

## 3. Approvals framework

### 3.1 Introduction

The proposed airport is one of the largest infrastructure projects considered in Australia in recent years and would be the first major greenfield airport development in decades.

Development of the proposed airport will be subject to a Commonwealth environment and development approvals framework. Development at existing federally leased airports requires approvals under the Airports Act, through the approval of major development plans submitted by an ALC. An ALC has not been appointed for the proposed airport and the typical process under the Airports Act did not appropriately cater for development of an airport at a greenfield site.

The Australian Government therefore introduced into Parliament the Airports Amendment Bill 2015 (Airports Act amendment) which was passed by Parliament and then received Royal Assent on 30 June 2015. This amendment provides a single and transparent mechanism to seek planning, environment and development approval for the Stage 1 development of the proposed airport. The Airports Act amendment provides for the preparation of an airport plan to guide the development of the airport, which is to be determined by the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The Airports Act amendment strengthens the Minister for the Environment's role under the Airports Act. This draft EIS has been prepared and will be finalised under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The draft EIS will meet all requirements of the EPBC Act and the EIS guidelines issued for the proposed airport, including the requirement for public consultation. In determining the Airport Plan, the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development must accept any environmental conditions proposed by the Minister for the Environment, taking into account this EIS.

To this end, the draft Airport Plan sits alongside this EIS as a companion document. The draft Airport Plan specifies how Stage 1 of the proposed airport is to be developed on the Badgerys Creek site, while this EIS assesses the environmental, social and economic impacts associated with the Stage 1 development, as shown in Figure 3–1.

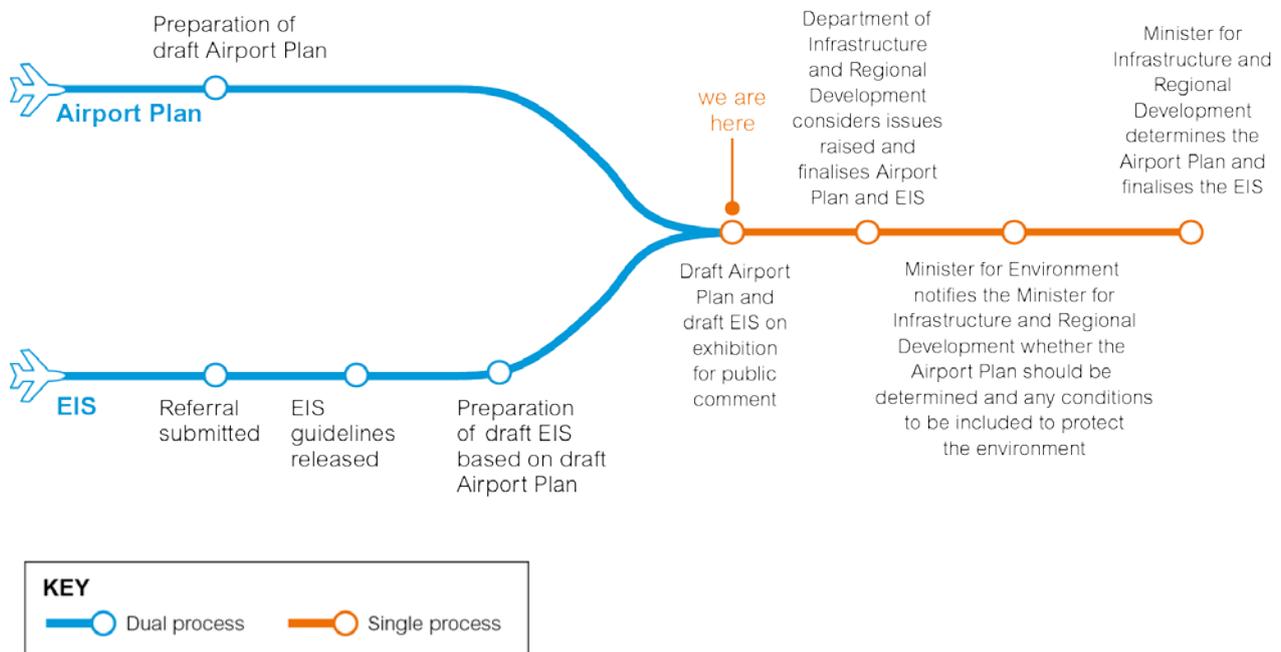


Figure 3–1 – Western Sydney Airport approval process

## 3.2 Approval process for Stage 1

### 3.2.1 The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act

#### Introduction

The environmental assessment of the airport commenced with a referral of the proposal under the EPBC Act. The EPBC Act is the national environment law that provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places, defined in the EPBC Act as matters of national environmental significance. These matters are:

