

3.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ANALYSIS

3.1 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ZONES

Seven landscape character zones have been identified along the motorway corridor as depicted in Figure 3.1. For the purpose of this report, these precincts generally reflect the motorway's surrounding land use and character, even though the land use may differ between the northern and southern verges of the motorway corridor.

Within the motorway, two distinct areas have been identified which tend to correlate with the precinct zones. Within zones 1 to 4 (western section), the motorway is generally above ground and devoid of a green median, whilst within zones 5 to 7 (eastern section), the motorway is predominantly on ground, or in a cut situation, creating a much more enclosed character.

This enclosed character is partially created by an established ribbon of vegetation along the verges that strongly contributes to the motorway's character. This is complemented in some areas by a grassed median and stands of trees which mark the overpass locations.

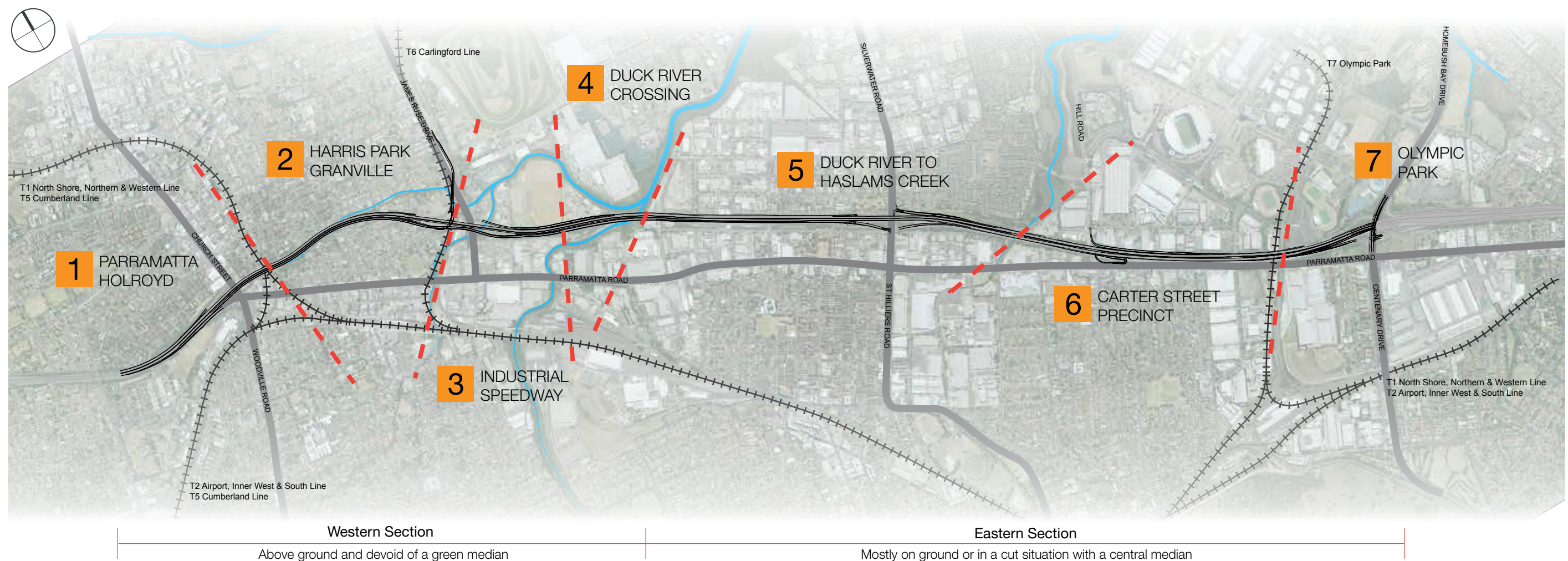


Figure 3.1 Landscape Character Zones Map

As the character zones have been identified as precincts that extend across the motorway corridor, each zone has been divided into a northern and southern side. This is due to the difference in interaction between one side of the motorway and the other in relation to the proposal, resulting in contrasting impacts.

The purpose of including some of these less affected areas, is to ensure that both sides of the corridor have been assessed and potential impacts considered.

This chapter also discusses the sensitivity values for each landscape character zone. The sensitivity assessment has been based on RMS's *Environmental Impact Assessment Practice Note - Guidelines for Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment No. EIA-N04, Version 2.0 Issue (2013)*.

The sensitivity value refers to the qualities of a particular character zone, the number and type of receivers and how sensitive the existing character of the setting is to the proposed change. For example a pristine natural environment will be more sensitive to change than a built up industrial area.

Sensitivity mapping has been provided in section 3.2 of this report.

