

# 1 Introduction

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This chapter provides an overview of the proposal and outlines the purpose of this report.

## 1.1 Proposal identification

The NSW Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) propose to upgrade about 15 kilometres of The Northern Road between The Old Northern Road, Narellan and Mersey Road, Bringelly (the proposal). This proposal would be undertaken within the Camden and Liverpool local government areas (LGAs) in the RMS Sydney region. The proposal does not include the upgrade of the Oran Park Link Road 1 (Peter Brock Drive) intersection, which is about 450 metres in length. A separate review of environmental factors (REF) (DPS 2012) was prepared by Development Planning Strategies and determined by RMS in May 2012.

An overview of the proposal and the locality is shown in figure 1–1. The proposal involves widening The Northern Road from a two-lane undivided road to a four-lane divided road (twin carriageways separated by a wide central median). The proposal would allow for an ultimate six-lane divided road, with the future lanes to occur in the median area, if and when required. The proposal would have a signposted speed limit of 80 km/h, a wide central median along its length, 13 intersections controlled by traffic lights, nine left in and left out T-intersections and upgrade of and/or tie in with local roads.

Construction of the proposal would be undertaken by RMS and/or others (developers) in staged sections as developments along The Northern Road are approved and precincts within the South West Growth Centre are developed (refer to section 3.3).

Substantial traffic growth has been predicted along The Northern Road due to increased residential and commercial development in the South West Growth Centre and nearby areas, and the proposal is required to cater for this future growth. The Northern Road would form one of the principal transport corridors within the South West Growth Centre.

The South West Growth Centre comprises about 17,000 hectares, divided into 18 planned urban precincts with a capacity for about 110,000 new dwellings and 300,000 people (Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DP&I) 2011). Precincts are being progressively released for precinct planning. The Northern Road traverses the precincts of Oran Park, Marylands, Lowes Creek, Bringelly, North Bringelly and future industrial.

The proposal is located in a predominantly rural-residential landscape, which has been highly modified and is fragmented due to land clearing for farming and road construction. Main waterways include Narellan Creek, Cobbitty Creek, Lowes Creek and Thompsons Creek. Other adjacent land uses comprise agricultural (grazing, horticulture), residential, public recreation, retail (such as Bunnings), industrial (such as the organic processing and recycling facility near Marylands Link Road 2), commercial (such as Bringelly shopping centre), sewage pumping station, educational facilities (Macarthur Anglican School and Bringelly Public School) and vegetated areas. The proposal would result in increased capacity to cater for the predicted future traffic and population growth within the South West Growth Centre.

