

## 7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

### 7.1 Scope of Work

The historical analysis of Thompson Square has shown it to be the genesis of the town of Windsor. It preserves a small part of a pre-1810 civic precinct and it was modeled to conform to a typical small town square or open space seen in several Macquarie period towns.

It was the site of many significant public buildings, private dwellings and a focus of community activity. It has a complex history of many layers over more than two centuries. It is also likely to have a complex archaeological profile not only derived from the several periods of use and redevelopment but environmental factors, particularly flooding, which have shaped and reshaped the landscape.

This section discusses the historical archaeological resource within the project area. The purpose of the analysis presented here is to define the following:

- To identify the scope of the potential archaeological resource
- Use physical evidence to modify or amend that predictive assessment
- Assess the significance of the resource
- Evaluate the impact of the proposed bridge construction on the resource and its significance
- Make recommendations for the future management of the archaeological resource

### 7.2 Methodology

The methodology used in this analysis is based on the procedures outlined in *“Archaeological Assessments and Assessing Significance for Archaeological Sites and Relics”*.<sup>531</sup> The following tasks have been carried out for this project:

- **Historical Research and Analysis**

This assessment is based on a detailed historical analysis of the project area that has used both primary and secondary sources. The analysis has been presented as a chronological narrative in Section 4 (Historical Development) of the report. This narrative forms the basis for defining the potential scope of an archaeological resource.

- **Potential Archaeological Resource**

The archival evidence has been used to identify specific sites for each historical phase as well as those for which a precise location cannot be determined but sufficient contemporary archival evidence exists to place it within or close to the project area.

- **Research Design**

One of the DGRs for the application with respect to archaeology required physical testing within the project area. This was intended as a means of more accurately evaluating the scope of the archaeological resource. To do so a research design was developed that defined the extent of the investigation and the issues that were to be investigated by the work. The research design is contained in Appendix 2 of the report.

<sup>531</sup> NSW Heritage Office and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (1996).

- **Test Excavation**

Within Thompson Square two test trenches were excavated, one within the Old Bridge Street alignment and the second in the small car park at the northern end of the square. On the northern side of the river, the excavation of six geotechnical test pits across the project area were archaeologically monitored and documented to provide a sample of the sub-profile. The evidence from the test pits excavated for Aboriginal archaeology was also used to inform the work. The report of this work is included as Appendix 3. A summary of the conclusions of the work are presented in this section.

- **Other Physical Evidence**

A range of other sources have been consulted that provide additional evidence for the sub-surface landscape of the project area specifically, geophysical testing and remote sensing surveys. Reference has also been made to archaeological investigations that have been made in previous years close to Thompson Square.

- **Cultural Significance**

An evaluation of the cultural significance of the potential archaeological resource within the project area has been made using the standard criteria developed by the NSW Heritage Council.

### 7.3 The Potential Archaeological Resource

The purpose of an assessment is to identify whether archaeological evidence is likely to be preserved within a specific area, and its scope and integrity. It is a predictive analysis that will be used in conjunction with an assessment of significance to inform future management strategies for that resource.

In the first instance identifying the scope of an historical archaeological profile relies in large part on the archival resources that relate to a particular place. These provide the framework in which specific sites can be identified or generic types of evidence can be predicted to occur within certain circumstances. With respect to Thompson Square, the scope of archival resources is variable, providing for some periods only a broad outline of development and in others quite detailed data. This analysis has relied on a wide range of sources including reports and correspondence generated from various administrations and agencies, newspaper accounts, images and plans amongst others.

This section presents the scope of possible archaeological evidence that could be contained within the project area; this is referred to as a “potential” archaeological resource. Following this analysis consideration is given to factors that may have acted to preserve or reduce that potential resource and evidence is taken from sources, including the test excavation, to modify or amend that predictive analysis. The following discussion uses the same chronological divisions as the historical analysis in Section 4 of this report as the basis for evaluation.

### 7.4 The Environment

Thompson Square is a much-modified landscape. Originally there was a steep and uneven descent to the river from a ridgeline in the area of George Street. On the northern side of the river was a similar, though less steep landform. Both river banks were subject to erosion and the land away from the river was periodically scoured and deposits of rich alluvial soil left as the river flooded for miles out from its usual course. The dense tree and shrub cover stabilised the banks but this vegetation was quickly and extensively removed after settlement in 1790 exacerbating problems of erosion.

Apart from erosion, European settlement caused other environmental changes. The landform, particularly in the area of present-day Thompson Square, was actively shaped to allow tracks to be made to a wharf. Early images of Thompson Square suggest that parts were cut and shaped to create level building platforms. On the northern side of the river the creation of farms required more land to be cleared and levelled for planting.

With respect to the creation of an archaeological profile this aspect of the development of the project area could be characterised by the following:

- Evidence of the pre-settlement landform in the underlying topography and remnant topsoil. On both the northern and southern sides of the river it is likely that this evidence would be of increasing depth the closer the position to the river due to the impact of flood deposition and European land management practices. Close to the river there could be evidence of a sandy beach or inlet that may have been instrumental in the choice of the southern side of the river for establishing a government precinct.
- Extant land surfaces could contain preserved pollen; this evidence can be used to specifically define the vegetation of the area prior to settlement. This source of information is the only authoritative means of establishing the scope of vegetation that existed prior to European settlement
- Evidence of environmental damage; this is likely to encompass erosion, evidence of flood damage and deposits of silt. Some of this environmental change is likely to be due to European land management but some, such as the deposition of silt from floods, is part of a natural cycle and will show the impacts of the environment on European occupation. It provides a balanced view to a discussion of the impact of settlement on environment.

## 7.5 Mulgrave Place: 1794

The first grants in the district were made in 1794; these were located to the north-west of the study area, outside the project area, and farms were also established on the northern side of the river in the project area; a grant was made here in 1794. There is no evidence of any development within the project area on the southern side of the river in this phase. With respect to the potential archaeological resource:

- There are no known sites associated with the project area on the southern side of the river in this period.
- There may be evidence of clearing on the northern side of the river associated with the first grant made to Edward Whitton in 1794. This is likely to take the form of fire clearing that would leave evidence of charcoal and ash in the ground surface and stumping and burning that would leave specific sites of carbonised tree roots. It is impossible to predict any specific site within the project area; this is a generic type of site that has been recognised from comparable situations
- Whitton is likely to have established some farm buildings and a house or hut in this first year but their position is unknown. Evidence of this type of development could encompass structural components of timber buildings such as post-holes or wall plates or foundations likely to be of field stone. Artefact scatters or assemblages are also possible in association with the buildings.

## 7.6 Green Hills: 1795-1800

In this phase the first farm was established in the area of Thompson Square, that of the storekeeper William Baker. Apart from his house Baker is known to have other out buildings and to have farmed some of his land. These developments would have been outside the project area. Baker managed the government store constructed within or close to present-day Thompson Square. As well as the store there was a building constructed for the military guard that protected it. It was in this period that the area that was to become Thompson Square was established via a reserve for government purposes. The open land became the site for several important government buildings including additional stores and the government house. Within the precinct was a privately owned leasehold on the eastern side that was occupied for a period and developed by Andrew Thompson, one of the most significant figures in the development of Windsor. This precinct was the genesis of Windsor as a town and, although modified, some of the open space from this initial precinct is preserved within the present-day square.

The river front that existed at this period at the base of Thompson Square has been substantially altered; evidence from contemporary images as well as records that describe piling along the banks in 1815 suggest that the original shore curved into the present-day northern end of the Thompson Square. The original landform is likely to be buried under considerable quantities of fill. This fill might also preserve elements of the original wharf. The analysis of archival evidence has concluded that the

site of this wharf was on or close to the site of the present bridge. Other features such as a boat slip might also be preserved under deep deposits of fill at the northern end of Thompson Square.

Archaeological evidence that could have developed from this phase is as follows:

- Evidence of the impact of first settlement through burning and stumping and fire-clearance; this could leave evidence of carbonised stumps and charcoal.
- Evidence of the first tracks and paths particularly to the river's edge and along the ridgeline. The first track to the river is likely to have run from the south-east side of Thompson's Square, through the centre and then curved down to the river. Fragments or sections could be preserved at depth within the present Thompson Square. The track along the ridge-line could be preserved in part or whole under the present alignment of George Street at the southern end of the square.
- There is unlikely to be remnant evidence of the first timber store built in 1795; it was close to the river and swept away a few years after construction. That event and the subsequent impacts from floods and land-forming are likely to have removed what may have remained from this building. It is likely to have been located within twenty metres of the river and more likely to be towards the western end of Thompson Square
- There is unlikely to be evidence of the first guard-house built in 1795. It was probably associated with the store and, if so, could have been swept away with that building in the flood. An alternative location is within the back of the allotments on the western side of Thompson Square; if so it is outside the project area. The precise location of this building is unknown so consideration must be given to evidence of it surviving; this would encompass structural evidence such as post-holes for timber framing, wall plates, possible stone foundations for hearths and the like. The only means of associating evidence of this type with the building would be by a stratigraphic horizon commensurate with this first period of development, an artefact assemblage that could be dated to the phase or specific artefacts that might identify a particular use or function for the building (regimental buttons, military hardware etc)
- There may be evidence of the first wharf built in 1795 preserved in deep deposits of fill at the northern end of Thompson Square and within the river. This site is probably located within the area of the present bridge; construction for that structure would have disturbed any fragmentary evidence. Remnant evidence is most likely to encompass hardwood piles or post-holes for those piles.
- Early nineteenth century images suggest that there may have been a boat-slip or dry dock on the eastern side of the wharf extending from the river for some considerable distance up the slope in the general area of Old Bridge Street or on the eastern side of the reserve. It appears to have been log or plank lined; similar examples from the earliest years of the nineteenth century have been found in Sydney. It survived into the early years of the nineteenth century. The northern end would have been destroyed or substantially disturbed by floods and later earth-works but intact evidence could survive at depth under deposits of fill within Old Bridge Street or under the reserve on the eastern side. The evidence could encompass remnant timbers and earth-works designed to accommodate the slope.
- The site of the first barracks was built in 1795 and the site has been identified as within the area of the Macquarie Arms Hotel and buildings on the western side of the square; it is outside the project area
- Between 1795 and 1800 two very large log granaries were built within the precinct. One survived into the early years of the nineteenth century. It is almost certain to have been located on the eastern side of Thompson Square across the line of Old Bridge Street. It was removed in c. 1812. Evidence of this building could survive at depth and is likely to encompass post holes associated with the timber-frame, an earth floor and possible additions to the soil profile indicative of the produce stored in it. This evidence like all from the earliest phases of development within Thompson Square is likely to be under deposits of later fill used to land-form the slope
- Two "government houses" were built in approximately 1796 but their location is unknown; the most likely area is on the western or southern side of Thompson Square where groups of buildings are shown in the earliest nineteenth century images but specific sites are

impossible to determine. Evidence remaining from these buildings would be determined by their construction; it is presumed either timber or stone footings would have been used that could leave intact structural elements or post-holes. Artefact assemblages are possible depending on the nature of the use; the term used to describe them suggests that they were domestic accommodation for members of the military or bureaucracy.

- Equally impossible to locate and, therefore, assess are the sites of several storehouses and granaries, officers' dwellings, public brick buildings and a lock-up that were built in the period between 1786 and 1800. Two might have been located close to the river in the area off The Terrace, below the houses on the western side of Thompson Square and outside the project area. The insufficient documentation means that, like all the other buildings for which no specific site can be identified the southern and western boundaries are more likely but all of Thompson Square must be considered as a possible site
- A house erected for the commanding officer at the settlement was built on the eastern side of the precinct; it became known as Government House. The site of the building and its out buildings and improvements have been identified outside the project area and close to the hypothetical line from Arndell Street to the river. The land surrounding Government House ran down to the river; later evidence suggests that this was an eroded landscape but evidence of paths or tracks might be found in the project area close to the river on the southern bank.
- Andrew Thompson is likely to have first lived in a small wooden building on the western side of his lease adjoining the present Thompson Square. It might also have been a watch house. The house was probably erected in the later 1790s and was still present up to 1813. The date of its demolition is unknown; it is likely to be located within privately held land on the eastern side of Thompson Square close to Old Bridge Street. The site is likely to be outside the project area. The large garden that adjoined the house within the Government Domain that ran parallel to the present Thompson Square and down to the river's edge is also likely to be outside the project area;
- On the northern side of the river, Whitton's activities might be evidenced by signs of ploughing and planting; this is largely identified by changes in the soil profile, planting patterns and plough marks. Evidence of farm-buildings, a house and out-buildings and fencing would be as already discussed; it is impossible to determine a precise location.





**Legend**

- Estimate of 1794 shoreline
- Construction Work Zone
- Potential and known maritime sites

**Archaeological Sensitivity**

- High
- Moderate
- Nil-Low

**Figure 5: Plan of the historic foreshore showing archaeological sensitivity of the Project Area**  
 Numbers relate to units presented in table 1 and the data sheets

0 20 40 60 80 100  
 Metres  
 Scale: 1:2,000 @ A3  
 Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56

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Date: 13 September 2012, File number: 14020  
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Plate 101: The village of Green Hills in 1809. Visible in this watercolour is a tall building that may have functioned as a granary and boat shed (dark structure in the centre left of the photograph); a number of government buildings close to the George Street Ridge on the left, Government House to the far left and a number of unidentified buildings in the centre of the painting. William Baker's Farm is the white house to the right. Source: (possibly) George William Evans' "The settlement on the Green Hills, Hawksbury [Hawkesbury] River N.S. Wales 1809".<sup>532</sup>

## 7.7 Consolidation of the Precinct: 1800 – 1810

In the first ten years of the nineteenth century substantial and important new buildings were added to the government precinct. They included brick stores, a school and a large warehouse or store that Andrew Thompson constructed on his lease on the eastern side of the precinct. These created a greater sense of definition for the place.

Archival evidence that indicates that a wharf or jetty was constructed for the Government House on the river bank below the sloping ground to the north of the building exists in the form of Slaeger's 1813 lithograph, which was probably created in 1812.<sup>533</sup> The exact date of its construction is unknown; it was in existence in 1813. The site is to the west of the project area.

Archaeological evidence that could have developed from this phase encompasses the following:

- A three-storey storehouse was built in 1803 on the ridgeline on a site that is now at the corner of Bridge Street and George Street; it is outside the project area on the southern side of George Street, probably beneath the former School of Arts building
- A weatherboard guardhouse was to be built in association with the new store; its precise location is unknown but it is unlikely to be within the project area because of the relationship with the store
- A two-storey building used as both a school and chapel was built between 1803 and 1806 on the eastern side of the new store. The site is outside the project area
- A log prison was intended to be built to replace an older building; the location of either is unknown but is more likely to be on the southern or western boundaries of the precinct. Archaeological evidence of a building of this type is likely to only encompass post holes or wall

<sup>532</sup> ML PXD 388, vol. 3, f.7.

<sup>533</sup> Pers. Comm Ian Jack.

plates and evidence of the framing and base. Making a certain identification of its former use might only be possible from a full floor plan and then it is unlikely that it would be so distinctive to allow that attribution.

- Government stables were built within Thompson's allotment on the eastern side of the open land bordering the river. The brick-stables survived until the 1850s. The site is within privately owned land and is outside the project area. It is unlikely that there are features within the project area associated with the building with the possible exceptions of drains and fences around the structures
- Thompson's store, workshop and stables were all built on the eastern side of the precinct within the leasehold at the southern end of the present Thompson Square. The sites of these buildings are within private property and are outside the project area; drains, fences and yard surfaces could exist within the project area.
- The government reserve occupied a large area of land on the eastern side of the present Thompson Square; it is not within the project area with the exception of a small portion of land at the northern end close to the river. Contemporary images show a substantial track running from Government House to the river and evidence of this path could be found in the project area; it is likely to be identified as a packed or hard paved surface
- Archival evidence (Slaeger's 1813 lithograph) suggests that there may have been a dedicated wharf for Government House on the river bank below the building; some evidence of this structure might be found at the interface between the river and land but flooding and erosion limit the possibility. This is to the west of the project area
- Archival evidence (Slaeger's 1813 lithograph) suggests that paths, or a path, from the ridge followed the eastern side of the open space down to the river; evidence of this path could be found within the project area.
- On the northern side of the river there is no evidence for additional improvements to Whitton's farm but the scope and extent of the improvements from any phase is still unknown.

## 7.8 A Macquarie Town: 1810-1820s

Thompson Square began to assume a form that more closely resembles its present configuration during the Macquarie era. Several of its landmarks, especially the Macquarie Arms Hotel, were built at this time though some earlier works and improvements were removed in c. 1812. A lithograph by Philip Slaeger (Plate 102) soon after the site was cleared but before the levelling and filling was undertaken for the wharf, evidences the impact of this work. *Figure 6* shows the 1812 survey overlaid onto a current aerial.

Contributing to the development of a deep and complex archaeological profile was the extensive land-forming carried out in association with the new wharf. Archival sources provide evidence of extensive piling and filling carried out at the northern end of Thompson Square for this work. Comparison of several images and the present landform suggests that the work entailed the reclamation and infilling of the small beach to create a straight line of waterfront along which the new wharf was built from the eastern side of the existing wharf. That older wharf would have been partly filled by the reclamation.





Plate 102: Lithograph, Phillip Slaegeer 1813 showing Thompson Square after much of the older works had been cleared from it (in "A View of the Town of Windsor in New South Wales").<sup>534</sup>

Archaeological evidence that could derive from this phase encompasses the following:

- A new wharf was constructed in 1815 to extend the existing wharf; if the old wharf was close to the site of the present bridge it suggests that the new wharf was most likely running along the bank to the east (the ferry was on the upstream side). The new wharf was swept away by a flood before it was completed; another wharf was built either on the old site or adjoining it, to a design by Francis Greenway. The site of this wharf is recorded on surveys and maritime archaeological investigation indicates that evidence of this wharf still survives in the water and at the shoreline.
- The shoreline was piled and the land filled as part of the wharf construction; evidence of this piling is likely to be found at the northern end of Thompson Square as well as the filling material used for it and to reclaim the beach.
- The new wharf was three feet higher than the old wharf and the land adjacent to it had to be raised to accommodate this difference. In addition, the slope behind the wharf was reduced to provide easier and safer access. This work is likely to have created an impact on the profile by cutting into parts of the existing landform; this could have impacted on remnant evidence from earlier works. In places deep deposits of fill must have been laid down to raise and level the landform. These would be visible in the profile; dating them to this phase of work would require a well-dated chronological sequence to be established above and below the deposits and/or a well-dated artefact assemblage to be incorporated within the fill.
- A new ferry and landing place was established on the water front; the river bank was cut back on the western side of the 1815 wharf to form a level landing place and a ferry was run from here across to the northern side of the river. Contemporary images show that a cutting or wide road was made on the northern bank to accommodate the ferry; subsequent erosion and land slips make it unlikely that evidence of this cutting will survive but some evidence could be found in the project area close to the river. It could encompass paved or worn surfaces.
- It is likely that a new road or path was constructed to the wharf and ferry after the works in Thompson Square were complete; later evidence suggests that close to the river, the road followed much the same alignment as the original path but the entrance to Thompson Square

<sup>534</sup> ML DL F81/21 p.19.

moved from the eastern side to the western side as a large area was opened in front of the Macquarie Arms Hotel. Evidence of this new path or road is likely to be preserved here; this is outside the project area. The same evidence suggests that the existing track along the ridgeline was widened to provide better access to the Government Domain and evidence of possible resurfacings could be preserved at depth in George Street; the southern extent of the project area encompasses part of this street

- A major improvement to Thompson Square was the introduction of good drainage. A large brick barrel drain was constructed from north to south through the area. The contract provided for either a central drain with side drains or two drains on either side of Thompson Square. The drain has been seen within the last thirty years and it seems more likely that a central drain was constructed; this would mean that apart from the principal drain there is the potential for smaller drains to be found within Thompson Square running to individual properties. There is no archival evidence available to determine the location of any secondary drains. The entire project area on the southern side of the river must be considered archaeologically sensitive in this case
- As part of the Macquarie-era improvements major changes were made to the Government Domain; this had been enlarged by the inclusion of the Thompson leasehold. New paths, planting and possibly drains and/or a ha-ha (a ditch that acted as both a barrier to a property and a landscape feature) were made in the land surrounding Government House. These works are largely outside the project area except for a small portion at the northern end of the reserve close to the river. Evidence of paths or drains might be found here that could be identified by their position in a defined chronological sequence, artefact association or building materials and technology. Evidence of plantings could also be found particularly planting holes
- The Macquarie-era was important for Thompson Square for the development of town allotments along the western side of the precinct; these provided a clear visual edge and definition. The Macquarie Arms Hotel was built in this period and as well as several inns and houses; all of these allotments are important archaeological sites and have been shown by archaeological investigations to preserve substantial and important information. These allotments are not in the project area.
- The development of the farm on the northern side of the river is still poorly documented; several images (Plate 103) include details of cottages or farm buildings and one is likely to be adjacent to, but not within, the project area on the Freemans Reach Road. In this period, half the original grant was sold leaving only fifteen acres; this is the land partly encompassed within the project area



*Plate 103: This image shows the ferry crossing to the northern bank and the cutting with a small house next to it, probably part of Whitton's farm: Captain Wallis (1821), Hawkesbury and the Blue Mountains in Views in New South Wales and Historical Account of the Colony of New South Wales*<sup>535</sup>

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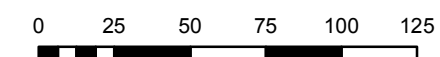
<sup>535</sup> ML PX\*D.





**Figure 6:Overlay of Meehan's 1812 plan on current aerial imagery.**

Note: The historic plan has been georeferenced to match modern cadastral boundaries where possible, however it should be noted that inaccuracies remain and the overlay represents a 'best fit' only.