- world heritage properties;
- national heritage places;
- wetlands of international importance (listed under the Ramsar Convention);
- listed threatened species and ecological communities;
- migratory species protected under international agreements;
- Commonwealth marine areas;
- the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park;
- nuclear actions; and
- a water resource, in relation to a coal seam gas or large coal mining developments.



The EPBC Act also applies to actions that have a significant impact on the environment where the actions affect, or are taken on, Commonwealth land, or are carried out by a Commonwealth agency (Commonwealth action).

### *Referral of the proposal*

The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development submitted a referral under the EPBC Act for the development of the airport on 4 December 2014. The Department of the Environment invited public comment on the referral for 12 business days.

On 23 December 2014, a delegate of the Minister for the Environment determined the proposed Western Sydney Airport to be a 'controlled action'. The referral decision instrument identifies the following controlling provisions under the EPBC Act as being relevant to this proposal:

- world heritage properties (sections 12 and 15A);
- national heritage places (sections 15B and 15C);
- listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A); and
- Commonwealth action (section 28).

At the same time, the delegate decided that the proposed airport development would be assessed by preparation of an EIS.

Tailored guidelines for the preparation of a draft EIS were issued on 29 January 2015. A copy of the guidelines is provided at Appendix B in Volume 4.

### *The EIS process*

This draft EIS has been prepared to address the requirements of the EPBC Act and the EIS guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment. The draft EIS will be finalised following public exhibition and submitted to the Minister for the Environment for consideration in the manner described in Section 3.2.3 below.

### *Scope of the environmental assessment*

The proposed airport would be developed as outlined in the draft Airport Plan prepared in accordance with the Airports Act (as amended in June 2015). Consistent with the proposal for a staged airport development, the draft Airport Plan includes a specific proposal for Stage 1 of airport development. The proposed Stage 1 development is the subject of this EIS. The environmental impacts of the proposed Stage 1 development are described and assessed in Volume 2.

The draft Airport Plan also provides indicative design concepts for the long term development of the airport. Subsequent stages of development beyond Stage 1, including construction of the proposed second runway, do not form part of the action subject to the current assessment process. It is expected that there would be several incremental stages of development before the airport approaches its potential long term capacity. Future stages of development beyond Stage 1 as described in the draft Airport Plan will be subject to the general assessment and approval requirements in accordance with the Airports Act.



Although the long term airport development is not part of the current action, Volume 3 of this EIS provides a preliminary assessment of the environmental impacts associated with a potential long term airport development concept, including indicative aircraft noise exposure levels.

### 3.2.2 Airports Act and the Airport Plan

The Airports Act provides a system for regulating certain federally-leased airports, including requirements for land use planning, building approvals and environmental management. Part 1 of the Airports Act provides for a 'Sydney West Airport' to be taken as an airport at a particular time, even if at that time it is only intended to be developed for use as an airport. The proposed airport at Badgerys Creek is therefore considered to be an airport for the purpose of the Airports Act. An airport lease would in due course be granted by the Commonwealth to an airport lessee company which would then become responsible for the airport site.

The Stage 1 development would be constructed and operated in accordance with the draft Airport Plan, which forms a transitional planning instrument under the Airports Act.

As set out in section 96C of the Airports Act, the Airport Plan consists of three main parts:

- Part 1 is the title section and provides an overview of the development and regulatory context;
- Part 2 outlines the indicative concept design for the Stage 1 development and an overview of the long term development; and
- Part 3 details the specifics and functionality of the developments.

While the Airport Plan defines the parameters for the Stage 1 development, future work including the long term development would be undertaken under the planning framework in Part 5 of the Airports Act as applies to existing major airports.

