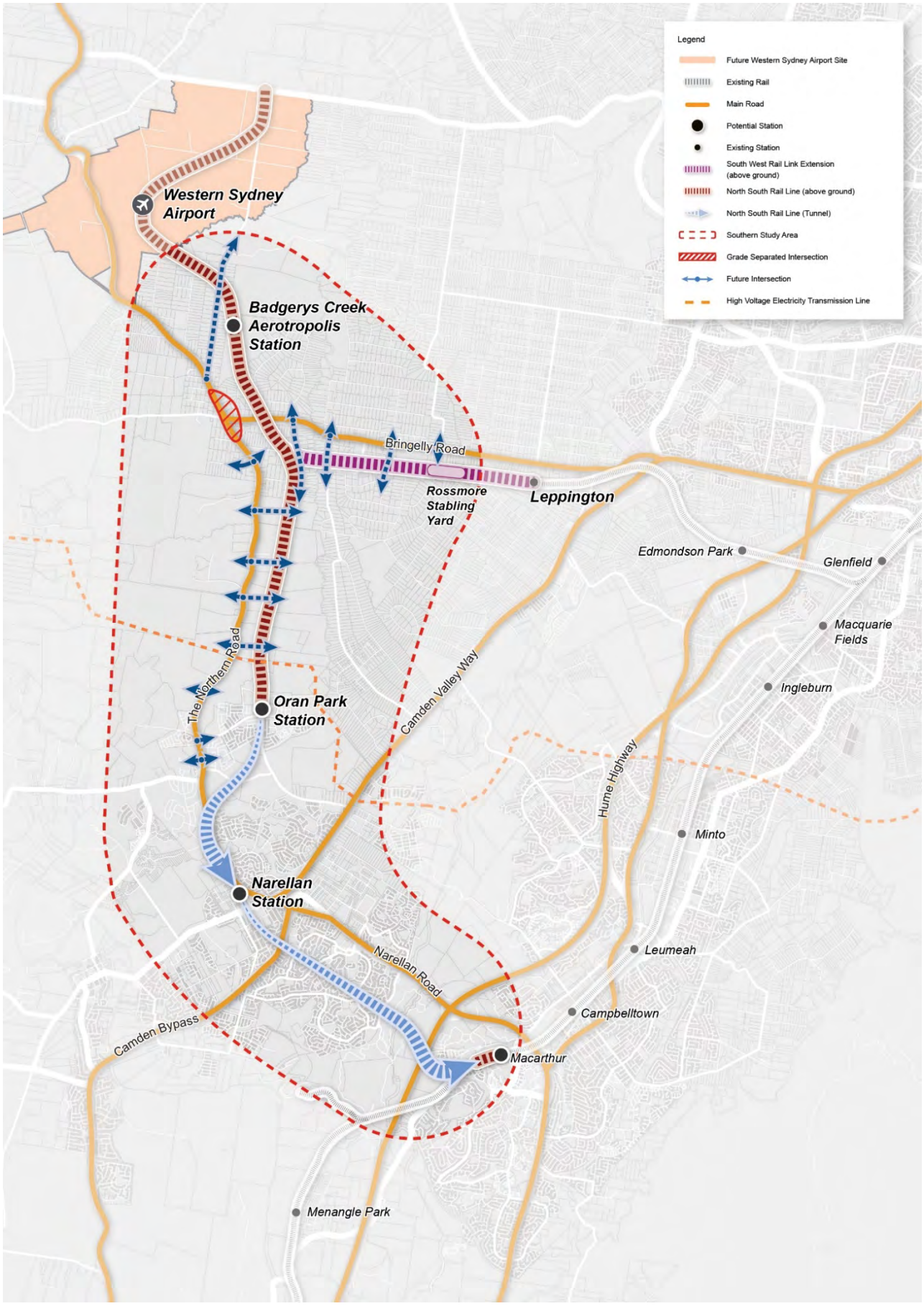

Figure 7-5 **Recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors overlaying infrastructure in the southern study area**

7.3.2 Assessment of road infrastructure impacts

In the southern study area, the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been located to maximise the potential for future railway infrastructure to be in cut, providing the opportunity for the roads to cross over the rail corridor without needing to ramp up or down.

The location of the stations would minimise impacts on the State road network, with a general principle to try and locate stations at least 400 to 800 metres from a State road, to enable local accessibility to the station, and to ensure the land around the station can be suitably developed for servicing by rail.

7.3.2.1 State roads

In the southern study area, rail crossings of State roads have been a major factor in the location of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. In particular, the new grade separated intersection between Bringelly Road and The Northern Road was considered to be a major constraint. Further, the need to cross The Northern Road, Camden Valley Way, Camden Bypass, and the Hume Highway were key reasons in supporting a decision to tunnel the recommended North South Rail Line corridor south of Oran Park.

The only State road crossing of the recommended corridors is at Bringelly Road, near the intersection with Kelvin Park Drive. Based on the indicative vertical alignment it is likely that the potential railway infrastructure may be in a cutting where it crosses Bringelly Road, and would therefore be below the current pavement of the road. The crossing of Bringelly Road would need to be built without significant traffic congestion impacts. To achieve this, pre fabrication of structures or trenchless excavation methods may be required including manufacture of precast concrete units adjacent to road crossings. However, this design work is not required at this stage of the corridor protection process and would be addressed as part of a potential future application for rail infrastructure.

7.3.2.2 Local roads

While local roads within the South West Growth Area are likely to be retained, their role and function are likely to change, and they may be realigned or extended as part of the development of each precinct. Existing local road crossings by the recommended North South Rail Line and South Rail Link Extension corridors are described in Table 7-1 and shown in Figure 7-6.

Table 7-1 Future crossings of local roads in the southern study area

Affected road	Future function	Future consideration
Allenby Road, Rossmore	The Allenby Road connection is likely to become one of many north-south connections, as other roads in the precinct are upgraded. These include Polo Road, North Avenue, Barry Avenue and Masterfield Street.	While it will be possible to design the future railway to ensure Allenby Road can cross the rail corridor, it is likely that Allenby Road will not be required to perform this function and may not ultimately be reconstructed to cross the rail corridor.
Masterfield Street, Rossmore	It is expected that Barry Avenue will be extended to connect to Masterfield Street, and the upgraded Masterfield Street / Bringelly Road intersection. This will involve a crossing of the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor across the flood plain.	The vertical alignment of the road will need to be designed with consideration of the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor, in consultation with Roads and Maritime Services and Transport for NSW.
Jersey Road, Bringelly	Jersey Road is expected to perform a key north-south link between Bringelly and Oran Park.	The railway would be elevated over South Creek and would remain elevated over Jersey Road to permit it to perform this north-south traffic function.

Affected road	Future function	Future consideration
Robinson Road, Bringelly	The recommended North South Rail Line corridor crosses Robinson Road at the same location as the future grade separated rail junction. Given that one leg of the rail junction would fly over Robinson Road and the other leg would be below the level of Robinson Road, it is unlikely that Robinson Road would be able to remain in its current form. This would also mean that the Robinson Road / Jersey Road intersection would likely need to be removed.	There are no major east-west links across South Creek in this part of the South West Growth Area, so the future transport role of Robinson Road is likely to be limited to local access.
Carrington Road, Bringelly	The recommended North South Rail Line corridor crosses Carrington Road in cut, so Carrington Road would be able to continue over the future railway.	There are no major east-west links across South Creek in this part of the South West Growth Area, so the future transport role of Carrington Road is likely to be limited to local access.
Kelvin Park Drive, Bringelly	The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor will cross underneath Kelvin Park Drive in a cutting, meaning that accessibility to Kelvin Park Drive would remain if necessary.	It is highlighted that the intersection improvements as part of the Bringelly Road upgrade indicate that a continuation of Jersey Road is likely to be the main access road into the Kelvin Park area in the longer-term future. The longer term need for continued access via Kelvin Park Drive / Bringelly Road intersection is not clear.
Badgerys Creek Road, North Bringelly	Badgerys Creek Road is expected to continue to perform a key north-south link between Elizabeth Drive and The Northern Road.	The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would likely cross under Badgerys Creek Road in a cut, ensuring it can continue to perform this role.
McCann Road, Rossmore	East of Rossmore Station the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor sits over the eastern part of McCann Road, affecting existing access arrangements for two rural residential properties.	McCann Road is a dead-end road, and while it may partially be retained for town-centre / station access upon redevelopment, it is unlikely to play a significant transport role.
Kirkham Street and Campbell Street, Narellan	These streets would provide access to the future Narellan Station, which could potentially result in temporary diversion of eastbound and northbound traffic via Porrende Street or Grahams Hill Road / Camden Valley Way.	The two eastern blocks of Kirkham Street and the southern block of Campbell Street may need to be closed in the long term to provide for the station / tunnel construction compound and to accommodate the future Narellan Station. The development of the station would likely trigger land use investigations into the overall precinct of the future station, which may lead to significant changes in land use immediately around the station. Access and traffic would be a major consideration in the planning for a future station precinct irrespective of whether substantive land use change takes place. Key factors to be considered in the planning and design of Narellan Station will be its integration with other public transport modes, particularly buses.

Proposed stations along the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been located within existing or known future town centres to attract active trips (walking and cycling) and will provide an alternative to driving for all trips, including those work trips in the morning peak period. As such, the future railway infrastructure would contribute to reducing pressure on local and state roads.

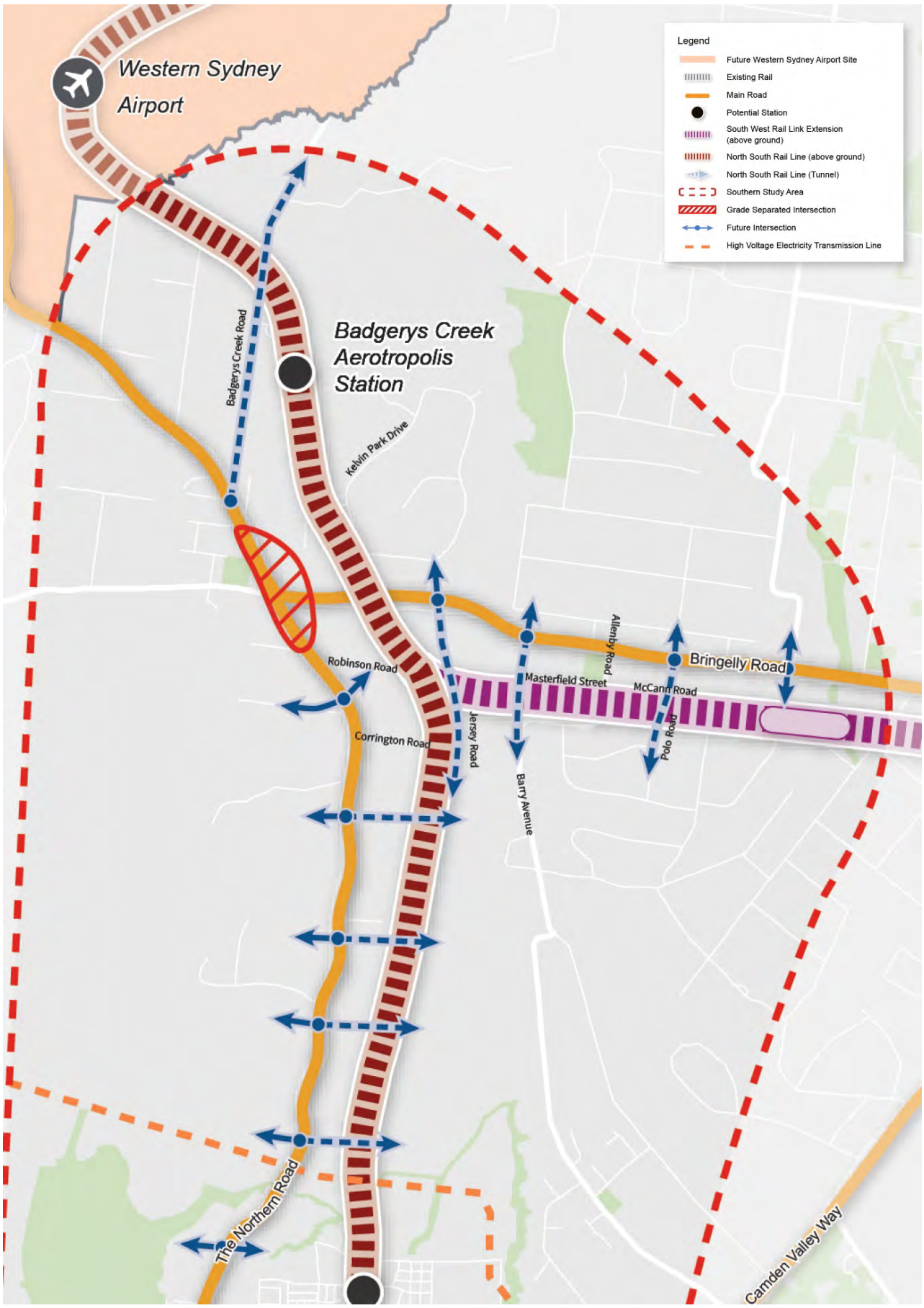

Figure 7-6 **Future local road intersections and crossings in the southern study area**

7.3.3 Mitigation strategies

The most significant traffic impact mitigation is the decision to underground the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in tunnel between Oran Park and Macarthur. This decision avoids impacts to a number of State and local roads.