Metres

Scale: 1:2,500 @ A3

Scale: 1:2,500 @ A3  
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56



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Date: 13 September 2012, File number: 14020  
Checked by: PBK, Drawn by: JMS  
Location: P:\14000s\14020\mapping\14020 SoH1 F6 Meehan 1812.mxd

Acknowledgements: Aerial - (c) SKM 2011



## 7.9 Regional Centre 1820S – 1840s

By the later 1820s Windsor served as a regional centre with over twenty public buildings and substantial numbers of privately owned premises in the course of development. Many of the buildings erected there for government purposes, such as the storehouses, were no longer required and were either demolished or abandoned. In this period Thompson Square was characterised by privately owned properties including several inns on the western side and the Government Domain on the eastern side. The square between these buildings provided access to the properties on either side as well as to the busy wharf and punt at the northern end.

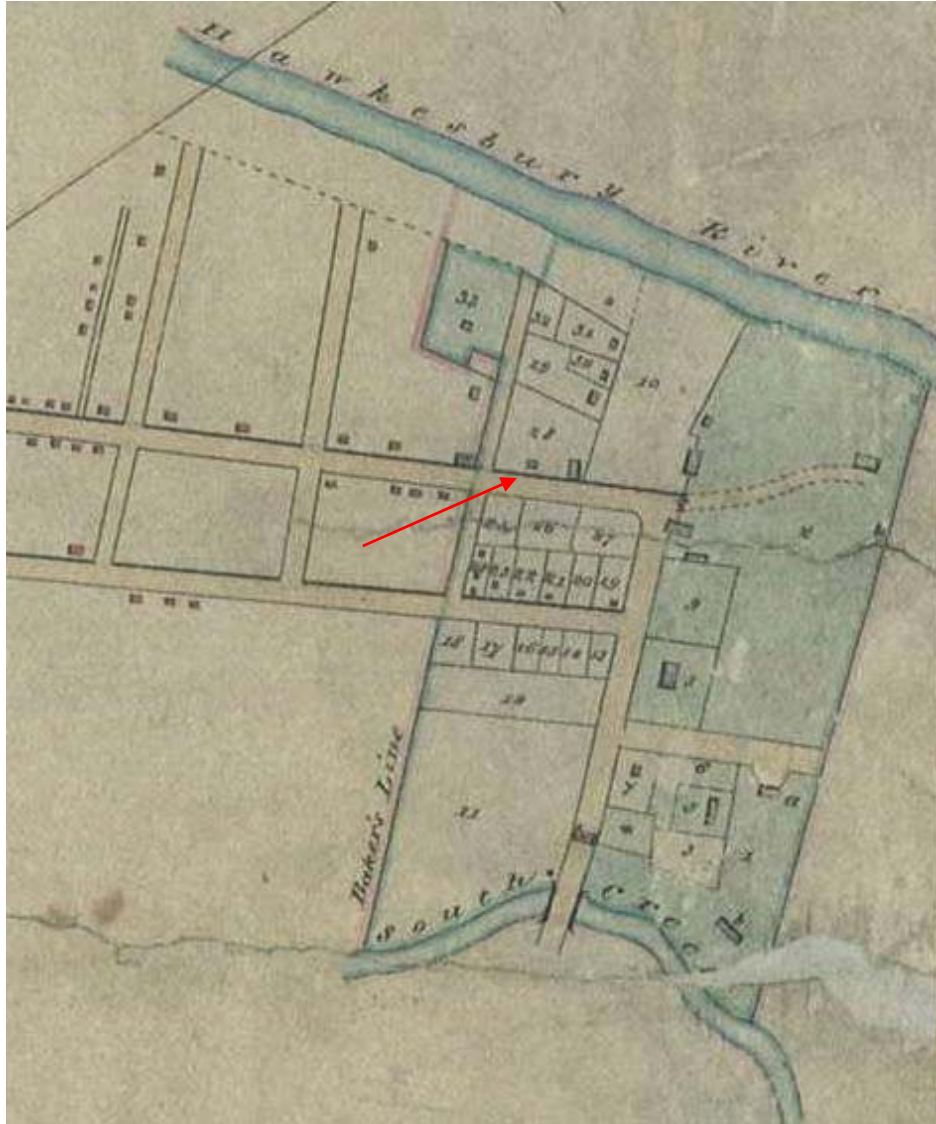


Plate 104: Part of the Map of the Town of Windsor of 1827 showing the clearly defined open space with most of the earlier buildings gone except Government House and the Macquarie Arms (indicated by a red arrow). It also shows the Government land on the eastern side of the Thompson Square (coloured green) and the subdivision for private development on the western side.<sup>536</sup>

<sup>536</sup> AO Map SZ 526.

Archaeological evidence that could derive from this phase is as follows:

- At the southern end of Thompson's former leasehold the old government stables were joined by two large buildings, one was a barracks for police and the second was for prisoners. These were in a ruinous state by the later 1840s and were demolished in the 1850s. The sites of these buildings are within privately owned land on the eastern side of Thompson Square and outside the project area. The potential for drains and fencing that surrounded or were attached to them exists on this side of Thompson Square.

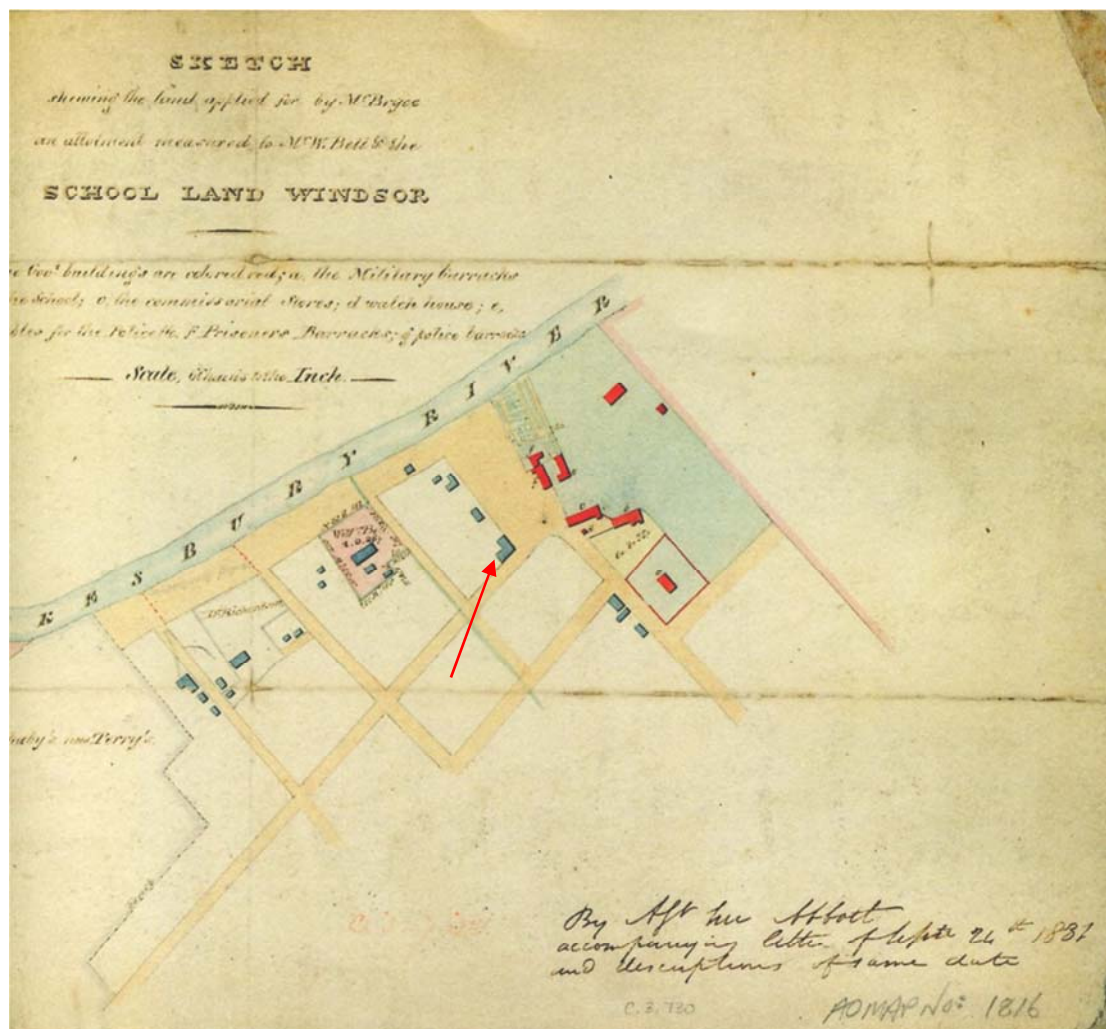


Plate 105: Thompson Square in 1831 by Surveyor Abbott showing the barracks buildings on the Government reserve on the eastern side of the square in red. The Macquarie Arms Hotel is indicated by a red arrow.<sup>537</sup>

- The 1831 plan (Plate 105) shows the buildings to be adjacent to a large garden laid out in plots. This had been part of Andrew Thompson's garden but this appears to be a new planting pattern. This land is largely outside the project area except for a small portion at the northern end close to the river. The potential exists for evidence of planting, paths and other improvements.
- The western side of Thompson Square was privately developed with houses, inns and out-buildings. Several of the original buildings remain but other allotments have been redeveloped. All of these properties have potential to encompass evidence of original buildings, out-buildings, other improvements, landscape works and artefact assemblages. None are within the project area
- Armstrong's survey of 1842 (Plate 106) indicates that some of the original track to the riverside was probably retained, although likely to have been repaved or resurfaced. By 1842 a new

<sup>537</sup> SRO AO Map 1816.



approach to Thompson Square had been made from the south-western corner with a widened area around George Street that extended in front of the Macquarie Arms Hotel. This is likely to have left evidence in the archaeological profile as a repaving or resurfacing of the existing surface in George Street and a new stratum in front of the Macquarie Arms Hotel. Evidence of some of this work, resurfacing and widening of George Street and of the existing road to the river may be found within the project area



Plate 106: Detail of Armstrong's plan of the town in 1842 showing the stables on the eastern side of the Square and the inns and private properties on the western side and the improved path through the Thompson Square<sup>538</sup>

<sup>538</sup> Armstrong, J. & White (1842) for Laban. & Baker (Firm), Allotments comprising the Peninsular farm adjoining the town of Windsor. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.map-f187>.

- In 1832 the ferry service that was commenced in 1814 was taken over by the Government and a punt on a cable was introduced to provide access between the two banks of the river. This punt operated on the western side of the present bridge. A separate report has been prepared for maritime archaeological relics that discusses the potential for this feature including cuttings and landings on both sides of the river (Cosmos Archaeology 2012).
- On the riverbank in the area of The Terrace and below the houses on the western side of Thompson Square there was a small brick building that might originally have been erected as a watch house but was certainly in use as a house occupied by the punt operator from the c. 1830s or 1840s (Plate 107). It survived to 1904. Evidence of this building could remain within the project area as foundations
- On the northern side of the river Whitton's farm appears to have been converted for use as a public house. This inn was certainly in trade by 1839. The inn may have been the farm house or an out-building converted for new use. There is no evidence to determine the location of this inn although it appears to have survived into the later years of the nineteenth century; an inn was located at the intersection of Freemans Reach and Wilberforce Roads. If this is the case, the main building is unlikely to be within the project area but road surfaces, fencing and artefact assemblages associated with it may be.



Plate 107: Detail of a survey c. 1835 showing the punt and the wharf on the river's edge at the northern end of Thompson Square and a wide cutting on the northern side of the river for the punt landing. The punt house is indicated by the arrow.<sup>539</sup>

<sup>539</sup> AO Map 5968.





**Figure 7: Overlay of an 1827 survey plan on current aerial imagery. The plan provides an indication of the location of now demolished buildings around Thompson Square**

Note: The historic plan has been georeferenced to match modern cadastral boundaries where possible, however it should be noted that inaccuracies remain and the overlay represents a 'best fit' only.

0 25 50 75 100 125

Metres

Scale: 1:2,500 @ A3

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56



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Date: 13 September 2012, File number: 14020  
Checked by: PBK, Drawn by: JMS  
Location: P:\14000s\14020\Mapping\14020\_SoH\F7\_Windsor\_1827.mxd







**Figure 8: Overlay of Abbott's 1831 survey on current aerial imagery. This survey shows government buildings in red and privately owned buildings in blue**

Note: The historic plan has been georeferenced to match modern cadastral boundaries where possible, however it should be noted that inaccuracies remain and the overlay represents a 'best fit' only.





**Figure 9: Detail of the 1835 survey of Windsor**

Note: The historic plan has been georeferenced to match modern cadastral boundaries where possible, however it should be noted that inaccuracies remain and the overlay represents a 'best fit' only.

0 25 50 75 100 125

Metres

Scale: 1:2,500 @ A3

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56



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Location: P:\14000s\14020\Mapping\14020\_SoH\F9\_1835\_survey.mxd







**Figure 10: Overlay of Armstrong's 1842 survey on current aerial imagery. The government precinct is on the right, the punt road is shown, as are roads through Thompson Square**

Note: The historic plan has been georeferenced to match modern cadastral boundaries where possible, however it should be noted that inaccuracies remain and the overlay represents a 'best fit' only.

0 25 50 75 100 125

Metres  
Scale: 1:2,500 @ A3  
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56



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## 7.10 A Fringe Area 1850s - 1900

The position of the wharf and the punt at the bottom of Thompson Square meant that the square was a hive of activity with goods and people constantly moving through these two critical transport nodes. From the 1880s though, the river began to silt up making navigation more difficult and rail transport began to dominate. Despite this change in the strategic role of Thompson Square it remained the only means to cross from the southern to northern banks of the river via the punt, but the development of new facilities in the town meant that the square no longer had the civic role that it had played in the past; this is reflected in changing occupation and alterations made to the building stock.

The archaeological evidence that could derive from this phase is as follows:

- On the eastern side of Thompson Square the buildings and barracks were demolished in the 1850s and some of the land at the northern end lay vacant for several years; 4 Bridge Street was not developed until well into the twentieth century. The archaeological profile is likely to encompass evidence of this period of demolition and vacancy but it is outside the project area.
- The houses that occupy the allotments on the eastern side of Thompson Square, in addition to 4 Bridge Street, were constructed in the 1850s and 1860s and are likely to encompass archaeological evidence of out-buildings and earlier works and improvements; these are potential archaeological sites but they are outside the project area.
- The School of Arts site is likely to encompass archaeological evidence of one of the early nineteenth century stores as well as evidence relevant to the development and use of the site for the School of Arts.
- The commercial buildings on the southern side of George Street that face Thompson Square were in part developed in this period and also encompass land that had earlier uses including stock yards and possible eighteenth century structures. These are all potential archaeological sites but outside the project area.
- An addition appears to have been made to Bridge Street to extend it across George Street to meet the existing road to the punt and wharf in 1855. This road ran from George Street along the front of the properties on the eastern side of Thompson Square to approximately three-quarters of the distance along its present length; evidence of this road is likely to be found as a paved surface within the present road and is within the project area.
- There is no evidence of any formal surfacing or improvements to the open space of Thompson Square from the 1840s to the 1870s; a survey plan of the early 1870s records it covered with round hard stones mixed with loam and higher up the hill this was covered with black soil (Plate 47). It could be expected that the archaeological profile would retain evidence of wear and use and possible discarded artefacts that could help to date this surface.
- Evidence of drains that post-date the barrel drain of 1815 might be found in the project area; there is reference to one sewer emerging near the punt house. This would be in the project area. There is also the potential for services such as water and gas and electricity to be found within the project area dating from the later years of the nineteenth century onwards.
- The construction of the new bridge in 1874 is likely to have impacted on earlier features in its close vicinity. The northern end of Bridge Street is likely to encompass evidence of the original surface laid down in 1874 when an extension was made to access the wharf.
- This same surface is likely to be found under the road along the western side of Thompson Square and the section through the middle; all were laid at the same time but the middle section and the portion of the road in front of the Macquarie Arms Hotel are likely to seal in older surfaces. The northern section of the road down to the present bridge may encompass some evidence of the original surface laid in 1874 but it was impacted in the 1930s and this may have removed that earlier surface
- The road works created two separate reserves in the middle of Thompson Square. There is little evidence to determine how they were first improved; evidence of fencing is possible at the perimeters but it is unclear if they were levelled or soil added to them. The archaeological record could address this absence of information; this is within the project area.

- The reserves have been used for a number of structures including a pavilion (upper reserve) and possibly a separate summerhouse (refer to Section 4 "Historical Development - Windsor"). These structures were removed in the early years of the twentieth century but evidence of them is likely to remain as structural elements, post-holes and surfaces.
- Raising the bridge in 1897 is likely to have had an impact on the archaeological profile in the area of the approaches; both approaches on the northern and southern sides of the bridge were raised, the slopes immediately adjacent to the bridge were lessened with large quantities of rubble and they were narrowed. This work will be evident in the archaeological profile by the addition of deep quantities of fill.



Plate 108: Detail of a survey plan of the proposed bridge location c. 1870. The hand written text on the riverbank identifies the locations of "round hard stones mixed with loam, covered with black soil" in the bend of the road, "Round hard stones mixed with loam" close to the river and it identifies the wharf (shaded area above the curve in the road as "New Government Wharf"). North is up and pivoted slightly to the right.<sup>540</sup>

- The construction of a temporary bridge used while the bridge was being raised in 1897 may have impacted on features at and in the river.
- In 1885 works were commenced to alter the slope of the roads by cutting them down in some places up to 3.5 feet and one to two feet in others. This process will be evident in the archaeological record as cuts made into the older profile and new surfacing. There is also evidence of several repairs made to the roads and this should be evident in the archaeological profile as resurfacing.
- It is likely that the hotel on the northern side of the river continued in use up to the 1880s. There is no evidence for its location or improvements; it is likely to be outside the project area but it is impossible to rule out the potential for evidence to be found here.
- In this period Thompson Square and the northern banks were inundated on several occasions including the highest flood ever recorded; this was a pattern that had occurred prior to the second half of the twentieth century and has been repeated since. These flood events have acted on the archaeological profile in two ways. Erosion and loss of land along the river's edge

<sup>540</sup> RMS 0182 091 BC 0104.

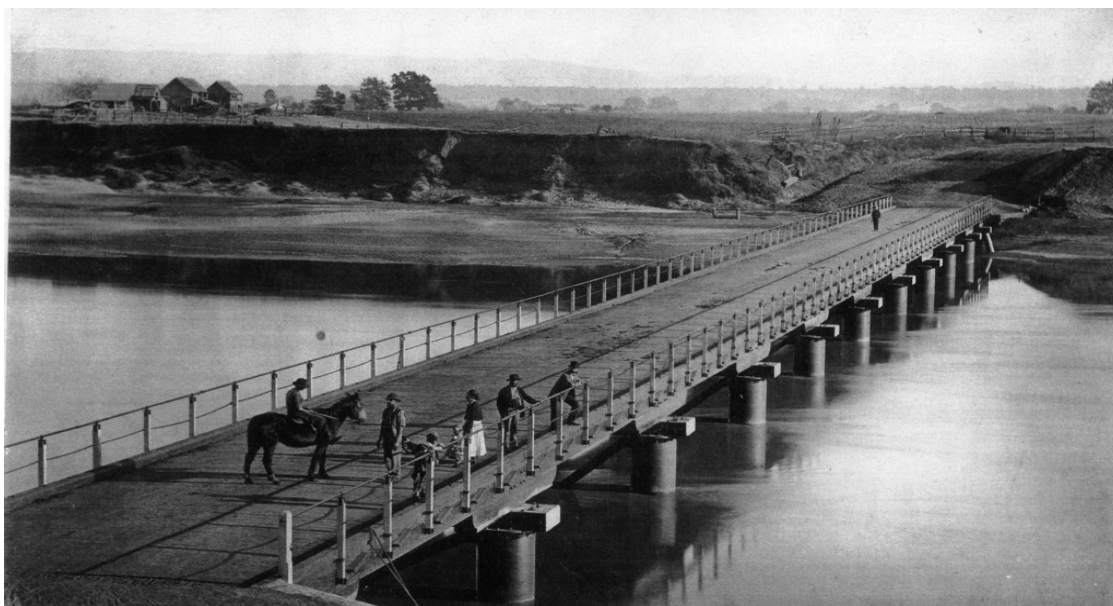
is likely to have damaged or removed evidence of features close to the banks including wharves, jetties, paths, planting etc. Secondly, silt is likely to have been deposited in considerable quantities particularly close to the river and this may have introduced large quantities of soil that would seal in deposits and features below it.



*Plate 109: Undated panorama showing Thompson Square in the later part of the nineteenth century; it shows the residential character that had been established during the second half of the nineteenth century, the open reserves and the cuttings that had been made for the road but the upper part of Bridge Street had not yet been united with the lower part. The bridge is also at original level which puts the photograph in a timeframe of between 1874 and 1897.<sup>541</sup>*

<sup>541</sup> ML Small Picture File Windsor NSW Bridges.





*Plate 110: View across the original low level bridge to the northern side of the river showing the cutting made there for it and also illustrating the scattered occupation and open fields and pastures that characterised this side of the river.<sup>542</sup>*

## 7.11 Windsor: 1900 – the Present

By the beginning of the twentieth century Windsor had developed into a quiet rural town with little change except in the evolving economy; small farms and orchards and market gardens characterised the northern bank of the river. In Thompson Square change was more concerned with the removal of existing elements rather than additions; the punt house was demolished in 1904 and the pavilion and summerhouse were removed from the reserve.

Archaeological evidence from this phase could encompass the following:

- A major program of road works was made on the western side of Thompson Square in 1934 (Plate 111); a deep cutting was made at the southern approach to the bridge and retaining walls were built to enclose it. The excavation is likely to have impacted on earlier surfaces from the roads and possible services.
- The construction of a boat shed on the lower reserve in the 1950s – 1960s may have impacted on part of the 1815 barrel drain; the building has since been removed from the site.
- The Squatters Arms inn on the northern side of the bridge was in ruins by the 1890s and any evidence of it appears to have been removed by 1916. The site may have been redeveloped or disturbed by market gardens. Lack of a precise location for this site makes an accurate assessment of its potential resource impossible.
- The land on the northern side of the river is likely to have been devoted to market gardens from the early years of the twentieth century, a use maintained until the 1990s. This activity is likely to have disturbed evidence of earlier works and is unlikely to have made a substantial contribution to the archaeological profile.
- Turf farming on the northern side of the river is also unlikely to have contributed much to the archaeological profile other than through deeper depths of soil added to the site to support the grass.

