

2.0 Approved project

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the key components of the approved Westlink M7 project (formerly called the Western Sydney Orbital). Approval for the construction and operation of the Westlink M7 was granted on 28 February 2002 under the then Division 4, Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (EP&A Act) (DPE reference number SSI-663). The approval granted consent for the construction and operation of a 39-kilometre-long, four traffic lane motorway with a 15-metre-wide central median, from the F5/M5 Motorway at Prestons in the south to the M2 Motorway at West Baulkham Hills in the north (the approved project). A full project description was provided in the *Western Sydney Orbital Project Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS) (Roads and Transport Authority (RTA), 2000).

Based on transport strategies at that time, the EIS (RTA, 2000) and Conditions of Approval (CoA) for the approved project outlined that if demand required, the wide central median would provide sufficient space within the road corridor to allow for future public transport facilities such as dedicated bus operations, light or heavy rail, or development of additional traffic lanes.

Construction activities commenced in 2003, and the Westlink M7 opened to traffic in December 2005. Five modifications for the project have been approved since it was constructed, which are described in **Section 2.2.1**. Road operations continue to operate under the CoA for the approved project.

By Order of the Minister for Planning, the original approval for the Western Sydney Orbital (now known as the Westlink M7) was made subject to the current State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) provisions of the EP&A Act (Division 5.2, Part 5) on 26 April 2019. As such, the approved project is considered to be State Significant Infrastructure under the EP&A Act.

2.2 Overview of the approved project (Westlink M7)

Key features of the approved project (Westlink M7) include:

- A 39 km dual carriageway motorway with interchanges along its length providing connections with the arterial road network, comprising:
 - A road (about 12 kilometres in length) from the M5 Motorway and Camden Valley Way intersection at Prestons through largely open space to Elizabeth Drive, Cecil Hills
 - A road alignment immediately adjacent to Wallgrove Road from Elizabeth Drive, crossing the M4 Motorway and Great Western Highway
 - Use of the Phillip Parkway road corridor between Eastern Road and Richmond Road, including upgrade of the section between Eastern Road to Woodstock Avenue
 - Use of the Castlereagh Freeway road corridor from Eastern Road to the M2 Motorway at West Baulkham Hills
 - Four 3.5 metre traffic lanes (two in each direction) with sealed inner road shoulders of one metre next to the median
 - A median of at least 15 metres wide (allowing provision for additional traffic lanes or public transport in future)
 - A 2.5 metre combined paved road shoulder/breakdown lane and on-motorway cycle lane next to the outer lane

- Interchanges with the surrounding road network, including the following (listed from south to north):
 - Hume Highway/M5 Motorway
 - Kurrajong Road
 - Bernera Road
 - Hoxton Park Road
 - Cowpasture Road
 - Elizabeth Drive
 - Wallgrove Road Link
 - Elizabeth Drive (south facing ramps and one north facing ramp only)
 - The Horsley Drive
 - Old Wallgrove Road (south facing ramps and one north facing ramp only)
 - M4 Motorway
 - Great Western Highway (north facing ramps only)
 - Power Street
 - Richmond Road
 - Quakers Hill Parkway (east facing ramps only)
 - Sunnyholt Road
 - Norwest Boulevard (west facing ramps only)
 - Old Windsor Road (east facing ramps only)
 - M2 Motorway
- Electronic tolling infrastructure to toll road users.

Other approved design features include:

- Cross-over points for pedestrians and cyclists, including cyclist crossovers at interchange ramps marked to provide safe crossing points
- A pedestrian and recreation cycle path (shared path) either within the road corridor of the Westlink M7 or outside and parallel to the road corridor
- Road design to accommodate a 100-year average recurrence interval (ARI) flood event
- Flyovers (overpasses) where the Westlink M7 crosses or intersects with a local street
- A 110 kilometre per hour design speed between the M5 Motorway interchange and Richmond Road, and 100 kilometre per hour design speed from Richmond Road to the M2 Motorway
- A road corridor width ranging from 65 metres to 150 metres (with interchanges up to 400 metres in width)
- Fencing of the road corridor with a 1.8-metre high chain wire fence
- Lighting at interchanges and road crossings
- Landscape treatments including a mix of woodland/forest, riparian forest and rural woodland, generally within the road corridor
- Provision of noise treatment measures along the majority of the road corridor to protect the existing acoustic environment of adjacent sensitive receivers

- Bridges at each of the major creek crossings along the road corridor, namely, Maxwells Creek; Cabramatta Creek; Hinchinbrook Creek; Reedy Creek; Eastern Creek; Breakfast Creek; Lalor Creek and Toongabbie Creek
- Culverts at minor waterway crossings along the road corridor
- Stormwater control infrastructure, such as detention basins, grassed swales, gully pits, concrete-lined drains and pipes
- An operational control centre at Eastern Creek, to oversee operation of the Westlink M7 and an approved storage compound (referred to as Gate 19) near to the operational control centre.