Mitigation strategies for the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridor in the southern study area are generally the same as described in Section 6.3.3, and will ensure that local transport arrangements can be designed to accommodate the future rail corridor without the need for costly local road diversions and realignments in the future, and also that the planning for station precincts is suitably integrated with other public transport and active transport modes.

7.4 Noise and vibration

7.4.1 How impacts have been avoided

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are located to maximise the potential for future rail infrastructure to be in cut. This will minimise impacts on existing and possible future sensitive receivers.

South of Oran Park, any future infrastructure would be in a tunnel, which would avoid airborne noise impacts to sensitive receivers at Narellan and its surrounding areas.

Between Rossmore, Western Sydney Airport and Oran Park, the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would run at surface through a generally greenfield area. Rural-residential dwellings currently dot these areas, with road traffic noise likely to be dominated by the State roads of Bringelly Road and The Northern Road. Existing or known future sensitive receivers at Oran Park are shown in Figure 7-2.

Planned development of the growth areas is predicted to substantially alter the surrounding landscape, likely resulting in future dwellings and other sensitive buildings being be located near and/or adjacent the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.

No sensitive receptors other than dwellings are currently located with 300 metres of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors, with the Oran Park Public School (about 360 metres), the Rossmore Public School / Preschool (about 420 metres) and the Bringelly Public School (about 800 metres) being the nearest existing educational, community or health / medical buildings.

South of Oran Park, the area is more suburban with condensed housing located within existing and new residential developments. South of Oran Park Station the recommended North South Rail Line corridor will be in tunnel, with a below ground station at Narellan. The proposed tunnel south of Oran Park would have no airborne noise impacts and would avoid the following sensitive receivers:

- United Cinemas Narellan
- Narellan Community Health Centre
- Mount Annan Public School
- Narellan X-Ray Centre
- Western Sydney University
- Harrington Park Medical Practice.

At the Macarthur portal, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor exits the tunnel within the existing rail corridor. The nearest existing dwellings are located east of the existing rail corridor within the existing residential suburb of Glen Alpine. West of the identified tunnel portal, the new residential suburb of Macarthur Heights is under development. Airborne noise from the identified rail line as it returns to the ground surface would be assessed against the redevelopment of an existing rail line criterion.

7.4.2 Strategic environmental assessment

7.4.2.1 Assessment of impacts of above ground corridor sections

Operational noise and vibration assessment are set out in Section 6.4. Depending on the surrounding terrain, future dwellings directly adjacent to the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would be expected to have predicted noise levels that may exceed the planning noise criteria for the provision of a new rail line. A range of mitigation strategies are available to minimise these impacts including the cutting in of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor north of Oran Park Station, wherever possible. Other mitigation strategies are discussed in Section 6.4.3.

7.4.3 Mitigation strategies

The most significant noise impact mitigation is the decision to underground the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in tunnel between Oran Park and Macarthur. This decision avoids airborne noise impacts for hundreds of properties, including residential properties, schools and heritage items, along the recommended North South Rail Line corridor.

As part of the land release and rezoning process, planning authorities and land developers should establish land use structure plans that minimise the location of sensitive buildings in proximity to the noisiest parts of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. In particular, planning authorities should consider locating employment, industrial and regional open space uses adjacent to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors where it is reasonably likely that the future railway will be elevated on embankments or structures. This is likely to be limited to the crossing of the South Creek flood plain and around the grade-separated Bringelly Y Junction.

Alternatively, mixed use and/or higher density residential buildings with suitable design and noise treatment can be located adjacent to the rail corridor to provide shielding of noise levels to lower density residential areas beyond, particularly at station locations.

Design and rail source noise mitigation strategies are described in Sections 6.4.3.2 and 6.4.3.3 respectively.

7.5 Visual amenity, built form and urban design

7.5.1 How impacts have been avoided

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are located to maximise the potential for future rail infrastructure to be in cut, and so minimise visual impacts on existing and possible future sensitive receivers.

As shown in Figure 7-7, the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor crosses the South Creek flood plain at a perpendicular angle to minimise the length of the bridge structure over the flood plain and reduce visual impacts associated with elevated bridges and fly-over structures. Further, the future fly-over structures associated with the Bringelly Y Junction will be located outside of the expected future town centre locations for Bringelly and Rossmore.

South of Oran Park, the future infrastructure would be in tunnel. This would avoid visual impacts to sensitive receivers at Narellan and its surrounding areas, including significant landscapes at Harrington Forest, the Scenic Hills, Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan and William Howe Regional Park.

Tunnel portals at Oran Park would be integrated with the Oran Park Station, minimising the visual prominence of the portals. At Macarthur, the tunnel portals would be located within the existing rail corridor to minimise impacts.

7.5.2 Strategic environmental assessment

Key locations where visual impacts have been assessed in the southern study area are:

- Rossmore
- South Creek Crossing and Bringelly Y Junction
- Narellan Station.

The recommended corridors have been selected to maximise the potential for future railway infrastructure to be in cut, providing the opportunity for the roads to cross over the rail corridor without needing to ramp up or down as well as minimising noise and visual amenity issues. This proposed design would have the benefit of reducing visual impact to the surrounding area, and is most appropriate in visually sensitive locations, such as existing or future residential areas. In these visually sensitive areas additional mitigation measures may also be warranted, such as increased setbacks or a landscaped buffer.

7.5.2.1 Rossmore

The Rossmore precinct will be comprised of new dwellings, as well as local retail and service centres.

The future railway through Rossmore will likely be mainly within a cutting. It is noted that a neighbourhood centre or similar is likely to be located adjacent to the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor at Rossmore, which reduce the visual impact as it is a less visually sensitive land use.

7.5.2.2 South Creek Crossing and Bringelly Y Junction

It is likely that the future railway infrastructure will need to be elevated on embankments or structures (such as bridges) over South Creek and over the Lowes Creek flood plain. In addition, the railway will also require elevated structures for the rail flyover component of the Bringelly Y Junction that is located between these two elevated sections.

Areas adjacent to South Creek are likely to stay in their current form as riparian areas associated with a natural water course. As such, the visual modification to the surrounding landscape as a result of the future work would be high.

The visual sensitivity of the area around the Bringelly Y Junction would be lower if employment or industrial development was located in close proximity to the corridor. It would therefore be appropriate to consider locating employment and industrial uses in these areas to minimise land use conflicts associated with amenity impacts of the future infrastructure components and railway operations. This is generally consistent with the South West Growth Centre Structure Plan that envisages industrial / employment areas around the flood affected areas near South Creek and the Lowes Creek confluence.

7.5.2.3 Narellan Station

Narellan Station would be an underground station immediately adjacent to the established town centre. Visual impacts would be limited to urban design and built form of station access structures and associated ancillary development (such as car parking and bus interchanges). The visual sensitivity of the location is considered to be low, and the proposed development will not result in a significant change to the nature of the existing landscape. As such, the visual impact would be low.

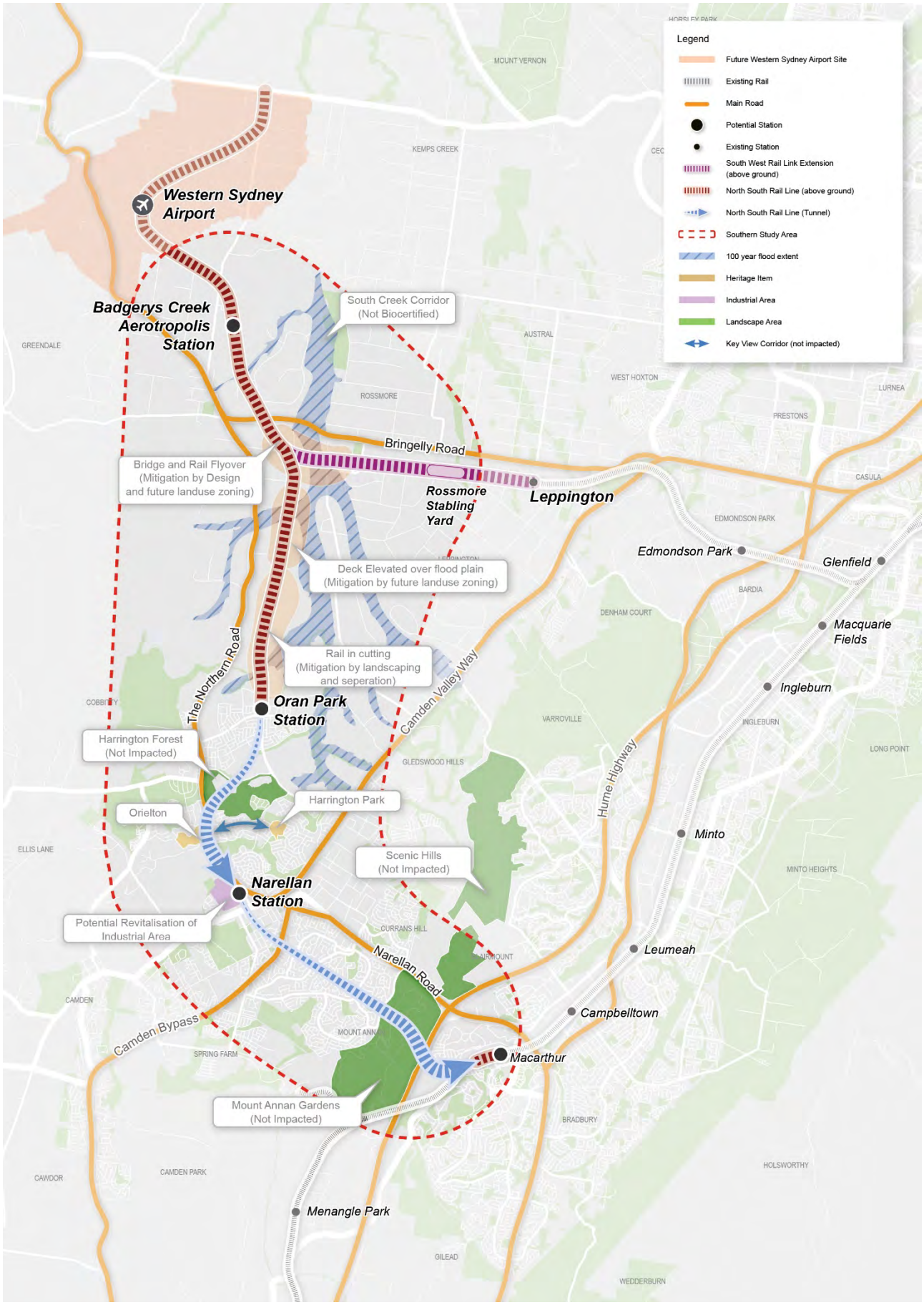

Figure 7-7 **Recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors overlaying landscape and visual features of the southern study area**

7.5.3 Mitigation measures

The most significant visual and landscape impact mitigation is the decision to underground the recommended North South Rail Line corridor in tunnel between Oran Park and Macarthur. This decision avoids impacts to significant landscape elements at Harrington Forest, Scenic Hills, Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan and William Howe Regional Park.

The area around the surface parts of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors in the southern study area is undergoing significant change form new urban development, with further development likely to follow as the South West Growth Area expands. This presents the opportunity to design future development along the recommended corridors to be compatible with a future rail line. For example, new development with low visual sensitivity can be located adjacent to segments of a future rail line likely to have the highest visual impact, while land uses with high visual sensitivity can be located adjacent to segments of a future rail line likely to have a lower visual impact.

7.6 Soil and water

7.6.1 How impacts have been avoided

West of Rossmore, the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor crosses the main channel of the South Creek flood plain at a perpendicular angle to minimise the length of the bridge structure over the flood plain, as shown at Figure 7-8.

North of Oran Park, the surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor adopts an alignment generally following a natural localised ridgeline and avoiding existing flood storage dams and creeks.

South of Oran Park, the future North South Rail Line infrastructure would be in tunnel to avoid impacts to surface waters associated with Narellan Creek and Harrington Park Lake.

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are separated from the Nepean River and are not expected to result in any detrimental impacts to the river.

The soil landscape of South Creek is known to include moderate to highly erodible soils and suitable erosion and sediment control measures will need to be implemented during construction.

7.6.2 Strategic environmental assessment

7.6.2.1 Geology

The preliminary geological assessment indicates that the following geological aspects will require further geotechnical investigation to adequately inform the detailed project design:

- Camden Syncline
- Rossmore Anticline
- Luddenham Dyke
- Woronora Anticline.