<sup>542</sup> ML Small Picture File Windsor NSW Bridges.

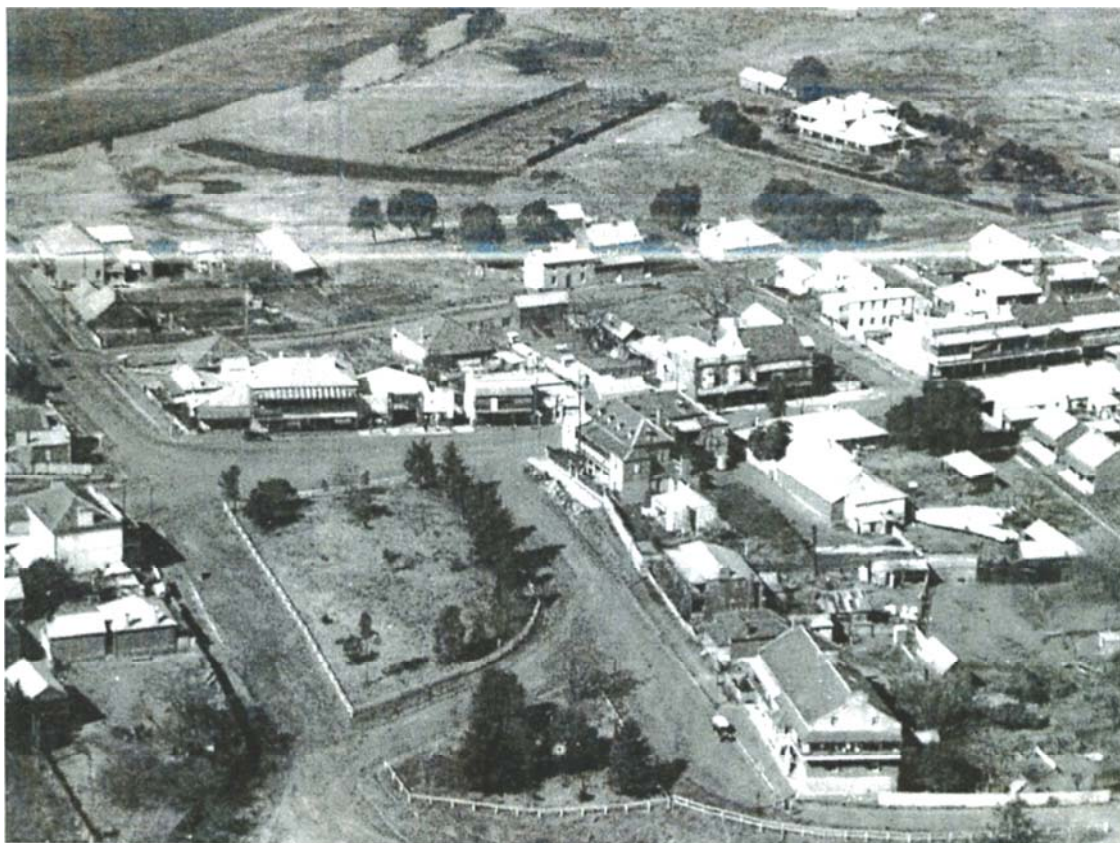


Plate 111: Thompson Square in 1929 before the final changes were made to the roads<sup>543</sup>

## 7.12 Summary of Archaeological Potential; Southern Side of the River

On the southern bank there may be evidence of the following:

- The pre-settlement environment
- Environmental damage and change from first European settlement onwards
- Clearing and the first buildings (store, guardhouse and wharf) from 1794-1795
- The first wharf of 1795 and a boat slip
- Tracks and paths, barracks, granaries, government buildings including domestic residences, a lock-up and Thompson's first house and garden that date between 1795-1800
- More government buildings including a prison and a possible government wharf and tracks and paths dated between 1800-1810; more sites of substantial buildings and works are recognised to lie close to but outside the project area
- A wharf, roads, cuttings, a large brick barrel drain and possible secondary drains and large quantities of levelling fill in Thompson Square from the period 1810-c.1820; the potential for significant archaeological evidence in building allotments on the eastern, western and southern sides of the square outside the project area is also recognised
- New road surfaces, punt landings, a watch house/punt house on the terrace from the period of c. 1820-1840; evidence of new government buildings on the eastern side of Thompson Square is also recognised but this is outside the project area
- An extension to Bridge Street on the eastern side of Thompson Square in its southern half from 1855 and in its northern half in 1879, of other road surfaces on the western side of Thompson Square and resurfacing of roads in the centre of the square, evidence of drains and other

<sup>543</sup> JHHS 2011 No 2: 21.



services, evidence of filling in the approach to the raised bridge level of 1897, cutting down of some levels in Thompson Square and its roads from the later years of the nineteenth century; evidence of a summerhouse and pavilion in the reserves and fences along the roads and reserves

- Cutting along the western side of Thompson Square for the construction of a new approach to the bridge in 1934
- There is the potential for artefact assemblages from all periods and services from the later part of the nineteenth century onwards.

Many of the sites recognised by the assessment cannot be specifically identified with a particular place within Thompson Square, meaning that the entire precinct must be treated as one of archaeological sensitivity.

## 7.13 Summary of Archaeological Potential; Northern Side of the River

With respect to the northern riverbank within the project area, the following sites have been recognised:

- Evidence of the pre-settlement environment
- Evidence of the impact of first settlement on that environment and evidence of the nature of that settlement with respect to clearance and agricultural development
- The potential for farm buildings, house and fencing from the first grant of 1794; no specific sites can be determined for this period of occupation
- Evidence of an inn that was in operation from at least 1839 and may have been continuously occupied to the 1880s. The site could encompass structural evidence, fences, drains and other landscape improvements as well as artefact assemblages. No specific site has been identified but anecdotal evidence suggests that it might be close to the intersection of Freemans Reach Road and Wilberforce Road.
- Evidence of market gardening and turf farming from the twentieth century

It is also recognised that the ability of these two areas to preserve this evidence is likely to have been impacted by flooding and erosion and the major earthworks associated with constructing the bridge and its approaches. However, these events in themselves contribute valuable knowledge about the development of this area.

## 7.14 Amending the Predictive Profile: Other Evidence

### 7.14.1 Introduction

The preceding assessment encompasses a large number of possible deposits, features and relics that could have evolved over more than two centuries of use and development. Not all are within the project area but the area that would be impacted by the construction of the bridge still has the potential to encompass a very complex archaeological profile. The purpose of this section is to examine evidence from several sources that could help to more accurately define that profile.

### 7.14.2 Prior Archaeological Investigation: Terrestrial Archaeology

Previous to the work carried out for the purposes of the project there have been a limited number of archaeological investigations close to Thompson Square and all have revealed evidence of an intact archaeological profile.

*Edward Higginbotham (1986): Report of the Historical and Archaeological Investigation of the Hawkesbury Museum 7 Thompson Square Windsor (for Hawkesbury City Council)*

In 1986 a survey was made of Thompson Square for archaeological purposes and at that time elements of a wharf were observed (probably from the 1815 wharf) and the remains of the brick barrel drain also constructed in 1815 were exposed and traced under Thompson Square, under the boat

club building and in the road cutting. This indicates that the 1815 drain was built in the centre of Thompson Square.<sup>544</sup>

*Edward Higginbotham (1993): Report on the Archaeological Excavation of the Site of the Extension to the Hawkesbury Museum 7 Thompson Square Windsor (for Hawkesbury City Council)*

This report described a program of excavation that found evidence of original out-buildings and changes made to existing buildings on the western side of Thompson Square.

*Cultural Resources Management (2002): Hawkesbury Museum Site of Proposed Extensions Baker Street Windsor Archaeological Assessment (for Hawkesbury City Council)*

*Cultural Resources Management (2002): Report on Test Trenching Museum Extension Site Baker Street Windsor (for Hawkesbury City Council)*

*Cultural Resources Management (2004): Archaeological Assessment Proposed Museum Service Area Baker Street Windsor (for Hawkesbury City Council)*

*Cultural Resources Management (2004): Draft Statement of Results of Excavation Museum Extension Baker Street Windsor (for Hawkesbury City Council)*

This is a suite of reports that described the assessment, testing and excavation of land behind the Thompson Square Museum building. The excavation revealed extensive evidence of the original topography, changes made to it, an intact portion of the 1815 Macquarie Arms Hotel boundary wall, development of a garden for the hotel, construction of walls to subdivide the property and the construction of buildings, cess pits, yards and other features from the period between the 1830s and 1860s, evidence of the clean up of the site after the 1867 flood and the use of the site for a dump in the later years of the nineteenth century and removal of older features during the first half of the twentieth century.

#### 7.14.3 Maritime Archaeological Investigations

In July 2008 an inspection of the southern bank of the Hawkesbury River adjacent to Thompson Square identified relics interpreted as part of the 1795 wharf and from the 1815 wharf. In addition, identification was made of a punt landing adjacent and downstream of the existing bridge.<sup>545</sup> A more detailed maritime survey was undertaken of the areas in November 2008. The survey areas encompassed the river bank and river under the southern side of the bridge to a distance of 100 metres east to the existing wharf and to a distance of up to twenty metres into the river. As well a smaller search area was investigated under and to the east of the bridge on the northern bank<sup>546</sup>.

In August 2011 an inspection was made of the punt and wharf sites. On the southern side of the river a small group of timber beams and walers with one possible deck beam were found; there was some indication that the structure had been fastened to another portion of the wharf on the bank or buried within it. Walers are timbers that are bolted to a row of piles to secure them together and in position. Five metres to the east of this group was another waler that protruded from the bank. Further east was another single timber pile approximately one metre out of the water. Also visible in the riverbank was a portion of retaining wall made using timber and iron components and cement with dressed sandstone, bricks and broken cement used as fill behind it.<sup>547</sup> Apart from one cutting on the northern bank of the river no evidence of the punt or its operation could be found above the water.<sup>548</sup>

Below water the survey carried out several transects from the southern bank. The survey encountered rounded ballast up to a distance of eighteen metres from the bank of the river at a depth of between four and five metres<sup>549</sup> and some timber elements.

The evidence has been interpreted as remains of the c.1816 wharf but from a time when the original fabric had been replaced through repairs. The rounded ballast has been interpreted as possibly associated with the 1795 wharf and possibly used to stabilise the outer edge of the wooden structure;

<sup>544</sup> Higginbotham, E (1986); Historical and Archaeological Investigation of Thompson Square Windsor: 1.

<sup>545</sup> Heritage Concepts (2008); Statement of Heritage Impact Hawkesbury River Bridge Windsor.

<sup>546</sup> Cosmos Archaeology Pty Ltd (2011); Windsor bridge Over the Hawkesbury River Punt and Wharf Sites Maritime Archaeological Investigation; 05.

<sup>547</sup> *Ibid*: 11-18.

<sup>548</sup> *Ibid*: 18.

<sup>549</sup> *Ibid*: 18-22.



it suggests that this wharf was approximately ten metres long.<sup>550</sup> The remnant wall along the riverbank has been interpreted as a twentieth century addition.<sup>551</sup>

The conclusions of the maritime survey were that there was a high archaeological potential for a maritime resource of structural and cultural remains associated with the first wharf. It was concluded that even substantial flooding events are unlikely to have significantly disturbed this material. It was also concluded that there is the potential for more structural remains of the wharf to be found on the bank below one metre of fill and a recently constructed gabion wall although the latter may have disturbed this resource through excavation.<sup>552</sup>

The conclusions of the present assessment would suggest that all of the elements identified in the survey were from the 1815 wharf and later works to it. Evidence for the first wharf of 1795 is likely to be found under the present bridge and possibly within the infilled beach adjoining the southern end of the bridge.

It was further concluded that although no substantial evidence of the punt landings could be found that evidence of them is still likely to survive on both sides of the river. The most likely location on the southern bank would have been immediately west (downstream) of the present bridge; elements could survive buried after the installation of the gabion wall. There was less likely to be intact evidence on the northern side of the river due to changes made for road access.<sup>553</sup> At one point the punt operated from a point on the western side (upstream) of the present bridge.

A more detailed analysis has been made for the purposes of the present evaluation.<sup>554</sup> This analysis concluded that there was high potential for archaeological evidence of the wharves within the river close to the banks, including possible evidence of the structure of the wharves on the land; moderate-low potential for evidence of the punt landings and moderate potential for artefact assemblages to be found in the river associated with the wharf.<sup>555</sup>

The maritime archaeological report prepared for the project<sup>556</sup> investigated the riverbed and riverbank using archival research, Side Scan Sonar (SSS), which was used to target areas of interest and underwater survey was undertaken to investigate anomalies identified in the SSS. The results of the dive concluded that:

- Rock ballast in the location of the c1815 wharf (government wharf) is part of the historic wharf site
- Structural remains and artefact deposits associate with the wharf are likely to exist behind the southern riverbank
- There is moderate potential for the punt to survive archaeologically on the northern side of the river, upstream of the existing bridge; and low archaeological potential along the punt route
- Timber structural remains were located close to the northern bank; these are considered to be c. 1950s mooring posts and do have archaeological or research value
- Four anomalies were either sterile or contained modern material
- A natural sandstone shelf in the vicinity of the southern punt landing. The maritime report concludes that this shelf is not part of the punt landing area.<sup>557</sup>

#### 7.14.4 Ground Penetrating Radar Survey

In December 2011 a limited GPR survey was made in Thompson Square, within the upper and lower parkland areas. It identified the potential for intact lateral drains from the central barrel drain built in 1815 and an unidentified domed object at the northern end of the reserve at a depth of 1.5 metres.<sup>558</sup>

<sup>550</sup> *Ibid*: 23.

<sup>551</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid*: 25.

<sup>553</sup> *Ibid*: 26.

<sup>554</sup> Cosmos Archaeology (2012); *Proposed Windsor Bridge Replacement: Maritime Archaeology Desktop Assessment*.

<sup>555</sup> *Ibid*: 47-49.

<sup>556</sup> Cosmos Archaeology Pty Ltd 2012.

<sup>557</sup> *Ibid*: 98 – 99.

<sup>558</sup> Geoarchaeology and Prospection (2011); Exploratory Ground Penetrating Radar Survey at Thompson's Square Windsor.

The latter could be the principal barrel drain built in 1815. No evidence of the drain was found in a test pit excavated for this project in the car park to the north of the GPR result, however this would be expected; a drain here would be at a lower depth than the base of the excavation in this trench. In addition, the test excavation revealed extensive land-forming here that would likely have removed traces of an earlier excavation.

#### 7.14.5 Geo-technical Evidence

Several borehole surveys have been made in the area, the most recent in 2012. The results of these surveys, at least in the top portion of the samples to a maximum of three metres on the northern bank have generally been borne out by test trenching. Essentially the northern bank is characterised by deep levels of what is described as “fill” above alluvium; fill is the term used by geoscientists to describe soils that are not a product of natural processes. On the south bank “fill” has been found to various depths above sands and alluvium.

#### 7.14.6 Test Excavation

For the purpose of this evaluation and in response to the DGRs for the project several test pits were excavated on the southern and northern banks of the river within the project area to provide specific information to inform the predictive assessment. The premises that were made for this work were:

- That any work undertaken would be as small as possible to minimise the damage caused to the resource while still meeting the project objectives
- That the work was not designed to locate specific archaeological sites that were identified in a preliminary analysis but to determine whether the maximum depths of excavation required for various parts of the design would impact on an intact archaeological profile or be confined to depths already disturbed for road works or services.

Excavation for the project on the southern side of the river is anticipated to require a depth of 0.5 metres at the southern end of Thompson Square, 1.0 metres in the centre and 1.5 metres at the northern end.

On the northern bank of the river the excavation depths for the roundabout and road works would reach depths of between 1-3 metres.

#### 7.14.7 The Work

Six test pits were excavated on the northern river bank within the project area. These were required for geotechnical purposes and provided a sample across the entire area that could also be used for archaeological information. Two test pits for Aboriginal archeology excavated here were also used to inform this assessment. On the southern side two test pits were excavated, one in Old Bridge Street and one in the northern car park. As well, the results of six test pits for Aboriginal archaeological investigations were used to provide additional information. Test excavations were carried out using a small excavator to assist with the removal of large deposits and a small team of archaeologists to manually clean surfaces, fragile deposits and features.

#### 7.14.8 Research Objectives

A research design was developed to provide a research framework for the test excavations. The outcomes or the principal questions that were addressed by the work were as follows:

- Will the depths of excavation required for the several components of the new bridge impact on levels that encompass intact archaeological resources?
- Can the test pits provide a sample that can be used to establish a profile that generally characterises each part of the construction area and, thus, establish what the impacts of the proposed works will be on the integrity and significance of the archaeological resource?
- Will the profiles provide sufficient evidence to establish dates or specific associations for archaeological evidence revealed in them?
- Is it possible to determine whether the impacts of land forming and the provision of infrastructure have combined to effectively remove a substantial and significant archaeological resource?



The full report of this work is included in Appendix 3. The results of the work are summarised and discussed in the following sections.

## 7.15 Results of the test excavation

### 7.15.1 Test Trench 1: Old Bridge Street Thompson Square

Test Trench 1 was located in an area that would be excavated to one metre for the bridge construction. The trench was located on Old Bridge Street adjacent to the yard of no 4 Bridge Street (Plate 112). Test trench 1 was excavated to one metre and it produced the following results.



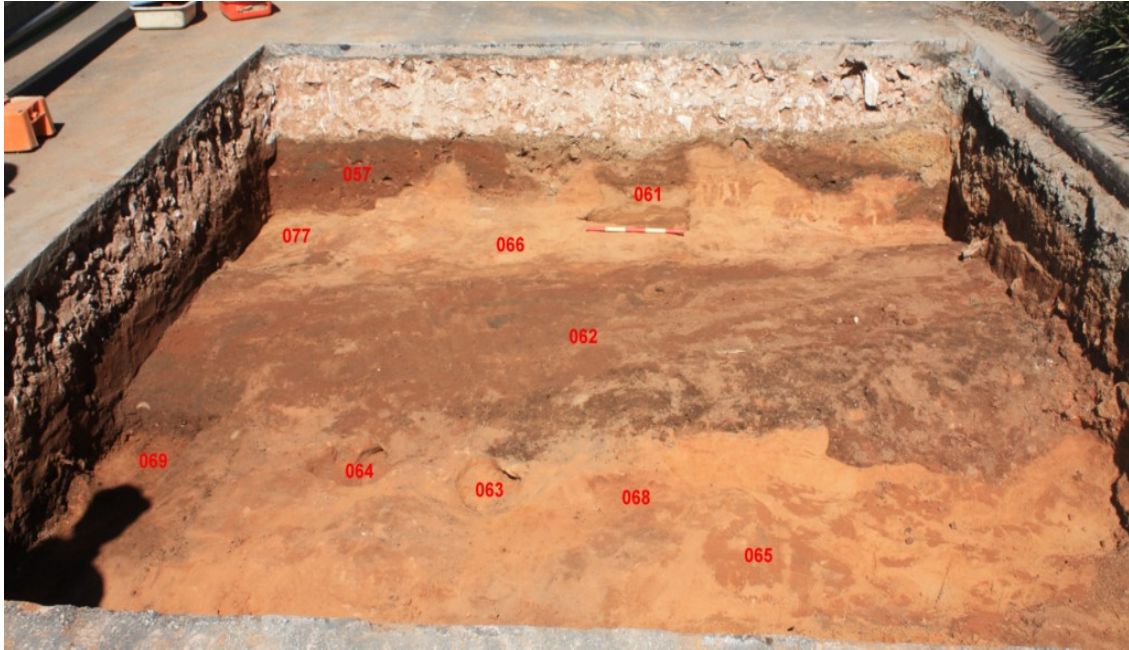
Plate 112: The location of Test Trench 1 (Old Bridge Street) and Test Trench 2 (within the car park)

- The base of the excavation was the upper part of an ancient sand dune that had been truncated by European activities. The landform has been modified by excavation but the substantial natural slope down from the south towards the river at the north is still evident.
- There was no evidence within the sample area of clearing, burning or stumping with the possible exception of some charcoal mixed into the remnant surface. The earliest evidence of European use was the introduction of a formed surface comprised of introduced loam and possibly some of the naturally occurring topsoil. Only a narrow band of this surface was preserved within the middle of the test trench; the northern and southern extremities were removed later in the nineteenth century by a slicing excavation down the hill. The remnant surface encompassed a substantial number of artefacts, all domestic in nature and all can be dated at least from the 1830s to the 1850s and probably earlier. The evidence in total indicated that this was a surface associated with a domestic site that could be dated from between c.1800 and 1830 and in use up to the mid-nineteenth century.
- Within this surface were many small excavations that were identified as holes dug to plant small trees or shrubs; evidence could be seen of stakes that were used to support the plants. A few artefacts were found in the pits and these were comparable in date to the artefacts mixed in the soil surface, c. 1800-1830 or up to the mid-nineteenth century.
- There was one large excavation only partly within the test trench on the southern boundary. This square excavation was almost certainly for a very large square post. The excavation was very deep and packed with early nineteenth century brick rubble. The size and depth of the hole suggests that it was part of a structure rather than for planting. It could be determined from its relationship to the soils and features around it that this post had been excavated either at the



same time as the planting holes or earlier; one distinctive artefact included in the fill suggests a date of between 1800 and 1820.