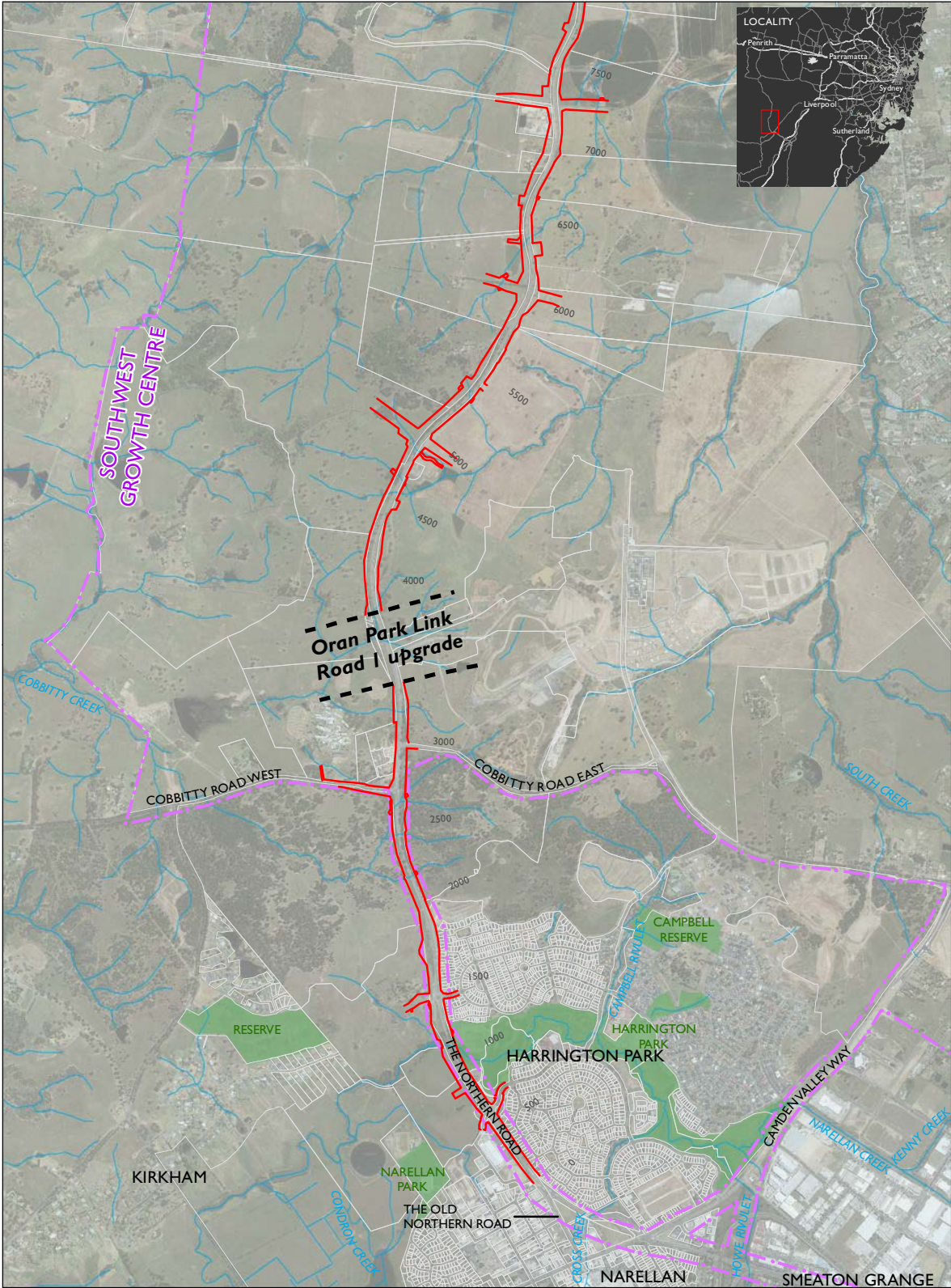


Figure 1.1a Locality map

- Proposal boundary
- - - LGA boundary
- - - South West Growth Centre boundary



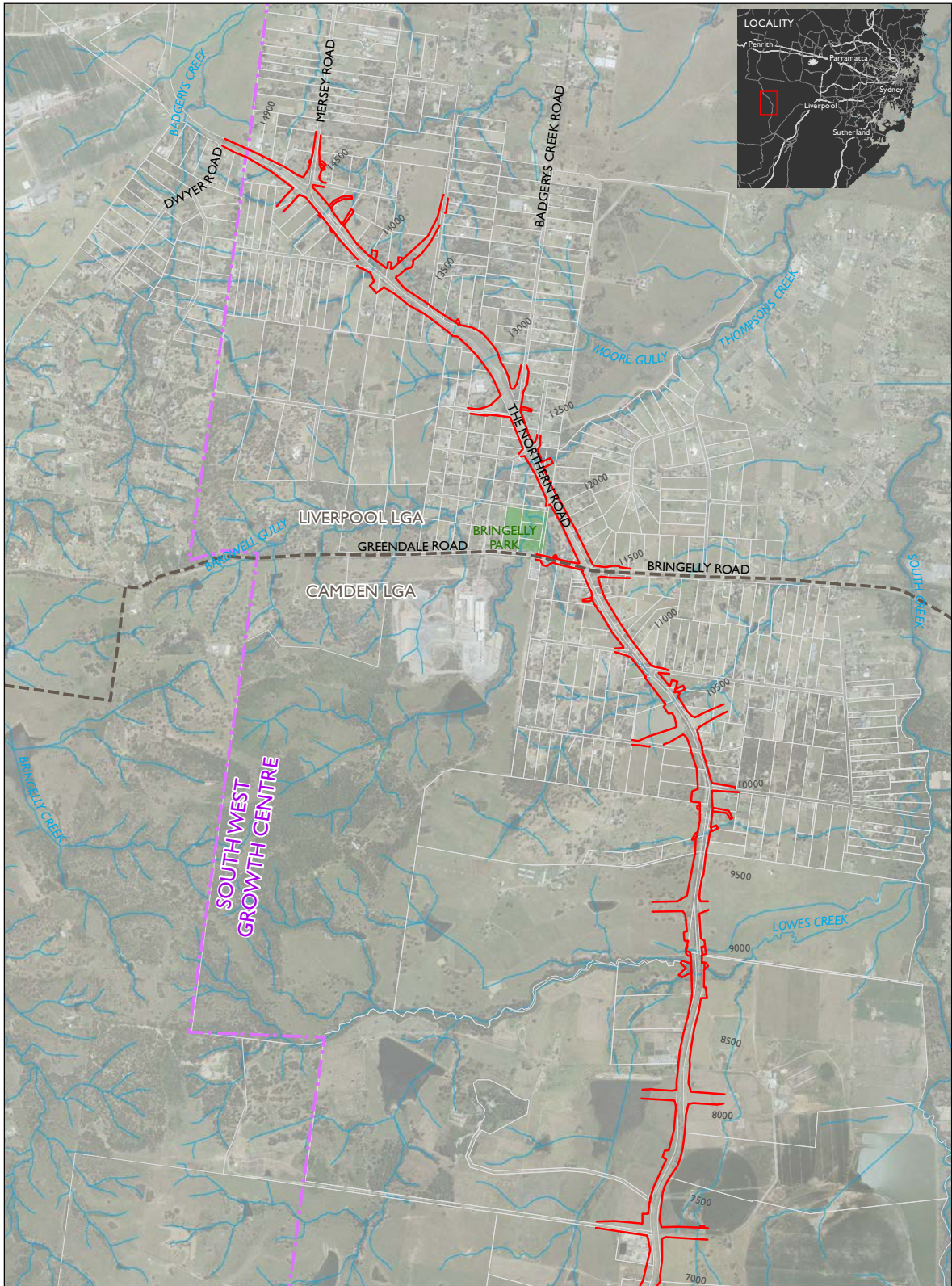


Figure 1.1b Locality map

- Proposal boundary
- - - LGA boundary
- - - South West Growth Centre boundary



The proposal would also provide improved access and safety for cyclists and pedestrians by providing an off-road shared path on the southbound (eastern) side of the proposal, with capacity for an off-road shared pathway on the northbound (western) side of the proposal, bus priority capability at traffic lights and indented bus bays.

The main features of the proposal include:

- An upgrade of the existing two-lane road to a four-lane road (two lanes each way) divided by a wide central median.
- Posted speed limit of 80 km/h.
- Provision of a three metre wide off-road shared pedestrian/cyclist path on the eastern side of the proposal, with space provided on the western side of the proposal for the future construction of a path if required.
- A typical lane width of 3.5 metres (3.3 metre lanes for turning lanes) with two metre outside shoulders and 0.5 metre inside shoulders.
- Bicycle and pedestrian crossing provisions at traffic lights.
- A bus priority lane on the approach and indented bus bay on the departure side of the signalised intersections on The Northern Road.
- Upgrade and/or tie in with 20 local roads including realignment of six local roads.
- Upgrade of eight existing unsignalised intersections to seven four-way signalised intersections and a signalised T- intersection.
- Adjustment to eight unsignalised T-intersections.
- A new unsignalised T-intersection at Oran Park Link Road 3.
- Five new signalised intersections with link roads to provide for future connectivity
- Designated turning lanes at all signalised intersections.
- U-turn facilities at Lowes Creek Link Road, Belmore Road, Greendale Road and Derwent Road.
- Tie in with the existing The Northern Road at the start and end of the proposal and the Oran Park Link Road 1 (Peter Brock Drive).
- Retention of the existing bridge over Narellan Creek for the southbound carriageway and provision of a new three span bridge over Narellan Creek for the northbound carriageway.
- Retention of the existing bridge over Thompsons Creek for the southbound carriageway and provision of a new single span bridge over Thompsons Creek for the northbound carriageway.
- Realignment and upgrade of the culverts within Lowes Creek.
- Scour protection works at Narellan Creek and Thompson Creek bridges and the Lowes Creek culvert.