7.6.2.2 Soils

The Bringelly to Oran Park section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor passes through, or near, a number of dams and drainage channels which have a ‘high probability’ for acid sulfate soil materials to occur in bottom sediments and adjacent soils. As such, there is the potential for localised environmental risks from acid sulfate soils, including localised acidic runoff. Acid sulfate soil assessments would be conducted and an acid sulfate soils management plan prepared at the time of project construction.

The tunnel section of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor will require significant earthworks to construct, and passes through an area (near Narellan Creek) considered to have a “Low Probability” of acid sulfate soil materials occurring within the soil profile. However, given that construction activities will involve substantial earthworks associated with tunnelling, further acid sulfate soil assessments will need to be conducted in the vicinity of Narellan to assess the presence and extent of acid sulfate soil materials and inform the need for an acid sulfate soils management plan to be prepared at the time of project construction.

The soil landscape of South Creek is known to include moderate to highly erodible soils. This is relevant to the selection of suitable erosion and sediment controls during the construction phase.

7.6.2.3 Contamination

Analysis has identified areas of environmental concern resulting from current or historical land uses. These areas include:

- Two larger scale agricultural and/or horticultural operations near Bringelly Y Junction
- Scrapyard near Bringelly Y Junction
- Recycling/composting facility between Oran Park and Bringelly Road
- Composting area between Oran Park and Bringelly Road
- Recycling and composting facility, around 800 metres north of Oran Park Town Centre
- Narellan industrial area containing numerous factories, warehouses, materials processing facilities and service centres
- Service station and car wash at Narellan
- Vacant land on the former brickworks site in Narellan, which appears discoloured and contains numerous stockpiles of likely soil/fill material.

Further contamination investigations are required to be carried out as part of future project design.

7.6.2.4 Hydrogeology and hydrology

Assessment of hydrogeology, hydrology and water quality has the same outcomes in the southern study area as documented in Section 6.6.2.4 for the northern study area.

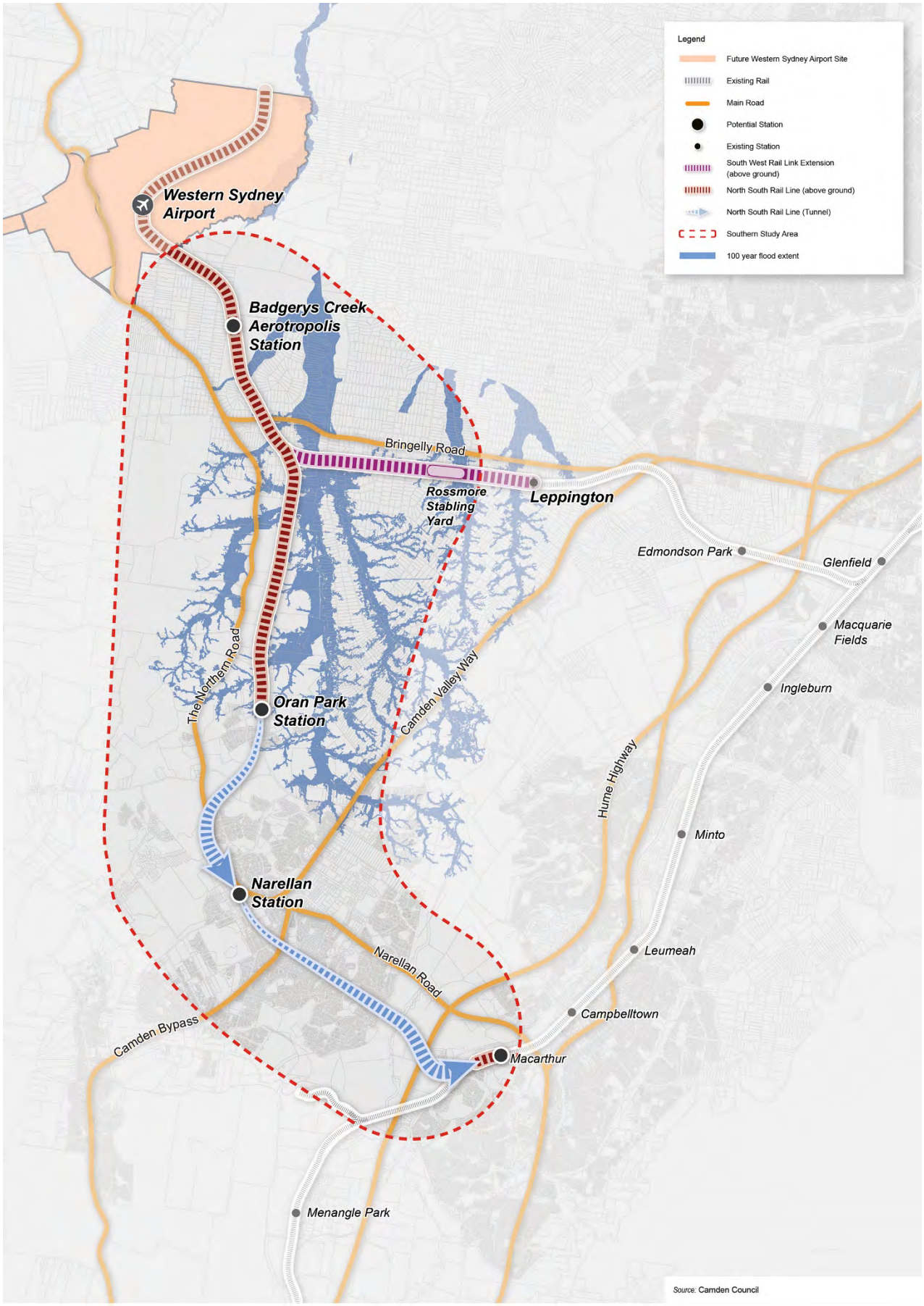

Figure 7-8 **Recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors overlaying flood impacts and watercourses in the southern study area**

7.6.3 Mitigation strategies

At the Oran Park Station, and through the Maryland, Lowes Creek, North Bringelly, Bringelly and Rossmore precincts the rail levels would need to be closely integrated with the civil engineering design of the future land use development. Detailed hydrological modelling of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors within the new landforms (and changed flood conditions) for each precinct would need to:

- Ensure suitable flood immunity can be achieved
- Assess upstream and downstream flooding impacts
- Determine the size of detention basins.

Locations where the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors cross the floodplain would require detailed consideration of design features with regard to how floods can affect the railway, and how creek crossings might alter flood behaviour. At creek crossings, the waterway opening would need to be designed with consideration to adverse flood afflux caused by hydraulic constriction of the bridge opening and piers, the potential for structural damage to piers or deck of the bridge from impact loads of flood debris, and inundation of bridge deck interrupting rail service or damaging rail infrastructure. This is relevant to all creek crossings, and particularly at South Creek, Lowes Creek and Bow Bowing Creek.

At tunnel portals, the railway formation levels would be elevated above the predicted probable maximum flood levels or flood walls would be constructed to prevent flooding of tunnels to minimise risk to human life and project infrastructure. This includes flood levels backing up from creeks, as well as more localised overland flow paths within urbanised areas. If this is not practical, then the portal levels must at least be elevated above the 1 in 100-year flood level. In these instances, the project should include flood evacuation planning including safe egress routes for workers and passengers.

The tunnel section between Oran Park and Narellan passes underneath several watercourses and the Sydney Water Supply Canal. The vertical alignment of the railway, geotechnical investigation and tunnel design will need to consider the risk of ground subsidence under watercourses and storages, and the potential impacts of water leakage from the surface and ingress into the tunnel.

Overall, the types of measures and design features required to mitigate flooding risk would need to be tailored to each specific part of the future rail infrastructure, but are overall likely to be typical of linear infrastructure projects.

7.7 Biodiversity

7.7.1 How impacts have been avoided

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are located within the South West and Western Sydney Growth Areas. Clearing of most native vegetation in the growth areas has been ‘Bio-certified’, meaning that the clearing is already approved and does not require detailed assessment or biodiversity offsetting as it has already been assessed and offset as part of the bio-certification process.

The recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor crosses the South Creek flood plain at a perpendicular angle to minimise the length of the bridge structure through the riparian corridor and to minimise any impacts on riparian and aquatic habitat.

South of Oran Park the future infrastructure would be in a tunnel, which would avoid ecological impacts to the Endangered Ecological Community at Harrington Forest and within the Australian Botanic Garden at Mount Annan. Land at Narellan Station and within the rail corridor south of Macarthur Station does not contain significant native vegetation.

7.7.2 Strategic environmental assessment

It is important to note that the clearing of native vegetation in recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors in the southern study area is predominately within bio-certified lands where the clearing is already approved and does not require detailed assessment or biodiversity off-setting. Land that has not been bio-certified is generally restricted to the riparian corridor along South Creek. The area within the recommended corridors is considered to provide only limited habitat opportunities for native fauna, threatened or otherwise, and is unlikely to be utilised by any fauna groups other than highly mobile species or species typical of urban and semi-urban environments. Land at Narellan Station and within the rail corridor south of Macarthur Station does not contain significant native vegetation.

The total amount of vegetation clearing required in bio-certified and non-bio-certified lands is provided in Table 7-2. A future North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension would require the removal of about 5.77 hectares of mapped native vegetation in the southern study area that is not bio-certified. Clearing of non-bio-certified native vegetation is estimated to include:

- About 4.04 hectares of River-flat Eucalypt Forest on Coastal Floodplain Forest within the South Creek corridor near Bringelly and along a tributary of South Creek, located just north of Oran Park.
- About 1.73 hectares of Cumberland Plain Woodland within the South Creek corridor near Bringelly.

Table 7-2 Impacted vegetation communities in the southern study area

Vegetation community	BC Act status	Area (hectares)		
		Certified	Non-certified	Total
Alluvial Woodland	Endangered (River-flat Eucalypt Forest on Coastal Floodplain Forest)	3.90	4.04	7.94
Shale Plains Woodland	Critically endangered	17.36	1.73	19.09
Shale Hills Woodland	Critically endangered (Cumberland Plain Woodland)	15.77	0	15.77
Total		**37.03**	**5.77**	**42.8**

7.7.3 Mitigation strategies

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor now includes substantial future sections of tunnel that avoid impacts for biodiversity. In particular, the potential impacts to the ecological values within Harrington Forest was a major contributor to selection of the tunnel south of Oran Park.

General ecological mitigation measures likely to be required during the delivery of the potential future infrastructure are set out in Section 6. Biodiversity off-set considerations are set our below.

7.7.3.1 Terrestrial biodiversity offsets

The terrestrial biodiversity values that may potentially require offsetting as part of the establishment of the rail corridor and future construction and operation of the rail line include the clearing of about 5.77 hectares of non-biocertified native vegetation. The ecosystem credits that will be required for future biodiversity offsets will be determined following field surveys. However, the likely credit types required to offset the non-biocertified Cumberland Plain Woodland vegetation types are as follows:

- ME19 Grey Box – Forest Red Gum grassy woodland on shale of the southern Cumberland Plain, Sydney Basin Bioregion (PCT850)
- ME17 Forest Red Gum – Grey Box shrubby woodland on shale of the southern Cumberland Plain, Sydney Basin Bioregion (PCT830)
- ME79 Swamp Oak open forest on river flats of the Cumberland Plain and Hunter Valley (PCT 1800).

Species credits would also be required to be offset if threatened species are potentially present within the non-biocertified parts of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. The presence or absence of threatened flora species will require surveys conducted during the appropriate time of year according to the *NSW Guide to Surveying Threatened Plants* (Office of Environment and Heritage 2016). Potential species credits that may require offsetting, include:

- Threatened plant species recorded in the recommended North South Rail Line corridor that are associated with grassy woodland habitats of western Sydney, such as *Pimelea spicata* and *Grevillea juniperina*
- Endangered populations of plants, including the *Marsdenia viridiflora* population
- Microchiropteran bats, including species that have previously been recorded within the locality, for example, Common Bent-wing Bat and Greater Broad-nosed bat, and for which suitable foraging and roosting habitat may be removed by any future clearing of the corridor.

7.7.3.2 National biodiversity offsets

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors could have impacts on matters of national environmental significance listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* including:

- Listed threatened species, as potential habitat for several threatened flora and fauna species occurring along the recommended North South Rail Line corridor
- Listed threatened ecological communities, as several small patches of Cumberland Plain Woodland vegetation are located along the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.

However, due to the small area of impacted non-biocertified native vegetation, a preliminary conclusion is that the future infrastructure project is not likely to have a significant impact on any matters of national environmental significance. This conclusion is preliminary only and will need to be supported by data collected from field surveys and by detailed mapping and assessment of impacts, including addressing the relevant significance criteria presented in the Department of the Environment (2013) *Matters of National Environmental Significance – Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1*.

Should the detailed assessment conclude that a 'significant impact' is likely as a result of the project, then the project will need to be referred to the Department of the Environment and Energy for consideration as to whether the it constitutes a 'controlled action' within the meaning of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Should the future infrastructure project be deemed a controlled action and residual impacts on the Matters of National Environmental Significance are deemed to be significant and unavoidable (after the application of avoidance and mitigation measures), then biodiversity offsets will be required by the Australian Government, in accordance with the *Environmental Offsets Policy* (Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities 2012).