The Airports Act amendment provides for development of an Airport Plan, which is a transitional planning instrument for the initial development of the airport as a greenfield site. The purpose of the Airport Plan is to set out the Australian Government's requirements for the Stage 1 airport development. Once determined by the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Airport Plan becomes the instrument that guides the development as detailed in Part 3 of the Airport Plan.

The Airport Plan is primarily concerned with Stage 1 of the proposed airport, which involves the development of a single runway located in the north of the airport site, a terminal and other relevant facilities to accommodate approximately 10 million domestic and international passengers per year as well as freight traffic. Over time, as demand grows, the airport is expected to expand to include a second runway and more substantial terminal, support and commercial facilities.

Developments that are not included in Part 3 of the Airport Plan remain subject to the general planning framework in Part 5 of the Airports Act. Further information about the provisions of the Airports Act is provided in Section 3.3.

The Airport Plan may be varied under the Airports Act. A variation of the Airport Plan has the same effect as if it were an authorisation of an action described in subsection 160(2) of the EPBC Act. That is, it is treated like a major development plan, and the advice of the Minister for the Environment must therefore be sought on the variation before it is made. In addition, any condition or provision that the Minister for the Environment requires to be included in the Airport Plan to protect the environment may only be varied with the approval of the Minister for the Environment.

### 3.2.3 Public consultation and determination of the Airport Plan

The EIS and draft Airport Plan will be placed on public exhibition concurrently for a period as determined by the Minister for the Environment. Notices inviting public comment on both documents have been placed in national, metropolitan and local newspapers, and online at [www.westernsydneyairport.gov.au](http://www.westernsydneyairport.gov.au).

During the public exhibition period any person, group, corporation or agency may submit comment on the draft EIS or the draft Airport Plan to the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development. All comments on either document will be considered to be comments on the EIS and a copy will be forwarded to the Department of the Environment.

#### *Finalisation of the EIS and determination of the Airport Plan*

The draft EIS and the draft Airport Plan will be revised, taking account of comments received during the exhibition period. The finalised EIS will also provide any additional information that may be relevant to the Minister for the Environment's consideration of the environmental impacts of the proposal.

The Minister for the Environment will consider the finalised EIS and revised draft Airport Plan from an environmental perspective and notify the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development whether the Airport Plan should be determined and, if it is determined, whether any specific conditions or provisions should be included for the purpose of protecting the environment.

If the Minister for the Environment is satisfied with the draft Airport Plan, the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development may determine the Airport Plan. The Airport Plan must include any conditions or provisions specified in the notice from the Minister for the Environment.

## 3.3 The broader planning framework

### 3.3.1 Airports Act – Land use planning and building controls

#### *Airport Master Plan*

Part 5 of the Airports Act requires an ALC to prepare an airport master plan to provide the strategic direction for the airport site for a period of 20 years. For the Western Sydney Airport, the ALC will be required to submit for approval a full master plan within five years of an airport lease being granted, or in such a longer period as approved by the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development. Part 2 of the Airport Plan will provide the planning framework for the airport until the first master plan is in place.

The master plan will include:

- development objectives and consideration of future needs for civil aviation and other users, services and facility requirements;
- proposed land use and development for the airport site;
- flight paths at the airport;
- an Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) and measures for managing aircraft noise;
- an environmental strategy including assessment of key environmental issues and details of proposed management and monitoring;
- a plan for a ground transport system on the landside of the airport including linkages with the surrounding road and public transport network;
- information on proposed commercial, retail, community, office or other non-airport related developments over the first five years of the master plan; and
- the likely effects of proposed developments on employment levels at the airport and on the local and regional economy and the community.

Section 79 of the Airports Act requires an ALC to notify and make available a preliminary version of a draft airport master plan for public comment. The ALC must provide copies of any public comments to the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development and demonstrate that the company has had due regard to those comments in preparing the draft master plan.

#### *Major development plans*

The ALC will also be required to prepare major development plans (MDPs) for future major airport developments that are not covered by the Airport Plan. Major developments are defined in section 89 of the Airports Act to include items such as constructing or modifying runways, certain buildings, taxiways, transport links or any development that is likely to have significant environmental or community impacts. Consultation with state and local government authorities is required during preparation of a draft MDP. The draft MDP must also be publicly exhibited to allow comment prior to finalisation and approval by the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development.