The approved project operates 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Maintenance works occur in accordance with approved operational management plans (refer to **Section 2.2.3**).

Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2 show an overview of the approved project. Figure 2-3 shows a typical cross section of the approved project (based on Figure 6 of the Western Sydney Orbital Project EIS (RTA, 2000)).

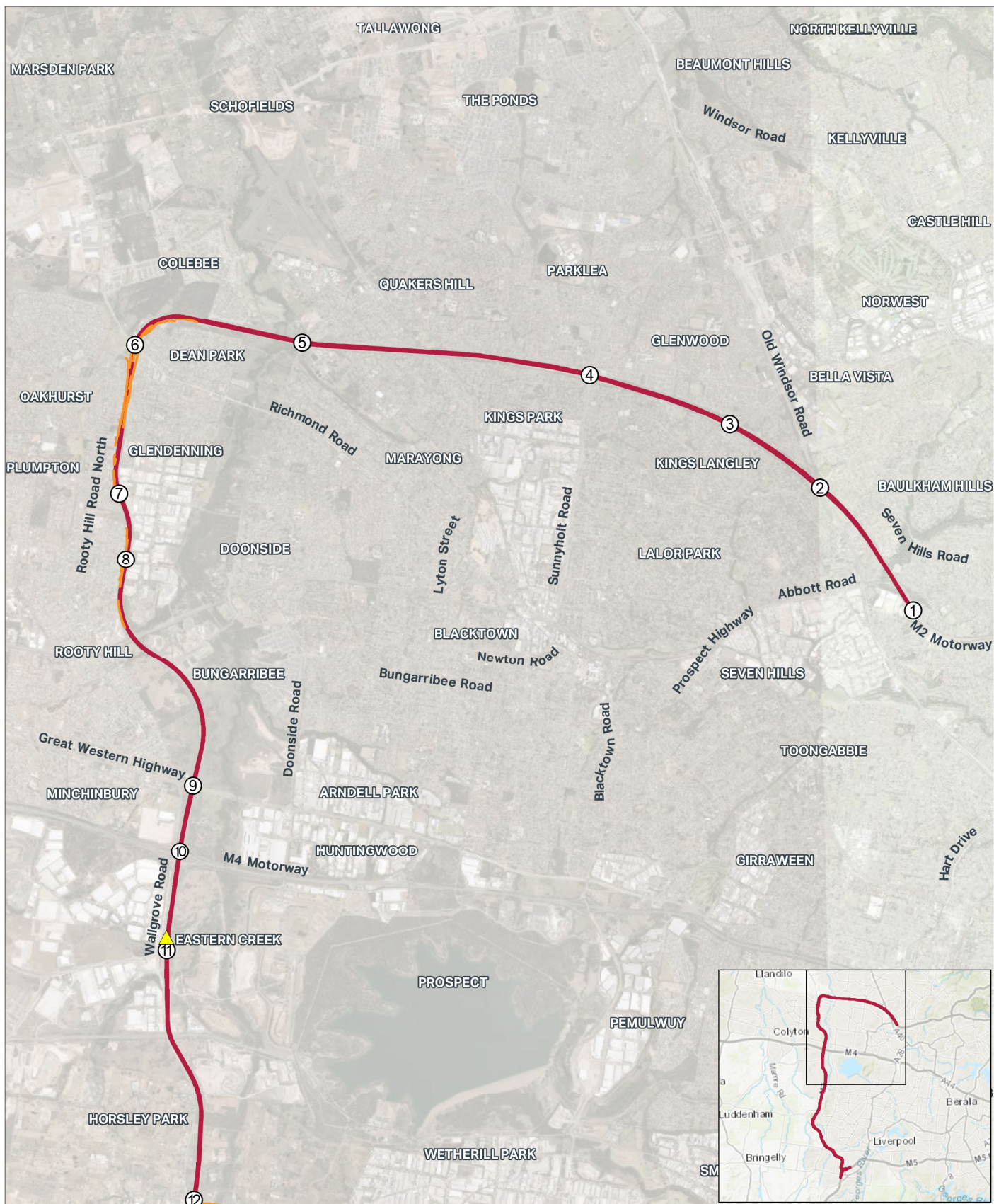


FIGURE 2-1: OVERVIEW OF THE APPROVED PROJECT (SHEET 1 OF 2)