- The physical evidence recovered from the test trench examined in terms of what is known of the development of Thompson Square in the period up to c.1850 suggests only a limited number of likely associations for this evidence and this archaeological horizon.
  - It could be part of Andrew Thompson's garden allotment; the timber post might be part of the weatherboard house he lived in or even one of the former log granaries that may have been reused as a boathouse in the early years of the nineteenth century;
  - It could be part of the extended government reserve made after Thompson's leasehold was absorbed into it after his death in 1810 and after it has been landscaped as is evident in several early nineteenth century images;
  - It could be part of a garden allotment that was formed to the north of the barracks and stables that occupied the edge of the allotment, recorded as early as 1831;
- The early nineteenth century surface was removed by the slicing cut down the hill from the south to the north. The shrubs or trees were pulled out or dug out as was the large timber post and all the holes were filled in with soil. The most likely interpretation for this work is the construction of an extension of Bridge Street that was made from George Street down to the existing curve of the road to the wharf in 1855. The absence of artefacts in the lower deposit after the mid-century supports this attribution or at least the date for when the work was carried out. There was a service trench that must have been laid either during the construction of the road in 1855 or as part of a later period of works before this road surface was replaced in the later years of the nineteenth century. The date of the service pipe is likely to have been in the 1860s-1870s;
- No evidence of a macadamised surface for the new road was found in the excavation; later road works from 1885 that entailed cutting down the height of the road would account for the loss of the tar or bitumen that may have been used to seal the road in 1855 and any later surfaces that may have been laid over it between that year and 1885;
- A new clay and loam surface was laid directly over the exposed soil of the 1855 road. The shape of this deposit across the trench suggests that the road had a camber, meaning that it had a rounded surface that sloped down to shallow depressions along each side for drainage. There were few artefacts in this new surface; they dated from the later years of the nineteenth century or early years of the twentieth century. This surface from the later part of the nineteenth century that removed evidence of any earlier surfaces from the 1855 to c.1885 also appears to have been truncated by later work;
- The top third of the excavation encompassed crushed sandstone that was laid as the level packing for the present road surface. The work was carried out in the twentieth century but a precise date is not possible to determine from the physical evidence. The new work entailed laying down a consistent and compacted deep deposit of the sandstone and then surfacing it with the present bitumen. The only change to this road is evident on the western side where the gutter and kerb have been cut into it through the excavation of a narrow trench. The relationship of these works compared to archival evidence for the development of Thompson Square indicated a date that pre-dates the 1970s for this work.



*Plate 113: Test Trench 1, view south showing the square post-hole [061] at the southern edge of the excavation and other excavations that were dug for trees or shrubs and the posts that supported them. The dark soil in the middle is the remnant early nineteenth century surface scale 500 millimetres*

#### 7.15.2 Test Trench 1: Old Bridge Street Thompson Square

Test Trench 2 was located in an area that would be excavated to 1.5 metres for the bridge construction. Test Trench 2 was located in the small car park adjacent to the lower parkland area. The excavation across the majority of the trench was terminated when substantial components were revealed that had been placed here for the construction of the road for the 1897 bridge level. These elements were preserved and the test trench was reduced to a square between structural components of this work. This smaller test trench reached the project construction depth. The combined work produced the following results:

- At the top of the excavation area was the bitumen surface and blue metal and kerb and gutter around the lower parkland area that all appear to be all part of one program of work, from the c.mid-1970s or later;
- Immediately below this deposit along the southern side of the trench was a large cut that appears to be a narrow path cut into a road surface made in 1897; the stratigraphy indicates that it was made before the c.1940s;
- Across the remainder of the trench was the compacted earth surface of the road made to the bridge when it was raised in 1897;
- There was considerable evidence for the extensive scope of work that went into creating the new approach to the bridge. Large quantities of fill were brought in to raise the level of the existing site. Over this fill were laid long concrete beams that were used to stabilise the slope and create a firm base for the new road. Evidence remained of their construction; what appears to be timber form-work. The southernmost beams were more widely spaced with two timber plates that stretched between them. All these elements were bedded in a compacted deposit of rubble. When this structure was completed the surface was levelled by means of a smooth deposit of silty soil and then a coarser layer of fill was laid to create a surface to which the new clay and ironstone road would bond;
- Below the 1897 works were several deposits. A deposit with numerous rounded pebbles and gravel is likely to be the surface that was in use in the 1870s. Below this was another silty clay surface that had been cut and shaped, possibly for the surface above it or for a purpose no longer evident because of the excavation made into it. These two deposits pre-date 1894 and they indicate that there is likely to be an intact archaeological profile to a greater depth; the



archival evidence suggests that this may be an area of reclamation above the original sandy cove. In this case deposits could reach several metres depth;



*Plate 114: Test Trench 2, view north showing the position of the smaller test pit (indicated by arrow) used to take the excavation to the required depth while preserving the features uncovered in the body of the excavation; scale 1 metre.*

#### 7.15.3 Aboriginal Test Pits A-D: Reserves and Thompson Square

Four test pits were excavated in Thompson Square to investigate the potential for Aboriginal archaeology. The results of these pits were also used to evaluate the scope of historical archaeological resources. The conclusions that could be made from these excavations are as follows:

- The southernmost of these pits, close to George Street, demonstrated that the land in and around the excavation has been substantially truncated, apparently in the twentieth century; the material in the fill used to level the site included artefacts from as late as the 1950s. The deposit above the intact dune sand was homogenous and suggests that anything from the nineteenth century or earlier has been removed in this area.
- The second test pit in the traffic island in Bridge Street also demonstrated extensive cutting and filling during the twentieth century, here more likely from the later part of the century. Nothing from the nineteenth century was found in this pit.
- The third test pit in the reserve provided more evidence of twentieth century land forming here exclusively from the later part of the twentieth century.
- The fourth test pit located close to the car park also demonstrated the impact of twentieth century work but here there was also evidence of nineteenth century fill and Aboriginal midden material. The small sample suggests that fill has been brought from another site and used to reshape the surface of the reserve; the presence of the 1945 coin in the fill gives an approximate mid-twentieth century date for the work. Yellow sandy clay found at the base of this test pit appears to be a nineteenth century level.

In total the evidence from these four small pits indicates that the southern boundary of the project area has been extensively disturbed both within the road and the reserve. The road works appear to be from the later part of the twentieth century and the changes to the park around the mid-twentieth century. The evidence recorded in the other two test pits placed in the upper parkland area supports the latter conclusion. It suggests that a substantial program of reshaping the reserve was carried out in the c. 1950s and it entailed bringing fill from elsewhere that included both nineteenth century European material and Aboriginal midden material. This was used to shape the northern part of the lower reserve. There is some evidence to suggest that intact nineteenth century levels might survive under this fill.



Plate 115: North section of ATP A showing the small European horizon above the remnant sand dune; the later is identified in the image as the artefact laden sandy layer<sup>559</sup> (scale one metre)

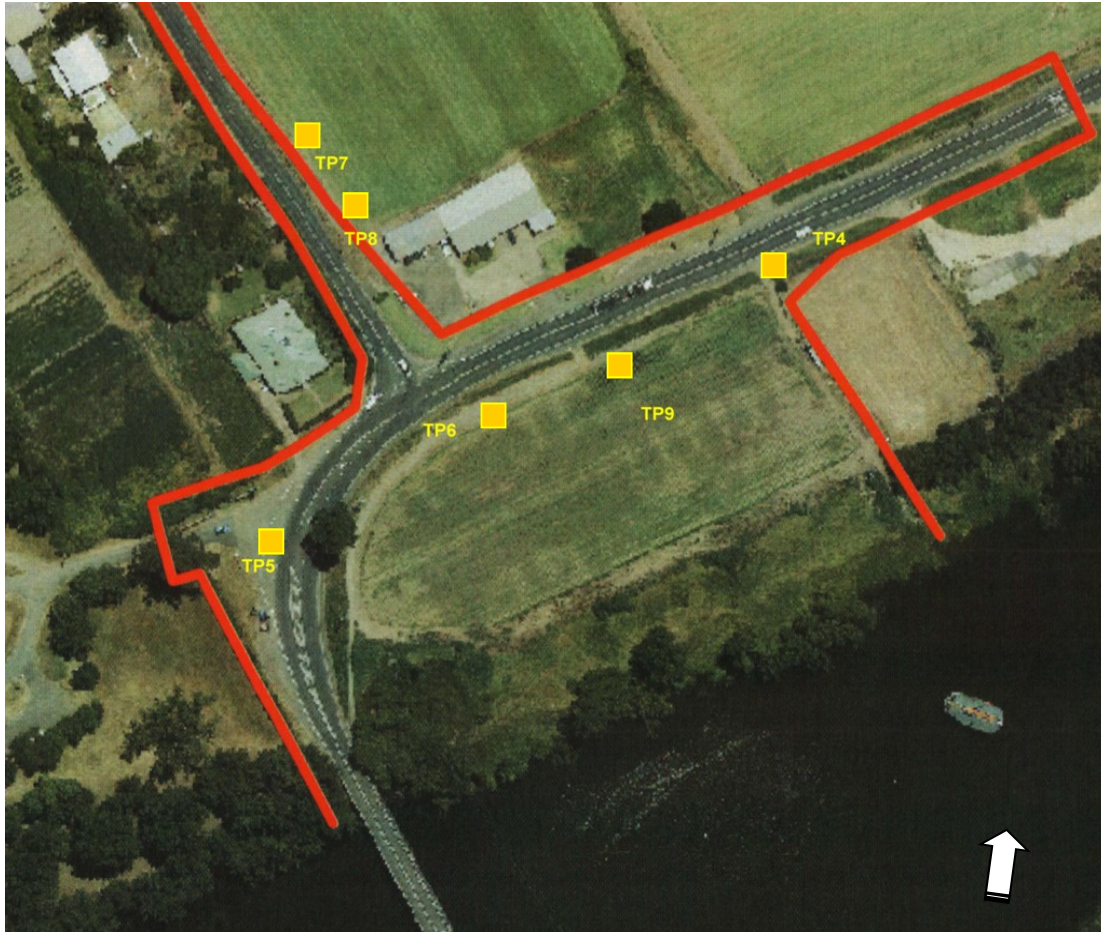
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<sup>559</sup> Image from Kelleher Nightingale Consulting Pty Ltd (2012); Windsor Bridge Replacement Project Cultural Heritage Assessment Report: 23.



#### 7.15.4 Geotechnical Test Pits 4-9: The Northern River Bank

For the purposes of the project geotechnical investigations were required on the northern river bank to examine the soil; a total of six pits measuring approximately 3.0 x 0.5 metres were excavated to a depth of approximately three metres. These pits were placed throughout the entire project area. The archival analysis had not identified any specific sites or targets within the project area so it was decided to use these pits as a sample study of the soil profile for archaeological purposes. Because of the depths the pits were entirely excavated by machine in association with an archaeologist.



*Plate 116: Location of geotechnical test pits 4-9, northern side of river.*

The results from these excavations may be summarised as follows:

- Test pits 4-9 excavated on the northern side of the river, reveal little evidence of European occupation or works. There were no clear surfaces with the possible exception of one in Test Pit 4, no evidence of agricultural works, the impacts of pastoralism and no structural evidence at all;
- The majority of the evidence found in these excavations demonstrates the processes of siltation from floods and soil added for specific activities such as the turf farm and road surfaces. Almost all of these can be identified as twentieth century activities. Test Pit 4 had a single fence post buried nearly one metre below the present ground surface; it was likely to be a twentieth century addition and Test Pit 7 revealed strap iron at 1.2 metres depth demonstrating how much soil has accumulated or been deposited within the northern part of the project area;
- Test Pit 8 provided the only nineteenth century artefact; a fragment of one mid-nineteenth century brick. The site of the nineteenth century Squatters Arms inn is likely to be in this area but one fragment is insufficient to provide a certain indication of the location of this place;

- Test Pit 5 provided the most substantial evidence of European activity in the form of two concrete beams similar to those found in Test Trench 2 on the southern side of the river. Almost certainly the beams on the northern side of the river are part of the same work of 1894 associated with improving the approaches to the new height of the bridge. This means that the metre of soil above them was deposited largely in the twentieth century;
- The almost complete absence of artefacts suggests, as the archival evidence does, that the land here was sparsely occupied apart from farming; evidence of pastoralism or agriculture was also not obvious in the test pit profiles.



*Plate 117: View east showing concrete beam in Test Pit 5 laid as part of the work in 1894 to improve the approaches to the bridge after it had been raised in height], scale 200 millimetre increments.*

## 7.16 Conclusions

The conclusions from the testing program essentially confirm the predictive assessment; the project area on the southern bank is within an area of complex, unpredictable archaeology. The testing has revealed that it encompasses evidence that has a chronological span at least from c. 1800 to the later part of the twentieth century. The land has been subject to great change through programs of cutting and filling and levelling and sculpting for many purposes. It means that the archaeological profile across the entire area is likely to change quite dramatically from one place to another and that understanding how features and deposits relate to each other, and thus can be interpreted, will only be possible by examining a very large area. This allows the site formation processes, the cutting and filling and levelling to be accounted for with respect to each layer of use and occupation.

On the northern side of the river the results also confirm the predictive assessment. There are very deep deposits of fill that arise from deliberate actions for farming and road works as well as soil deposited in floods. There is almost no evidence of nineteenth century works with the single exception of the infrastructure made to accommodate the change in bridge height in 1894. This work was recorded on both sides of the present bridge. The results do not rule out the potential for archaeological evidence to be found on this side of the river but it is less likely than that on the southern side within the project area. It is still impossible to determine specific sites or targets for any future investigation.

- The project area on the northern river bank is assessed to be of local significance.



- One area of salvage excavation is required here to document the works associated with the improvement of the approaches to the bridge when it was raised in 1894.
- The remainder of excavation in the northern area would be monitored to ensure that if significant relics are revealed during the course of the work they are identified and documented; if necessary salvage excavation may be required.
- The archaeological resource within Thompson Square has been assessed to be of both State and local significance, valued for its cumulative evidence as well as the potential for important individual relics, with a potential for some aspects to be of National significance because of their association with the contribution of the town and fundamental to the growth of the colony. The earliest phase of Green Hills to the Macquarie period is likely to contain relics that would be potentially of National significance as it may have the ability in the archaeological resources to demonstrate the changes occurring in the colony from prison to free settlement, the early development of a site without initial government authority, structures, modifications to land and river that cannot be found on any other site.
- Excavation of Thompson Square for the project would have an adverse impact on the cultural significance of the archaeological resource within it. This work would result in the loss of significant archaeological resources would fragment and isolate the remaining profile lessening its cultural value.
- Monitoring of any bulk excavation in Thompson Square is not acceptable; the resource is too significant and unpredictable for this to be accepted.
- Excavation of the project area as a salvage archaeological excavation would redress the loss of information but would still have the same impact of fragmentation and isolation of the remaining resource.
- An option for complete salvage excavation of Thompson Square has been considered; this option would address the issue of comprehensive retrieval of all information but would irrevocably remove this significant profile and have massive implications for the future form of Thompson Square as well as for the project.
- The issue of *in situ* conservation of significant relics also needs to be considered in any option that requires excavation.

In summary the broad trends of the evidence revealed by the testing program are as follows:

Table 5: Broad phases as indicated by the archaeological testing program





Period	Works	Area
1800-1850	Garden and possible building Maritime relics including wharves and jetties	Test Trench 1 Maritime survey - river banks and bed
1815	Possible barrel drain and lateral drains	GPR survey
1855	Road Construction	Test Trench 1
c.1870s	Possible surfaces in the square	Test Trench 2
c.1885	Road construction	Test Trench 1
1850-1900	Levels in the reserve Services	ATP D, Test Trench 2 Test trench 1
1894	Road to new bridge Land forming and infrastructure approaches to	Test Trench 2 Test Trench 2, Test Pit

Period	Works	Area
	bridge	5
1900 – c. 1950	Excavation and filling and land-forming the reserves Levels of fill northern river bank	ATP A, ATP C, ATPD Test Pits 4-9
c.1950-1970	Road Construction Car Park Construction	Test Trench 1 Test Trench 2
c.1970-2000	Road and Reserve works Services	Test Trench 1, ATP B Test Pits 4-9





#### Legend

-  Area Covered by SHR Listings
-  Thompson Square (estimated)
-  Government Domain (estimated)
-  Green Hills Civic Precinct (estimated)



**Figure 11: Evolution of Thompson Square 1795 - 2012**

0 30 60 90 120 150

Metres

Scale: 1:3,000 @ A3

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56



Biosis Research Pty. Ltd.  
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2015

Offices also in: Ballarat, Melbourne,  
Wollongong, Canberra, Wangaratta



Date: 05 November 2012, File number: 14020  
Checked by: PBK, Drawn by: JMS  
Location: P:\14000s\14020\Mapping\14020\_SoH\F11\_TS\_Evo\_051112.mxd

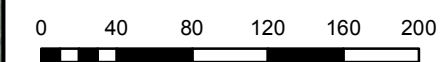





**Legend**

- Walking Track
- ▨ Thompson Square
- ▭ Roads
- ▭ Government Domain
- ▭ Green Hills Civic Precinct

**Figure 12: Evolution of Thompson Square Roads 1795 - 2012**



Metres  
Scale: 1:4,000 @ A3  
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56

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Date: 05 November 2012, File number: 14020  
Checked by: PBK, Drawn by: JMS  
Location: P:\14000s\14020\Mapping\14020\_SoH\F12\_TS\_Roads.mxd





## 7.17 Assessment of Archaeological Significance

### 7.17.1 Cultural Significance

A detailed assessment of significance for Thompson Square, its component elements and the project area is presented in a separate section of this report; reference should be made to it with respect to this section. The purpose of this analysis is to determine the cultural value or significance of the archaeological resource that is likely to be preserved within the project area. This evaluation has been made within the analytical framework developed by the NSW Heritage Branch taking into account the unique issues that apply to the largely invisible archaeological resource.

Criteria (a) to (e) explain why an item is important and criteria (f) and (g) further refine this reason by establishing a degree of significance. As well, an item is evaluated with respect to whether it is important for the state or its locality. While it is not usual practice to grade archaeological resources within their level of significance, it has been done in this report to express the variations that may exist within that level of significance and in some case, which may have values that extend beyond the State.

With respect to the significance of archaeological sites or elements the evaluation depends greatly on the ability of the physical evidence to provide information unavailable from other sources that can extend our knowledge of the past through research or its challenge to secondary or primary sources. The preservation of the site, the scope of primary historical evidence for the site or its type and the availability of comparable sites all have a bearing on the evaluation of significance.

### 7.17.2 Assessment of Significance

#### CRITERION (a)

*An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item is important in the course, or pattern, of the local area's cultural or natural history*

#### RESPONSE

The project area is within the town of Windsor, one of the original Macquarie era towns. It encompasses land that pre-dates the town being the civic precinct established for the original farms

The project area may encompass the sites of some of the earliest buildings and other works dating from 1795 onwards.

The project area also encompasses land that was part of one of the 1794 grants on the northern side of the river. The potential for relics here is uncertain but less likely than within Thompson Square.

As well as works from the first decades of the town's growth, the project area encompasses important improvements from the middle and later years of the nineteenth century that reflect the changing status and role of the town and this particular square. These also reflect the changing importance of different types of transport. The evidence includes the development of the bridge across the river to link the two communities. There is likely to be archaeological evidence of these works and processes.

The archaeological evidence within the project area is likely to provide evidence for the evolution of Thompson Square over two hundred years providing tangible links and information for this historical role that are unavailable from other sources.

**CRITERION (b)**

*An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of the local area*

**RESPONSE**

The project area is within the seminal area of development for Windsor pre-dating its foundation as a Macquarie era town.

Thompson Square has close associations with several Governors but particularly Lachlan Macquarie; a number of the improvements and designs for Thompson Square are a direct result of his involvement.

Thompson Square has direct associations with outstanding people in the development of the town and region particularly Andrew Thompson. Thompson lived on one side of the square for a period and some of his major commercial works were also located here.

The northern bank has an association with one of the earliest settlers in the district, Edward Whitton.

The northern bank might also encompass the site of a long-standing landmark inn although its precise location is not determined.

The archaeological profile could provide direct and physical evidence of these associations by revealing works or improvements that have been created for, on behalf of or by these figures.

**CRITERION (c)**

*An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (State); OR An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area*

**RESPONSE**

Archaeological evidence within the project area is unlikely to have aesthetic values but it can provide a depth of historical layering and sense of place that adds to the visual qualities of Thompson Square.

**CRITERION (d)**

*An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (State); OR An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.*

**RESPONSE**

The project area encompasses land that can be demonstrated to have had value to both past and present communities.

Archaeological evidence is unlikely to demonstrate the social value of the place, except as an historic area of Windsor to the present community, but it might provide evidence of places or events that were of value to the past community.

**CRITERION (e)**

*An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an*



*understanding of the area's cultural or natural history*

## RESPONSE

The archaeological profile of the project area has the potential to provide information and demonstrate the historical evolution of Thompson Square over two hundred years with information that cannot be acquired from other sources and with tangible links that are unique to this resource.

The northern bank of the river is less likely to encompass the depth of historical development that would be found on the southern bank but it is still likely to encompass some aspects that can only be documented from physical resources.

The resource is comparable in its earliest phases to significant founding periods at Sydney and Parramatta and Norfolk Island and provides opportunities for comparative studies

## CRITERION (f)

*An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the area's cultural or natural history*

## RESPONSE

The archaeological profile of the project area on the south bank is completely unique to it. Because of the potential chronological depth of the profile it may include sites that are rare beyond the specific history of this place. It is comparable to the other earliest settlement sites in Australia; Sydney, Parramatta and Norfolk Island.

## CRITERION (G)

*An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's*

- *Cultural or natural places; or*
- *Cultural or natural environments (State); OR*

*An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the area's*

- *Cultural or natural places; or*
- *Cultural or natural environments.*

The archaeological profile of the northern bank is likely to be more representative of the agricultural/pastoral development that characterised the northern side of the river but it also has the potential to include evidence of singular events in the development of the town.

The later periods of development within Thompson Square, including the later years of the nineteenth century and of the twentieth century, are unique to this place but are representative of patterns of settlement that can be seen at other rural towns.