Under section 160 of the EPBC Act, the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development is required to seek the advice of the Minister for the Environment before deciding to approve a draft MDP. The Minister for the Environment determines whether advice is required and the approach to assessing the environmental impacts of the proposal under the EPBC Act, and also provides advice on the suitability of the development for approval, including any recommended conditions. If the Minister is satisfied that the draft major development plan meets the objectives defined in the Airports Act, the decision may be made to approve the plan.

### *Building controls*

Once the airport lease has been granted by the Commonwealth, most building activities on the airport site, including those authorised by Part 3 of the Airport Plan, require building approval and certification under the Airports (Building Control) Regulations 1996. Approval and certification is given by the Airport Building Controller and must be consistent with the relevant planning instrument (for example, the Airport Plan, master plan or major development plan).

### **3.3.2 Environmental management**

Once an airport lease has been granted, the Airports Act and the Airports (Environment Protection) Regulations 1997 set out the framework for the regulation and management of activities at airports that have potential to cause environmental harm once the airport lease has been granted. Part 6 of the Airports Act specifies offences relating to environmental harm, environmental management standards, monitoring and incident response requirements. The ALC for the proposed airport will be responsible for environmental management, including the responsibilities listed under Part 6 of the Airports Act.

The Airports (Environment Protection) Regulations 1997 impose duties on airport operators to take all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent or minimise air, water and soil pollution, as well as offensive noise. There are also duties regarding the preservation of biota, ecosystems and habitats, threatened species and ecological communities, sites of indigenous significance, and aesthetic, cultural, historical, social and scientific values. An operator must also take reasonable and practicable measures to ensure compliance with international environmental obligations.

The Regulations also impose extensive monitoring and reporting requirements in relation to air, water and soil pollution, as well as noise levels. This regime will be supplemented by the statutory appointment of an independent airport environment officer, dedicated to the airport, who will have powers to issue environment protection orders in relation to matters such as pollution, noise and habitat preservation and powers to issue infringement notices for environmental contraventions.

Another source of regulation of environmental matters at the proposed airport will be the environment strategy in the airport's master plan. This strategy will cover a number of environment matters and, in particular, will detail the specific measures to be carried out by the ALC for the purposes of preventing, controlling or reducing the environmental impact associated with airport operations. The environment strategy is a legally binding instrument that will apply to the airport operator and other people who conduct activities at the airport. The environment strategy will be prepared as part of the master plan development process.

### 3.3.3 Protection of airspace

The framework for the protection of airspace surrounding an airport is provided in Part 12 of the Airports Act. The regulations may declare airspace to be ‘prescribed airspace’ if it is in the interests of safety, efficiency or regularity of existing or future air transport operations for the airspace to be protected. If prescribed airspace has been declared, activities that result in intrusions into this airspace – such as new buildings or other structures – are termed ‘controlled activities’ and require approval. It is expected that prescribed airspace will be declared for the airport before operations commence. The prescribed airspace would include the Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) and Procedures for Air Navigation Services – Aircraft Operations (PANS–OPS) surfaces for safety and navigation purposes at the proposed airport.

### 3.3.4 Aerodrome certification

Before the airport commences operations, the ALC will be required to obtain an aerodrome certificate from the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA). Aerodrome certificates are granted under Division 139.B.1 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998. To be granted an aerodrome certificate, the ALC will need to demonstrate that:

- the airport’s facilities and equipment are in accordance with the applicable standards;
- the airport’s operating procedures make satisfactory provision for the safety of aircraft;
- an aerodrome manual, in accordance with the regulations, has been prepared; and
- the ALC would, if the certificate is granted, be able properly to operate and maintain the aerodrome.

### 3.3.5 Airspace management

Airspace management, including the ultimate determination of flight paths into and out of the proposed airport, is the responsibility of Airservices Australia and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA). Preliminary airspace architecture has been developed for the purpose of this draft EIS (see Chapter 7). The following matters would be taken into account in determining final flight paths.

