

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose of the document

Hills Motorway are proposing to upgrade the capacity of the M2 Motorway. Urban and Landscape Design consultants HBO+EMTB and Tract Consultants, have prepared an Urban Design and Visual Assessment Report, as a Technical Paper for the Environmental Assessment project approval process. The Report has been prepared as part of a collaborative design process with Hills Motorway, Leighton Contractors and AECOM.

The preparation of this report has been through a series of design iterations and consultations to ensure that all parties are aware of the visual/urban design issues associated with the proposal and have actively sought to minimise the impacts. The initial phase of this report was the formulation of the Framework Report the purpose of which was to determine a consistent urban design approach for the upgrade of the M2 Motorway. This set agreed objectives and principles and has guided the designers during the development of the design for the upgrade and related corridor improvements.

This document takes the Urban Design Framework document and builds upon its findings, expanding on the definition of the context, adding a visual assessment of the proposal, and providing an indication as to the treatments and measures that should be adopted to ensure that the impacts of the proposal are reduced and the visual character of the Motorway improved.

### 1.2 Director General Requirements

Urban Design has been assessed as being a key issue by the Director General for the Environmental Assessment process and requires the following:

*"Urban Design and Landscape Issues - the Environmental Assessment must include consideration of the Urban design and landscape implications of the project, including identification of urban and landscape design objectives to enhance the current road corridor and to demonstrate how the proposed urban design elements of the project would be consistent with the existing (and desired) character of the area."*

The Director General Requirements have been addressed in this Report as follows:

- Urban and landscape design objectives are identified in Section 4.0.
- The Visual Assessment documents the impact of the proposal on the existing context and potential mitigation which in turn informed the urban design concept.
- Existing and desired urban character is discussed in Section 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0 and demonstrated in Section 6.0.

### 1.3 The Proposal

The M2 Motorway is an important part of the Sydney Orbital Network connecting Sydney's north-west to the lower north shore and Sydney's CBD (Refer to Figure 3). Increased traffic volume on the motorway has resulted in the need to increase capacity and improve the level of service for users. The proposed M2 Upgrade project would include the following components:

- Widening and/or provision of a third lane along sections of the eastbound and westbound carriageways between Windsor Road and Lane Cove Road.
- Provision of new on/off ramps at Windsor Road and Herring Road.
- Widening and provision of a third lane in the Norfolk Road tunnel.
- A continuous shoulder which provides an emergency and cyclist lane.
- Upgrades to the Motorway's Operational Management and Control Systems.

### 1.4 Study Methodology

The undertaking of the visual assessment and urban design concept involved an iterative process in which preliminary information was provided to highlight key issues and constraints and potential ways of handling critical issues which were integrated into the engineering design. This ensured that a consistent character and identity was created for the Motorway. The findings of this preliminary analysis formed the Framework Report. The Framework documented the regional and local planning context through which the M2 Motorway passes.

An analysis of the physical context of the motorway was documented to assist in understanding the environment surrounding the motorway and the existing conditions of the natural and urban setting. This analysis took the form of field surveys and a desk-top study and was used to establish the key attributes of the motorway which in turn determine the urban character precincts and specific site constraints and opportunities. These were used to generate objectives and principles which form the urban design framework for the upgrade works. At that stage, information regarding the location and nature/extent of the works was not fully defined and so the report focus was to provide an overview of the typical issues and constraints which would be assessed in greater detail as the design evolved.

From this preliminary Framework Report, an Urban Design Visual and Assessment Report has been prepared. This document is a Technical Paper which supports the Environmental Assessment Report and has been compiled to meet the requirements of the Director General as part of the Part 3a Environmental Assessment Process.

### 1.5 Report Structure

The structure of the assessment follows that of the Framework Report but extends and expands on the information presented. Like the Framework Report it uses both desk top and field survey to define the context of the road in terms of physical characteristics. The initial assessment is reviewed and expanded with detail gathered to address the specific issues of the concept design. Information gathered from site comprised a review of all public areas, including streets, parks and so on to assess likely view points and impacts. Private properties were not accessed, although an assessment of proximity to the Motorway and likely impacts of the proposal have been made. From this recommendations of the treatments and strategies for implementation are described.

The structure of the report is as follows:

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Contextual Analysis: a comprehensive analysis, depicted through maps, photos and text, of the regional and local context, natural setting and urban setting adjoining the corridor. Character precincts and key attributes are identified which influence the design response.

