



Growth Centres Biodiversity Certification

Assessment of Consistency between the Relevant Biodiversity Measures of the Biodiversity Certification Order and the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (Aerotropolis Core, Badgerys Creek, Wianamatta-South Creek) Precinct Plan

December 2021

1. Introduction

In December 2007 an order conferring biodiversity certification on *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006* (Growth Centres SEPP) was made by the then Minister for the Environment under section 126G of the then *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act).

In July 2008, the Minister's certification was validated by the *Threatened Species Conservation Amendment (Special Provisions) Act 2008* which was subsequently incorporated into Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act. The amendment gives the Minister for the Environment the power to suspend or revoke the certification if any of its conditions, termed Relevant Biodiversity Measures (RBMs), are not complied with.

The RBMs applying to the certification have remained unaltered since gazettal of the original order and require (among other things) the permanent protection of 2,000 hectares of high quality vegetation within the Growth Centres.

On 25 August 2017, the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) came into force, replacing the TSC Act. However, section 35 of the Biodiversity Conservation (Savings and Transitional) Regulation 2017 provides that

35 Biodiversity certification that was conferred on land under Part 7AA of the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 and that was in force on the repeal of that Act is taken to be biodiversity certification conferred on the land under Part 8 of the new Act

This report has been prepared to fulfil the requirement of RBM 35 for an assessment of the consistency of proposed Aerotropolis precinct plans (all of Aerotropolis Core and parts of Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek, south of Elizabeth Drive) with the biodiversity certification and the RBMs.

This report has been prepared in a table format and addresses all RBMs that are relevant to precinct planning. It is noted that some RBMs related to other government policies and programs and are not specific to precinct planning and have therefore not been included in the report.

A complete copy of the relevant biodiversity measures can be found on the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's website at <u>Register of biodiversity certification orders | NSW Environment, Energy and Science</u>

Where the report indicates that precinct planning is inconsistent with the biodiversity certification, full justification for the inconsistency is provided as part of the ecological assessment for the precinct.

Definitions

Terms defined below appear in **bold** in the table. Where the terms are also defined in the Biodiversity Certification Order, the definitions provided are consistent with those in the Order. However, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and Environment, Energy and Science (EES) division are replaced in this report for the Growth Centres Commission and the Department of Environment and Climate Change, respectively.

- Additional High Conservation Value Vegetation (AHCVV) means areas of vegetation which
 were found during ground-truthing which would otherwise meet the definition of Existing Native
 Vegetation but was not originally identified as "vegetation" on maps 4 and 5 of the draft Growth
 Centres Conservation Plan.
- Biodiversity Certification Maps means the maps marked "North West Growth Centre Biodiversity Certification" and "South West Growth Centre – Biodiversity Certification" dated November 2007 and included in Schedule 2 of the Biodiversity Certification Order.
- BC Act means the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (replaces the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995).
- Certified Area means an area marked as a certified area on a biodiversity certification map.
- Clearing of existing native vegetation means any one or more of the following:
 - a) cutting down, felling, thinning, logging or removing existing native vegetation in whole or in part,
 - b) killing, destroying, poisoning, ringbarking, uprooting or burning existing native vegetation in whole or in part.
- EP&A Act means the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.
- Existing Native Vegetation (ENV) means areas of indigenous trees (including any sapling) that:
 - c) had 10% or greater over storey canopy cover present,
 - d) were equal to or greater than 0.5 Ha in area, and
 - e) were identified as "vegetation" on maps 4 and 5 of the draft Growth Centres Conservation Plan.
- Minister means the Minister administering the TSC Act and/or the BC Act.
- Non-certified Area means an area marked as a non-certified area on a biodiversity certification map.
- Protection or Protected in relation to land means land that is protected by a land use zoning
 under an environmental planning instrument or public ownership arrangements that provide
 for the protection of biodiversity values as a priority, or another arrangement that provides in
 perpetuity security for biodiversity on the subject land.
- Relevant Biodiversity Measures means the conditions in Schedule 1 of the Biodiversity Certification Order.
- TSC Act means the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995.