- In designing airspace management arrangements for the airport, flight paths and procedures would be optimised for noise management purposes as part of the work that Airservices Australia would undertake before the airport became operational.
- Under the *Air Services Act 1995*, Airservices Australia is required to exercise its functions, as far as practicable, so as to protect the environment. *Airservices Commitment to Aircraft Noise management* (Airservices Australia 2013) outlines the considerations which are taken into account in designing flight paths and procedures.
- CASA would need to validate proposed flight paths and procedures. Under the Civil Aviation Act 1988, CASA is also required to exercise its functions so as to, as far as practicable, protect the environment.
- It is expected that a referral to the Minister for the Environment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* would be required before flight paths for the airport are put into place.

Consultation with airlines and other stakeholders would be undertaken through the design process, which would be subject to separate regulatory assessment processes. Important considerations in airspace design include:

- efficient use of the Sydney region airspace and integration with the national air traffic network as a whole;
- airspace protections for other aerodromes in the Sydney region including Defence establishments;
- the use of navigational technologies available both on ground and in aircraft at the time;
- opportunities to minimise potential noise and amenity impacts and other potential environmental issues; and
- consideration of operator and airline preferences and requirements.

### 3.3.6 Aviation transport security

It is expected that the proposed airport will be a security controlled airport for the purposes of the *Aviation Transport Security Act 2004*. This Act, along with the Aviation Transport Security Regulations 2005, imposes extensive requirements relating to the security of airport premises.

### 3.3.7 Biosecurity

It is expected that the proposed airport will be a first point of entry for the purposes of the *Biosecurity Act 2015*. An airport that is a first point of entry is required to comply with conditions imposed by the Minister for Agriculture regulating matters such as the conduct of biosecurity risk management.

### 3.3.8 Other regulatory considerations

A number of other regulatory requirements apply to the operation of airports including requirements relating to matters such as:

- designation of international airports under the *Air Navigation Act 1920* and related regulations;
- customs and immigration;
- work health and safety;
- limitations on foreign and airline ownership of airport-operator companies; and
- controls related to activities such as commercial trading, liquor licensing, vehicle movements, gambling and smoking.

## 3.4 New South Wales planning framework

The Western Sydney Airport would be located on land owned by the Commonwealth within the state of New South Wales (NSW). Section 96C(3) of the Airports Act authorises development of the airport in accordance with the Airport Plan and section 112 of the Airport Act excludes the operation of any state law which applies to land use planning. Accordingly, NSW planning laws do not apply to the proposed airport.

While the EIS guidelines form the primary guidance material for this EIS, consideration has also been given to relevant NSW legislation including environmental planning instruments, policies, and guidelines where considered appropriate.

The table following provides a brief summary of various NSW Acts and planning instruments that have been considered. Further information on how NSW Acts, planning instruments, policies and guidelines have been taken into consideration can be found in the relevant EIS chapters and technical studies.

**Table 3-1 – Brief summary of NSW acts and planning instruments considered**

NSW legislation and planning instruments		Overview
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979		The objects of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> include the encouragement of proper management and conservation of natural and artificial resources and the promotion of the orderly and economic use and development of land in NSW. The Act also provides for the making of environmental planning instruments including State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) and Local Environmental Plans (LEPs), which include land use controls, such as development standards applicable to the land within the area covered by each instrument.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (Infrastructure SEPP)		The Infrastructure SEPP aims to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure across NSW.
State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SRD SEPP)		The SRD SEPP identifies development that is State significant development (SSD) or State significant infrastructure (SSI).
State Environmental Planning Policy (Western Sydney Employment Area) 2009 (WSEA SEPP)		The Western Sydney Employment Area (WSEA) was established to provide businesses in the region with land for industry and employment. The WSEA has been extended to include land to the north and west of the airport site. The WSEA SEPP provides a range of development controls and standards for development within the WSEA.
State Environmental Planning Policy 19 – Urban Bushland (SEPP 19)		The purpose of SEPP 19 is to protect and preserve bushland within urban areas due to its inherent aesthetic, community and natural heritage values.
State Environmental Planning Policy 44 – Koala Habitat Protection (SEPP 44)		SEPP 44 aims to encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for Koalas to ensure a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of Koala population decline.
State Environmental Planning Policy 33 – Hazardous and Offensive Development (SEPP 33)		SEPP 33 presents a systematic approach to planning and assessing proposals for potentially hazardous and offensive development for the purpose of industry or storage.
State Environmental Planning Policy 55 – Remediation of Land (SEPP 55)		SEPP 55 provides for a statewide planning approach to the remediation of contaminated land and aims to promote the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment.
State Environmental Planning Policy 64 – Advertising and Signage (SEPP 64)		SEPP 64 aims to ensure outdoor advertising is compatible with the desired amenity and visual character of an area, provides effective communication in suitable locations and is of high quality design and finish.