Section 3: Visual Impact Assessment: describes the likely visual impacts of the project through a review of key vantage points and public spaces adjoining the corridor.

Section 4: Objectives and Principles: outlines urban and landscape design objectives and principles for the project.

Section 5: Opportunities and Constraints: an identification of key opportunities and constraints for the built and landscape elements of the M2 Motorway corridor, depicted through photos, text and sections.

Section 6: The Urban Design Concept: provides a description of the urban and landscape design proposal, including text, plans, sections, photomontages.

Section 7: Implementation Strategy.

Section 8: References.

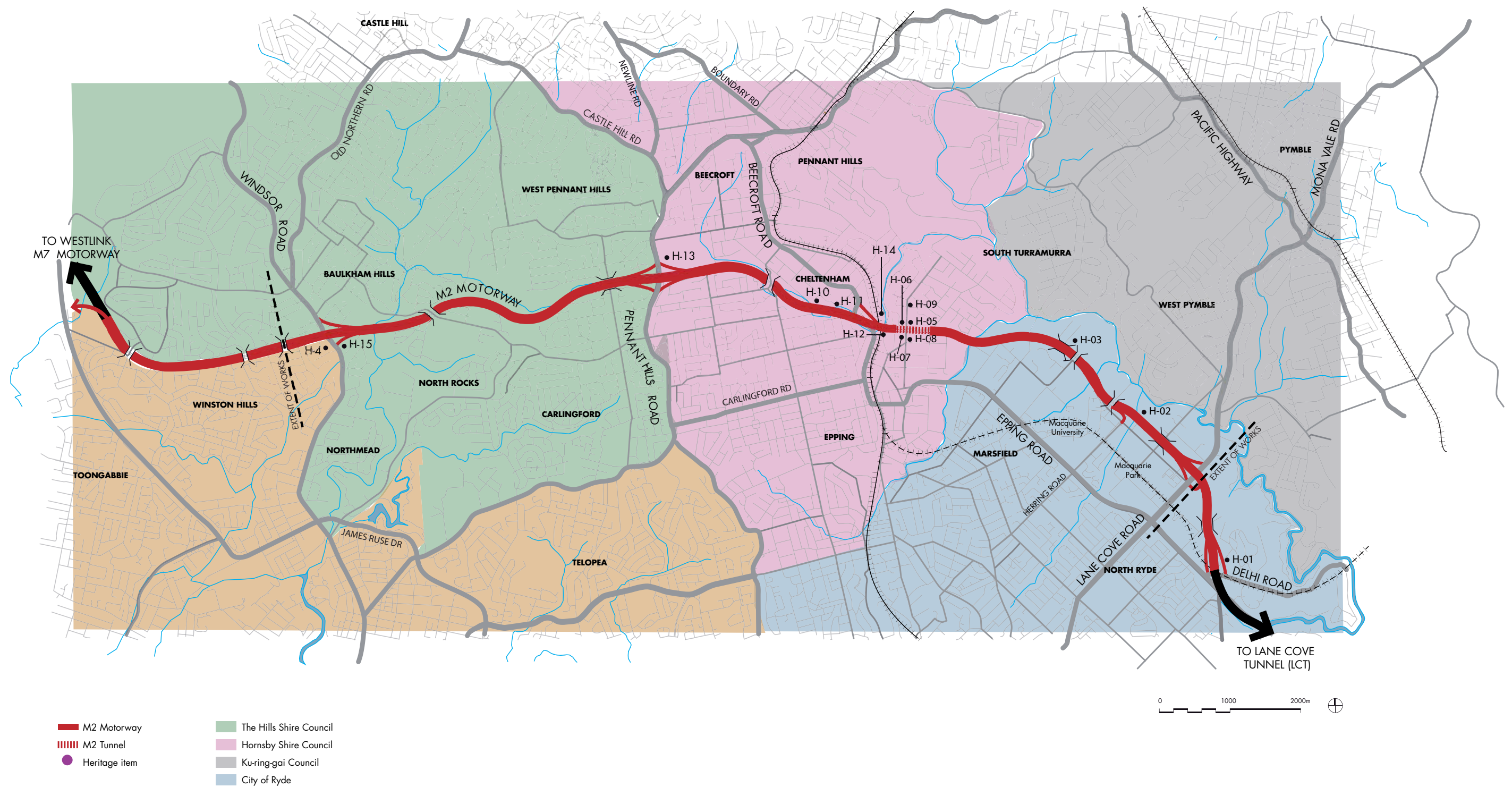


Figure 2.1 Local Council Areas