Legend

— Westlink M7

▲ Eastern Creek Control Centre

— Existing noise wall

Interchanges

① M2 Motorway

② Old Windsor Road

③ Norwest Boulevard

④ Sunnyholt Road

⑤ Quakers Hill Parkway

⑥ Richmond Road

⑦ Power Street

⑧ Woodstock Avenue

⑨ Great Western Highway

⑩ M4 Motorway

⑪ Wallgrove Road at Old Wallgrove Road

⑫ The Horsley Drive



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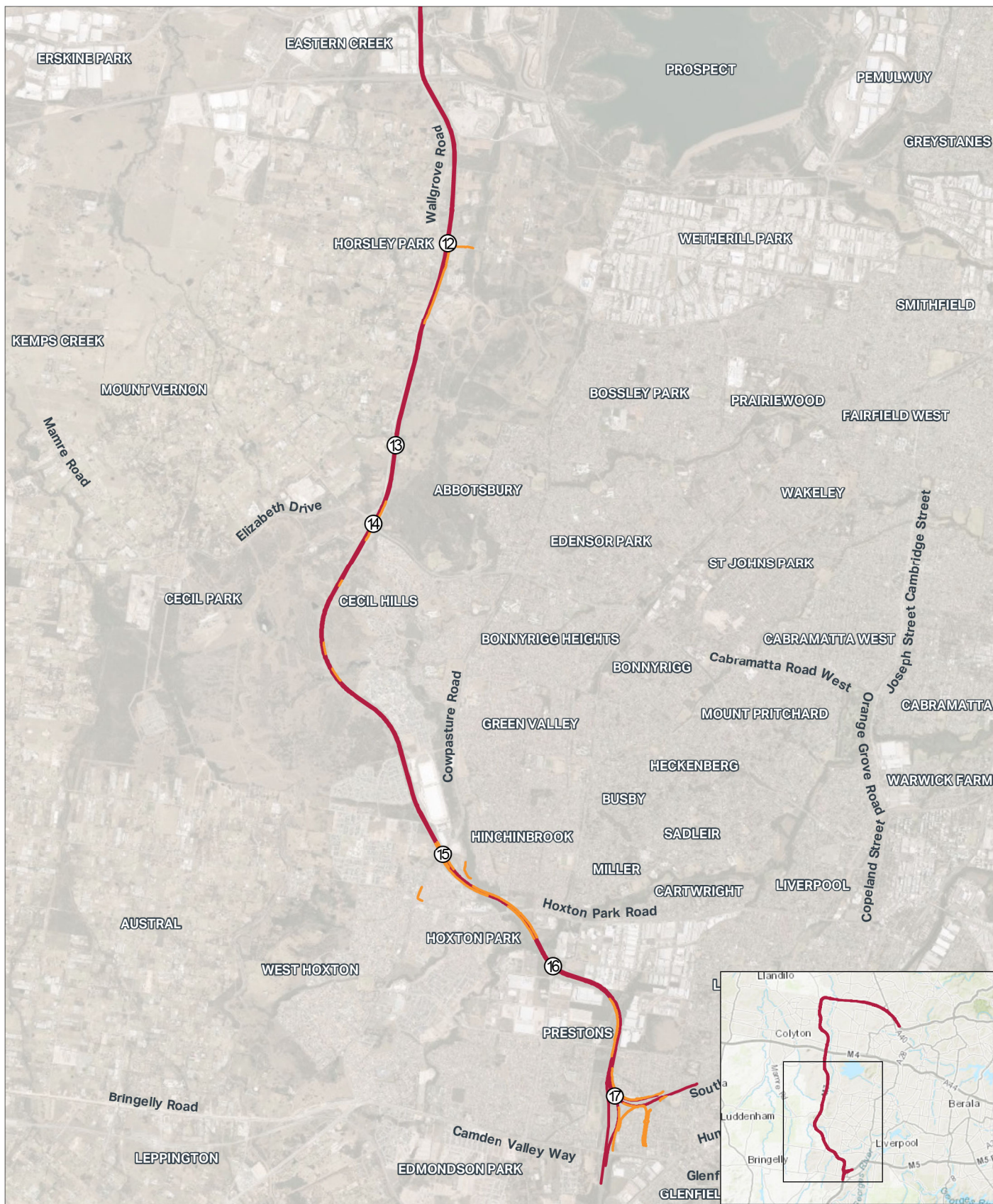