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## NSW legislation and planning instruments Overview

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### Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008 (Liverpool LEP)

The Liverpool LEP provides local environmental planning provisions for land in the Liverpool Local Government Area (LGA) in accordance with the relevant standard environmental planning instrument under section 33A of the EP&A Act.

### *Protection of the Environment Operations Act*

The objectives of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* Act are to protect, restore and enhance the quality of the environment, in recognition of the need to maintain ecological sustainable development.

### *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*

The *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* provides for the conservation of NSW-listed threatened species, populations and ecological communities of animals and plants. The Act does not generally apply to fish.

### *Fisheries Management Act 1994*

The *Fisheries Management Act 1994* aims to conserve, develop and share the fishery resources of NSW for the benefit of present and future generations, including conserving fish stocks and fish habitat and promoting ecologically sustainable development.

### *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1997*

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1997* provides for the protection of Aboriginal objects (sites, objects and cultural material) and Aboriginal places.

### *Heritage Act 1977*

The *Heritage Act 1997* makes provisions for the conservation of NSW's non-Aboriginal environmental heritage.

### *Water Management Act 2000*

The *Water Management Act 2000* is intended to ensure that NSW water resources are conserved and properly managed for sustainable use benefitting both present and future generations.

### *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997*

The main objective of the *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997* is to establish a process for notifying, investigating and remediating land which is or may be contaminated to a prescribed extent.

### *Roads Act 1993*

The *Roads Act 1993* governs the opening, operation and management, and closure, of public roads in NSW.

### *Waste Avoidance and Recovery Act 2001*

The *Waste Avoidance and Recovery Act 2001* promotes waste avoidance and resource recovery.

### *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*

The *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* provides for the identification, classification and control of noxious weeds.

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## 3.5 Related actions and proposals

This section provides an overview of actions and proposals related to transport planning, site preparation and other activities that are outside the scope of the Airport Plan and this EIS.

### 3.5.1 Demolition of buildings

As part of the day-to-day management of the airport site, the Australian Government is demolishing and removing vacant buildings and other structures that present a health or safety hazard. Any works associated with this day-to-day management of the site are not expected to have a significant environmental impact and are outside the scope of this draft EIS.

### *Realignment of utilities*

A range of utility infrastructure assets, such as electricity transmission lines, telecommunications lines and water mains, are located on the site and are considered incompatible with the airport proposal. Removal of utility infrastructure off the airport site is considered as part of this draft EIS. However, as these utility assets are the responsibility of private or state-owned owners and operators, any works to relocate them off site would be subject to a separate process and are not within scope for this draft EIS.

### *Regional airspace design and management*

The impacts identified in this EIS are based on indicative flight paths developed by Airservices Australia for aircraft approaches and departures at the proposed airport. It is expected these flight paths would be progressively refined during a detailed design process which would provide the opportunity to optimise safety, efficiency, noise and environmental impacts and may require changes to existing regional airspace management arrangements before operations begin at the proposed airport.

Proposals about airspace management above and around the proposed airport, including the determination of flight paths, will be made by Airservices Australia and the CASA closer to the start of airport operations. These proposals may require further environmental assessment processes to assist decision making and may be the subject of a future referral under the EPBC Act following detailed design.