2. Assessment

Table 1: Assessment of consistency between the relevant biodiversity measures of the Biodiversity Certification Order and the Precinct Plans for all of Aerotropolis Core and parts of Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek, south of Elizabeth Drive.

	Relevant Biodiversity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification	
		General			
4	Copies of all final reports, maps, reviews, plans and monitoring data referred to in the conditions of biodiversity certification must be held by the DPIE and made publicly available, either on request and/or by a mechanism that is broadly publicly accessible. This does not apply to material that is commercially sensitive or contains sensitive information regarding the location of threatened species, populations or ecological communities or their habitat.	All information required by the RBMs for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis Precinct (all of Aerotropolis Core and parts of Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek, south of Elizabeth Drive) will be publicly exhibited.	Yes		
	Native vegetation to be retained within the Growth Centres				
6	A minimum of 2,000 hectares of existing native vegetation must be retained and protected within the Growth Centres, either within the certified areas and/or the non-certified areas, subject to conditions 7 to 13 below.	The draft Growth Centres Conservation Plan identifies 67.31 ha of ENV to be retained within the entire Precinct to maintain parity with the 2,000-ha requirement.	Yes	92.39 ha of ENV will be protected in the proposed Aerotropolis precinct plans (all of Aerotropolis Core, and parts of Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek, south of Elizabeth Drive). This will be achieved through proposed amendments to the State Environmental Planning Policy (Western Sydney Aerotropolis) 2020 (WSA SEPP) and by using the following mechanisms: • Retention of 68.81 of ENV within land zoned Environment and Recreation under the WSA SEPP, of which 12.72 ha is within currently certified lands and 56.09 ha is within currently non-certified lands. • Clause 27 of the Western Sydney Aerotropolis SEPP requires consent for the clearing of native vegetation in the	

	Relevant Biodiversity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
				Environment and Recreation zone, however sub-clause (7) states: o 'This clause does not authorise the clearing of existing native vegetation within the meaning of the relevant biodiversity measures under Part 7 of Schedule 7 to the repealed Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995'. • Retention of 23.58 of ENV within the Precinct's open space network, of which 23.19 ha is within currently certified lands and 0.39 ha is within currently non-certified lands. A proposed amendment to the Western Sydney Aerotropolis SEPP will rezone these areas of the open space network as Environment and Recreation. As above, the ENV will be protected via clause 27(7) and will be shown on the High Biodiversity Values map. Amendments are scheduled for the first quarter of 2022, subject to confirmation.
Rete	ntion of existing native vegetation during precinct ning			
7	During the precinct planning process, the DPIE may determine to make areas of existing native vegetation within the non-certified areas available for development if the clearance of such vegetation is considered necessary for either the provision of essential infrastructure and/or to meet the required Development Parameters specified in the Growth Centres Development Code.	2.10 ha of non-certified ENV will be cleared for essential infrastructure and achieving development parameters.	Yes	The loss of 2.10 ha of validated ENV on non-certified land is to allow for the Major Infrastructure Corridor (MIC) and other major roads within the Aerotropolis Core Precinct. Losses also occur of small areas of ENV to allow for the logical, orderly and economic development of land to occur.
8	In making a determination under condition 7, the DPIE must demonstrate by way of information provided during the public exhibition of the precinct plan (where that exhibition	As 2.10 of mapped non- certified ENV will be lost to	Yes	35.91 ha of validated ENV will be retained on land that is currently certified but is proposed to be non-