ZONE 1 - PARRAMATTA/HOLROYD CHAINAGE 00 TO 1100

NORTHERN SIDE

The suburb of Parramatta is on the northern side of the M4 corridor, which is predominantly a residential area composed of single storey dwellings and blocks of flats up to four storeys high that dominate the streetscape between Pitt Street and Church Street. A strong green buffer defines the interface with the motorway, limiting its visual exposure to residents. Church Street is dominated by a mix of large commercial properties, including a number of car dealerships. East of Church Street is a residential area of predominantly single storey houses and weatherboard cottages, mixed with double storey and multi-storey flats. The motorway is visually more dominant in this location as there is minimal screening.

The topography within this zone is almost all flat with a pronounced rise towards the western end.

Due to the dominant residential character of the area, **this zone is considered high in sensitivity.**

SOUTHERN SIDE

This zone is mainly comprised of large commercial properties with a warehouse type character, specialising in the construction industry. Towards the western end of this zone is a pocket of single and double storey residential properties on generous lots. Kurung Reserve and Holroyd Sports Ground situated adjacent to the motorway provide some green buffering and limit the visual exposure towards the motorway. The shared user path that extends along the sports ground and crosses beneath Church Street and the railway line is a significant cycle route within the area.

Between Church Street and the Main Western Rail line, the motorway becomes more dominant as it runs on a viaduct structure. There is minimal screening except for the built form elements of the commercial properties.

Where the topography gently rises towards Pitt Street at the western end, this part of the zone is considered low in sensitivity except for the residential pocket to the west. In this case the sensitivity of this part of the zone is considered high due to its land use and its somewhat detached character from the motorway. **Overall this zone has a moderate sensitivity.**



landscape character zones

SHEET 1

ZONE 2 – HARRIS PARK/GRANVILLE CHAINAGE 1100 TO 2300

NORTHERN SIDE

This side of the motorway consists of a mixture of multi-storey flats and town houses (Harris Park), and single storey homes (Granville) set in a somewhat green streetscape. Within the suburb of Granville, east of Good Street, dense vegetative screening, with stands of *Casuarinas*, exist alongside A'Beckett Creek channel, which crosses underneath the motorway.

The topography is relatively flat and numerous properties have views towards the elevated motorway. The **sensitivity for this zone is considered high** due to the residential land use and potential sensitivity to impact due to current outlooks from residences.

The shared path utilises the space below the existing motorway within the extent of this zone, zig-zagging between the various piers of the existing viaduct.

SOUTHERN SIDE

Granville, on the southern side, is dominated by single and some double storey residential properties, creating a uniform and cohesive streetscape. Within this zone, the motorway encroaches towards this residential area, affecting a number of properties adjacent to it. The western section between the railway line and Good Street utilises the A'Beckett Creek corridor to limit these impacts. However, east of Good Street, a number of properties would be directly impacted through full and partial acquisition. Both the cohesive residential character and land use make this zone **high in sensitivity**.

ZONE 3 – INDUSTRIAL/SPEEDWAY CHAINAGE 2300 TO 3000

The motorway passes through the industrial areas of Clyde to the south and the Sydney Speedway to the north. Whilst the M4 Motorway continues in an elevated position, the lack of noise barriers limits its visual presence to surrounding areas. Views to the surrounding areas provide some context to the traveller.

The shared path crosses over James Ruse Drive on an independent structure, adjacent and directly north of the M4 Motorway, before linking up with Martha Street on the southern side of the motorway.

Between James Ruse Drive and Wentworth Street the space beneath the viaduct structure is currently used as a motorbike training facility. Directly west of the training facility, Duck Creek interfaces with the motorway and James Ruse Drive. The creek appears degraded, with weed infested banks and rubbish within the channel.

The viaduct structure terminates at Wentworth Street from where it is positioned on a fill batter with ample vegetative screening.

The sensitivity to this zone is predominantly considered low due to the industrial and commercial character of the area, except for the recreational areas of the Sydney Speedway where a moderate sensitivity has been assessed. **Overall this zone has a moderate sensitivity.**

ZONE 4 – DUCK RIVER CROSSING CHAINAGE 3000 TO 3550

Within this zone, the motorway crosses the sensitive environs of Duck River which provides a strong green backdrop to the motorist travelling on the motorway. North of Duck River is the Rosehill Industrial Estate and the Shell Oil refinery, which creates a visual marker along the journey with its numerous vertical stacks.

Duck Creek joins Duck River just north of the motorway. Within this zone, the motorway is mostly on a viaduct structure and the shared path diverts from Martha Street and crosses the river on a separate structure before merging with Adderley Street West.

To the south of the motorway, large commercial premises and a concrete batching facility flank the motorway.

The sensitivity to this zone is low due to the commercial properties, yet high in terms of the Duck River corridor due to its environmental value and scenic quality. **Overall this zone has a moderate sensitivity** due to the significance of the river.



landscape character zones