The archaeological profile that is likely to exist within the project area has particular value for its cumulative effect as a complex profile. It may demonstrate the long history of occupation and change from over two centuries of development as well as specific features and events that have shaped the town and this space. Within this cumulative profile it is recognised that some components may have different levels of value:

- Due to their ability to demonstrate aspects of the evolution of the town that are no longer evident in the above ground resources of the place.
- Because they are singular in the evolution of the place.
- Due to their rarity beyond their specific location within Windsor.
- Because they represent processes or events that characterise the development of the town or its environs.
- Because there is other evidence that might have a greater ability to demonstrate particular aspects or processes for the town than does the archaeological resource.
- Because they may have acted to remove or disturb aspects of older occupation that have greater cultural values.

These issues have been taken into account when grades of significance have been assigned to particular phases that are likely to be represented within the overall profile.

Grading	Reason
Exceptional	<p><i>Evidence from the Green Hills and Macquarie periods because of their importance to the evolution of the town as seminal periods of development and the absence or relative rarity of fabric from these periods in the above ground resources of the town and its environs.</i></p> <p><i>Evidence from these periods has value beyond this town because of their relative rarity, comparable to only a few equally early settlements such as Sydney, Parramatta, Norfolk Island and Newcastle.</i></p>
High	<p><i>Evidence from the early to later years of the nineteenth century because of its ability to document and illustrate significant developments and processes that were shaping the town many of which are not evident in above ground resources and because of their associations with important events or people.</i></p>
Moderate	<p><i>Evidence from the early years of the twentieth century to the c.1950s because of their impact on the appearance and use of the project area.</i></p>
Little	<p><i>Evidence from the later years of the twentieth century onwards which is still largely intact above ground and has acted to remove or disturb older or more rare elements.</i></p>



### 7.17.3 Significance of the Archaeological Potential

The evaluation system used here was formulated for an above-ground resource and it has always been recognised that it does not always adequately address the value of an archaeological resource. For that reason assessments of archaeological sites usually also evaluate the potential resource in relation to three standard questions:

***Can the site contribute knowledge no other site can?***

The resource within the project area has the potential to provide evidence that is unique to the town of Windsor, evidence from its first and earliest years of settlement pre-dating the Macquarie era town. As Thompson Square was the site of the pre-Windsor settlement it is completely singular and evidence that may be preserved here is both rare and unique. It can only be compared to a small number of equally early settlement towns. Test excavation has demonstrated that very early nineteenth century levels do survive within Thompson Square.

***Can the site contribute knowledge no other resource can?***

The archaeological resource within the project area has the potential to provide physical evidence of developments, processes, sites and elements that are unlikely to have been documented, have been minimally documented and/or have been lost. It offers opportunities to both reveal the past and describe or document it. This is particularly the case for the earliest periods of development. Test excavation has demonstrated that information concerning formative processes not available through archival means can be retrieved from this physical resource.

***Is the knowledge relevant to general questions about human history or other substantive questions about Australia or other major research questions?***

In the first instance the information that could be gained from the archaeological resource is of primary value to Windsor and its environs. It is specific to this place. However, because of the importance of this town in the development of the state and the region evidence from it has a greater value. It demonstrates how the colony evolved and what this meant for regional centres.

## 7.18 Statement of Archaeological Significance

The historical analysis, archaeological assessment and evidence from preliminary testing and past works demonstrate that there is likely to be a complex and chronologically deep archaeological profile within Thompson Square and to a lesser degree on the northern river bank. It is impossible to isolate the resource that could exist within the project area and assess its significance. It must be assumed that the evidence contained within the project area will have the same values and significance as the rest of Thompson Square even if specific elements within both may vary from each other. The significance of the archaeological resource within the project area is the same as that for the resource across all of Thompson Square and this cultural significance must be assessed on several levels.

Windsor is the third settlement in Australia after Sydney and Parramatta. These are the places that made long-term European settlement possible and their histories inform us of the circumstances, the pressures and visions that would shape our history and the way we live. Apart from its importance as one of our first permanent settlements, Windsor also has added status as a Macquarie town, one of only five places in the Hawkesbury that were specifically selected and influenced by arguably our most important Governor, Lachlan Macquarie. A number of the improvements and designs for Thompson Square are a direct result of Macquarie's involvement. Thompson Square has direct associations with outstanding people in the development of the town and region particularly Andrew Thompson, who lived and worked here. The archaeological resource could provide tangible links or associations with significant historical figures by revealing works or improvements that have been created for, on behalf of, or by these figures.

Thompson Square is the single place that links the earliest settlement on the Hawkesbury with the Macquarie-era town. This site was used as a civic precinct to service the first farms established on the river from 1794. It evolved into a small village in its own right that also provided the services and administration for the region. It is the seminal place of the town's evolution. It was this village that was incorporated into the Macquarie planned town of Windsor; it was the only town to incorporate this earlier layer of settlement. It is unique.

If Windsor and Thompson Square are important then archaeological evidence that can better document or reveal the history of use and development that is unique to this place and provide evidence of its associations is also significant. The below ground resources are likely to provide evidence of the earliest years of settlement, pre-dating the fabric that survives above ground. Archaeological evidence is also likely to provide evidence of events and processes that were specific to Thompson Square but are representative of the development of this town.

The principal value of the potential archaeological profile in Thompson Square is its cumulative value. It has the potential to document events, processes, improvements and places that span the full history of European development in this place from 1794 to the present day. It is likely to be the only place in Windsor or its environs that can do so. The archaeological profile of the project area on the south bank is completely unique to it. Because of the potential chronological depth of the profile it may include sites that are rare beyond the specific history of this place.

Apart from the potential to document and demonstrate the changing town and the place of Thompson Square in it over a long period of time the archaeological profile of Thompson Square can be evaluated for different levels of significance that are largely relevant to their rarity either through age or singular uses. In particular, evidence that relates to the founding settlement of 1794 up to and inclusive of Macquarie-era works is assessed to be of exceptional significance for its importance within the town, its rarity and its contribution to documenting the growth of the colony in its formative years. For the earliest years of settlement this resource would be the only fabric that survives in the town; there is no evidence above ground that predates 1811. It is comparable to only a very small number of other places in New South Wales that have the same depth of development such as Sydney or Parramatta.

As well as works from the first decades of the town's growth the project area is also likely to encompass important improvements from the middle and later years of the nineteenth century that reflect the changing status and role of the town and Thompson Square. These include the development of the bridge across the river to link the two communities. Many of these processes are not evident in above ground resources. These are resources that can make a substantial addition to the evidence that survives above ground; they have value for the town.

Evidence that derives from the early to middle years of the twentieth century is less significant. These processes are still evident in other forms and they have impacted on earlier and very rare resources. Evidence from the later years of the twentieth century onwards which is still largely intact above ground and has acted to remove or disturb older or very rare elements is considered to have little individual significance but is recognised as an integral component in the complex profile.

The northern area of the project area across the river also has a history of settlement that dates back to 1794 with a farm established here by the ex-convict, Edward Whitton, in that year. Apart from his pioneer status Whitton's contribution is representative of the thousands of people who worked to develop the region.

Archaeology in the northern part of the project area is unlikely to have the same complexity of resources as Thompson Square because of the nature of settlement here; largely pastoralism and agriculture. It has value as a comparison to the complex history of Thompson Square but its individual components are likely to be less significant; the exception would be the site of a long-standing landmark inn although its precise location cannot be determined. The resource in the northern part of the project area, with few exceptions, is likely to be more representative of the agricultural/pastoral development that characterised this side of the river.

The archaeological resource is likely to provide a depth of historical layering and sense of place to the acknowledged visual qualities of Thompson Square. These are qualities and resources that can be valued by the community. It has the ability to provide unique, rare and representative components for this place and for New South Wales. The cumulative profile recording evidence of works and change over two centuries is unique. Within that overall profile evidence of the Green Hills period of development and Macquarie-era works would be of State significance; evidence contained within it, above and below ground that can be determined to have a direct association with the Green Hills Settlement or the period of expansion under the direction of Governor Lachlan Macquarie would potentially be of National significance. The remainder of the archaeological profile has local significance.



## 8 CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### 8.1 Introduction

The investigation and analysis undertaken for the project has revealed the complexity of the heritage resources of Thompson Square. To date Thompson Square has been accepted as a significant cultural space with important buildings around it largely due to the connections with Governor Macquarie. These evaluations are not disputed but there has been little discussion about why these connections are so important and to whom and, as well, what other factors might need to be addressed to understand why this place is an important cultural artefact.

### 8.2 Background to assessing significance

The past is an important aspect of cultural identity and can take the form of things that can be seen and touched, such as buildings, gardens, relics, and bridges, as well as intangible values, such as specific traditions that provide a link to the past. Listed heritage places are an agreed acknowledgement of a place's or site's importance to a community for a number of reasons. Acknowledging a place for what it contributes to our understanding of the past is clearly an important aspect of our society, and is demonstrated in various ways: by legislation to protect it, tourist destinations, photography subjects and a general interest in the past, to name a few.

Heritage assessment criteria in NSW are based on the significance values outlined in the Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) *Burra Charter*<sup>560</sup> and built upon by the NSW Heritage Council criteria A - E, which add the values of "rare" and "representative" to the discussion as criteria F and G. This approach to heritage has been adopted by cultural heritage managers and government agencies as the set of guidelines for best practice heritage management in Australia. The criteria and guidelines are presented in Table 6 (below).

Data gathered during this investigation feed into the prompts below to extract relevant information. Data was gathered through the historical analysis, site survey and the archaeological test excavation. The assessment of social significance has been made by reviewing recent community responses to the project and other documentation (refer Section 0 "Community Esteem") and the place's status as a heritage item has been derived from analysing comparable sites (refer Section 6.7). An item or place can be considered to be of local or State significance in that criterion if it meets those thresholds.

Once assessed against the criteria, a statement of heritage significance (statement of significance) is prepared. The statement of significance is a researched and ordered text that succinctly presents the significant attributes of an item and it forms the basis of management strategies for the item.

For more information go to:

<http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/assessingheritagesignificance.pdf>

<sup>560</sup> *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (1999,) Australia ICOMOS Incorporated 2000.

Table 6: NSW Heritage assessment criteria<sup>561</sup>

CRITERION	DESCRIPTION	GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSION
A	An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or at a local level);	Shows evidence of a significant human activity Is associated with a significant activity or historical phase Maintains or shows the continuity of a historical process or activity
B	An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or at a local level);	Shows evidence of a significant human occupation Is associated with a significant event, person, or group of persons
C	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or at a local level);	Shows or is associated with, creative or technical innovation or achievement Is the inspiration for a creative or technical innovation or achievement Is aesthetically distinctive Has landmark qualities Exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology
D	An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (or at a local level);	Is important for its associations with an identifiable group Is important to a community's sense of place
E	An item has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural and natural history (or at a local level);	Has the potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information Is an important benchmark or reference site or type Provides evidence of past human cultures that is unavailable elsewhere
F	An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or at a local level);	Provides evidence of a defunct custom, way of life or process Demonstrates a process, custom or other human activity that is in danger of being lost Shows unusually accurate evidence of a significant human activity Is the only example of its type Demonstrates designs or techniques of exceptional interest Shows rare evidence of a significant human activity or important to a community

<sup>561</sup> NSW Heritage Office, 2001, *Assessing Heritage Significance: A NSW Heritage Manual Update*, Crown copyright: 9.



CRITERION	DESCRIPTION	GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSION
G	An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or at a local level).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a fine example of its type</li> <li>Has the principal characteristics of an important class or group of items</li> <li>Has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity</li> <li>Is a significant variation to a class of items</li> <li>Is part of a group which collectively illustrates a representative type</li> <li>Is outstanding because of its setting, condition or size</li> <li>Is outstanding because of its integrity or the esteem in which it is held</li> </ul>

Complex items or places can also be graded to define what it is about the item or place that makes it significant. Grading can also help identify what aspects of an item or place are reducing significance.

Table 7: Grading of significance for complex items<sup>562</sup>

GRADING	JUSTIFICATION	STATUS
Exceptional	Rare or outstanding element directly contributing to an item's local and State significance.	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing.
High	High degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the item's significance. Alterations do not detract from the significance.	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing.
Moderate	Altered or modified elements. Elements with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the item.	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing.
Little	Alterations may detract from the overall significance but its role, function, design or fabric can still be interpreted.	Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing.
Intrusive / Nil	Damaging to the item's heritage significance. Difficult to interpret.	Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing.

## 8.3 Current evaluations

### 8.3.1 Recognised Heritage Value

A cursory online search reveals the many and diverse groups and individuals consider Thompson Square and/or elements to be a significant cultural place or relic. Other heritage items in the vicinity of Thompson Square, and therefore the project area, are also listed on statutory instruments.

This public acceptance of the importance of the place is supported by statutory listings, the official recognition of cultural value. There are three individual listings that have statutory recognition on the State Heritage Register within the project area.

- "The Thompson Square Conservation Area" also known as the "Thompson Square Precinct" (SHR listing no. 00126)
- "House and Out-buildings", 5 Thompson Square (SHR listing no. 00005)
- "The Macquarie Arms Hotel", has also been known as the "Royal Hotel" (SHR listing no. 00041)

All of these items were first afforded protection by means of permanent conservation orders (PCOs) under the provisions of the *NSW Heritage Act (1977)*. The PCOs were placed in 1979 and 1982, in response to an immediate threat to the significance of Macquarie Arms Hotel and Thompson Square respectively.

All of these items are listed under the revised local planning instrument (2012) and were transferred from the previous planning instrument (1989). "Bridgeview" at 27 Freeman's Reach Road in the northern part of the project area is listed only on the local instruments.

The Register of The National Estate also includes a number of these items; the descriptions for some of these listings are in error and/or unclear.

The National Trust of Australia (NSW), while not a statutory authority is considered to have an authoritative view, lists the conservation area and a number of the surrounding buildings.

The Doctors House was listed in the Cumberland County Council list of Historic Buildings in 1961-1967.

<sup>562</sup> NSW Heritage Office, 2001, *Assessing Heritage Significance: A NSW Heritage Manual Update*, Crown copyright: 11.



The statutory position of all the items has been discussed at length in Section 3 of the report. Of all these places and sites within the project area, only the following have had some form of a statement of significance prepared for them:

- Thompson Square, including those buildings within SHR listing (SHR data sheet)
- Windsor Bridge (RMS Section 170 Register data sheet)
- The Macquarie Arms Hotel (SHR data sheet)
- “Bridgeview” 27 Wilberforce Road (SHI data sheet)

### 8.3.2 Thompson Square

The significance of Thompson Square has been acknowledged by its status on the State Heritage Register and more recently, the site has been nominated to the National Heritage Register (NHL) although a determination is yet to be made on the application.

#### **State Heritage Register Listing: Thompson Square Conservation Area Listing no. 00126**

Thompson Square was initially gazetted in a Permanent Conservation Order; the listing included most of the buildings surrounding it. Excluded from the listing were two items: the Macquarie Arms Hotel and the house at no. 5 Thompson Square. Both of these places were already protected under existing Permanent Conservation Orders. A statement of significance exists for the Thompson Square Conservation Area:

*“Thompson Square is one of the oldest public squares in Australia and notable for the large number of Colonial Georgian buildings which surround it. It is the only public space remaining from the original town and has played an important part in the history of the town. It is the only remaining civic space as laid out by Governor Macquarie and is a vital precinct in the preservation of the early Colonial character of Windsor. The Square reflects Macquarie's visionary schemes for town planning excellence in the infant colony (Sheedy 1975) – (updated 30 September 1997)”.*

(State Heritage Register: Statement of Significance Listing Number 001126)

#### **National Heritage Register Nomination: Thompson Square Conservation Precinct, Thompson Square, Windsor, NSW, Australia (Place ID 106230)**

A nomination of the Thompson Square Conservation Precinct to the NHL was submitted to the Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Community in February 2012. The Statement of Significance has been reproduced below. A determination by the Australian Heritage Council has not yet been made:

*“Thompson Square is not only rare: it is unique.*

*“There is no other eighteenth-century civic square in Australia.*

*“Thompson Square Conservation Precinct has evolved over 217 years. It is considered Australia's earliest remaining civic square and pre-dates Governor Lachlan Macquarie's formalisation of Thompson Square after 1810. Located adjacent to the Hawkesbury River, it embodies the location for the civic square where settlers obtained supplies, a location for the mooring of vessels at King's Wharf, the first punt to cross the river, the first purpose built hotel in Australia and the location for the first bridge to cross the River. The square also provides extensive archaeological potential in regard to the early settlement of Windsor, both above and below ground, particularly from the 1795 wharf, the 1815 wharf, and the barrel drain that underlies the square.*

*“The square reflects Governor Macquarie's visionary schemes for town planning excellence in the infant colony (Sheedy 1975) and survives as a key Georgian precinct. It is noted for the large number of important Colonial Georgian buildings that surround the square and that reinforce its character and that of Windsor township.*

*“Beneath the open spaces, and roadways of Thompson Square within the buildings that surround it and their garden soil, there is a high potential to yield very valuable information about the cultural development of the space which has been in consistent use by Europeans since 1795 and by Aboriginal [sic] for millennia. The European archaeological deposits in Thompson Square reflect a small port, a busy entrepot, a civic square, a business centre and a residential area, all within a very tight compass.*

*“The square as a public green space, has had its visual integrity harmed, been reduced in usable size and unfortunately suffered adversely functionally and aesthetically by the 1934 formation of a road cutting diagonally through it, leading to the bridge over the river”.*

Statement of Significance: Nominated Place on the National Heritage Register Place ID 106230; accessed 9/05/2012 Australian Heritage Database online

### 8.3.3 Windsor Bridge

#### **Roads and Maritime Services Section 170 Register: Item ID 4309589**

The existing bridge is not listed on the State Heritage Register but it is included in the Department of Roads and Maritime Services “Heritage and Conservation Register” (s 170 Register). The listing for the bridge has the following statement of significance for it.

*“The Windsor Bridge has a high level of historic, technical, aesthetic and social significance as an important historical and physical landmark in one of the State's pre-eminent historic towns, and in the wider Sydney region. It is the oldest extant crossing of the Hawkesbury River. Together with the successive crossings upstream at Richmond, this bridge has played a major role in shaping the history of the Hawkesbury area, functioning for well over a century as an all important link between the communities on either side of the River and as an essential component in a through route of importance in the development of the Sydney region. The series of major alterations to the structure since its construction articulate the continuing difficulties of negotiating a crossing of this major waterway with its frequent floods. The Windsor Bridge has landmark qualities as one of only two bridge crossings of the Hawkesbury River in the Hawkesbury area and as such it defines the surrounding network of roads. It is a large structure, and although simple in appearance, impressive. The bridge represents a major engineering project in the State for its time. The addition of a reinforced concrete beam deck to replace the timber deck in the 1920s is a relatively early use of this technology. The River and this crossing of it has [sic] defined the life of several generations of local inhabitants on both sides of the River. As the suburban outskirts of Sydney widen and come closer to the still distinct and distinctive Macquarie towns, the rich history of the area and its physical remains become increasingly important to the community's sense of identity. The Windsor Bridge is thus an important part of Windsor's history and identity”.*



## 8.3.4 Macquarie Arms Hotel

**State Heritage Register: Listing no. 00041**

*“Opened in 1815 and constructed by emancipist Richard Fitzgerald in response to specific directions from Governor Macquarie, the Macquarie Arms Hotel is of exceptional significance as the most sophisticated and most intact major commercial building dating to the pre-1820 colonial period of Australia’s history. Playing a pivotal role in Macquarie’s town plan for Windsor, the Macquarie Arms Hotel is the most substantial building to form part of Thompson Square, the best Georgian town square on mainland Australia. The building contains numerous rare and aesthetically superior elements, and continues to be widely recognised for its importance to the understanding of settlement, urban design, and architecture during the colonial period, while its historic associations carry strong cultural messages of the period’s society and government. It has been long established by art and architectural historians, and has a prominent place in the contemporary social life of Windsor”.*

## 8.3.5 House and outbuilding 5 Thompson Square Windsor: SHR 00005

A statement of significance for this building does not exist on the State Heritage Register, however a Heritage Branch file on the listing report states:

*5 Thompson Square is classified by the National Trust. It is a key building which forms part of the Thompson Square group of buildings lending character to this important area.<sup>563</sup>*

## 8.3.6 Bridgeview: LEP item ID I274

*Bridgeview is of aesthetic significance as a good and substantial example of a Federation bungalow that displays a high degree of integrity. Its location overlooking Windsor Bridge and Thompson Square makes it a local landmark.*

*Date Significance Updated: 03 Sep 02*

## 8.4 Why is Thompson Square and its Components Valued?

The heritage listings as well as the public opinion expressed in various forums confirm that Thompson Square as a precinct and the components that are encompassed within it are recognised and valued as important cultural places. However, there have been very few instances where an assessment of significance has been made that explicitly evaluates the reasons for why the place and its elements are important; these statements have been presented in the preceding section.

Examining the statements of significance the following reasons are given as to why public and professional opinion values this place and its individual components. The points below are from the statements of significance:

- *Thompson Square is one of the oldest public squares in Australia*
- *It is notable for the large number of “Georgian” buildings that surround it*
- *It is the only public space remaining from the original town*
- *It is the only remaining civic space laid out by Macquarie that remains intact*
- *It reflects Macquarie’s vision for town planning*
- *It has played an important part in the history of the town*
- *It is an important component that defines the historic character of Windsor*
- *The Macquarie Arms Hotel is an important and intact pre-1820 commercial building, it is an important architectural item, reflects contemporary views on planning and social status and makes a major contribution to the square*

<sup>563</sup> Heritage Branch File s90/06110/001; not available online.

- *The majority of buildings are identified because of their contribution to the character of the square*
- *The present bridge is important because it is the oldest extant bridge on the Hawkesbury River and has linked both sides for over a century. It has landmark qualities and technical values*

Only very recently the archaeological potential of the area has emerged as an issue of importance

Apart from the local listing for "Bridgeview" (which is specific to its architectural and landmark qualities) the issue of cultural value for the landscape on the northern side of the river has not been raised even though it was alienated for European use a year earlier than Thompson Square. It is a cultural landscape that is as explicit with respect to its evolution over two centuries as is that of Thompson Square. The north bank however, does not and has never attracted the same degree of support and opinion as the land on the southern side of the river and, specifically, Thompson Square. Clearly, the complexity of the landscape in Thompson Square and its picturesque qualities appeal to us and has done so for a very long time. A more "academic" response identifies historical events or associations and technical aspects that also have value for us.