Relevant Biodiversity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
occurs after this order takes effect) that the clearing of any existing native vegetation in the non-certified areas will be offset by: (a) the protection of an equal or greater area of existing native vegetation elsewhere in the Growth Centres; and/or (b) the revegetation and/or restoration of an area of land elsewhere in the Growth Centres, subject to satisfying the following, (i) that the clearance of existing native vegetation in the non-certified areas will not affect the capacity to achieve overall improvement or maintenance of biodiversity values for threatened species, populations and ecological communities and their habitats, (ii) the revegetated and/or restored areas will be protected, (iii) the extent of revegetation and/or restoration compared to clearing of existing native vegetation must be undertaken at a ratio of at least 3:1 (to reflect the greater ecological risks relative to retaining existing native vegetation), (iv) areas subject to revegetation and/or restoration must be of a suitable boundary configuration and design to support long-term management, (v) revegetation and/or restoration of the proposed areas would not be undertaken under another scheme or regulatory requirement already in operation at the time that the clearing is approved (this includes but is not limited to any approvals, and associated conditions of such approvals, that may be required under the <i>Rivers and Foreshores</i>	infrastructure/development, this must be offset. Measures consistent with RBM 8(a)/(b) have been implemented to offset impacts of clearing of ENV as described in relation to RBM 7.		certified. This amount is greater than the loss of ENV for infrastructure described in RBM 7.

	Relevant Biodiversity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
	Improvement Act 1948 and Water Management Act 2000),			
	(vi) revegetation and/or restoration will be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced persons using indigenous plant stock, and			
	(vii) sufficient resources will be made available to undertake the revegetation and/or restoration and any necessary follow-up maintenance and monitoring for a minimum period of 5 years following the commencement of the revegetation and/or restoration.			
9	Revegetation and/or restoration may be partly counted towards meeting the overall requirement to protect 2,000 hectares of existing vegetation required in condition 6. The amount that may be counted shall be calculated by dividing the total area of revegetation and/or restoration required under condition 8b (iii) by 3.	N/A	-	-
	Note: for example, if 9 hectares of revegetation is undertaken then 3 hectares may be counted.			

	Relevant Biodiversity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
	ntion of existing native vegetation shown in areas sed with red hatching			
12	Notwithstanding any other conditions of biodiversity certification, in the lands marked by a red hatching on the biodiversity certification maps existing native vegetation must not be cleared unless it is in accordance with a plan of management or unless such clearance has been agreed to by the OEH.	Lands marked by a red hatching on the biodiversity certification maps existing native vegetation will not be cleared.	Yes	Lands subject to Condition 12 of the Biodiversity Certification Order within the Wianamatta-South Creek precinct are currently zoned Environment and Recreation.
Grou	and-truthing of existing native vegetation			
13	If new information becomes available after the biodiversity certification order took effect that demonstrates that the vegetation within an area does not otherwise meet the definition of existing native vegetation, then for the purposes of conditions 7 to 8 and condition 11 to 12 only the area of confirmed existing native vegetation shall be considered.	Eco Logical Australia conducted ground truthing and aerial photo interpretation of ENV within the Precinct. The calculations of loss are based on the originally mapped ENV (to maintain comparison with the Precinct target), whilst protection is calculated on validated ENV (for conditions 7 to 8 and 11 to 12).	Yes	The draft conservation plan maps 209.07 ha of ENV within the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (Aerotropolis Core, Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek) Precinct, 67.31 ha of which falls within non-certified land areas. 126.04 ha of validated ENV currently exists throughout the Precinct of which 58.58 is located in non-certified areas. 84.39ha of additional high conservation value vegetation (AHCVV) also exists throughout the Precinct, of which 34.39 ha is located within currently non-certified land. Of this, 20.67 ha has been field validated, of which 10.03 is located within currently non-certified land.
	tional conservation actions within the Growth Centres – ve vegetation			
14	During or before the preparation of the relevant precinct plan(s) under the Growth Centres Development Code, a further detailed assessment must be undertaken of the	N/A	Yes	-