According to the *Environmental Offsets Policy*, offsets can comprise a combination of 'direct offsets' and 'other compensatory measures'. Offsets should align with conservation priorities for the impacted protected matter and be tailored specifically to the attribute of the protected matter that is impacted to deliver a conservation gain. A minimum of 90 per cent of the offset requirements for any given impact must be met through direct offsets.

Offsets for Matters of National Environmental Significance that might be required for the construction and operation of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension have not been quantified for this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment, as it is not yet clear whether the construction and operation of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension would be a controlled action and hence whether offsets would be necessary.

7.8 Heritage

7.8.1 How impacts have been avoided

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors in the southern study area avoid direct impacts on heritage items and conservation areas listed on the State Heritage Register and in local environmental plans. Heritage items in proximity to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are shown at Figure 7-9.

While the landscape is acknowledged to be of cultural and social significance to Aboriginal people, there are no areas of particular cultural or social significance identified within the corridors.

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor includes a substantial section of tunnel between Oran Park and Macarthur that could prevent impacts on heritage values. The commitment to a tunnel avoids impacts on areas of possible Aboriginal heritage value. South of Oran Park the future infrastructure would be in a tunnel, which would avoid impacts to heritage items in this portion of the corridor. North of Oran Park, there are a limited number of heritage items and future infrastructure is likely to be located in a cutting to minimise any impacts.

The Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council controls several small sites through native title claims for land near the Rossmore–Bringelly section of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors, however, none of these sites are impacted by the recommended corridors.

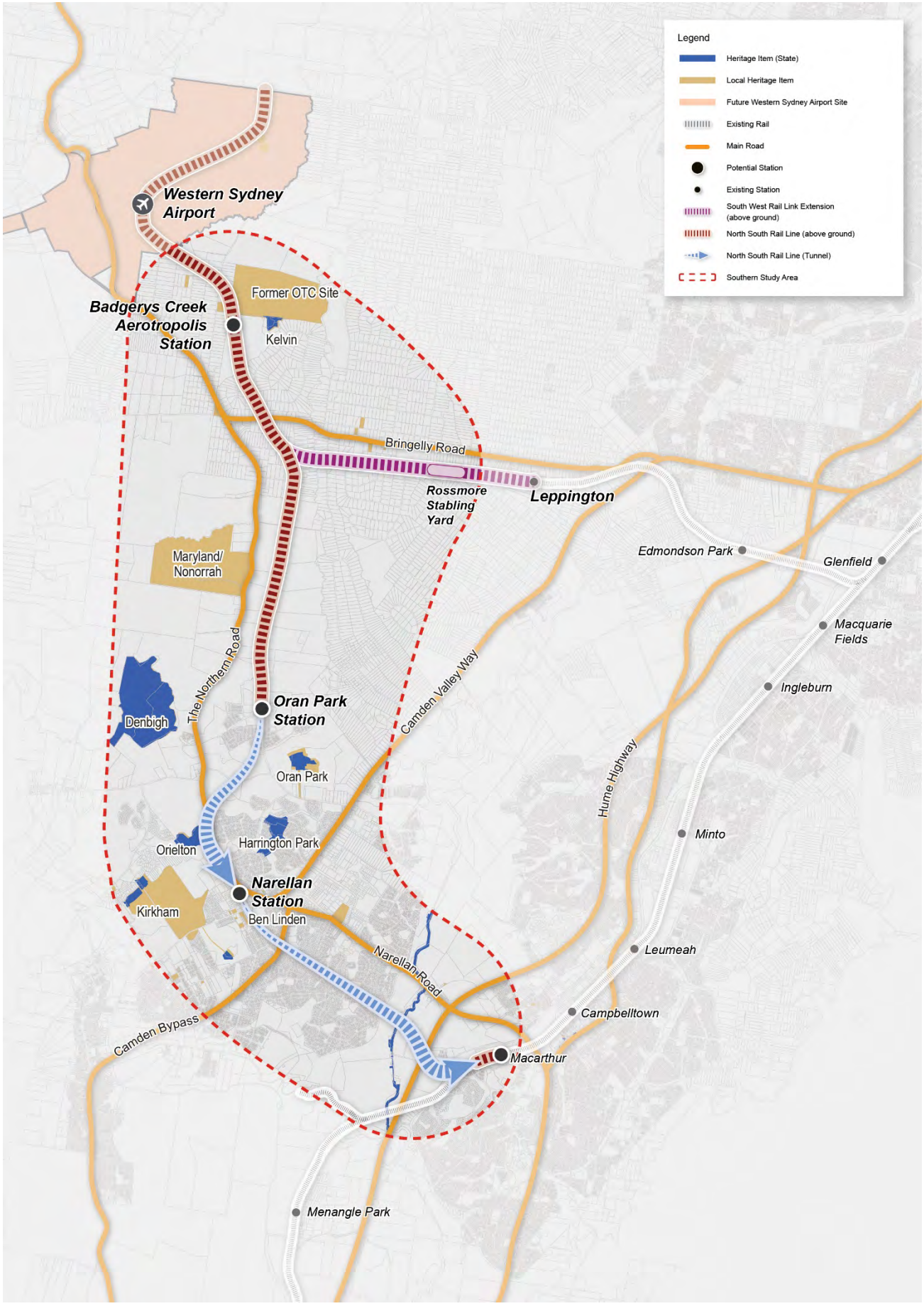

Figure 7-9 **Recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors overlaying European heritage items in the southern study area**

7.8.2 Strategic environmental assessment

7.8.2.1 Aboriginal heritage

There is potential for there to be direct and indirect impacts on Aboriginal heritage as a result of a future North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension in the southern study area, however, no specific or significant impacts have been identified. It is considered that impacts would most likely occur during the construction phase, with future operation unlikely to result in significant impacts to any surrounding Aboriginal heritage. Through the application of appropriate mitigation measures, impacts on Aboriginal heritage should be able to be minimised or avoided completely.

Protecting the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would protect large tracts of land, remnant vegetation, Aboriginal objects and cultural landscapes. Certain Aboriginal sites, such as artefact sites, are currently considered to be common throughout the Cumberland Plain. However, as development of the Cumberland Plain increases, the number of intact Aboriginal sites decreases. As a result of this, all Aboriginal archaeological sites are likely to be rarer and therefore more valuable in the future, including those that may eventually be discovered within the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link corridors.

7.8.2.2 Built heritage

The long-term protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors could affect how heritage items are valued and maintained.

In relation to impacts on Orielton, the design of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor would be in tunnel where Orielton is located and therefore any long-term impact would be minimised. Similarly, Ben Linden is unlikely to be directly impacted as a result of a future rail infrastructure. Future construction of a station at Narellan would be within the visual curtilage of Ben Linden, however, due to its existing context within a light industrial and commercial area, the impact of this is considered to be minimal, and can be addressed through design.

Impacts on Bringelly Road will be negligible as the road is already undergoing significant upgrades. Similarly, any impact on the Bringelly / Greendale cultural landscape would be negligible as the area is already intended to undergo significant urban development removing the rural elements of the landscape.

At North Bringelly, the North South Rail Line would affect the access road and curtilage of the State Heritage Register listed ‘Kelvin’ group. In addition, the local heritage values associated with the former Overseas Telecommunications Commission site would be directly impacted.

While the impacts of construction of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension on surrounding heritage items would need to be investigated prior to a future detailed infrastructure application, it is considered that design and construction measures can be implemented to avoid any significant impacts on the curtilage, fabric or setting of all affected heritage items. Upon completion of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension it is considered that there would be minimal impacts to the heritage values of the area provided that mitigation measures are implemented during design and construction.

In addition to the presence of the known heritage items, further investigation would need to be undertaken to determine the significance of any archaeological sites. It is considered that future design and construction methods may be implemented to minimise any impacts to the heritage value of the area.

7.8.3 Mitigation strategies

The recommended North South Rail Line corridor includes substantial future sections of tunnel that avoid impacts on heritage. In particular, the potential impacts to the State Heritage Register listed Orielton was a contributor to selection of the tunnel south of Oran Park. The commitment to a tunnel also avoids impacts to areas of likely Aboriginal heritage value along Narellan Creek, along ridgelines and hill landforms in Harrington Forest, as well as around Gundungarra Reserve and William Howe Regional Park, Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan, the Scenic Hills and the Western Sydney University Campbelltown Campus.

7.8.3.1 Aboriginal heritage

The following mitigation measures will be considered as part of a future design phase:

- Consultation with Office of Environment and Heritage and landowners regarding the Aboriginal sites affected by the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors
- Consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders in accordance with the relevant Office of Environment and Heritage guidelines. Consultation should be conducted at various stages during further planning
- Investigation and assessment of Aboriginal heritage impacts in accordance with the relevant guidelines, including, but not be limited to, site visits, confirmation of registered Aboriginal sites, identification of unrecorded sites, identification of areas which have been subject to little background research and an assessment of Aboriginal archaeological potential
- Construction phase mitigation measures may include test excavation, salvage excavation, detailed recording, reporting, artefact analysis, and heritage interpretation.

In addition to this, future investigations present a unique opportunity to conduct a large-scale comparative study of Aboriginal archaeology in differing local contexts. As a result of this, there would be an opportunity for interpretation of Aboriginal heritage values to be incorporated into future design or to be included in a future heritage interpretation strategy.

7.8.3.2 Built heritage

The following mitigation measures will be considered as part of a future design phase:

- Prepare a statement of heritage impact for the former Overseas Telecommunications Commission Site, the 'Kelvin' group, Orielton and Ben Linden as part of a future infrastructure application
- The heritage significance of the Bringelly / Greendale cultural landscape and the Northern Road and Bringelly Road would need to be assessed in future heritage assessments and taken into consideration during the urban development in the area
- The design and construction of any future North South Rail Line work at Narellan should consider the heritage values of Ben Linden
- A detailed archaeological impact assessment should be prepared prior to a future infrastructure application to investigate the potential archaeological sites, including a site survey and documentary analysis
- Once construction methodology and the detailed design of the future rail line are known, impacts to potential archaeology should be avoided and mitigated by undertaking test excavation, salvage excavation, archaeological monitoring, detailed recording, reporting and artefact analysis as well as the preparation of a Heritage Interpretation Strategy.

7.9 Air quality

The assessment of air quality impacts in the southern study area is the same as that for the northern study area in Section 6.9.

7.10 Social

7.10.1 How impacts have been avoided

Potential social impacts would be assessed at the time of infrastructure delivery, accounting for the current land uses surrounding the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridor and the impact on the community at the time a project is proposed. A future environmental impact statement would be accompanied by a social impact assessment.

7.10.2 Strategic environmental assessment

The surface section of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors between Rossmore, Western Sydney Airport and Oran Park is expected to be the subject of substantial urban transformation in the coming years, prior to the delivery of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension infrastructure.

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would maximise the opportunity to integrate future rail infrastructure into planned urban development, and minimise impact to existing and future communities. Transport for NSW will continue to work with other relevant agencies across the NSW Government to ensure that land use planning and transport planning processes are integrated and coordinated, so that social disruption in the future can be avoided.

The location of the proposed Narellan Station presents an opportunity for renewal of the centre and will support the ongoing growth of the area.

The Oran Park Master Plan currently envisages a school and health /medical precinct to be located adjacent to Oran Park Station.

7.10.3 Mitigation strategies

Social mitigation strategies for the southern study area are the same as those for the northern study area described in Section 6.10.3.

8 Overall impact and environmental risk analysis

This section assesses the potential cumulative impacts of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors and the overall potential impact of future rail infrastructure in these corridors. An environmental risk analysis summary is also provided that identifies the potential environmental impacts associated with the protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.

8.1 Cumulative environmental assessment

Cumulative impacts are the successive, incremental and combined impacts of one or more activities. Such impacts can be both positive and negative and can vary in intensity as well as in spatial and temporal extent. Cumulative impacts may be generated through the aggregation or interaction of impacts. The number of projects planned and underway across western Sydney and the potential cumulative impacts that may arise require collective consideration.

8.1.1 Related infrastructure and development

Major new development for residential, employment and recreation will occur in the growth areas and new transport infrastructure projects will be required to support them. Current and future road infrastructure projects in western Sydney are summarised in the *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan* (Roads and Maritime Services 2017b) and include:

- An upgrade of The Northern Road to a minimum of four lanes from Narellan to the M4 Western Motorway
- Construction of the proposed M12 Motorway between the M7 Motorway and The Northern Road
- Upgrade of Bringelly Road to a minimum of four lanes between The Northern Road and Camden Valley Way
- A $200 million package for local road upgrades.

Future infrastructure projects that are currently in various stages of planning include:

- Outer Sydney Orbital
- Western Sydney Freight Line
- Western Sydney Airport.

The outcomes of the *Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study* will also likely shape future rail infrastructure development in western Sydney to 2056.