It is worth reconsidering the existing statements of significance in light of the extensive research and analysis that has been undertaken for this project.

### **Thompson Square is one of the oldest public squares in Australia**

Of the existing statements of significance which make this claim, some recognise that there are two phases of space encompassed here – the area associated with Green Hills and that defined by Governor Macquarie. One statement of significance calls this a civic space<sup>564</sup> of the Macquarie regime and one a civic square that pre-dates Governor Macquarie but was formalised by him, an eighteenth-century civic square.<sup>565</sup>

The terms "civic space" and "civic square" are however not defined in the statements of significance, which is relevant because the terms are used to describe one of the significant aspects of the item. Civic spaces are conveniently placed locations that attract use by the community for a variety of purposes; they act as the public space for formal and informal uses. By nature of their use, civic spaces can either appear and evolve with a settlement, or they can be planned. The common factor is that it is a space that can be used for different activities, either formal or informal, but always for community purposes.

This definition of a civic space or square accommodates the space in the Green Hills settlement and Governor Macquarie recognised it as a square when he named it "Thompson Square".<sup>566</sup> The historical analysis presented in this report illustrates how very different the space was when it was in Green Hills from the uncluttered space that it became as Thompson Square.

The assessments of significance do not differentiate between the very different qualities encompassed by these two phases. While the term "civic square" has a flexible definition, was the loosely defined open space of Green Hills with civic buildings placed around and within it a public square? Perhaps not deliberately so until Macquarie formalised it and turned it from a space created by the structures within and around it, to a space that was deliberately cleared and named.

Is it accurate to describe the present square as an eighteenth century civic square when it encompasses within it only a part of the much larger Green Hills civic precinct, if that is understood to mean the open space associated with the principal public buildings established from 1795-1810? This question is more difficult to answer. What survives visibly of the early civic precinct is a small proportion of the original space. It may still be interpretable as an early public space to a certain degree, but as shown by the assessment of significance, the most substantial connection between Thompson Square today to the civic precinct of Green Hills may only survive in the archaeology.

Is it accurate to call the space that existed at the end of the Macquarie regime, a public square of that period when much of the physical definition for it in terms of buildings evolved well after his departure in 1821? The shape of the square has also changed since it was proclaimed Thompson Square.

<sup>564</sup> Thompson Square Conservation Area SHR statement of significance.

<sup>565</sup> NHL nomination for Thompson Square (Place ID 106230).

<sup>566</sup> *Journal of a Tour of Governor Macquarie's first Inspection of the Interior of the Colony, Commencing on Tuesday the 6<sup>th</sup> of Novr. 1810.* Online transcript, [The ALL Project](#), Macquarie University.



What appears to be the intent of the existing statements is to recognise that Thompson Square encompasses an open area of land that has been associated with public use in some form or other since 1795, which is an undisputable fact.

The comparative analysis undertaken for this project has identified only one other comparable site to Thompson Square with respect to this long period of use. This is Macquarie Place in Sydney that emerged in 1792 as open space associated with civic buildings and was formalised by Governor Macquarie in 1810. Hyde Park was used informally from the 1790s but was later transformed into a formally designed city park.

The principal issue that needs to be addressed when characterising Thompson Square as one of the oldest public squares in the country is not the chronological span of occupation and use but the notion that the present square is a preservation of “an eighteenth century civic space” or a civic space “laid out by Governor Macquarie”. It could be taken as a suggestion that the square represents a moment preserved in time. It is neither; it is smaller than the Green Hills precinct and while the space is greatly defined by Governor Macquarie’s vision and influence its present form was not defined until at least the middle years of the nineteenth century when the land on the eastern boundary was subdivided into the present allotments. This can be demonstrated by the historical analysis presented in this report (Section 4.0). Further, the buildings and public spaces that define its character date from 1815 to the 1950s and owe much to restoration projects of the 1970s and 1980s.

Thompson Square is, as the National Heritage Register nomination recognises, the product of over two centuries of evolution; to define it as “eighteenth century” or “Macquarie era” or only “one of the oldest public squares” is to downplay the complexity of the evolution of this space over time and its many associations. Thompson Square has a far more interesting story to tell and associations to claim.

#### **It is notable for the large number of “Colonial Georgian” buildings that surround it**

The earliest surviving building, the Macquarie Arms Hotel, opened in 1815 and is “Georgian” in period and in architectural style. The Macquarie Arms Hotel is the only building surviving from Governor Macquarie’s time. The former inn at 7 Thompson Square (now part of the Hawkesbury Regional Museum), built in 1835 just makes it into the Colonial Georgian period, and is built to the “Old Colonial Regency” style.<sup>567</sup> Its later Victorian appearance is due to later changes to the verandah. The third building that is likely to fit into the late Georgian period of construction is the building at 62 George Street, the surviving section of which was probably built in the late 1830s. The adjacent building is an add-on that post date the 1880s.

Thompson Square cannot really be termed a “Georgian precinct” as has been the case either in terms of the evolution of its space or the building stock. The majority of the buildings that surround the square date from early Victorian period through to the 1920s and one from the 1950s. Some of the earlier nineteenth century buildings that surround it have stylistic features that derive from Georgian architecture but Thompson Square cannot be defined as a space surrounded by a large number of Colonial Georgian buildings. The statements are not intended to be misleading, but reflect the same mindset that is apparent in the inferences of this statement and that discussed in the preceding section; there is a preconception of this place that colours all statements about Thompson Square. Thompson Square has important picturesque qualities that have been valued in the past and continue to be so and it has several fine nineteenth century buildings. But rather than reinforce a not entirely accurate image of Thompson square as a preserved “Georgian” square, we suggest its more complex history of change and use should be recognised.

#### **It is the only public space remaining from the original town**

It is not entirely clear whether “original town” means the Green Hills settlement of Macquarie’s town of Windsor. The historical analysis in this report indicates that perhaps the Green Hills settlement should be thought of as a village that provided the nucleus for a later town. It should also be noted that Macquarie’s Windsor had two public squares, the other being McQuade Park.

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<sup>567</sup> The description of this style has been taken from R Apperly *et al* 1989: 28. The Doctors House is included in the “Old Colonial Regency” period which ended in c. 1840 after Victoria ascended the throne in 1837. The 1842 Armstrong survey shows an “old inn” where the Doctors House stands, putting the building in the early Victorian period and further supporting its post-1840s construction date.

Thompson Square when forming as part of the Green Hills village was not a consciously designed urban space. The historical evidence indicates that with the exception of spaces such as the garden around Government House, within individual allotments and directly associated with buildings; the open space was more of a negative space, the land that existed around those occupation areas. So, while it could be considered “public space” in that it was the means to, through and around these places and to and from the wharf, it was not a consciously designed urban space at this period. It is though, the only remnant of the larger Green Hills precinct that remains as a publicly accessible open space today.

### **It is the only remaining civic space laid out by Macquarie that remains intact**

As discussed earlier, Thompson Square is not an entirely Macquarie-era space. The northern end was defined in this period but has since been modified because of the present bridge, the western side is defined by one building and allotments defined in this period but the eastern side is a composite of an approximate eighteenth century boundary and mid-nineteenth century allotments. The southern side is a composite of an eighteenth century track, the Macquarie period planned road and some later modifications. Thompson Square does owe much to the town plan extended into this space by Governor Macquarie but, as the earlier discussions have made clear it is a more complex public space than that derived from a single phase.

It is also not accurate to say that this remains the only intact civic space that owes its genesis to Governor Macquarie’s town planning. Several of the large squares planned by the Governor for his towns can still be discerned in the modern town plans as intact historical identities even if uses have changed, especially at Richmond (Richmond Park), at Wilberforce (Wilberforce Park), and McQuade Park in Windsor. Those planned for Parramatta, Liverpool, Bathurst, Campbelltown and Newcastle are no longer readily identifiable. McQuade Park preserves the original square for the planned town; like all the others including Thompson Square it has been modified later in its history but is a readily recognisable connection to the orderly spaces intended by the governor.

In Sydney the most obvious civic space, the cluster of public buildings along Macquarie Street ending in Hyde Park may not have the same relationship to the open space of the park as the civic spaces in the regional towns but it is a powerful expression of the impact of Governor Macquarie on town planning.

It is also worth noting that all the Macquarie-planned towns provided for a major square or open space and smaller reserves for various purposes, such as schools or markets or cemeteries. The inclusion of the open space of the Green Hills settlement may be unusual that it existed before the town plan and was incorporated into it but Macquarie’s management of that space ended in it conforming to other towns that encompassed greater and lesser open spaces for community use.

### **It reflects Macquarie’s vision for town planning**

Thompson Square is in large part a product of Governor Macquarie’s determination to have well-ordered, regular and liveable town spaces. The regular allotments on the western side of the square, the well-constructed Macquarie Arms Hotel, the provision of well formed streets, services such as drainage and better accommodation for the vital river traffic all derive from his influence. Thompson Square has been cited as an unusual case of his town planning where Macquarie accommodated an existing open space within this new regulated landscape: this is true, but in a broader sense it can be seen as consistent with the policies he established for existing towns. Directives were issued for improved building standards, streets and civic spaces and these had to be applied to the haphazard growth of a town like Sydney. In a sense, therefore, Thompson Square may be seen as an exemplar of Macquarie’s consistent “vision” of town planning when it had to be applied to the irregular growth of the colony as he found it. The new towns he founded, where he could apply these urban planning principles might be said to represent the purest expression of his objectives and those pre-existing places where his requirements were applied are examples of where an ideal met reality; in Windsor both are expressed in the town plan and the extension of it to Thompson Square.

### **It has played an important part in the history of the town**

It is true that the space at Green Hills played an important part in the history of the town. The contribution needs to be more precisely defined with respect to its nature and at what time or periods that Thompson Square has figured prominently in the history of the town. It would not be correct to suggest that Thompson Square has always had a consistent level of importance throughout its entire history. The historical analysis has provided contemporary evidence that shows periods when the square was run-down, neglected and the haunt of the town’s undesirables. But certainly there are



seminal periods in the development of the town and region in which this place was of critical importance. The obvious example is its role as part of the larger civic precinct established as a service centre for the settlement at Green Hills. It could also be argued that the relationship of the square to the wharf made this place of vital importance up to the decline of river traffic in the second half of the nineteenth century. The relationship of the wharf to the square and as the principal means of public access to that wharf and the punt meant that it was a focus of town life. This was recognised in the nomination paper for the inclusion of Thompson Square on the National Heritage Register.

However, it is also helpful to understand that Thompson Square can be considered valuable not only for those times when it had a starring role on the life of the town but for those times when its less prominent role contributes to understanding important changes in the dynamics of the town. In the latter years of the nineteenth century and even the early decades of the twentieth century the economy of the town had changed and the focus of commercial and other activities had shifted to the "new town". Apart from the vital role played by the bridge linking the communities on both sides of the river, Thompson Square, as discussed in the preceding section, became run down and the need for revitalisation was recognised. This theme in the history of Thompson Square might not be "important" but it is instructive in understanding how Windsor was part of a greater regional history and evolved under the influence of external factors such as changing methods of transport.

### **It is an important component that defines the historic character of Windsor**

What is the "historic character" of Windsor? With reference to the existing listings for Thompson Square one identifies it as having an early colonial character and the other that the "Georgian" buildings around it help to define the character of the Square and Thompson Square is instrumental in establishing the character of the town. As the preceding discussion has made clear Thompson Square is not just Georgian or early colonial; it is a complex layering of elements that encompass over two hundred years of European settlement. The "historic character" of Windsor is therefore complex.

Perhaps what the existing statements of significance are recognising is that quite simply Thompson Square looks "old" and is therefore valuable in the context of historical character in Australia. It has interesting buildings that are readily identified as "historic" and they have settled into their picturesque setting. Thompson Square identifies this as a place that has been settled for a long time. Thompson Square is valuable because it provides an easily recognisable sense of place and identity that can be extended to the rest of the town.

There is a sub-text to this simple statement that needs to be addressed; that of setting. It is easy to demonstrate that the combination of the buildings, the landscape, the space and the relationship of Thompson Square to the river and bridge have created a picturesque, harmonious and appealing landscape that have attracted people for many years. There are pictures and postcards of "Windsor" for at least a century with Thompson Square as a central subject. As well as St Matthew's Church, Thompson Square is probably the most popular subject for accomplished and less than accomplished artistic endeavours for the same period.

So this statement is a truism but it could be more explicit; the "historic character" of Windsor might be simply that it's old and it mostly looks old and that doesn't rely on the identification of a specific period of time to be relevant. Thompson Square, because it is externally so little changed is one of the best expressions of this long period of people and landscape adjusting to each other. The fact that the adjustment here has created an appealing landscape increases the value placed on this combination of culture, nature, artifice and practicality.

**The Macquarie Arms Hotel is an important and intact pre-1820 commercial building, it is an important architectural item, reflects contemporary views on planning and social status and makes a major contribution to Thompson Square;**

**The majority of buildings are identified because of their contribution to the character of Thompson Square**

Apart from the age of the Macquarie Arms Hotel all the statements made in relation to it could be applied to all the buildings that surround Thompson Square. All buildings demonstrate to varying degrees, contemporary views on planning and social status, as well as economics, the prevailing popular aesthetic and the individual (owner and designer's) response to their environment and perceived place in it. It's why all buildings, even those that are not in "good taste" or the "best example" have a role to play in heritage evaluation. They express the general state of the community at a particular time and individual expression within those contemporary standards. Some buildings can have an extra layer of "value" because they are very good examples of their type or a particular style; they are important buildings because they are "good" buildings and they would be "good" or "significant" even located away from their particular setting. Sometimes a building, like any other relic or work is important because it is rare either in type or, more often, age. A building that survives to any great age in Australia deserves recognition.

The identification of the Macquarie Arms Hotel in particular as the subject of an individual statement of significance is, in part, accidental; a response to perceived threats or necessary works and the standard heritage industry practice to managing those impacts by understanding what it is about a place that we want to maintain. What is more interesting about the statement of significance for this building is the emphasis on its importance in the Macquarie – period landscape and particularly its starring role in "the best Georgian town square on mainland Australia".

The hotel is an outstanding Macquarie-era building, is a rare example of its type and is a major component of Thompson Square. It also has approximately two hundred years of use and change since that time which had no role to play in the statement of significance other than its popularity as a present-day social venue. Like the public statements of significance for Thompson Square there is in this statement an overwhelming desire to create an icon of a romantic colonial past set in the "Georgian" period with its associated sensibilities and aesthetic. This icon becomes inextricably tied to the towering figure of Lachlan Macquarie and becomes more important because of its almost singular survival.

Thompson Square has a far more interesting story to tell and associations to claim than the reasonably one-dimensional model that emerges from most of the existing statements of significance.

The accepted relationship of the fabric of Thompson Square with the reasons why items or elements are listed is best illustrated the statement of significance:

*"Thompson Square is one of the oldest public squares in Australia and notable for the large number of Colonial Georgian buildings which surround it. It is the only public space remaining from the original town and has played an important part in the history of the town. It is the only remaining civic space as laid out by Governor Macquarie and is a vital precinct in the preservation of the early Colonial character of Windsor. The Square reflects Macquarie's visionary schemes for town planning excellence in the infant colony (Sheedy 1975) – (updated 30 September 1997)".*

(State Heritage Register: Statement of Significance Listing Number 001126)

The listing states that Thompson Square is surrounded by a number of Colonial Georgian buildings. This statement is followed by an inventory of every building around the square, most dated in the inventory listing and, as this analysis has demonstrated only three buildings, the Macquarie Arms Hotel and the Hawkesbury Museum, and one section of another building at 62 George Street were actually built in the Georgian period.



**The present bridge is important because it is the oldest extant bridge on the Hawkesbury River and has linked both sides for over a century. It has landmark qualities and technical values**

The present bridge has never figured in any of the existing evaluations of Thompson Square. It does not fit the model of Thompson Square as an intact early colonial square that has influenced most discussion to date but is also symptomatic of the relatively small recognition that Thompson Square was and is part of a much larger and evolving cultural landscape. Inclusion of the bridge on the RMS Section 170 Register is in part due to its technical values but also because it reflects this regional economy and connection. For the purposes of this analysis a comparative study has been made of the present Windsor Bridge. It was concluded that Windsor Bridge is considered to be a rare item, within the state, relating to its initial construction, its subsequent modifications and survival. Its composition of iron cylinder piers is rare in a bridge built only for road traffic. In combination with timber beam spans, it was unique. The original form survives, with replacement of the superstructure with concrete, in the closely spaced piers and low profile beam/deck combination.

**The archaeological potential of the area only recently has emerged as an issue of importance**

There has been a tacit recognition in the past of the importance of archaeological resources within Thompson Square through the commission of projects designed to identify and record those resources in cases where this evidence has been threatened by construction work.

The nomination form for inclusion of Thompson Square on the National Heritage List makes a more explicit statement of the value of this form of evidence for documenting and understanding the development of this place.

It has been a major component of this project to undertake a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the potential archaeological resource of Thompson Square and the project area. This has demonstrated that the archaeological resource of Thompson Square is comparable in importance to the above ground fabric in its ability to demonstrate important aspects of the development of this place.

## 8.5 What Can Be Concluded?

Thompson Square and its environs is an important cultural place and have been recognised as such for many years. That recognition, however, has been limited by a focus on the early colonial, and especially, Macquarie, eras, its rarity or singularity in this regard, at the expense of the much more complex and perhaps even more significant story which Thompson Square embodies. The following issues should therefore be addressed in a new statement of significance for Thompson Square and its resources.

A detailed analysis of public statements of significance in conjunction with the historical analysis undertaken for the project has identified the following issues:

- There must be precision with respect to definitions such as “public square”, “civic space”, “colonial Georgian”, the “town”
- The relationship between the agricultural settlement at Green Hills, the service centre established on the south bank of the river and the relationship of this settlement to the later planned town of Windsor must be well defined
- There must be a clear understanding that Thompson Square does not preserve one particular period of town development. Thompson Square contains elements from many periods and is the product of a complex layering of development that may encompass elements from 1795 to the present day. The form of the square and the components above and below it all derive from all these phases. Reducing this multi-layered record of occupation to an emphasis on one period reduces the importance of the place.
- The differences between the open space around the buildings and allotments added to the Green Hills precinct and the planned urban space that evolved from the Macquarie period onwards must be identified
- The relationship between Thompson Square and McQuade Park needs to be explicit in terms of the role of the open spaces in the town. Thompson Square was unusual in that it existed before the town but Macquarie’s management of the space led to it conforming to

other towns that included large and lesser open spaces for public purposes. At Windsor, McQuade Park preserves the original main square of the planned town and the pre-existing Thompson Square was managed so that it evolved into a smaller public space consistent with other lesser reserves in the planned towns.

- The belief that Thompson Square is singular in that it remains the only extant civic space that owes its genesis to Governor Macquarie's town planning must be corrected. Several of the large squares planned by the Governor for his towns can be discerned in those modern town plans as historical identities; at a Richmond, at Wilberforce, and at Hyde Park. At Windsor the open space of McQuade Park preserves the original square for the planned town; like all the others including Thompson Square it has been modified later in its history but is a readily recognisable connection to the orderly spaces intended by the governor. In Sydney the most obvious civic space, the cluster of public buildings along Macquarie Street ending in Hyde Park may not have the same relationship to the open space of the park as the civic spaces in the regional towns but it is a powerful expression of the impact of Governor Macquarie on town planning.
- It has been concluded that Thompson Square is an excellent example of the Macquarie paradigm for town planning and that is true if the elements of Thompson Square that derive from this phase can be isolated. More accurately the manipulation of the space and its inclusion in the town is probably more illustrative of how the existing space of Thompson Square was made to conform to the model of a smaller reserve seen in several of the planned towns. Less accurately, Thompson Square has been cited as an unusual case of his town planning where the governor accommodated an existing open space within this new regulated landscape. In a broad sense it can be seen as consistent with the policies he established for existing towns. The new towns he founded, where he could apply these urban planning principles might be said to represent the purest expression of his objectives and those existing places where his requirements were applied are examples of where an ideal met reality; Sydney is a prime example of the latter and in Windsor both the ideal and the practical are expressed in the town plan and the extension of it to Thompson Square
- Existing evaluations imply that Thompson Square has played a critical role in the development of the town; the emphasis has been on the Green Hills and Macquarie periods. However, the relationship of Thompson Square to the town is more complex and has been subject to peaks and troughs. A more balanced view of the role of Thompson Square is to understand that it provides valuable evidence not only for those times when it had a starring role on the life of the town but also when it had a less prominent role. This theme in the history of Thompson Square might not be "important" but it is instructive in understanding how Windsor was part of a greater regional history and changed under the influence of external factors such as new methods of transport.
- The relationship of Thompson Square to the rest of the town and how this place helps to shape the public profile of Windsor could be more explicitly defined. There has been an emphasis placed on establishing it as a specific type of square, Georgian or Macquarie era; this appears to confer a similar antiquity and important historical association to the rest of the town. This analysis has concluded that the better preservation of the fabric and public space in Thompson Square, irrespective of its age, provides an easily recognisable sense of place and identity that can be extended to the rest of the town.
- There has been virtually no recognition of the importance of Thompson Square within a wider cultural landscape and the importance of the setting to the identity of this as an historic place, one that has been accepted as an instantly recognisable symbol of Windsor for over a century. The appealing landscape increases the value placed on this combination of culture, nature, artifice and practicality.
- There has been a very great disconnect between the reasons for listing individual items of heritage significance and the reality of their context. The emphasis here, like that in the envelope of the square, has been on the importance of buildings and other works as contributors to the constructed icon of the Georgian town square. The fact that only three buildings were constructed in the Georgian period and two of these at the very end has not been questioned and neither the hotel nor any other building or work in Thompson



Square has been evaluated for its role in defining the long period of occupation or its complexity

- Only recently has any consideration been given to elements that define more than the built environment of Thompson Square, or the importance of its greater regional context. These more recently identified components include archaeological evidence, relics and works such as the existing bridge, views and urban space.