	Relevant Biodiv	versity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
	Services Austra	or proximate to the Shanes Park Air lia site marked in blue hatching on the rtification maps.			
15		t referred to in condition 14 must examine as meet the criteria specified in Schedule 3.	N/A	Yes	-
16	Based on the outcomes of the assessment the EES shall provide advice to the Minister on whether the areas should be included within the certified areas or the non-certified areas shown on the biodiversity certification maps.		N/A	Yes	-
	Additional conservation actions within the Growth Centres – plants				
17	plan(s) under the Growth Centres Development Code relating to the areas referred to in the table below, the following actions must be undertaken:		N/A The black hatched areas are outside the Precinct boundaries.	Yes	-
	Species	Required action			
	Acacia pubescens	Potential populations at Cross Street, Kemps Creek and Thirty-second Avenue, Austral – as shown in black hatching on the biodiversity certification maps:			
		survey to confirm the presence of the species, and			
		if the species is present, provide for the protection of the area of suitable habitat for the species to the satisfaction of the OEH .			

Relevant Biodi	versity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
Pimelea spicata	Potential populations at Denham Court Road - as shown in black hatching on the biodiversity certification maps :			
	survey to confirm the presence of species, and			
	if the species is present, provide for the protection of the area of suitable habitat for the species to the satisfaction of the OEH .			
Persoonia hirsuta	Potential populations at North Kellyville – as shown in black hatching on the biodiversity certification maps:			
	survey to confirm the presence of the species, and			
	if the species is present, provide for the protection of the area of suitable habitat for the species to the satisfaction of the OEH .			
Leucopogon fletcheri	Known population at North Kellyville - as shown in black hatching on the biodiversity certification maps:			
	survey to confirm the extent of the population, and			
	provide for the protection of the population to the satisfaction of the OEH .			
Darwinia biflora	Known populations at North Kellyville - as shown in black hatching on the			

			Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
	Hibbertia superans	biodiversity certification maps:			
	Epacris purpurascens var purpurascens Eucalyptus sp "Cattai"	 survey to confirm the extent of the populations, and provide for the protection of the population to the satisfaction of the OEH. 			
	may decide that i	etion of the above actions the Minister t is appropriate to amend the boundaries ubject to biodiversity certification, in condition 3.			
	Additional conservation actions within the Growth Centres – inimals				
18	During or before the preparation of the relevant precinct plan(s) under the Growth Centres Development Code relating to the area referred to in the table below, the following actions must be undertaken:		N/A The black hatched areas are outside the Precinct boundaries.	Yes	-
	Species	Required action			
	Green and Golden Bell Frog	Potential population at Riverstone – as shown in black hatching on the biodiversity certification maps:			
		Option 1			
		survey to confirm the presence of the species, and			
		if the species is present, provide protection of the area of suitable			

	Relevant Biodiversity Measure		Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
		habitat for the species to the satisfaction of the OEH .			
	0,	ption 2			
	•	if the species is present at Riverstone but cannot be adequately protected to the satisfaction of the OEH , then:			
		a) undertake targeted survey to confirm the presence of the species elsewhere in the Growth Centres, and			
		b) if the species is present elsewhere in the Growth Centres, provide for the protection of an area(s) of suitable habitat for the species to the satisfaction of the OEH .			
	decide that it is appro	of the above actions the Minister may opriate to amend the boundaries of the versity certification, in accordance with			
	ditional conservation actions within the Growth Centres – relopment sites				
19	Within twelve months of the biodiversity certification order taking effect, the DPIE (in consultation with the EES) must put in place procedures so that all future precinct plans (excluding any plans that were publicly exhibited before the biodiversity certification order took effect), where practicable, provide for the appropriate re-use of:		These provisions will be incorporated into the Western Sydney Aerotropolis Phase 2 Development Control Plan (WSA DCP).	Yes	These provisions will be incorporated into the WSA Phase 2 DCP.