A review of the potential for cumulative impacts to arise is provided in Table 8-1, with further assessment provided in Sections 8.1.2 to 8.1.5 where a potential for cumulative impacts is identified.

Table 8-1 Cumulative impacts assessment

Matter	Assessment
Land use and property impacts	Progressive urbanisation of the landscape, shifting from largely rural to increasingly urban, with the corresponding loss of agricultural land uses and changes to economic activity. These changes in land use activity are likely to occur with or without the future rail infrastructure.
Economic impacts	Progressive urbanisation of the area is likely to result in positive cumulative economic impacts, as investment in infrastructure and land use programs increases opportunities for employment and housing.
Traffic and transport	Cumulative impacts on traffic and transport in the region are likely to be as a result of increased investment in transport infrastructure, as well as an increased residential population. Corridor protection is intended to address these traffic and transport impacts and be complementary to planned infrastructure investment in the region.
Noise and vibration	Progressive development of the region may result in cumulative noise and vibration impacts as a result of the intensification of land uses and construction.
Visual amenity, built form and urban design	Progressive development of western Sydney is likely to alter the existing visual amenity, built form and urban design character along the length of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor between Orchard Hills and Oran Park and the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor. There are also likely to be potential incremental changes in the visual character of established urban areas around St Marys, Werrington, Caddens, Narellan, Campbelltown and Macarthur.
Soil and water	Progressive development of the area may result in potential cumulative soil and water impacts, altering flooding and soil quality conditions.
Biodiversity	Broader scale loss of ecological diversity, particularly of endangered ecological communities such as the Cumberland Plain Woodland, see Section 8.1.3.
Heritage	Cumulative impacts on heritage items, are discussed in Section 8.1.4.
Air quality	Agglomeration of individual smaller scale impacts such as airshed changes, watershed alterations or climate change that collectively trigger regional sensitivity criteria. The future North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension infrastructure would not contribute to a worsening of airshed or climate change issues. Cumulative hydrological and water quality issues are considered in Section 8.1.5.
Social	Progressive urbanisation of the area is likely to result in positive cumulative social impacts, as investment in infrastructure and land use programs increases opportunities for employment and housing.
Construction	Potential agglomeration of construction impacts, depending on the timing of construction, which may include air, noise and water quality impacts. These are construction impacts that are not related to corridor protection and would be addressed as part of the environmental impact assessment supporting a future infrastructure application.

8.1.2 Cumulative impact on land use

Considerable discussion has been made in this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment of current and future development within and along the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors and changes in land use activity that are likely to occur, with or without the future infrastructure.

Cumulative impacts of corridor protection and ongoing urban development in the Western Economic Corridor and Greater Penrith to St Marys area will have a transformative effect on the character of western Sydney, particularly in relation to the visual character of the landscape, noise, stormwater, traffic and transport. As a result of this, cumulative impacts associated with development and infrastructure delivery will be assessed and mitigated through detailed land use planning. The objective of early corridor protection is to assist in the mitigation of cumulative impacts by ensuring land uses can be appropriately distributed.

In relation to cumulative impacts outside the Western Economic Corridor, corridor protection will not result in any additional impacts beyond what would ordinarily be expected through the course of incremental development. In this way, land use planning and future infrastructure applications will be able to adequately address any impacts that arise.

At Macarthur, protection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor will further strengthen the strategic role of this centre when considered alongside proposed transport infrastructure upgrades and ongoing urban development around Macarthur Heights and the Western Sydney University Campbelltown Campus.

Overall, the majority of impacts discussed in this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment are not considered to result in any impact beyond what would ordinarily be expected as part of ongoing development, with the exception of the issues discussed in the following sections.

8.1.3 Cumulative impacts on ecological values

Impacts on flora and fauna associated with the future construction and operation of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension are likely to be relatively restricted and limited in extent, however clearing would be required in certain locations resulting in a loss of flora and fauna habitats and biodiversity values. In addition to this, there will also be several other large infrastructure works that will occur in western Sydney over the timeframe of the construction and operation of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension. Key projects include major road upgrades as part of the *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan* as well as service and infrastructure work to support future residential growth throughout the South West Growth Centre.

On an individual basis, these developments may only have localised and limited impacts on biodiversity but each are likely to involve some loss of threatened species habitat and a reduction in the extent of threatened ecological communities. The collective impacts of the above developments in western Sydney could be significant at a regional scale in particular, as they will all occur within the same region and over similar timeframes.

It will be the responsibility of the NSW Government and relevant local councils to consider the significance of the cumulative impacts relating to infrastructure and development projects in western Sydney. It is recommended that a regional scale approach to avoidance of impacts on biodiversity should be considered, with appropriate mechanisms for setting aside land and funding for biodiversity offsets. Transport for NSW may either set aside land or funding for biodiversity offsets for the project at the strategic environmental assessment phase or may defer the need for offset until the project begins the delivery phase, which will be quantified in a future environmental impact statement.

8.1.4 Cumulative impacts on heritage items

The long-term protection of the corridor may affect how heritage items are valued and maintained, which may impact on the heritage significance of the item. Specifically:

- The recommended North South Rail Line corridor would traverse the Luddenham Road Alignment in Luddenham
- The recommended North South Rail Line corridor travels through the McGarvie-Smith Farm in Badgerys Creek
- Orielton is located partly within the recommended North South Rail Line corridor, however, this portion of the corridor will be in tunnel and is unlikely to significantly affect its heritage value
- Ben Linden is located in proximity to the tunnel portion of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor and the future Narellan Station. Ben Linden is currently located within a light industrial area and any impacts as a result of the future station are unlikely to directly impact the heritage significance of this item
- The Northern Road and Bringelly Road potential local heritage items are currently undergoing upgrades that will likely result in an adverse effect on the heritage significance of the roads as the alignment and setting will be altered
- The Bringelly / Greendale cultural landscape is located within the South West Growth Area and the significance of this area is likely to be impacted as a result of planned urban development. It is noted that the protection of the corridor could temporarily protect a section of the cultural landscape, however the scale of urban development would likely diminish any heritage value over time

- Long term protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors could temporarily protect portions of potential historical archaeological sites, however, future urban development in the northern and southern study areas is likely to impact on potential archaeological sites.

8.1.5 Cumulative impacts on water resources

Future development in the Western Economic Corridor will result in modified groundwater conditions and surface water conditions that will affect flooding behaviour. For this reason, any future infrastructure application would need to be designed, planned and assessed based on the conditions at the time and stormwater arrangements should take into account the future infrastructure.

The cumulative impact from urbanisation and other land uses within the catchment is a recognised issue and the Lower Hawkesbury-Nepean River Nutrient Management Strategy prepared by Office of Environment and Heritage provides a catchment wide policy framework to coordinate and guide actions aimed at preserving the environmental values of the river system. The most sensitive environmental issue is likely to be the cumulative impact of development within the South Creek catchment on the water quality objectives for the Hawkesbury Nepean River.

8.2 Overall impact

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* specifies that justification of major projects must have regard to biophysical, economic and social considerations and the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

This means that the decision on whether a project can proceed or not needs to be made in the full knowledge of its effects, both positive and negative, whether those impacts can be quantified or not. The assessment must therefore focus on the identification and appraisal of the effects of the proposed change over the area's existing conditions.

Various components of the biophysical, social and economic environments have been examined in this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment and are summarised below.

8.2.1 Social and economic

Corridor protection and potential future railway infrastructure has the potential to result in positive social and economic impacts as it would:

- Protect land now for future rail infrastructure to minimise future costs associated with rail infrastructure
- Protect corridors that link strategic centres as identified by *A Plan for Growing Sydney*, the *Draft Western City District Plan* and the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* to provide transport infrastructure close to places of employment
- Be located to avoid impacts on existing sensitive receivers
- Create an opportunity for future land uses to be established to respond to the potential for future rail infrastructure in the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors
- Deliver additional development capacity for employment-generating land uses
- Deliver additional dwellings in transit oriented development around new transport nodes, increasing the demand for local employment-supporting services
- Increase the broader population catchment able to access the region for employment by public transport, increasing the ability of businesses to access potential employees and customers.

8.2.2 Biophysical

The assessment presented in Sections 6 and 7 of this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment has demonstrated that the proposed corridors have minimised the potential for biophysical impacts and demonstrated that potential future rail infrastructure will not result in any unmanageable biophysical impacts following the implementation of the mitigation measures discussed above.

8.3 Ecologically sustainable development

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 lists four principles of ecologically sustainable development:

- The precautionary principle
- Intergenerational equity
- Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity
- Improved valuation and pricing of environmental resources.

These principles and their application to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors are discussed in the following sections.

8.3.1 The precautionary principle

The precautionary principle is utilised when uncertainty exists about potential environmental impacts. It recommends that if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, a lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation. The precautionary principle requires careful evaluation of potential environmental impacts to avoid, wherever practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment.

This draft Strategic Environmental Assessment has not identified any serious threat of irreversible damage to the environment associated with the protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. Where appropriate, the precautionary principle would be adopted during assessment of potential future rail infrastructure to minimise any adverse environmental impacts in accordance with the mitigation measures outlined in Sections 6, 7 and 10.

8.3.2 Intergenerational equity

Intergenerational equity is concerned with ensuring that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations. The proposal has been designed to benefit both the existing and future generations by identifying corridors that will minimise impacts on existing land uses and to ensure that future land uses can be appropriately distributed. Protecting the corridors will aim to ensure that future rail infrastructure can be delivered in a timely and cost-efficient manner. Potential future rail infrastructure will benefit future generations by providing a transport link between homes and places of employment and will support the ongoing growth of western Sydney.

8.3.3 Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity

The principle of biological diversity upholds that the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in the assessment of projects. The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would not have any significant effect on the biological diversity and ecological integrity of the local area, with future potential rail infrastructure applications capable of applying appropriate mitigation strategies to ensure impacts on biological diversity and ecological integrity are minimised.

8.3.4 Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms

The principles of improved valuation and pricing of environmental resources requires consideration of all environmental resources which may be affected by a proposal, including air, water, land and living things. At the corridor protection stage of the process, it is considered that no environmental resources in the area will be adversely affected. Future potential rail infrastructure applications will consider valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms and other mitigation measures to minimise any impacts on environmental resources required or impacted by future rail infrastructure.

8.4 Environmental risk analysis

An environmental risk analysis has been undertaken that establishes a residual risk for a range of environmental factors by reviewing the significance of environmental impacts and the ability to manage those impacts. The environmental risk analysis has been adapted from Australian Standard AS4369.1999 Risk Management and Environmental Risk Tools.

Figure 8-1 indicates the significance of environmental impact and assigns a value between one and 10 based on:

- The receiving environment
- The level of understanding of the type and extent of impacts
- The likely community response to the environmental consequence of protecting the corridors.

The manageability of environmental impact is assigned a value between one and five based on:

- The complexity of the mitigation measures
- The known level of performance of the safeguards proposed
- The opportunity for adaptive management.

The sum of the values assigned provides an indicative ranking of potential residual impacts after the mitigation measures are implemented. Table 8-1 presents the findings of the environmental risk analysis.