FIGURE 2-2: OVERVIEW OF THE APPROVED PROJECT (SHEET 2 OF 2)

Legend

— Westlink M7

— Existing noise wall

Interchanges

⑫ The Horsley Drive

⑬ Wallgrove Road near Villiers Road

⑭ Elizabeth Drive

⑮ Cowpasture Road

⑯ Bernera Road

⑰ M5 Motorway



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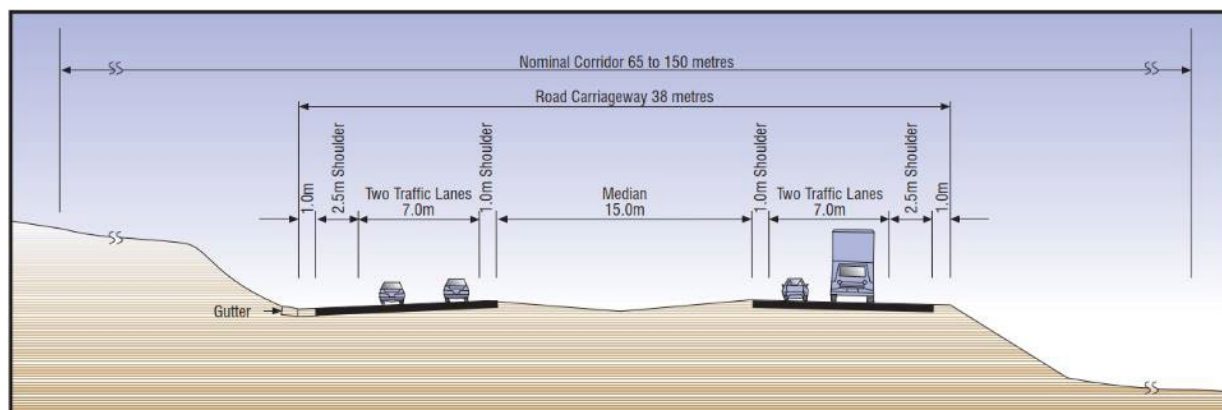


Figure 2-3 Typical cross section of the approved project (RTA, 2000)

2.2.1 Overview of approved modifications

The approved project has been modified on five occasions, as follows:

- **Modification 1:** Approved 19 June 2003 under the then section 115BAA of the EP&A Act to correct several minor misdescriptions in the CoA relating to pre-construction requirements, and to clarify the timing of stormwater management requirements
- **Modification 2:** Approved 4 May 2004 under the then section 115BAA of the EP&A Act to correct several minor errors resulting in inconsistencies between CoA
- **Modification 3:** Approved 25 August 2004 under the then section 115BAA of the EP&A Act to correct a minor error resulting in an inconsistency between CoA and to correct references to the Minister
- **Modification 4:** Approved 24 January 2006 under the then section 75W of the EP&A Act to delete condition 115(a), requiring the grade separated pedestrian/bicycle access (shared path) within the road reserve at Mavis Street, Rooty Hill (incorporating Angus Creek crossing and access to Aquilina Reserve), thus removing this access point
- **Modification 5:** Approved 18 July 2019 under section 5.25 of the EP&A Act to delete condition 66 which prohibits commercial advertising within the road reserve.

2.2.2 Conditions of Approval

There are 222 CoA for the approved project. These include conditions relating to the following:

- General conditions and compliance
- Communication and consultation
- Environmental management (construction and operation), and environmental auditing
- Project design requirements
- Public transport, freight and tolling
- Utilities and services
- Safety and security.

The CoA for the approved project can be found in the Schedule 1 Western Sydney Orbital Conditions of Approval ([Western Sydney Orbital Conditions of Approval](#)).

The approved project is also subject to nine conditions of concurrence imposed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) (NPWS, 2001). These include conditions relating to the following:

- General conditions and compliance with the Concept Design
- Management measures for threatened species and ecological communities and endangered species and communities

- Habitat compensation packages, surveying requirements, feasibility of species translocation
- Recovery plans and actions for threatened species and ecological communities significantly affected.

2.2.3 Approved management plans

Several management plans were developed for the approved project during construction and operation, in accordance with the CoA. The management plans currently in effect for the operation of the approved project include the following:

- Operational Environmental Management Plan, including the following sub plans:
 - Soil and Water Management Sub-Plan
 - Operational Noise Management Sub Plan
 - Waste Management Sub-Plan
 - Security and Crime Management Sub-Plan
 - Landscape and Revegetation Management Sub-Plan
 - M7 Weed Management Plan
 - Bushfire Fuel Load Monitoring Program.