	Relevant Biodiversity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
	 (a) native plants (including but not limited to seed collection) and the re-location of native animals from development sites, prior to development commencing; and 			
	(b) top soil from development sites that contain known or potential native seed bank.			
	For the purposes of condition 19a and 19b appropriate uses may include, but are not limited to, application in revegetation or restoration works and landscaping in the Growth Centres.			
Futu	re precinct plans			
35	During the preparation of future precinct plans (excluding any precinct plans already publicly exhibited before this order took effect) the GCC must undertake and make publicly available an assessment of the consistency of the proposed precinct plan with the conditions of biodiversity certification. This may occur during or before any public exhibition of future precinct plans.	This assessment of consistency has been prepared to satisfy this RBM. This report will be publicly exhibited with the full Precinct Planning package.	Yes	This assessment addresses all RBMs applicable to the planning for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (all of Aerotropolis Core, parts of Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek south of Elizabeth Drive) Precinct.
Futu	re threatened species listings or discoveries			
36	Where a preliminary determination is made under the Act to list a species, population or ecological community, and that species, population or ecological community may or is known to occur within the Growth Centres, then the DPIE must (as soon as practicable) provide advice to the EES on whether: (a) the species, population or ecological community is known or likely to be present in the Growth Centres;	DPIE does not propose to make a preliminary determination under the Act to list a species, population or ecological community. EES to provide comments during the exhibition of the precinct planning package.	Yes	

	Relevant Biodiversity Measure	Comment	Consistent with RBMs and Part 7 of Schedule 7 of the TSC Act	Justification
	 (b) it was considered during the preparation of the draft Growth Centres Conservation Plan by the DPIE; and (c) whether the SEPP, and related measures, provides adequate protection for the species, population or ecological community. 			
37	Based on the information provided in accordance with condition 36, and any other relevant matters, the EES shall advise the Minister on whether to formally review, maintain, modify, suspend or revoke the biodiversity certification of the SEPP if the species, population or ecological community is listed under the Act.	-	Yes	-

3. Conclusion

This report has undertaken an assessment of the consistency of the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (all of Aerotropolis Core and parts of Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek south of Elizabeth Drive) Precinct Plan, with the biodiversity certification and the applicable relevant biodiversity measures.

It is concluded that the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (all of Aerotropolis Core and parts of Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek south of Elizabeth Drive) Precinct Plan is consistent with the biodiversity certification of the Growth Centres SEPP, as follows:

- The Western Sydney Aerotropolis (Aerotropolis Core, Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek) Precinct Plan will protect 92.39 ha of field validated ENV, following a SEPP amendment, and will count towards the 2,000-ha target, in accordance with RBM6. This exceeds the 67.31 ha target identified for the Precinct in the Draft Conservation Plan.
- Environment and Recreation zone and open space network as described below (Annex B and C).
- The WSA SEPP includes clause 27(7) which protects Existing Native Vegetation. These areas will be shown on the High Biodiversity Value Map (Annex C).

Land use zones have been selected based on advice from EES in relation to appropriate zoning of land containing ENV. During exhibition of the precinct planning package, EES will provide comment on the appropriateness of the proposed Environment and Recreation zoning. Land use zones must consider other land use planning factors, including the future ownership, acquisition and use of land in accordance with the Precinct Plan and the EPA Act. In accordance with the hierarchy of land use zones preferred by EES, land use zones have been applied to ENV that is proposed to be protected as follows:

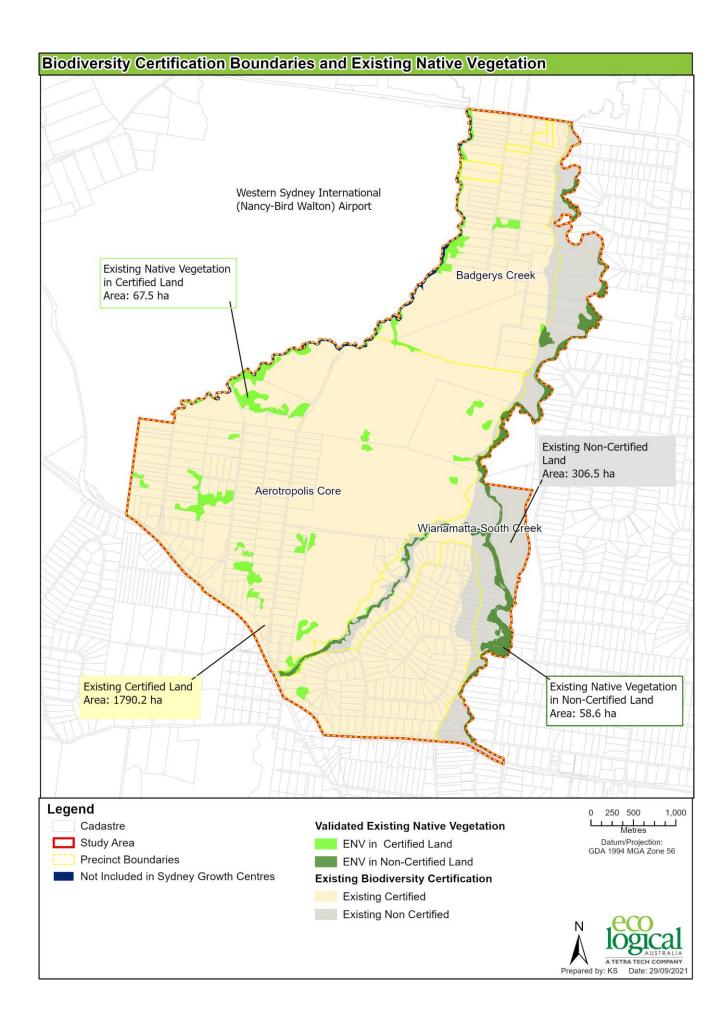
All ENV to be protected will be located on land to be zoned Environment and Recreation.

Proposed Biodiversity Certification Map

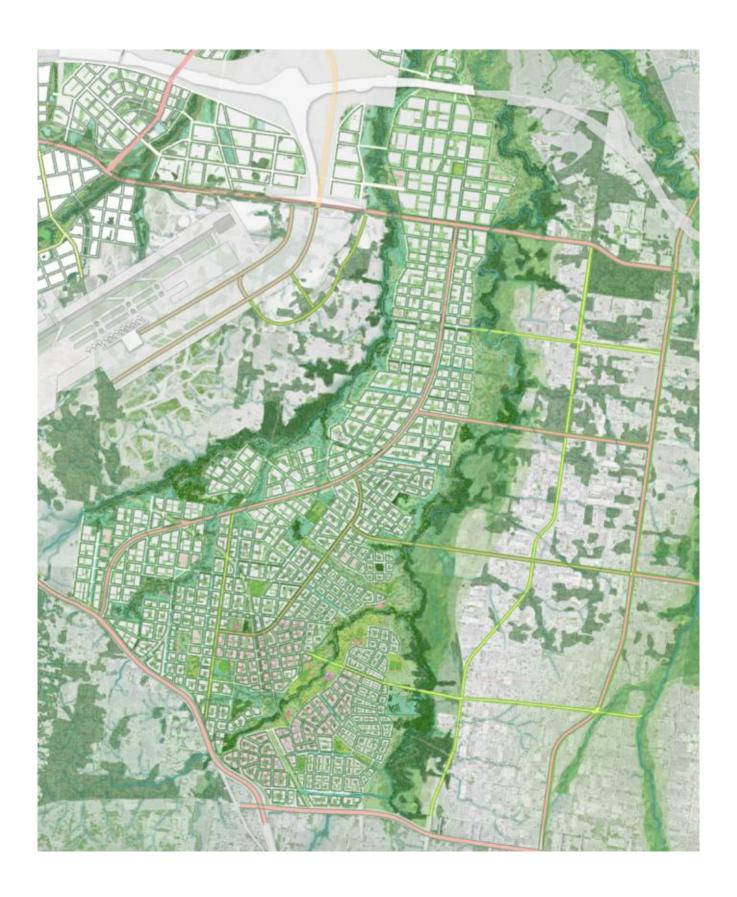
To reflect the outcomes of the Precinct Plan and ensure the protection of ENV, amendments are proposed to the boundaries of certified and non-certified land as shown on the biodiversity certification map (referred to as the subject lands map) (see Annex D). The new boundaries of the non-certified lands are proposed to reflect the boundaries of the:

- Protected ENV (as mapped as 'Existing Native Vegetation' on the Native Vegetation Protection Map see Annex C).
- Development areas and essential infrastructure.

Annex A Biodiversity Certification Map for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (all of Aerotropolis Core and parts of Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek, south of Elizabeth **Drive) Precinct Plan** (including field validation results)



Annex B
Proposed Precinct Plan for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (Aerotropolis Core, Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek) Precinct



Annex C Proposed Protection Measures for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (Aerotropolis Core, Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek) Precinct Plan (including High **Biodiversity Value (ENV) and Zoning Maps)**

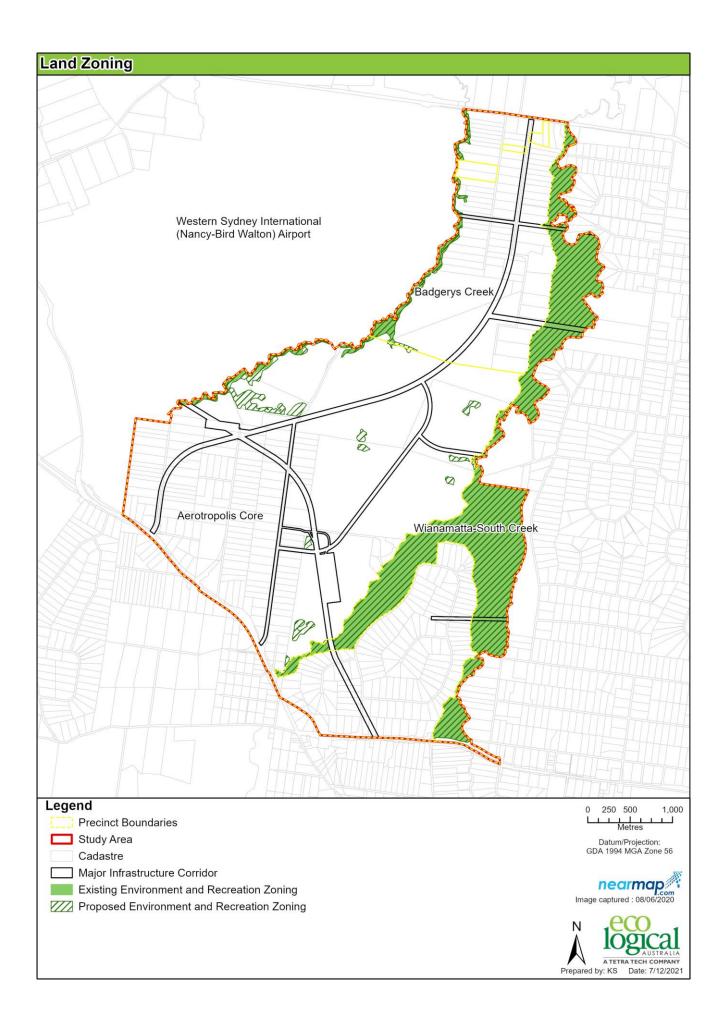
Calculations of ENV within the Western Sydney Aerotropolis (Aerotropolis Core, Badgerys Creek and Wianamatta-South Creek) Precinct Plan