The environmental risk analysis identifies and addresses the impacts of corridor protection. Construction and operation of future transport infrastructure within the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would be the subject of a future environmental impact assessment to assess impacts and identify mitigation measures in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Significance of impact	Manageability of impact				
	5 Complex	4 Substantial	3 Elementary	2 Standard	1 Simple
1 – Low	6 (Medium)	5 (Low/Medium)	4 (Low/Medium)	3 (Low)	2 (Low)
2 – Minor	7 (High/Medium)	6 (Medium)	5 (Low/Medium)	4 (Low/Medium)	3 (Low)
3 – Moderate	8 (High/Medium)	7 (High/Medium)	6 (Medium)	5 (Low/Medium)	4 (Low/Medium)
4 – High	9 (High)	8 (High/Medium)	7 (High/Medium)	6 (Medium)	5 (Low/Medium)
5 – Extreme	10 (High)	9 (High)	8 (High/Medium)	7 (High/Medium)	6 (Medium)

Figure 8-1 Significance of environmental impacts matrix

Table 8-2 Environmental risk analysis

Potential environmental impacts of corridor protection			Risk analysis		
Item	**Potential environmental impact**	**Proposed mitigation strategies**	**Significance of impact**	**Manageability of impact**	**Residual impact**
Land use and property	Affected properties subject to development restrictions until such time as the infrastructure is delivered.	▪ Implement statutory corridor protection measures within appropriate environmental planning instruments to identify and manage land use and property within and immediately adjoining corridor.	3	3	6
Economic	Corridor land is not economically used until the future infrastructure is delivered.	▪ In consultation with the Department of Planning and Environment, councils and landowners, an interim land use strategy will be prepared to set out the preferred land use outcomes sought by Transport for NSW when considering land use changes until such time that a transport project proceeds.	3	2	5
Traffic and transport	No traffic and transport impacts associated with corridor protection.	▪ Implement statutory corridor protection measures within appropriate environmental planning instruments to identify and manage land use and property within and immediately adjoining corridor to ensure that future road network is influenced by the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.	2	2	4
Noise and Vibration	No noise and vibration impacts associated with corridor protection.	▪ Implement statutory corridor protection measures within appropriate environmental planning instruments to identify and manage land use and property within land immediately adjoining corridor to ensure that future urban development is influenced by the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors – including siting of sensitive land uses, and design of buildings.	2	2	4

Potential environmental impacts of corridor protection			Risk analysis		
Item	**Potential environmental impact**	**Proposed mitigation strategies**	**Significance of impact**	**Manageability of impact**	**Residual impact**
Visual amenity, built form and urban design	No visual and landscape impacts associated with corridor protection.	▪ Implement statutory corridor protection measures within appropriate environmental planning instruments to identify and manage land use and property within land immediately adjoining corridor to ensure that future urban development is influenced by the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors – including siting of sensitive land uses.	2	2	4
Soil and Water	No geology, soil and water resource impacts associated with corridor protection.	▪ Implement statutory corridor protection measures within appropriate environmental planning instruments to identify and manage stormwater management systems within land next to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.	2	2	4
Biodiversity	No biodiversity impacts associated with corridor protection.	▪ Future approvals and/or concurrence in accordance with the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 1979* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* as required. ▪ Biodiversity offsets to be obtained.	2	2	4
European heritage	The protection of the corridor could affect how heritage items are valued and maintained.	▪ Design of future infrastructure to consider the heritage values of McGarvie-Smith Farm and Ben Linden. ▪ Future approvals and/or concurrence in accordance with *Heritage Act 1977*.	2	2	4
Aboriginal heritage	No Aboriginal heritage impacts associated with corridor protection.	▪ Future approvals and/or concurrence in accordance with the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.	2	2	4
Air quality	No air quality impacts associated with corridor protection.	▪ Design of future infrastructure to consider greenhouse gas emissions.	2	2	4

Potential environmental impacts of corridor protection			Risk analysis		
Item	**Potential environmental impact**	**Proposed mitigation strategies**	**Significance of impact**	**Manageability of impact**	**Residual impact**
Social	▪ No community facilities or services impacted by corridor protection. ▪ Land owners of affected properties may not be able to sell the property.	▪ A transparent and equitable process to manage and communicate the property acquisition process should be established as early as possible to assist in managing land owner concerns.	2	2	4

9 Corridor protection process

9.1 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, supported by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000, sets out mechanisms for the management, development and conservation of the environment as well as for the orderly and economic use and development of land. The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* includes provisions relating to the following matters:

- Requirements for rezoning land including for the preparation of a local environmental study as part of the rezoning process
- Matters for consideration when determining a development application, infrastructure application or activity.

9.1.1 Rezoning of land

Part 3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* creates the authority for State Environmental Planning Policies and local environmental plans to be made. Local environmental plans are made by councils to guide planning decisions for local government areas through zoning and development controls to manage the ways in which land is used. Implementation of local environmental plans is facilitated through development control plans which provide detailed planning and design guidelines. A development control plan typically identifies additional development controls and standards for addressing development issues at a local level and can be applied more flexibly than a local environmental plan. State Environmental Planning Policies deal with matters of State or regional environmental planning significance.

Under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, only the Governor may make a State Environmental Planning Policy, while authority to make a local environmental plan is delegated to the Minister for Planning or the Greater Sydney Commission.

When making or amending environmental planning instruments, the relevant planning authority, for example, a council or the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment, must take into account the Ministerial directions contained in Section 117 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. These directions require councils to address a range of matters when seeking to rezone land.

9.1.2 Infrastructure approvals

Part 5.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* currently contains provisions relating to the environmental assessment and approval of State Significant Infrastructure, including the application process, which includes the issuing of environmental assessment requirements by the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment, the preparation of an environmental impact statement and the public exhibition of the project. It is likely that any future application for rail infrastructure in the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would be required to comply with this legislative process.

Under Part 5.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, a range of approvals under other legislation do not apply to State Significant Infrastructure. Approvals under the following legislation, which might otherwise be required prior to the construction of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension in the future, would not be required as a result of Part 5.1:

- *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
- *Heritage Act 1977*
- *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*
- *Native Vegetation Act 2003*
- *Water Management Act 2000* (except for an aquifer interference approval which remains).

When the Government commits to progressing with the construction and operation of an infrastructure project within the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors, an environmental assessment of the proposed project under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, or the relevant legislation at that time, would be prepared. This stage of the corridor delivery process may be decades away and would be subject to available funding and the regulatory context at the time.

9.2 Land proposed for protection

Land in the above ground sections of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor and all of the recommended South West Rail Link Extension corridor is proposed to be protected. The vertical and horizontal alignment of the two sections of tunnel in the recommended North South Rail Line corridor are still under investigation and no protection of these tunnels is proposed.

Protection of the above ground sections of the recommended corridors now will enable the land release precinct planning processes to factor in the future location of the rail corridors and to provide for appropriate land uses around the corridors including in the vicinity of the future railway stations. This is particularly relevant for land within the Western Sydney Airport and South West Growth Areas, where land has already been released for future urban development.

At Narellan and Oran Park, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor to be protected includes temporary tunnel construction compound sites. At Macarthur, the recommended North South Rail Line corridor for protection is limited to slivers of land on either side of the existing rail corridor. Detailed maps showing the properties impacted by the recommended North South Rail Line corridor are available alongside this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Corridor protection will be achieved through the planning system. It is intended that an environmental planning instrument will be prepared under Part 3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* that will rezone the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors as SP2 Infrastructure.

The outcomes that protection of the recommended corridors by rezoning are intended to achieve are to:

- Facilitate the future delivery of the North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension for passenger train services by preventing development from occurring within the recommended corridors that is incompatible with the future infrastructure, minimising future community disruption and minimising property acquisition costs.
- Not affect existing uses which will be able to continue in the immediate term.
- Enable the NSW Government to acquire the land, and specify the relevant acquisition authority for owner-initiated land acquisition under the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* until that time.

The Department of Planning and Environment is the relevant planning authority responsible for the preparation of the environmental planning instrument(s) that will protect the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.

9.3 Other statutory requirements

This section identifies relevant Australian Government, NSW Government and local legislation that needs to be considered in the context of corridor protection and the potential future delivery of rail infrastructure. This section also identifies what a future environmental impact assessment for potential mass transit would need to consider.

Table 9-1 Relevant legislation

Legislation	Relevance to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors	Future assessment considerations
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999	The requirements of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* have been taken into account when selecting the recommended corridors. The Commonwealth Department of Environment and Energy has been engaged during the preparation of this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment in accordance with the guidelines in Appendix 1.	Referral to the Australian Government's Department of Environment and Energy potentially required to assess potential impact on Matters of National Environmental Significance.
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* controls development in NSW, including rezoning and development approvals (refer to Section 9.1).	A future environmental impact statement would need to be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016	The *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* mandates the use of biodiversity offsets for the majority of projects across NSW as well as identifies and protects threatened species, ecological communities and key threatening processes. The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been selected to avoid and minimise impacts on threatened species identified under the Act.	A future environmental impact statement would need to assess the impact of potential mass transit infrastructure in the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors on threatened and endangered species, populations and communities, as well as provide for offsets in accordance with the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme established under the Act.
Water Management Act 2000	The *Water Management Act 2000* regulates activities that impact on surface or groundwater systems. The need to obtain approvals for work in, on or under waterfront land has informed the selection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.	A future environmental impact statement would need to obtain approval under the *Water Management Act 2000* for any work undertaken in the recommended corridors that are in, on or under waterfront land.
National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974	The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* protects Aboriginal sites and relics in NSW and includes requirements for consultation and consent where development is likely to impact on Aboriginal relics and values. The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been selected to minimise any impacts on Aboriginal relics.	A future environmental impact statement would need to assess the impact of potential mass transit infrastructure in the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors on Aboriginal sites or relics.
Heritage Act 1977	The *Heritage Act 1977* protects European heritage items and requires consent for any work that is likely to impact on listed heritage items. The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been selected to minimise any impacts on heritage items as a result of corridor protection or future mass transit infrastructure in the corridors.	A future environmental impact statement would need to assess the impact of potential mass transit infrastructure in the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors on heritage items. A future application for development in the recommended corridors may also be referred to the NSW Heritage Council.

Legislation	Relevance to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors	Future assessment considerations
Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991	The *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* establishes a process for equitable compensation of landowners whose land is acquired. Any land acquisition undertaken subsequent to protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors would be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of this Act.	Any land acquisition undertaken prior to the delivery of potential mass transit infrastructure in the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors needs to occur in accordance with the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991*.
Crown Lands Act 1989	No Crown land is affected by the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.	No Crown land is affected by the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. It is unlikely a future environmental impact statement would need to address the *Crown Lands Act 1989*.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006	The State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 regulates development of the South West Growth Centre. The structure plan for the South West Growth Centre established under the policy was considered in the selection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors. It is likely that the protection of the recommended corridors would require subsequent amendments to the policy.	A future environmental impact statement may need to demonstrate how potential future mass transit infrastructure in the recommended corridors is consistent with the controls of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007	The State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 contains a variety of regulations for the planning and delivery of infrastructure and services. The policy is not directly applicable to the protection of corridors, however, requirements for rail infrastructure and associated development that are established by the policy have been taken into account in the selection of the recommended corridors.	A future environmental impact statement may need to establish that the works are consistent with the requirements of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007
Penrith Local Environmental Plan 2010	The Penrith Local Environmental Plan 2010 establishes land use controls for the Penrith local government area. The selection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has taken into account existing land use patterns facilitated by the Penrith Local Environmental Plan 2010.	A future environmental impact statement would need to consider the provisions of the Penrith Local Environmental Plan 2010.
Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008	The Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008 establishes land use controls for the Liverpool local government area. The selection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has taken into account existing land use patterns facilitated by the plan.	A future environmental impact statement would need to consider the provisions of the Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008.
Camden Local Environmental Plan 2010	The Camden Local Environmental Plan 2010 establishes land use controls for the Camden local government area. The selection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has taken into account existing land use patterns facilitated by the plan.	A future environmental impact statement would need to consider the provisions of the Camden Local Environmental Plan 2010.

Legislation	Relevance to the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors	Future assessment considerations
Campbelltown Local Environmental Plan 2015	The Campbelltown Local Environmental Plan 2015 establishes land use controls for the Campbelltown local government area. The selection of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor has taken into account existing land use patterns facilitated by the plan.	A future environmental impact statement would need to consider the provisions of the Campbelltown Local Environmental Plan 2015.
Planning Guideline for Major Infrastructure Corridors **(Department of Planning and Environment 2016)**	The *Planning Guideline for Major Infrastructure Corridors* is for use by infrastructure agencies with a focus on achieving appropriate land use outcomes and ensuring a strong evidence base for decision making. The preparation of this draft Strategic Environmental Assessment has been guided by the 'heads of consideration' contained in the guideline.	A future environmental impact statement would demonstrate how potential mass transit infrastructure is consistent with the guideline.
Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline **(Environment Protection Authority 2013)**	The *Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline* contains trigger levels above which heavy rail infrastructure projects need to consider feasible and reasonable mitigation measures to address noise and vibration impacts (refer to Sections 6.4.2.1 and 6.4.2.2). The ability of future rail infrastructure to comply with the guideline was considered during selection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors.	A future environmental impact statement would need to consider the criteria contained in the guideline.
Interim Guideline for Development Near Rail Corridors and Busy Roads **(Department of Planning 2008)**	The *Interim Guideline for Development Near Rail Corridors and Busy Roads* supports the operation of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 and provides guidelines for the management of development in and around rail corridors and busy roads.	A future environmental impact statement would demonstrate how potential mass transit infrastructure is consistent with the guideline.

10 Commitments and mitigation measures

This section discusses strategic measures to avoid, minimise and, if necessary, offset the predicted impacts of any significant risks to the environment posed by the recommended corridors.

10.1 Infrastructure design

10.1.1 Vertical alignment of above ground infrastructure

The corridors should be at-grade wherever possible; elevated track and tunnels should only be incorporated to avoid insuperable natural constraints, or to protect existing natural or built environments where no viable alternative can be found.

Earthworks and engineering structures should be minimised, and optimised across the length of the corridors as far as possible.

10.1.2 Station precinct design

Station locations need to align with the overall project planning objectives, taking into account factors such as transfers between modes, as well as urban planning for any existing or new town centres, local transport access, current and likely property ownership boundaries and topography.

Further detailed understanding of the station catchments and passenger demand, as well as the broader network operational analysis, will allow further refinement of station characteristics, including platform size and numbers, as well as the scale and function of passenger transfer infrastructure.