## 8.6 Assessment against the NSW heritage criteria

To enable consistent evaluations to be made of potential heritage items and for heritage items to be equably compared a set of standard evaluation criteria has been developed for use in the New South Wales planning system. The criteria address issues of historical importance, aesthetic considerations, technical values, importance to the community and relative rarity or the value of an item as an example of its kind. Separately consideration is given to whom the values expressed in the evaluation of significance have relevance; a local community, the people of the state, for the country or even for an international community.

The “items” that will be impacted by the project are Thompson Square, and its component elements, and the existing Windsor Bridge. Land on the northern side of the river remains formally unrecognised as a heritage item but as discovered during this investigation, it too has a role to play in the development of the locality. These three major components are evaluated for their cultural significance using the standard criteria in the following sections.

### 8.6.1 Thompson Square

#### CRITERION (a)

*An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item is important in the course, or pattern, of the local area's cultural or natural history*

#### RESPONSE

Thompson Square encompasses part of the civic area established in 1795 to service to the Green Hills agricultural farms on the northern bank of the Hawkesbury River. The civic area was established on the southern bank and expanded to encompass administrative buildings and other service buildings, improvements including a wharf, landscape works as well as leasehold land. In this period of development, 1795-1810, the few buildings and wharf built in the first two years greatly expanded beyond the area of the present Thompson Square and included major building and landscape works. Thompson Square is the only extant element of the open space that surrounded these works.

Green Hills was the third agricultural settlement in Australian following Sydney and Parramatta and was vital to the success of the colony providing much needed food in the first years of settlement. Green Hills also provided a base for outward exploration and expansion of the colony. Its population provides a representative demographic of the colony in its earliest years and these people also represented a significant political faction, for example, during the administration of Governor Bligh.

Thompson Square became part of the planned town of Windsor established by Governor Macquarie in 1810 along with four other towns on the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system. It was the only one of these towns to incorporate an existing settlement; in this case the service centre for the Green Hills agricultural lands. Thompson Square encompasses part of this service centre but the shape of the open space was managed to conform to a standard plan the governor was initiating throughout all the towns. Thompson Square evolved to become a smaller public reserve while the principal town square was planned in the centre of the new town; this is the site of McQuade Park. The standard town plan was extended to encompass the older settled area and existing boundaries and new allotments, roads and landscape works were used to regularise this older less-defined space and to improve the amenity and facility of the place by better planned and executed works in the same manner that was occurring in other established centres such as Sydney and Parramatta. The provisions for the Macquarie Arms Hotel, drainage and improved wharf facilities all demonstrate this concern and foresight for well-planned, built and functioning towns.

The location of the wharf that serviced the river traffic to this settlement at Thompson Square meant that this place became an important focus of town life. The many inns and hotels, commercial outlets including the large warehouse of Andrew Thompson on the eastern side of Thompson Square and the several administrative buildings here demonstrate this role. Thompson Square retained this importance until the decline of river traffic in the later years of the nineteenth century.

From that period the focus of the town's commercial life shifted to the west demonstrated by the



change in function of several inns to private occupation, the construction of specifically built residences and the emergence of the public reserves. These physical and historical changes illustrate important economic and social changes within the town and its place in the region. The construction of the bridge in 1874 was an important event in the life of the town but the alterations made to Thompson Square to enable it to be built illustrate the changes that were beginning to form. Equally, the construction of the new approach to the bridge in 1934 illustrates how the place was viewed at the time.

The emerging heritage awareness of Australian society from the early years of the twentieth century through to its consolidation in the 1970s and 1980s, demonstrated by the enactment of heritage legislation, is illustrated by the restoration and renewal programs undertaken in Thompson Square. Early programs of this type in the 1930s and 1940s were more concerned with civic amenity but those of the later decades of the twentieth century which have strongly influenced the current appearance of Thompson Square, reflect both a national and local awareness of the Australian past and its use in creating local and national identity. This aspect of Thompson Square's relationship to the town is evidenced by the several heritage listings for the square and places within it.

Thompson Square is a product of over two centuries of development and the fabric contained within it, above and below ground, the green space within it, and the views to and from it, its setting, provide a narrative of its development from the period of the Green Hills settlement through to the present day. These resources provide specific evidence of the evolution of this town and region, influences that have been important in that evolution and the growing awareness of the importance of this past in forming our present identity and sense of place.

## CRITERION (b)

*An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of the local area*

## RESPONSE

Thompson Square is named after a man prominent in early Sydney and, particularly, in Green Hills. Andrew Thompson arrived as a convict in 1792, joined the police force in 1793 and became chief constable in 1798 at the time he arrived at Green Hills. This became his home and centre of his business interests for the rest of his life. Thompson Square encompassed one of his houses and several commercial buildings that were particularly important in the regional economy. By 1806 he was the wealthiest settler in the colony. He was the friend of several governors, particularly Lachlan Macquarie. Thompson died in 1810. The bequests from his estate were influential in the evolution not only of Thompson Square but the land encompassed within the larger earlier Green Hills precinct.

Thompson's life illustrates many aspects of life in early Australia. His swift rise to wealth illustrates the government attitude towards emancipists. His business choices provide evidence of contemporary thinking with respect to the economy. He was a very significant influence in industry and commerce as well as a respected and trusted member of the civil administration.

Thompson Square is also directly associated with Governor Lachlan Macquarie one of the most important figures in Australian history. Macquarie named the square in honour and respect for his friend. Some of the important aspects of its form and appearance derive directly from his involvement in the urban plan of the new town of Windsor.

Thompson Square has been the home and business place of several important local and regional identities including John Howe and James McGrath who were involved with construction of the Macquarie-era wharf and brick drain within Thompson Square and Robert Fitzgerald who built and owned the Macquarie Arms Hotel at the instructions of Governor Macquarie.

For approximately half a century it was the centre of regional administration with buildings within or bordering it devoted to government, law enforcement, the military, the economy, health, spiritual endeavours, education and provisioning.

**CRITERION (c)**

*An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (State); OR An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area*

**RESPONSE**

Thompson Square is a cultural landscape that has evolved over more than two centuries. It is an instantly recognisable symbol of the town of Windsor and has been so for more than a century. The prominence of Thompson Square in this regard can be demonstrated by the many creative projects that have it as a focus; drawings, paintings, photographs, postcards and stories and articles that feature the square.

The cultural landscape of Thompson Square also embodies the historic identity of the town of Windsor. This derives from the survival of intact and evocative fabric of several periods and restoration projects that have enhanced this fabric. The importance of Thompson Square in this respect can be demonstrated by its prominence in art and literature as a representation of Windsor and by more recent literature and responses to planned changes to the site that have focused on its importance as a "colonial" or "Georgian" space; an incorrect conclusion but one illustrative of how the site is viewed by the people who live in and around it.

The incorporation of open space from the original Green Hills service area provided the nucleus for the present square. The latter owes much to the urban planning standards established and initiated by Governor Macquarie. The informal space of the earlier Green Hills was moulded by Macquarie to conform to his ideals of a well-planned, well-built and functioning urban environment. He extended the standard town plan laid out for Windsor, with its centrally located main square (now McQuade Park) to encompass the older space and by establishing allotments, a regularised waterfront and a well-defined street at the southern end and using the older boundary of the former Thompson property on the eastern boundary he created a smaller public square similar to others that were planned for the other Hawkesbury-Nepean towns. Several of these greater and lesser squares are still visible, coherent historical identities in those towns as are Thompson Square and McQuade Park.

Macquarie's high standards for urban living extended beyond urban planning to the fabric of buildings and other works and this can be demonstrated particularly by the Macquarie Arms Hotel. This was a building specifically provided for by the governor and one that had to conform to his specifications. It remains an outstanding and rare example of its type and time and makes a significant contribution to Thompson square as a prominent structure on a corner location, lending a sense of entry to the place as well as making a contribution to that historic character embodied in the square. More prosaic examples of the extent of Lachlan Macquarie's interest in the amenity of his towns are likely to be provided by archaeological evidence of elements such as a major brick drain laid through the square, a wharf and improvements to the landscape.

The historical factors that were instrumental in the development of Thompson Square were influential in the scope and quality of the buildings that were gradually built around the open space. These buildings can document the broad historical trends of the town and its response to regional changes. They also provide an assemblage of individual and often very fine examples of architecture that encompass works from the early, middle and later years of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century. These buildings are very important in creating the sense of age, place and identity that is so important in the relationship of Thompson Square to the rest of Windsor and beyond it.

The open space, the reserves and roads also make vital contributions to the aesthetic qualities of this place. They provide places to view the built environment, they provide pleasing and contrasting green spaces and they are important elements in their own right in the development of this space. The development of landscaped reserves in the later years of the nineteenth century is informative about the role of Thompson Square at that time. The landscape adds another layer of aesthetic value and historical information to this place. The development of landscaped reserves in the later years of the nineteenth century is informative about the role of Thompson Square at that time. The position of the



roads is informative of the relationship of the town to the river and illustrates the later changes to the purpose of the square with a greater emphasis on transit than destination. The landscape adds another layer of aesthetic value and historical information to this place.

The aesthetic appeal of Thompson Square is not just confined to views within it. Thompson Square retains many of its historic views and vistas, some now obscured by vegetation. The views and vistas allow Thompson Square to be appreciated from several locations and the record of these views to and from the Square stretch back into the nineteenth century. These works demonstrate that this has been a valued landscape for a very long time. It has landmark qualities on the approach to Windsor from the Freemans Reach Road and Wilberforce Road and is a focal point of the town and communicates arrival to Windsor on the approach over the George Street ridge.

#### **CRITERION (d)**

*An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (State); OR An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.*

#### **RESPONSE**

From 1795 to the later years of the nineteenth century, from the service precinct of Green Hills to the urban town square of Windsor this place was a focal point of regional and town life in all possible aspects.

During the later part of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century its importance in the town faded as the changing economy and transportation caused the focus of the town to shift further west. It was during this period, though, when it was landscaped and the combination of built and natural landscapes began to mature that it was increasingly valued for its aesthetic and picturesque qualities.

For the present community it embodies the history of the town, is a symbol for it and gives it a sense of place and identity. It is a place that is used for community activities and is a valued destination for tourists. The vocal and polarising response to the present project demonstrates the importance of Thompson Square to the community of Windsor and beyond.

Thompson Square is also important to a much larger community of those who are concerned about the preservation of evidence that demonstrates the history of this country and its contribution to the modern urban environment. This concern can be demonstrated by amongst others long-term interests of community groups such as the Royal Australian Historical Society and the National Trust of Australia and statutory listings that extend back to the 1960s and even further.

#### **CRITERION (e)**

*An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the area's cultural or natural history*

#### **RESPONSE**

There is no surviving evidence from the Green Hills period of development from 1795-1810 above ground but there is the potential for archaeological evidence to survive from this period providing the only physical connection between the earliest settlement and that of Windsor. This would be a rare opportunity to document evidence from not only the earliest days of settlement at Windsor but of the colony in New South Wales.

As well as evidence from the early period of development, Thompson Square is likely to possess a complex archaeological profile that encompasses occupation, building and landscape improvements from 1795 to the present day including components specifically associated with the Macquarie period of urban design and important events in the town including the construction of the bridge.

The value of this profile is more than the individual components within it; it has value as a cumulative profile of over two centuries of European occupation. It is likely to be the only place in

Windsor that provides that depth of development and one of very few places in New South Wales to be able to do so.

This is an important complementary resource to the works and landscape components that survive above ground; it could provide evidence of periods of settlement for which there is nothing remaining above ground and it could provide greater information for those that do remain there as well as unique evidence of lives and activities.

The archaeology of this place encompasses both terrestrial and maritime resources; the latter could encompass sites of great importance to the earliest settlement including the first wharf as well as other waterfront activities and evidence related to the bridge, bridge construction and travel between the two sides of the river.

## CRITERION (f)

*An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the area's cultural or natural history*

## RESPONSE

Thompson Square is likely to encompass a cumulative archaeological profile that extends from the earliest years of settlement, from 1795 to the present day. It is one of a very few places in New South Wales that has the potential to do so.

Thompson Square preserves a small part of the open space that was a part of the Green Hills service precinct but is largely the product of urban planning initiated by Governor Lachlan Macquarie and added to throughout the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century. The preservation of an urban space like this for nearly the entire span of European settlement is rare particularly as it remains a community space.

As an example of the Macquarie-era town planning it is singular in its incorporation of an existing settlement into one of the new Hawkesbury-Nepean towns.

The practice of naming towns, roads, natural features and many other items in honour of people was a common practice in the early years of Australia but the dedication of the governor of this square in honour of his friend and prominent local resident Andrew Thompson is more unusual.

## CRITERION (G)

*An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's*

- *Cultural or natural places; or*
- *Cultural or natural environments (State); OR*

*An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the area's*

- *Cultural or natural places; or*
- *Cultural or natural environments.*

## RESPONSE

Thompson Square has its origins in the establishment of a precinct that was developed to service a pre-existing agricultural settlement. It has similarities to Parramatta although the more haphazard growth of Green Hills is less common.

The Green Hills precinct was incorporated into the new planned town of Windsor and the definition of the space by works in the Macquarie-era transformed this precinct into a recognisable town square. Thompson Square and McQuade Park are the larger and smaller public squares of Windsor. The creation of reserved spaces for community purposes such as markets, churches and schools is a feature of Macquarie's planning that can be seen in all his new towns and several comparable examples are preserved in places such as Liverpool and Castlereagh. These are important components that are representative of early nineteenth century urban planning that was designed to create well-planned and well-built urban spaces.



The complex cultural landscape of Thompson Square contains elements from almost every phase of its development; archaeological resources might encompass evidence of the first Green Hills period of settlement. This would be a rare survival but also representative of Windsor with fabric that is capable of illustrating the main historical events, influences and many associations that are specific to this place.

#### 8.6.2 Windsor Bridge

### CRITERION (a)

*An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item is important in the course, or pattern, of the local area's cultural or natural history*

### RESPONSE

Windsor Bridge physically demonstrates the connection that has existed between the northern and southern banks of the Hawkesbury River since 1795 and by inference the relationship between the agricultural areas and the service centre located within and around the present site of Thompson Square. The bridge still helps to define the role of Windsor in the region and the principal routes that have existed here since the nineteenth century

The bridge is the oldest surviving crossing over the Hawkesbury section of the Hawkesbury - Nepean River and is only the third means that have been used to cross from the northern to southern banks at Windsor replacing a punt and an earlier ferry that had serviced the town since 1814

It was a major event in the development of the town when the bridge was constructed in 1874 and again when it was raised in 1897. It was also a substantial public works program for the time

The alterations that have been made to this bridge since its construction illustrate the continuing impact of the river and its floods on the lives of the people close by and the improvements that have been made there

The relationship of the bridge to Thompson Square helps to define the relationship of that public space to the river and the changing character of the square as it evolved from a destination to a transit area.

### CRITERION (b)

*An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of the local area*

### RESPONSE

Windsor Bridge was the outcome of extensive local political agitation and represents a significant community action designed to improve the management and economy of the town

The design of the bridge came from the NSW Department of Public Works and construction was the work of William King Dixon and Andrew Turnbull, both notable engineers in the colony. Dixon came to the colony to work on the first railway in NSW. Andrew Turnbull was an experienced bridge-builder who became business partners with Dixon before his (Dixon's) death. Andrew Turnbull went on to build many other bridges in the state including one over Cattai Creek and Wisemans Ferry Road.

### CRITERION (c)

*An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (State); OR An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area*

### RESPONSE

Windsor Bridge exemplifies two historical phases in bridge building technology employed in New South Wales in the nineteenth century. It has piers made of cast iron cylinders more usually associated with railway bridges but here designed to resist the severe flooding experienced by the Hawkesbury. The simpler timber

girder superstructure and timber beam deck were more usually employed in the construction of a road bridge. Windsor Bridge is an unusual amalgam of these technologies and this was a response to specific environmental conditions as well as the budget for the project. Despite alterations and substantial refurbishment in 1922 it retains the form of the 1874 bridge.

The replacement of the timber components of the bridge with a mass concrete superstructure was an early use of this material and provided a valuable benchmark in the development of the technology. The replacement was to strengthen the bridge but the final form remained in keeping with the bridge's original scale. It is considered to fall within the broader style of concrete beam bridges but is a variation among this style due to the deck being installed on existing piers.

Windsor Bridge makes a major contribution in the broader views to and from Thompson Square and it has been included in this panorama in photographs and works of art for well over a century and continues to be so. It is a substantial element in the mature cultural landscape and contributes to the picturesque qualities of Thompson Square, its built heritage, landscaping and the relationship to the river. The bridge is an extension of the visual curtilage of Thompson Square with the eye sweeping along it to The Doctors House and to the rest of the square. It is a landmark feature of Windsor.

#### **CRITERION (d)**

*An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (State); OR An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.*

#### **RESPONSE**

Windsor Bridge has been an important part of the wider Windsor community for more than a century

#### **CRITERION (e)**

*An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the area's cultural or natural history*

#### **RESPONSE**

Windsor Bridge encompasses evidence that can inform our current knowledge concerning nineteenth century building practice and very particular aspects of it, for example, the methods used to sink the iron cylinders into the river bottom has yet to be determined

The site of the bridge has potential for important archaeological evidence that pre-dates it relevant to the first wharf of 1795 and its replacement in 1815

#### **CRITERION (f)**

*An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the area's cultural or natural history*

#### **RESPONSE**

Windsor Bridge employs two separate technologies, not unusual for bridge construction in the 1870s but the amalgam of them in one structure is rare. The 1922 change to the superstructure is also uncommon, with mass concrete taking the place of timber. No other bridge like it has been found in NSW.

#### **CRITERION (g)**

*An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's*

- *Cultural or natural places; or*
- *Cultural or natural environments (State); OR*

*An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the area's*



- *Cultural or natural places; or*
- *Cultural or natural environments.*

**RESPONSE**

This criterion does not apply.

## 8.6.3 The North Bank (within the Project Area)

**CRITERION (a)**

*An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item is important in the course, or pattern, of the local area's cultural or natural history*

**RESPONSE**

The north bank of the Hawkesbury River was settled during the initial late eighteenth century period of agricultural settlement. It was part of a land grant made to an ex-convict and was used as a farm. Later an inn was established that was a landmark of the area until the early years of the twentieth century. The area has retained its rural character made possible by long-term uses such as market gardens and turf farms. It retains the early road configurations and general views

**CRITERION (b)**

*An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of the local area*

**RESPONSE**

The land on the northern bank of the river is associated principally with the ex-convict Edward Whitton who acquired the land in 1794, and his descendants. It is also associated with hotel that occupied part of this land for more than fifty years, the Squatter's Arms Hotel.

**CRITERION (c)**

*An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (State); OR An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area*

**RESPONSE**

Views to the northern bank of the Hawkesbury River have changed relatively little in two centuries due to the continuing open character of the landscape. This vista from Thompson Square and including the Windsor Bridge has been the subject of photographs and images for nearly the entire period of European occupation.

There is one heritage listed building on this side of the river adjacent to the project area. "Bridgeview" has been identified as is a fine example of a well-preserved Federation bungalow. Its elevated position makes it a familiar local landmark.

**CRITERION (d)**

*An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (State); OR An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.*

**RESPONSE**

This criterion does not apply

### CRITERION (e)

*An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the area's cultural or natural history*

### RESPONSE

This part of the project area has the potential to encompass archaeological evidence that relates to one of the first grants made on the northern bank in 1794 and the farm that was subsequently developed on it. This area also has the potential for evidence of a landmark, the Squatters Arms Hotel that occupied a site at the junction of Freemans Reach Road for over sixty years. Archaeological testing undertaken for the project has not revealed evidence of either; the land has been subject to erosion and considerable change during the twentieth century.

The project area does preserve evidence of the works carried out to improve the approaches to Windsor Bridge when it was raised in 1897; this has been demonstrated by testing. There is also the potential for archaeological evidence to be found closer to the river.

### CRITERION (f)

*An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (State); OR An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the area's cultural or natural history*

### RESPONSE

If evidence of the first eighteenth century farm and its improvements including those made in the early years of the nineteenth century were identified these would be rare.

If evidence was found of the Squatters Arms Hotel, this also would be rare

Evidence that relates to the works undertaken for the alterations to the bridge would also be rare; they are specific to this bridge and few examples have been found of the same technology.

### CRITERION (G)

*An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's*

- Cultural or natural places; or
- Cultural or natural environments (State); OR

*An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of the area's*

- Cultural or natural places; or
- Cultural or natural environments.

### RESPONSE

Evidence that relates to both the eighteenth and nineteenth century farm and the Squatters Arms Hotel would be both rare and representative of a period of occupation and a type of business that were characteristic of the region but are now no longer represented in above ground fabric or only in a few cases.

## 8.7 LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

An assessment of significance is qualified according to the identity of the community to which an item has relevance and for which it contributes in a meaningful way to the values described in the assessment criteria; historical events or processes, individuals or groups of people, community values, aesthetic and technical qualities, the ability to provide more or new information.

An item can have relevance to the local community, to the state of New South Wales, to the country and in exceptional circumstances to the international community. Some items can be important to more than one community. “Levels” of significance are not intended to imply ascending levels of importance.

This section discusses the level of significance that can be attributed to the three principal areas discussed in this analysis; Thompson Square (and its components), the Windsor Bridge and the land on the northern bank of the Hawkesbury River encompassed within the project area.

#### 8.7.1 Local Significance

An item that is important to the local community is one that provides evidence or reference to persons or processes or events that were instrumental in the development of the town or region, or provide outstanding examples of this evidence. A group of items can define the identity of a particular community and can include buildings or other structures, archaeological resources, spaces and landscape elements such as trees. Generally, local significance is understood to mean that the item is significant within the local government area although the geographic extent of a locally significant item can extend beyond the present government boundary. An item that is of local significance can also be of state significance.