### *Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan*

The proposed airport is supported by the Australian and NSW governments' Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan (WSIP), which is investing \$3.6 billion over 10 years in major road infrastructure upgrades in Western Sydney. The WSIP will ensure transport connections are capable of handling future traffic growth in Western Sydney and will deliver the major road upgrades and transport linkages required to service the proposed airport. These include:

- upgrade of The Northern Road to a minimum of four lanes from Narellan to Jamison Road, South Penrith, including realignment around the western boundary of the airport site;
- construction of a new four lane motorway, including access to the site, between the M7 Motorway and The Northern Road, generally along the alignment of Elizabeth Drive;
- upgrade of Bringelly Road to a minimum of four lanes between The Northern Road and Camden Valley Way;
- Werrington Arterial Road linking the M4 and Great Western Highway;
- upgrade of Ross Street and Great Western Highway intersection at Glenbrook; and
- a \$200 million package for local road upgrades.

With the exception of activities associated with the demolition of parts of the section of The Northern Road currently bisecting the site, these projects are outside the scope of the Airport Plan and this EIS. The NSW Government will be responsible for delivering these projects as operator of the road network. This will include undertaking any environmental impact assessments that may be required.

### *Western Sydney Employment Area Extension*

The NSW Government established the Western Sydney Employment Area (WSEA) to provide businesses in the region with land for industry and employment, catering for transport and logistics, warehousing and office space. Following the Australian Government announcement that Badgerys Creek would be the site for a Western Sydney airport the NSW Government has extended the WSEA south to Elizabeth Drive and includes some land west of the site.

A draft Structure Plan was released in June 2013. It outlines a broad framework for the area including the location of future employment land and centres, a road network, potential freight and transport corridors and staging scenarios. The NSW Government is revising the draft Structure Plan to take into account the proposed airport. This revision is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2015. The Western Sydney Employment Area is described further and mapped in Chapter 21.

### *South West Growth Centre*

The South West Growth Centre (SWGC) is a major greenfield land release area bordering the airport site to the south-east. The SWGC will eventually contain about 110,000 new dwellings for some 300,000 residents. The land immediately adjoining Badgerys Creek south of Elizabeth Drive has been earmarked for industrial and employment lands.

The NSW Government program for development of the SWGC (along with the North West Growth Centre) was assessed under the strategic assessment provisions of the EPBC Act. The SWGC, which provides for conservation outcomes through a comprehensive biodiversity offsets package, was endorsed by the then Australian Government Minister for the Environment in December 2011. The South West Growth Centre is described further and mapped in Chapter 21.

### *South West Rail Link Extension Corridor Preservation*

The NSW Government has started the planning and consultation process for the preservation of a corridor for the future extension of the South West Rail Link. The extension corridor is proposed to connect Leppington station to Bringelly and then head in two directions: north to the T1 Western Line near St Marys; and south to Narellan. The NSW Government is also considering an extension of the corridor further south to the existing T2 South Line.

It is anticipated that the northern section of the South West Rail Link Extension between Bringelly and the T1 Western Line will be undertaken as part of the Outer Sydney Orbital study and consultation process. In the context of the South West Rail Link Extension, rail services will be required at the proposed airport initially through a connection to the Sydney metropolitan network and in the long term, a dedicated airport express rail service from a key transport node. The rail line will be predominantly underground through the airport site to avoid critical infrastructure, and also preserves flexibility for a station(s) in the terminal precinct.

The Stage 1 development does not currently include a rail service as the forecast demand would not require rail access. However, planning for the airport preserves flexibility for two potential rail alignment options. These alignments would follow a corridor under the terminal at 90 degrees to the runways, a corridor parallel to the runways in line with the ground transport access, or a combination of both. Figure 3–2 indicates the potential locations where these alignments enter the airport site.

A final rail alignment will be determined in consultation with the NSW Government. Depending on the final alignment and preferred timing to develop rail services, some enabling work may be required during the Stage 1 airport development to future-proof the corridor. Any such work is expected to be subject to a separate approval process.



Figure 3–2 – Potential rail corridors leading to airport site



### *Outer Sydney Orbital Corridor Study*

The NSW Government is undertaking a corridor preservation study that is investigating a suitable Outer Sydney Orbital corridor to provide a north–south connection for a future motorway, freight rail and, where practicable, a passenger rail line. The corridor is expected to run from the Hume Highway south of Campbelltown, past the South West Growth Centre, the Broader Western Sydney Employment Area and the airport site, and through to the North West Growth Centre. Ultimately the corridor will provide increased capacity for the road network to improve accessibility to housing and employment opportunities in Western Sydney.