10.2 Interim land use strategy

An interim land use strategy will be resolved with local councils, Greater Sydney Commission and the Department of Planning and Environment to set out the preferred land use outcomes sought by Transport for NSW when considering land use changes until such time that a transport project proceeds (or is approved under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). Corridor protection outcomes that will influence the interim land use strategy include:

- Corridor protection must allow for, and facilitate, the eventual development of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors for passenger train services
- Corridor protection should look to minimise future community disruption and opposition to the eventual development of rail infrastructure in the recommended corridors for passenger train services
- Corridor protection should minimise short-term, that is, up-front property acquisition costs as well as the eventual property acquisition costs. For example, temporary development of housing or commercial buildings within the recommended corridors may be acceptable if these properties can be acquired when the transport project moves to the construction phase without significant disruption to the structure of surrounding development patterns or unreasonable additional costs to the project
- Corridor protection should be undertaken in such a way as to inform and support the development of appropriate land uses and densities, particularly at future station locations

- The protected corridors should remain in active use to avoid short- and medium-term sterilisation of the land.

Any interim activity in the corridors is expected to be removed and replaced with transport infrastructure at some point in the future. The purpose of the interim land use strategy is to influence development patterns so that this process can occur without compromising the integrity of the land development structure and associated broader land use when the transport infrastructure is developed.

10.3 Future environmental assessment

Any future proposal to build and operate a rail line in the corridor would be required to be subject to a comprehensive environmental assessment in accordance with the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. At this time, environmental impacts in relation to noise, air quality, impact on native flora and fauna and visual amenity would be subject to technical expert assessment in accordance with the procedure for State Significant Infrastructure. This process has been outlined at Section 9.1.2 and involves the preparation of a State Significant Infrastructure application informed by technical experts. A comprehensive and accurate assessment of environmental impacts would be undertaken at this time. A future environmental assessment would be required to assess the following matters:

- Legislative and policy context
- Consultation
- Biodiversity
- Flooding and hydrology
- Heritage
- Noise and vibration – amenity
- Noise and vibration – structural
- Socio-economic, land use and property
- Soils
- Sustainability
- Transport and traffic
- Place making and urban design
- Water quality
- Utilities.

11 Conclusion

The 30-minute city is one of the key goals for the Greater Sydney Region over the next 20 years and the protection of the recommended corridors will assist in achieving integrated transport and land use outcomes where homes are located within a 30-minute journey of a strategic centre. The rapid urban growth in western Sydney and planning for the Western Sydney Airport by the Australian and NSW Governments has reinforced the need to protect a corridor for future public transport infrastructure so that infrastructure can be built efficiently and cost-effectively when it is needed.

The projected growth in population and employment in western Sydney highlights the importance of ensuring that appropriate provisions are made now to meet the future transport needs of not only western Sydney but also the wider Sydney Metropolitan region. Integrated transport planning decisions are required that consider the long term requirements for both land use and transport.

The strategic need for corridor protection has been established at the Australian Government and NSW Government levels in the *Australian Infrastructure Plan*, the *Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056* and the *Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan* and the recommended corridors will assist in enabling a north-south connection between the growing south-west, the Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis and the Greater Penrith to St Marys area.

Given the rapid expansion of development in western Sydney, early protection of corridors is vital to ensure that there is sufficient land available in the future when the construction of railway infrastructure is required. With the expected change in patterns of land use, early protection of future rail corridors will inform future land use planning, minimise acquisition costs and avoid redundant development.

Identifying and protecting corridors for the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors is an important opportunity to undertake before development in the region reduces future opportunities for such a piece of infrastructure. It would also provide clarity for the Department of Planning and Environment, councils and developers, and provide greater certainty for existing and future residents in the area.

Protection of the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors represents an integrated transport solution that balances infrastructure benefits and opportunities with land use and environmental impacts and meets the stated objectives of Australian and NSW strategic policies. Protecting the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors well in advance of their construction would:

- Protect land from development that might preclude future rail infrastructure, or make it more difficult and/or expensive to build when it is required
- Provide residents, employers, councils, landowners, developers and Government agencies with greater confidence that transport infrastructure can and will be built
- Provide more certainty about where future transport infrastructure will be located, so that new development can be planned around it
- Assist in the long-term planning of transport services and train fleet investments
- Ensure that town centres and other employment centres are located and planned to optimise their access to public transport

- Allow appropriate land use restrictions and setbacks to be built into master plans and design codes to reduce potential noise and other environmental impacts on residences, schools, and other sensitive receptors
- Allow directly-affected landowners to factor transport corridors into their plans, and to dispose of land at their own volition
- Allow the Government to develop cost-effective, measured approaches to corridor land acquisition and management.

The recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been selected following a comprehensive process that has involved community consultation, exploration of multiple alignments and the input of a number of technical experts. Following investigations into existing natural and built constraints in the study area as well as an initial public consultations, the recommended North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link Extension corridors have been selected to avoid environmental, social and economic impacts.

One of the key features of the recommended North South Rail Line corridor is the sections that will be in tunnel between St Marys and Orchard Hills and Oran Park and Macarthur. This feature has been incorporated into the recommended North South Rail Line corridor to avoid potential impacts on existing landowners in these areas as well as to prevent any impact on Harrington Forest, Mount Annan Botanic Gardens, schools, heritage items and local/State roads including the M4 Western Motorway. However, the whole of life cost of tunnel rail infrastructure is substantially higher than for surface rail infrastructure. The much greater cost of developing rail infrastructure in tunnel can make rail projects unfeasible.

The proposed surface corridor has been deliberately located to respond to existing topographical constraints as well as the presence of native flora and fauna, flood conditions and the local/State road network.

As a result of the comprehensive corridor selection process that has been undertaken, it is considered that potential environmental impacts arising from corridor protection or future transport infrastructure have been minimised or avoided.

Western Sydney is set to grow dramatically over the next 30 years. The NSW Government has set targets for residential and employment growth and the land release program is already well underway.

The *Long Term Transport Master Plan* identifies the challenges that the transport system in NSW needs to address to support the state's economic and social performance over the next 20 years. With the projected growth in population and employment in western Sydney, it is important to ensure that appropriate future provisions are made now to meet the future transport needs of not only western Sydney but also the wider Sydney Metropolitan region. Integrated transport planning decisions are required that consider the long term requirements for both land use and transport.

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Appendix 1
Strategic environmental assessment scope

Project:	North South Rail Line and South West Rail Link extension corridors
Location	North South Rail Line corridor: St Marys to Macarthur via Western Sydney Airport, North Bringelly, Oran Park and Narellan South West Rail Link Extension corridor: Rossmore to North Bringelly
Lead agency	Transport for NSW
General – The scope	A strategic environmental assessment is to be prepared as the evidence base to inform the creation of statutory planning controls to secure land for the purpose of a long-term major infrastructure corridor. There may be a 'fit for purpose' of the Strategic Environmental Assessment against the scope presented in this document. The final strategic environmental assessment will be exhibited with the draft planning mechanism to reserve the final North South Rail Line corridor and South West Rail Link Extension corridor alignments. This is a strategic planning exercise therefore the assessment of impacts should be based on preliminary environmental assessments and indicative design requirements/standards that are currently applicable for the potential future infrastructure, rather than final design requirements. More detailed design should only be undertaken if it is required to confirm the identified corridor alignment affected by complex issues.

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
Content of the Strategic Environmental Assessment:	The strategic environmental assessment should address: 1. **The strategic justification**: This section should provide a description of the strategic need for the future infrastructure project, as well as provide the rationale for why reservation of a corridor is required at this time. This section should detail the overall objectives of the project as well as how the reservation fits within current government strategic plans and policies at all levels (local, State and federal). The scope for this section includes: ▪ An outline the long-term transport planning context of the western Sydney region and the project's broader application to the NSW transport network. ▪ Providing the strategic justification of the proposed future infrastructure, the overarching objectives of the project and the long-term outcomes they seek to achieve. Consideration should be given to: - The strategic transport need for the proposed future infrastructure - How the proposed future infrastructure will integrate with the broader transport network (existing and proposed) in the adjoining districts and region - How the corridor reservations and proposed infrastructure projects align with strategic plans or policies (local, State and federal) ▪ Analysis of alternative transport solutions that could be undertaken to address the strategic need identified above. This should include: - Other transport scenarios (such as a 'do-nothing' scenario or a 'build when required' [without reservation] scenario) - Assessment the strategic costs and benefits of reserving the corridor compared to the alternative transport solutions and consequence of these other solutions.	Section 2.1.4 Section 2.1.2 Sections 2.2 to 2.4 Section 2.1.4 Sections 2.1.1 and 2.2.4 Sections 6.3.2 and 7.3.2
	2. The infrastructure project and its components This section should provide an overview of the business requirements of the potential future infrastructure which will be used to inform the corridor alignments. The scope for this section includes: ▪ A high-level description of the business requirements of the future infrastructure and any related considerations that will form part of determining the corridor alignments. These include: - Identifying the strategic locations that the future infrastructure projects needs to connect, for	Section 5.1.1 Section 5.5

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	example, servicing future growth areas and access to intermodal terminals - Width needed for a future corridors, for example, differing infrastructure needs/design over the extent of the corridor - Strategic connections to other infrastructure networks, for example, rail, road and cycle modes or key interchanges - Strategic design requirements, for example, slope or topography and design standards.	Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 Section 5.4.3 Section 5.1.1
	3. Corridor alignment constraints alignments This section should identify and provide a strategic assessment of the corridor investigation areas' constraints. The scope for this section includes: ▪ Strategic environmental opportunities and constraints within the corridor investigation areas ▪ Existing land uses within the corridor investigation areas ▪ Outline the process by which corridor alignments constraints were identified and corridor options assessed. This should include: - Description of the process of how the corridor options were derived, for example, investigation area and constraints analysis - Explanation of multi-criteria analysis used to assess the constraints within the corridor investigation areas - A summary of the assessment of corridor alignment options - Relevant summary of how corridor options have considered the key issues in sections 5-15 of these requirements.	Sections 3 and 4 Sections 3.5 and 4.5 Section 5.1 Section 5.1.3 Sections 5.1.3 and 5.3 Section 5.1.3
Key issues	**4. Recommended corridor alignments** This section should provide a detailed description of the recommended corridor alignments and how they achieve the overarching objectives of the corridors and the potential future infrastructure, with reference to how the corridor alignments integrate and supports strategic plans. The scope for this section includes: ▪ A description of the recommended corridor alignments and potential construction methodology for the future infrastructure. This includes notation of above or below ground construction ▪ An overview which outlines how the recommended corridor alignments: - Meets the overarching objectives of the projects	Section 5.5 Section 5.5

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	- Relates and interacts with existing and proposed infrastructure and transport networks - Integrates with strategic plans and supports broader objectives of the western Sydney region, for example, growth planning, land use and infrastructure strategies	Section 5.5 Sections 2.2 to 2.4
	▪ Identification of the sections of the recommended corridor alignments which require reservation, for example, sections at grade requiring rezoning or tunnel sections requiring design considerations to be applied ▪ Detail how the recommended corridor alignments have considered the key issues in sections 5-15 of these requirements.	Sections 9.2 and 9.3 Appendix 1
Key issues	The Strategic Environmental Assessment must also address the following specific matters for the identified corridor alignment. An assessment of all key issues is required for the sections of the identified corridor alignment requiring reservation. Sections of the identified alignment that are proposed to be in tunnel (and therefore will not be reserved) are only required to address the matters that are marked with an asterisk (*).	
	5. Land use and property impacts This section should identify the land use and property impacts within the recommended corridors and adjacent to the recommended corridor alignments. This section should also describe how land use and property impacts were avoided, minimised to reduce potential impacts of the recommended corridor alignments on surrounding land uses and properties. The scope for this section include:	
	▪ Identifying the current land uses within the recommended corridor alignments and describe the potential impacts of the recommended corridor alignments on: - Residential land uses - Industrial land uses - Open space/recreational/national parks - Agricultural land - Extractive/mineral/energy resources* - Utility infrastructure* - Major transport infrastructure*	Sections 6.1.2 and 7.1.2
	For each land use specify the number of existing lots and potential lots (based on draft environmental planning instruments and development proposals) affected by the recommended corridor alignments.	Sections 6.1.2 and 7.1.2
	▪ Consideration of the potential implications of relevant legislation or protected land ownership, for example:	Sections 6.1.2.1, 6.8.2.1, 7.1.2.6 and 7.8.1

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	- Crown Lands - *Native Title Act 1993* - *National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974* ▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided or minimised negative impacts of the recommended corridor alignments on surrounding land uses and properties.* ▪ A broad outline of the suite of possible mitigation options to address the remaining impacts of the potential future infrastructure on surrounding land uses and properties.* ▪ Consideration of any potential cumulative impacts on the land within the recommended corridor alignments created by the potential future infrastructure and other existing and future infrastructure development. ▪ An outline of where future detailed assessments may be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure.*	Sections 6.1.1 and 7.1.1 Sections 6.1.3 and 7.1.3 Section 8.1.2 Sections 6.7 and 10.3
	6. Future land use opportunities This section should identify possible future land use changes or opportunities that could be capitalised on as a result of the potential future infrastructure within the recommended corridor alignments. The scope of this section includes: ▪ An outline of potential future land use opportunities surrounding the corridors as a result of the potential future infrastructure, including commentary on potential: - Economic growth - Areas of change such as interchanges or major connections with other major infrastructure projects (current and future) - Housing growth. ▪ Consideration of the potential future infrastructure in relation to the Regional and District Plans (current and proposed/draft).	Sections 6.1.2, 6.3.2, 7.1.2 and 7.3.2 Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2
	7. Economic impacts This section should provide an overview of potential future economic impacts and opportunities that may be created by the potential future infrastructure. Economic impacts to the wider region are also to be commented on, providing short-, medium- and long-term scenarios. The scope of this section include: ▪ Commentary on the potential economic impacts of both reserving the corridors and the delivery of the potential future infrastructure. Including:	Sections 6.2 and 7.2