- Upgrade of cross drainage to meet flood immunity for a 1 in 100 year average recurrence interval (ARI).
- Provision of street lighting for the proposal.
- Seven permanent spill basins.
- Batters required for cut and fill areas.
- One major fill location and seven major cut locations.

The proposal has been designed to allow for future upgrade to a six-lane road (three lanes each way). This would be achieved by widening into the wide central median.

The concept design for the proposal is provided in Appendix A, with a detailed proposal description provided in chapter 3.

## 1.2 Purpose of the report

This REF has been prepared by Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) on behalf of RMS Sydney region. For the purposes of these works, RMS is the proponent and the determining authority under Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

The purpose of the REF is to describe the proposal, to document the likely impacts of the proposal on the environment, and to detail protective measures to be implemented.

The description of the proposal and associated environmental impacts have been undertaken in context of clause 228 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*, the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act), the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (FM Act), and the Australian Government's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). In doing so, the REF assists to fulfil the requirements of section 111 of the EP&A Act, that RMS examine and take into account to the fullest extent possible, all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment by reason of the activity.

The findings of the REF would be considered when assessing:

- Whether the proposal would be likely to have a significant impact on the environment and therefore the necessity for an environmental impact statement to be prepared and approval to be sought from the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure under Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act.
- The significance of any impact on threatened species as defined by the TSC Act and/or FM Act, in section 5A of the EP&A Act and therefore the requirement for a Species Impact Statement (SIS).
- The potential for the proposal to significantly impact a matter of National Environmental Significance (NES) or Commonwealth land and the need to make a referral to the Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) for a decision by the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment on whether assessment and approval is required under the EPBC Act.

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