All of the individual items (buildings, works, reserves and the bridge) have been identified in existing heritage listings and are of accepted local significance. The Thompson Square Conservation Area is also of local significance.

The Thompson Square Conservation Area is defined as a parcel of land inclusive of buildings but the SHR listing does not include the views to and from this place. Old Bridge Street and Thompson Square road are included in the plan but Bridge Street is not. The analysis undertaken for this project concludes that these are an integral part of the conservation area and supports their inclusion in the listing. All the roads encompass elements of tracks and paths that date from the 1850s to the 1930s and while some have been intrusive all of them make a contribution to understanding the role and use of this place and its wider relationship to the town and the region. In these they would satisfy criterion (a), historical significance. If Thompson Square as an historical identity can be demonstrated to have significance for the local area then those components that have contributed to its development, its use and its connection to the town and wider geographical context must also be of the same importance.

Similarly the views to and from Thompson Square can be demonstrated to have evolved into an extension of the space enclosed by the square. Images of this extended view of, initially the Green Hills precinct and then Thompson Square survive from as early as 1807 and this vista still features in contemporary images. The matured cultural landscape of Thompson Square, the Windsor Bridge and the river was an important symbol of the town and its historical identity from the later years of the nineteenth century and it remains so. In this context the setting and views can satisfy criterion (a) for their historical values, criterion (c) for their aesthetic values and criterion (d) for its symbolic status with respect to the identity of the town.

The archaeological potential of the area had not been identified due in part to the town of Windsor not being the subject an archaeological management plan. An item is considered to have local heritage significance if it can satisfy one of the standard evaluation criteria. In this case the archaeological potential of the area can satisfy criterion (e), for its research potential, criterion (f), rarity because of its ability to provide evidence of the earliest European settlement of the area from 1795-1810, evidence that relates to the period of civic improvement undertaken by Governor Macquarie in the period 1810-1822 and evidence of sites that were once common features of the town and region but are no longer such as the potential evidence of the Squatters Arms Hotel, as well as uncommon technology (works associated with the construction of Windsor Bridge and its approaches. These aspects of the archaeological profile as well as evidence that relates to the evolution of Thompson Square after the Macquarie period can also fulfil criterion (g) for their ability to provide evidence of events, processes and associations that were important in the development of the town and region.

#### 8.7.2 State significance

An item of state significance needs to satisfy only one of the same evaluation criteria but must demonstrate its importance to the wider community of the people of New South Wales. Three principal items have already been identified to be of state significance; Thompson Square, the



Macquarie Arms Hotel and 5 Thompson Square. By default the remaining buildings in Thompson Square are also assessed to be of state significance because of their inclusion in the conservation area listing.

The issue of significance of the roads and views is the same as that discussed in the preceding section on local significance. These components are integral to the development and appreciation of Thompson Square (criteria a and c) therefore, if Thompson Square is of state significance these components must also be of the same degree of significance because of their integral relationship. Similarly the views are an important component with respect to the setting and historical identity of this place and, by association of the town. These views are important components of the state significant item and should be considered also to be of state significance by satisfying criteria (a, c and d).

Windsor Bridge has been identified as an item of state significance on the RMS (s170) conservation register. The bridge however, is not listed on the SHR. The analysis undertaken for this project has determined that the bridge is also of state significance primarily due to its technical achievement; it is an unusual amalgam of technologies and encompasses early used of materials. It is a combination that appears to be unique in the state and satisfies criterion (c). It is also a major component of the views to and from Thompson Square and it frames the western part of the square; this aspect of the cultural landscape has also been evaluated to be of state significance because of its aesthetic qualities (also criterion c).

The archaeological assessment undertaken for this project has determined that the project area is likely to encompass a complex and important archaeological profile that could include evidence from the first years of settlement (1794 on the northern bank and 1795 on the southern bank) up to the twentieth century. It is a cumulative profile that documents over two centuries of European occupation. The entire profile has local significance because of its ability to more accurately document and reveal evidence of the settlement of the town, particular and sometimes landmark components, its evolution and use and the lives of the people who lived there. There are parts of this profile that have the potential to be of state significance; these would encompass components that derive from the Green Hills period of settlement and those associated with the Macquarie-era development.

Green Hills was the second major agricultural settlement in the colony after the establishment of Parramatta. It is the foundation of the third oldest settlement in the country. The success of farming here was a major factor in the colony surviving and enduring in the first decades of its establishment. This is a place of seminal importance to New South Wales. There is no above ground fabric that remains from this period; archaeological evidence will be the only means of more accurately documenting this period of occupation and providing a physical connection with this place. The analysis undertaken for the project indicates that this archaeological resource is likely to encompass both terrestrial and maritime components. Archaeological evidence that derives from the period of settlement at Windsor that is associated with its expansion during the regime of Governor Lachlan Macquarie also has the potential to be of state significance. Lachlan Macquarie is a towering figure in Australian history; he has been called the father of Australia. His vision and practical application changed the scope of settlement in New South Wales from a prison colony to the foundation of a new nation. The importance of his legacy in the cultural landscape and its value to the present community is exemplified by a program designed to identify his works as the basis of a thematic listing for the state heritage register of New South Wales in 2009 – 2010.

Windsor was one of five towns founded by the Governor on the Hawkesbury Nepean and one for which we have considerable evidence for his direct involvement in its plan and improvements. Thompson Square evolved from the open precinct of the Green Hills settlement into a small public space similar to others that were intended for the other towns due to the direct involvement of the governor. The obvious legacy from this period is the Macquarie Arms Hotel but there are likely to be substantial archaeological components including evidence of drainage, land forming and improvements along the waterfront.

Archaeological evidence from these phases would satisfy criteria (a, b, d, e and f) at a State level.

### 8.7.3 National significance

Prior to changes to the *Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, (EPBC Act) a system for listing items of National significance in a way that protected them under commonwealth legislation did not exist. The Register of the National Estate (RNE) included items that were

considered to be of significance to the nation but the statutory implications of registration extended only to items owned by the Commonwealth. Nominations to the RNE ceased in 2007 and from 2012 it became an archive. Items owned by the Commonwealth were transferred to the Commonwealth Heritage List, established by the EPBC Act.

The National Heritage List (NHL) also established by the EPBC Act is a list of places to Australia. The criteria and the significance threshold for those criteria are at a very high level of significance.

While Thompson Square and many of the surrounding buildings are listed on the RNE, very none of these items were transferred to the NHL. The assessment criteria for listing on the RNE specifically refer to elements that are "outstanding" to the nation.

A nomination form has been prepared for the consideration of Thompson Square to be included on this register (*refer Section 7.2*).

To be identified as a place of cultural value to the nation an item must satisfy one of the following criteria:

- (a) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history
- (b) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history
- (c) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history
- (d) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of (i) a class of Australia's natural or cultural places or; (ii) a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments
- (e) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group
- (f) the place has an outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period
- (g) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons
- (h) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, a group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history
- (i) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the places importance as part of an Indigenous tradition

Thompson Square, the northern bank of the river and Windsor Bridge encompass works, buildings, relics, landscape components that derive from over two centuries of European occupation as well as Aboriginal occupation before and after 1794. All of those items have local significance and many components can be demonstrated to be of state significance.

With respect to the national criteria only those components that have a direct association with events or people that were of critical importance to the foundation, endurance or expansion of the colony as a whole would meet these criteria. It could be argued that the only elements or fabric that would meet this requirement would be those that derive from the Green Hills period of settlement and those that have a direct connection with the work of Governor Lachlan Macquarie.

In the case of evidence related to Green Hills the success of this settlement along with Sydney and Parramatta made long-term settlement and expansion possible and had greater consequences than for its immediate region. With respect to the association of Governor Macquarie, he changed the vision for the settlement and was directly responsible for its expansion and improvement. These two aspects of early settlement and strong administration have resonance for the future success and direction of Australian history; survival, expansion, direction, improvement.

Archaeological evidence of the Green Hills phase of settlement would satisfy the NHL criteria (a), (b) and (c) because of its rarity. There are only a small number of places that can or could encompass physical evidence of the founding years of Australian settlement, before 1810. Archaeological evidence and fabric above the ground, including the Macquarie Arms Hotel, that survives from the

period 1810-1822 and which can be demonstrated to have a direct connection with the influence of Governor Lachlan Macquarie would also satisfy criteria (h).

More difficult to assess is the envelope of Thompson Square. It retains a fragment of open space from the civic precinct of Green Hills but its current form is derived from a variety of influences. These include modelling of the space undertaken in the Macquarie period to make it conform to a small public square similar to other public spaces planned for other Macquarie towns. Subdivision from the middle years of the nineteenth century, an assemblage of buildings that include the Macquarie Arms Hotel of 1815 but the majority being early and late Victorian period as well as early and mid-twentieth century and a waterfront that has components from the early years of the nineteenth century to the present day are other aspects of the past that have influenced the form of Thompson Square today.

Here there is a direct association with Governor Macquarie but it is “diluted” by the many changes and additions that have been made to it in the two hundred years since he dedicated the space. It is not as clear an expression of his direction and intent as more intact and less altered places associated with him. For this reason Thompson Square and the conservation area is still assessed to be of State significance.

## 8.8 Statements of Significance

### 8.8.1 Statement of Significance: Thompson Square

Thompson Square encompasses part of the civic area established in 1795 to service the Green Hills agricultural farms on the northern bank of the Hawkesbury River. The civic area on the southern bank expanded in the period up to 1810 to encompass administrative buildings and other service buildings, a school, place of worship, commercial buildings and improvements including a wharf, landscape works as well as leasehold land. This precinct was considerably larger than the present area of Thompson Square but this is the only extant element of the open space that surrounded these eighteenth and early nineteenth century works. Green Hills was the third settlement in Australia following Sydney and Parramatta, and the second agricultural centre and it was vital to the success of the colony providing much needed food in the first years of settlement. Green Hills also provided a base for outward exploration and expansion of the colony. Its population provides a representative demographic of the colony in its earliest years. There is no surviving evidence from the Green Hills period of development from 1795-1810 above ground but there is the potential for archaeological evidence to survive from this period providing the only physical connection between the earliest settlement and that of Windsor. This would be a rare opportunity to document evidence from not only the earliest days of settlement at Windsor but of the colony in New South Wales.

The civic precinct of Green Hills became part of the planned town of Windsor established by Governor Macquarie in 1810 along with four other towns on the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system. It was the only one of these towns to incorporate an existing settlement. Thompson Square encompasses part of the older service centre but the open space was moulded by means of new allotments and roads and a regularised waterfront to conform to a standard plan the Governor was initiating throughout all the towns. This became a small public reserve, similar to others that were planned for Macquarie towns, while the principal town square was located in the centre of the new town; this is the site of McQuade Park. Several of these greater and lesser squares are still visible, coherent historical identities in other towns such as Liverpool and Castlereagh as Thompson Square and McQuade Park are identifiable components of the Macquarie-era town plan for Windsor.

Thompson Square is named after a man prominent in early Sydney and, particularly, at Green Hills. Andrew Thompson arrived as a convict in 1792 and died in 1810 one of the wealthiest and most respected men in the colony, a personal friend of several governors. Thompson Square encompassed one of his houses and several commercial buildings that were particularly important in the regional economy. The bequests from Thompson's will were influential in the evolution not only of Thompson Square but the land encompassed within the larger earlier Green Hills precinct.

The naming of Thompson Square was the initiative of Governor Lachlan Macquarie; it is a rare personal testimonial. Apart from Thompson this square is most closely associated with this governor, one of the most significant figures in Australian history. Some of the important aspects of its form and appearance derive directly from his involvement. Apart from standard town plans Governor Macquarie's urban planning initiatives required provision for better planned and executed works that improved the facility, function and amenity of towns. Provisions for the Macquarie Arms Hotel,



drainage and improved wharf facilities all demonstrate this concern and foresight with regard to these aspects in the new town of Windsor. The hotel is a significant building in its own right for its architectural qualities, rarity and its contribution to the historic and aesthetic environment of Thompson Square.

The location of the wharf that serviced the river traffic to this settlement at the northern end of Thompson Square meant that this place became an important focus of town life. The many inns and hotels, commercial outlets including the large warehouse of Andrew Thompson on the eastern side of Thompson Square and the several administrative buildings here demonstrate this role. For approximately half a century it was the centre of regional administration with buildings within or bordering it devoted to government, law enforcement, the military, the economy, education, spiritual endeavours, education and provisioning. Thompson Square retained this importance until the decline of river traffic in the later years of the nineteenth century. During this period Thompson Square was the home and business place of several important local and regional identities including John Howe and James McGrath who were involved with construction of the Macquarie-era wharf and brick drain within Thompson Square and Robert Fitzgerald who built and owned the Macquarie Arms Hotel at the instructions of Governor Macquarie.

The buildings that surround Thompson Square can document the broad historical trends of the town and its response to regional changes. They also provide an assemblage of individual and often very fine examples of architecture that encompass works from the early, middle and later years of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century. These buildings are very important in creating the sense of age and place and identity that is so important in the relationship of Thompson Square to the rest of Windsor and beyond it. Several buildings from this post-Macquarie period of development are important for the contribution they make to Thompson Square and should be considered significant in their own right; they include the Doctors House and the Museum building on Bridge Street. These buildings form prominent components of the Thompson Square Conservation Area along with the Macquarie Arms and the house and outbuildings at 5 Thompson Square.

The open space, the reserves and roads also make vital contributions to the aesthetic qualities of this place. They provide places to view the built environment, they provide pleasing and contrasting green spaces and they are important elements in their own right in the development of this space. The establishment of landscaped reserves in the later years of the nineteenth century is informative about the role of Thompson Square at that time. The position of the roads is informative of the relationship of the town to the river but these also document the changing status of Thompson Square from a destination to a transit area. The landscape adds another layer of aesthetic value and historical information to this place.

The aesthetic appeal of Thompson Square is not just confined to views within it. It has landmark qualities on the approach to Windsor from the north and is a focal point of the town and communicates arrival to Windsor on the approach over the George Street ridge. The views and vistas allow Thompson Square to be appreciated from several locations and the record of these views stretch back into the nineteenth century. This demonstrates that this has been a valued landscape for a very long time.

As river traffic decreased the focus of the town's commercial life shifted to the west demonstrated by the change in function of several inns to private occupation, the construction of specifically built residences and the emergence of the public reserves. These physical and historical changes illustrate important economic and social changes within the town and its place in the region. The construction of the bridge in 1874 was an important event in the life of the town and the subsequent alterations to the square illustrate the changing status of the place. It was during this period of change that Thompson Square was landscaped with the idea of parklands started to form. Construction of new approach to this bridge in 1934 was a public work that would have a profound impact on the western side of the public space.

Rehabilitation commenced in the later 1930s and 1940s through small schemes of civic improvements but the real change in the status of Thompson Square was due to the emerging heritage awareness of Australian society to its past. This movement commenced in the early years of the twentieth century and was consolidated in the 1970s and 1980s, demonstrated by the enactment of heritage legislation. Thompson Square provides an outstanding example of this process of cultural awakening. It has been the subject of heritage listings that date back to the 1960s and much of its current appearance is due to restoration programs of the later decades of the twentieth century.

These works and actions reflect both a national and local awareness of the Australian past and its role in creating local and national identity. The cultural landscape of Thompson Square also embodies the historic identity of the town of Windsor. This derives from the survival of intact and evocative fabric of several periods and restoration projects that have enhanced this fabric. The importance of Thompson Square in this respect can be demonstrated by its prominence in art and literature as a representation of Windsor and by more recent literature and responses to planned changes to the site that have focused on its historic importance. For the present community it embodies the history of the town, is a symbol for it and gives it a sense of place and identity. It is a place that is used for community activities and is a valued destination for tourists. The vocal and polarising response to the present project demonstrates the importance of Thompson Square to the community of Windsor and beyond. Thompson Square is also important to a much larger community of those who are concerned about the preservation of evidence that demonstrates the history of this country and its contribution to the modern urban environment. This concern can be demonstrated by amongst others long-term interests of community groups such as the Royal Australian Historical Society and the National Trust of Australia and statutory listings that extend back to the 1960s.

The visible above ground resources of Thompson Square are likely to be complemented by a complex archaeological profile that encompasses occupation, building and landscape improvements from 1795 to the present day including components specifically associated with the Macquarie period of urban design and important events in the town including the construction of the bridge as well as unique evidence of lives and activities. The archaeology of this place encompasses both terrestrial and maritime resources; the later could encompass sites of great importance to the earliest settlement including the first wharf as well as other waterfront activities and evidence related to the bridge, bridge construction and travel between the two sides of the river. The value of this profile is more than the individual components within it; it has value as a cumulative profile of over two centuries of European occupation. It is likely to be the only place in Windsor that provides that depth of development and one of very few places in New South Wales to be able to do so.

Thompson Square is a product of over two centuries of development. It is a complex, evocative cultural landscape and the fabric contained within it, above and below ground, the green space within it, and the views to and from it, provide a narrative of its development from the period of the Green Hills settlement through to the present day and the factors that have influenced this development. It documents the growing awareness of the importance of this past in forming our present identity and sense of place. The preservation of an urban space like this for nearly the entire span of European settlement is rare particularly as it remains a community space.

Thompson Square is of local significance and is significant to the state of New South Wales.

Thompson Square is of local significance and is significant to the state of New South Wales. Evidence contained within it, above and below ground that can be determined to have a direct association with the Green Hills Settlement or the period of expansion under the direction of Governor Lachlan Macquarie would potentially be of National significance.

#### 8.8.2 Statement of Significance: Windsor Bridge

Windsor Bridge has been an important part of the wider Windsor community for more than a century. It physically demonstrates the connection that has existed between the northern and southern banks of the Hawkesbury River since 1795 and by inference the relationship between the agricultural areas and the service centre located within and around the present site of Thompson Square. The bridge still helps to define the role of Windsor in the region and the principal routes that have existed here since the nineteenth century. It is the oldest surviving crossing over the Hawkesbury section of the Hawkesbury - Nepean River and is only the third means that have been used to cross from the northern to southern banks at Windsor replacing a punt and an earlier ferry that had serviced the town since 1814.

Windsor Bridge was the outcome of extensive local political agitation and represents a significant community action designed to improve the management and economy of the town. The construction of this bridge in 1874 was a major event in the development of the town and again so when it was raised in 1897. It was also a substantial public works program for the time. The alterations that have been made to this bridge since its construction illustrate the continuing impact of the river and its floods on the lives of the people close by and the improvements that have been made there.

The design of the bridge came from the NSW Department of Public Works and construction was the work of William King Dixon and Andrew Turnbull, both notable engineers in the colony. The bridge exemplifies two historical phases in bridge building technology employed in New South Wales in the nineteenth century. It has piers made of cast iron cylinders usually associated with railway bridges but here designed to resist the severe flooding experienced by the Hawkesbury. The simple timber girder superstructure and timber beam deck were more usually employed in the construction of a road bridge. The use of the two technologies was a response to specific environmental conditions as well as the budget for the project. Despite raising the bridge level in 1897 and later alterations and substantial refurbishment in 1922 it retains the form of the 1874 bridge. The alterations made in mass concrete are an example of the early use of this material and provided a valuable benchmark in the development of the technology. The combination of materials and technology is unique; no other bridge like it has been identified in New South Wales.

Windsor Bridge encompasses evidence that can inform our current knowledge concerning nineteenth century building practice and very particular aspects of it, for example, the methods used to sink the iron cylinders into the river bottom has yet to be determined. As well the site of the bridge has potential for important archaeological evidence that pre-dates it relevant to the first wharf of 1795 and its replacement in 1815.

The relationship of the bridge to Thompson Square helps to define the connection of that public space to the river and the changing character of the square as it evolved from a destination to a transit area. Windsor Bridge makes a major contribution in the broader views to and from Thompson Square and it has been included in this panorama in photographs and works of art for well over a century and continues to be so. It is a substantial element in the mature cultural landscape and contributes to the picturesque qualities of Thompson Square, its built heritage, landscaping and the relationship to the river. It is a landmark feature in the cultural landscape.

Windsor Bridge is of local significance and is significant to the state of New South Wales



### 8.8.3 Statement of Significance North Bank (land within the project area)

The north bank of the Hawkesbury River was settled during the initial late eighteenth century period of agricultural settlement. The land within the project area was part of a land grant made to an ex-convict, Edward Whitton, and was used by him and his family as a farm and his home. Later an inn, the Squatters Arms, was established that became a landmark of the area until the last years of the nineteenth century.

Views to the northern bank of the Hawkesbury River have changed relatively little in two centuries due to the continuing open character of the landscape made possible by long-term uses such as market gardens and turf farms. It retains the early road configurations. This vista from Thompson Square and including the Windsor Bridge has been the subject of photographs and images for nearly the entire period of European occupation.

There is one heritage listed building on this side of the river adjacent to the project area. "Bridgeview" has been identified as it is a fine example of a well-preserved Federation bungalow. Its elevated position makes it a familiar local landmark. With respect to other cultural resources this part of the project area has the potential to encompass archaeological evidence that relates to one of the first grants made on the northern bank in 1794 and the farm that was subsequently developed on it. This area also has the potential for evidence of a landmark inn, the Squatters Arms that occupied a site at the junction of Freeman's Reach Road, however, archaeological testing undertaken for the project has not revealed evidence of either to date. The land has been subject to erosion and considerable change during the twentieth century. If the first eighteenth century farm and its improvements including those made in the early years of the nineteenth century were identified these would be both rare and representative. If evidence were found of the Squatters Arms Hotel, this also would be rare and representative. Both would provide evidence that once were characteristic of the region but are now no longer represented in above ground fabric or only in a few cases.

The project area does preserve evidence of the works carried out to improve the approaches to Windsor Bridge when it was raised in 1897; this has been demonstrated by testing. There is also the potential for archaeological evidence to be found closer to the river. Evidence that relates to these works would also be rare; they are specific to this bridge and few examples have been found of the same technology.

The cultural resources that are and could be contained within the project area on the northern bank of the river are of local significance and have the potential to be of state significance depending on the nature, scope and integrity of the individual site.