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	- Expected economic (or productivity) change created by the potential future infrastructure. This includes: ▪ Consideration of the wider economic impact of the potential future infrastructure on the western Sydney region, Greater Sydney, Regional NSW, strategic and district centres and key employment locations ▪ Consideration of whether the potential future infrastructure may generate opportunities for new employment locations or centres ▪ The potential cumulative economic impacts of the corridors when considered together and alongside other infrastructure projects.	 Sections 6.2.1 and 7.2.1 Sections 6.2.1 and 7.2.1 Sections 6.2.3 and 7.2.3
	8. Traffic and transport This section should provide an assessment of the potential impact of the recommended corridor alignments and potential future infrastructure on the surrounding area of the corridors. The scope for this section includes: ▪ A description of how the preferred corridor alignments will meet the transport-related objectives of the corridors and potential future infrastructure. Consideration to be given to: - Sensitive land uses - Future growth areas - Strategic plans (current and proposed/draft). ▪ An assessment of the traffic and transport impacts on the local, regional, State and national road and rail network. This includes opportunities for potential extension of these networks or identifying where networks may need to be severed due to the potential future infrastructure project and corridor alignments. ▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided or minimised negative traffic and transport impacts on the surrounding traffic flows and transport demand. ▪ A broad outline of the suite of possible mitigation options to remaining impacts of the potential future infrastructure on surrounding traffic flows and transport demand, for example, future design considerations or operational requirements. ▪ Consideration of the potential cumulative impacts on the transport infrastructure within the corridors created by the potential future infrastructure and other existing and future infrastructure development. ▪ An outline of where future detailed assessments would be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure.	 Sections 2.4 and 5.5 Sections 6.3.2 and 7.3.2 Sections 6.3.1 and 7.3.1 Sections 6.3.3 and 7.3.3 Sections 6.3.2, 7.3.2 and 8.1.1 Sections 6.3.3, 7.3.3 and 10.3

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	9. Noise and vibration*	
	This section should assess the potential noise and vibration impacts of the potential future infrastructure in the vicinity of the recommended corridor alignments. An indicative map of the potential noise and vibration impacts within the vicinity of the corridors should be provided.	Figure 6-1 and Figure 7-1
	The scope of this section includes:	
	▪ Identification of sensitive land uses (current and future) surrounding the corridors likely to be impacted by the potential noise and vibration of the potential future infrastructure.	Sections 3.11, 4.11, 6.4.2 and 7.4.2
	▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided or minimised negative noise and vibration impacts on the surrounding sensitive land uses.	Sections 6.4.1 and 7.4.1
	▪ A broad outline of the suite of possible mitigation options to address the remaining noise and vibration impacts of the potential future infrastructure on surrounding sensitive land uses, for example, future design considerations.	Sections 6.4.3 and 7.4.3
	▪ An outline of where future detailed assessments would be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure.	Sections 6.4.3, 7.4.3 and 10.3
	10. Visual amenity, built form and urban design	
	The visual impact of the recommended corridor alignments and subsequent potential future infrastructure should be identified, with consideration given to visual amenity, built form and urban design of the areas surrounding the corridors.	
	The scope of this section includes:	
	▪ Identification of strategic visual, built or urban form impacts of the potential future infrastructure on the surrounding area.	Sections 6.5.2 and 7.5.2
	▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided or minimised negative impacts on the surrounding visual, built or urban form.	Sections 6.5.1 and 7.5.1
	▪ An outline of the urban design principles and objectives to guide further design and assist in addressing the impacts of the potential future infrastructure on surrounding visual, built or urban form.	Sections 6.5.3 and 7.5.3
	▪ An outline of where future detailed assessments would be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure.	Sections 6.5.3, 7.5.3 and 10.3

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	11. Soils and water*	
	This section should identify soil and water issues related to the recommended corridor alignments.	
	The scope for this section includes:	
	▪ Identification and description of the geological and hydrological conditions within and surrounding the recommended corridor alignments. Consideration is to be given to: - Key hydrological features (e.g. watercourses, dams) - Water supply - Acid sulphate soils - Contaminated land	Sections 3.3, 3.4, 4.3 and 4.4
	▪ Description of the hydrological and geological impacts in relation to the recommended corridors and potential future infrastructure, including the strategic assessment of: - Location and nature of flood regimes affecting the corridors or to be affected by the potential future infrastructure - Potential impacts on surface water, groundwater, soils, flooding, riparian areas and potable water	Sections 6.6.2 and 7.6.2
	▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided or minimised negative impacts on the surrounding hydrological and geological features.	Sections 6.6.1 and 7.6.1
	▪ A broad outline of the suit of possible mitigation options to address the remaining impacts of the potential future infrastructure on surrounding hydrological and geological conditions (e.g. future design considerations).	Sections 6.6.3 and 7.6.3
	▪ Consideration of the potential cumulative impacts on the hydrological and geological conditions surrounding the corridors created by the potential future infrastructure and other existing and future infrastructure development.	Section 8.1.5
	▪ An outline of where future detailed assessments would be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure.	Sections 6.6.3, 7.6.3 and 10.3

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	12. Biodiversity This section should evaluate the current ecological values within the recommended corridor alignments and identify potential impacts on those ecological values as a result of the potential future infrastructure. This section should also identify how offset obligations will be addressed after the corridor is reserved. The scope for this section includes: ▪ A strategic assessment of the potential ecological impacts of the corridor reservations and potential future infrastructure both within the corridors and adjoining with specific reference to: - Wetlands - Vegetation and habitat clearing - Connectivity - Edge effects - Riparian/aquatic habitat and marine vegetation - Soil and water quality - Adjoining waterways - Salinity, erosion and sedimentation - Ongoing water management. ▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided, minimised and/or offset its impacts on the ecological values of the corridor investigation areas. This may include: - Outlining the approach to offset strategies for ecological impacts and native vegetation clearing - Consideration of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects* (Office of Environment and Heritage, 2014). ▪ A broad outline of the suite of potential mitigation options to address the remaining impacts of the potential future infrastructure on surrounding ecological values and within the corridors, for example, future design considerations or operational requirements. ▪ Consideration of the potential cumulative impacts on the ecological values surrounding the corridors created by the potential future infrastructure and other existing and future infrastructure development. ▪ An outline of where future detailed assessments would be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure. All biodiversity assessments should take into account: ▪ Impacts on features of High Environmental Value, as described in the relevant Regional and/or District Plan (current and proposed/draft)	Sections 6.7.2 and 7.7.2 Sections 6.7.1 and 7.7.1 Sections 6.7.3 and 7.7.3 Section 8.1.3 Sections 6.7.3, 7.7.3 and 10.3

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	▪ *Draft Guidelines for Threatened Species Assessment* (Department of Environment and Conservation/Department of Primary Industries 2005) ▪ *Threatened Biodiversity Survey and Assessment: Guidelines for Developments and Activities* (Department of Environment and Conservation 2004) ▪ *Draft Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management – Update 2013* (Department of Primary Industries 2013) ▪ *Guidelines for Aquatic Habitat Management and Fish Conservation* (Department of Primary Industries 1999).	
	13. Heritage This section should identify the impact of the recommended corridor alignments and subsequent potential future infrastructure on aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage. The scope for this section includes:	
	▪ Identification of the State and local aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage affected by the recommended corridor alignments including: - Heritage items - Conservation areas - Areas of cultural and archaeological significance	Sections 6.8.2 and 7.8.2
	▪ Description of the potential impacts of the recommended corridor alignments and potential future infrastructure on the identified State and local aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage in the corridors.	Sections 6.8.2 and 7.8.2
	▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided or minimised negative impacts on the aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage in or directly adjacent to the recommended corridor alignments.	Sections 6.8.1 and 7.8.1
	▪ A broad outline of the suite of potential mitigation options to address the remaining impacts of the potential future infrastructure on aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage in the corridors.	Sections 6.8.3 and 7.8.3
	▪ Consideration of the potential cumulative impacts on the aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage in the corridors created by the potential future infrastructure and other existing and future infrastructure development.	Section 8.1.4
	▪ An outline of where future detailed assessments would be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure.	Sections 6.8.3, 7.8.3 and 10.3

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	14. Air quality This section should identify possible air quality impacts of the potential future infrastructure with consideration of local and regional air quality. The scope for this section includes: ▪ Identification of possible air quality impacts of the potential future infrastructure and corridor reservations on the local and regional air quality with specific consideration given to sensitive receivers. ▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided or minimised negative impacts on the local and regional air quality, for example, future design considerations or operational requirements. ▪ A broad outline of the suite of possible mitigation options to address the remaining impacts of the potential future infrastructure on local and regional air quality. ▪ Outline where future detailed assessments would be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure.	Sections 6.9.2 and 7.9 Sections 6.9.1 and 7.9 Sections 6.9.3 and 7.9 Sections 6.9.3, 7.9 and 10.3
	15. Social This section should evaluate the impacts of the recommended corridor alignments and subsequent potential future infrastructure on the directly affected community and its facilities and/or services should be identified and discussed in this section. The scope of this section includes: ▪ A strategic assessment of the social impacts of the recommended corridor alignments and potential future infrastructure on the directly affected community and community facilities/services. ▪ Where applicable, an outline of how the recommended corridor alignments have avoided or minimised negative impacts on the community and its facilities/services. ▪ A broad outline of the suite of possible mitigation options to address the remaining impacts of the potential future infrastructure on the community and its facilities/services. ▪ Consideration of the potential cumulative impacts on the community and its facilities/services created by the potential future infrastructure and other existing and future infrastructure development. ▪ Outline where future detailed assessments would be required as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the future infrastructure.	Sections 6.10.2 and 7.10.2 Sections 6.10.1 and 7.10.1 Sections 6.10.3 and 7.10.3 Section 8.2.1 Sections 6.10.3, 7.10.3 and 10.3

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
	16. Environmental risk analysis* This section is to include an environmental risk analysis summary which should identify the potential environmental impacts associated with the recommended corridor alignments. The scope for this section includes: ▪ Provide a matrix assessment of the potential impacts associated with the recommended corridor alignments and the potential future infrastructure (as identified in sections 5-15) with specific attention given to: - Strategic mitigation measures and their staged application - Potentially significant residual environmental impacts after mitigation measures are applied.	Section 8.4
Consultation	During the preparation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment, there is an expectation that the agency will consult with the relevant local, State and/or Commonwealth Government authorities, service providers, community groups and affected landowners. This may involve: ▪ Local, State and Commonwealth government authorities, including engaging with Department of Planning and Environment and Greater Sydney Commission about the application of the future infrastructure projects to the relevant District Plans, Regional Plans and Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plans ▪ Specialist interest groups, including Local Aboriginal Land Councils, and others such as Aboriginal stakeholders ▪ Relevant utilities and environmental assessment service providers ▪ The public, including community groups and adjoining and affected landowners. The Strategic Environmental Assessment should describe the consultation process and the issues raised and identify where the design of the projects or the corridor alignments have been amended in response to these issues. Where amendments have not been made to address an issue, a short explanation should be provided.	Sections 5.3 and 5.4

Item	Scope	Where addressed in the draft SEA
Statutory planning considerations	**Statutory planning considerations: Current planning framework***	
	This section should identify the existing environmental planning instruments that apply to the recommended corridor alignments and relevant sections or clauses that will be affected by potential statutory planning controls in relation to the corridor reservations.	
	The scope for this section includes:	
	▪ Identification of the existing environmental planning instruments that apply to the recommended corridors that will be affected by potential statutory planning controls in relation to the corridor reservations. This should include: - All existing relevant local environmental plans - All existing relevant State Environmental Planning Policies - All existing relevant structure plans and local action plans and development control plans - All existing relevant land use and infrastructure strategies - Other plans, polices and strategies relevant to the recommended corridors	Section 9.3
	Statutory planning considerations: Future planning framework*	
	This section identifies the land use outcomes that the environmental planning instrument should achieve. This section should not propose zoning recommendations or development controls.	
	The scope for this section includes:	
	▪ Identifying the sections of the recommended corridor alignments that need to be reserved. ▪ Identify the sections where reservation is not required, but design outcomes of permissible uses may need to be managed. For example, limitation on the depth of basement car parks.	Section 9.2 Not applicable

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