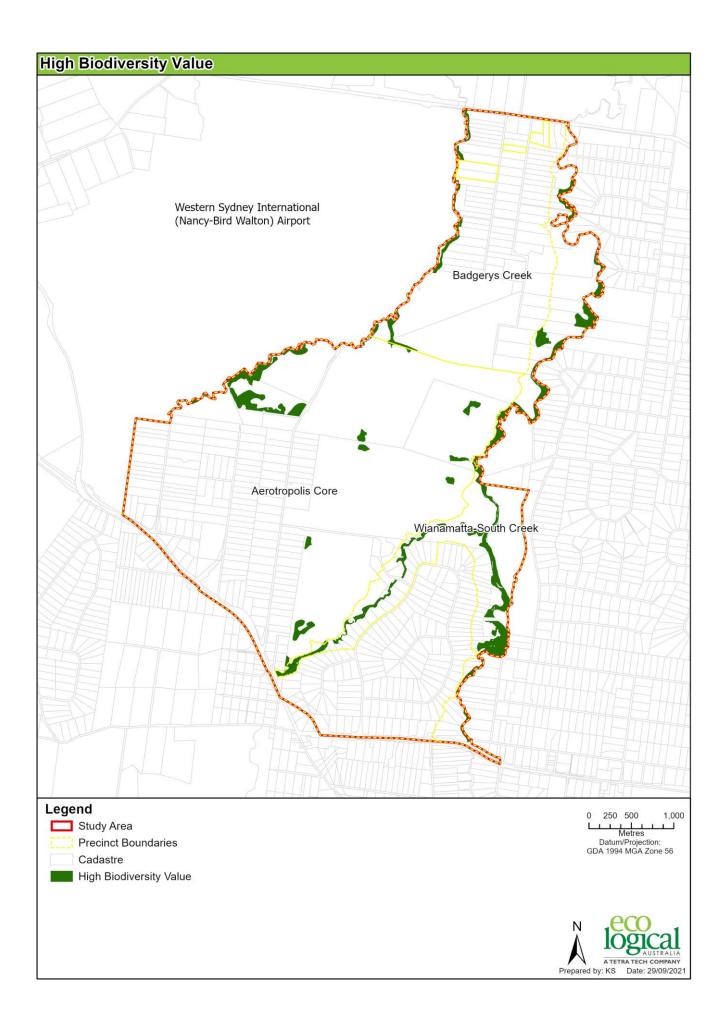
Results of field validation for ENV and AHCVV

Reference	ltem	Area (ha)
А	Area of mapped ENV in non-certified areas (as per Conservation Plan)	67.31
В	Area of validated ENV in non-certified areas	58.58 (shortfall of 8.73)
С	Area of validated ENV in certified areas	67.46
D	Total area of validated ENV in the Precinct	126.04
E	Total area of validated AHCVV in Precinct	84.39 validated through recent aerial imagery, of which 20.67 was validated via ground truthing.

Summary of impacts, offsets and areas of ENV to be protected

Reference	ltem	Area (ha)
А	Area of mapped ENV in non-certified areas (as per Conservation Plan)	67.31
В	Area of validated ENV in non-certified areas	58.58
С	Impacts: Validated non-certified ENV to be cleared (area to become certified)	2.10
D	Offsets: Validated certified ENV to be used as offset (area to become non-certified)	35.91
E	Total area of ENV to be protected in non-certified areas (E = B-C+D)	92.39
F	Area of additional high conservation value vegetation (AHCVV) to be protected	It is noted there is 10.91 of ground-truthed AHCVV within the Environment and Recreation Zoning and Open Space Network which could be protected, which may count to the overall target in the future. However, as this is not confirmed has not been included below.
Н	Total area of ENV/AHCVV to be protected (H = F+E)	92.39





Annex D					
Proposed Amendments to Biodiversity Certification Map					

Comparison of existing and proposed certified/non-certified land

The following table outlines the current and proposed certified and non-certified areas.

Land Type	Precinct Current Area (Ha)	Precinct proposed Area (Ha)
Certified Land	1,790.17	1,742.46
Non-Certified Land	306.46	354.18
Not Subject to State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006	11.69	11.69

