

### 3.6.4 River Crossing – Punt

It would not be until the later part of the nineteenth century that a permanent crossing would be made across the Hawkesbury. Until then, probably from the 1820s or earlier a punt provided the only means of crossing the river. It operated from the middle of the river frontage at the bottom of Thompson Square, a position now just to the west of the present bridge. It can be seen on the 1842 survey (Figure 6) but is more clearly seen on other surveys including one provisionally dated to the mid 1830s; this also shows the position of the wharf. The management of the service was taken over by the government in 1832.

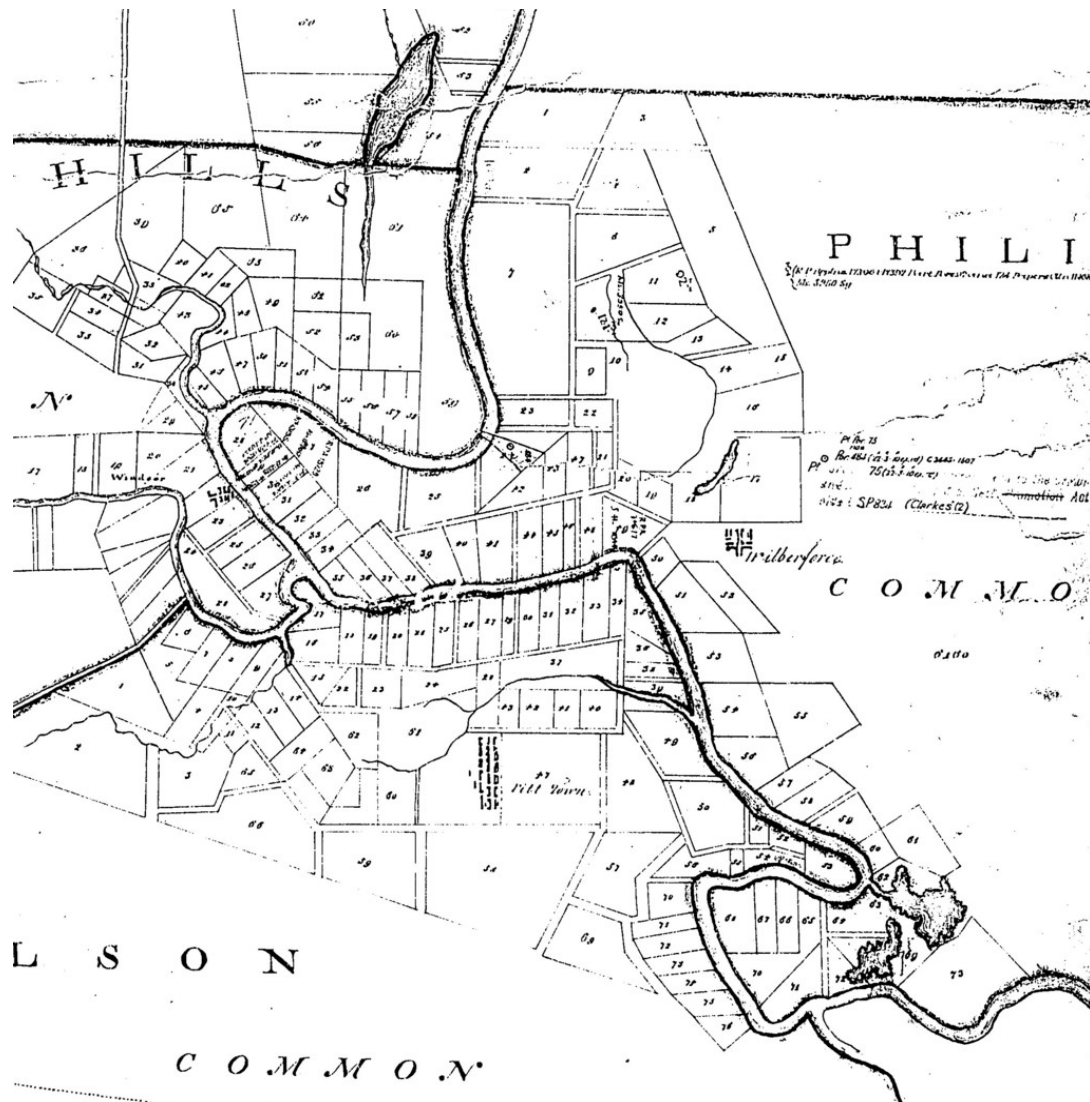


**Plate 10:** *Detail of a survey c. 1835 showing the punt and the wharf on the river's edge at the northern end of Thompson Square and a wide cutting on the northern side of the river (AO Map 5968)*

### 3.6.5 The Northern Bank of the Hawkesbury

There is still almost no evidence to identify what features or improvements may have been made on the northern side of the river. The only indication is an undated parish map that shows the distribution of properties. Reference to a former hotel on the corner of Freeman's Reach Road and Wilberforce Road was made by the Rev J Steele. Steele wrote that “*At the corner of Freeman's Reach and Wilberforce Roads, just across the river, stood the old Squatter's Arms, kept by one Ryan. The old ruin has only recently been removed. The house originally resembled the old Government House. It was open from about 1846 to 1867*” (Steele 1915: 151). A series of plans for the existing bridge include two plans of the northern

bank, dated 1878 both showing a rectilinear building on the eastern side of Freemans Reach Road (only one of those plans is reproduced here Plate 12). Annotations show that the land is owned by William McQuade and occupied by John Ryan.



**Plate 11: Detail of an undated parish map showing the distribution of properties on the northern side of the river (SRO Map SZ 417)**

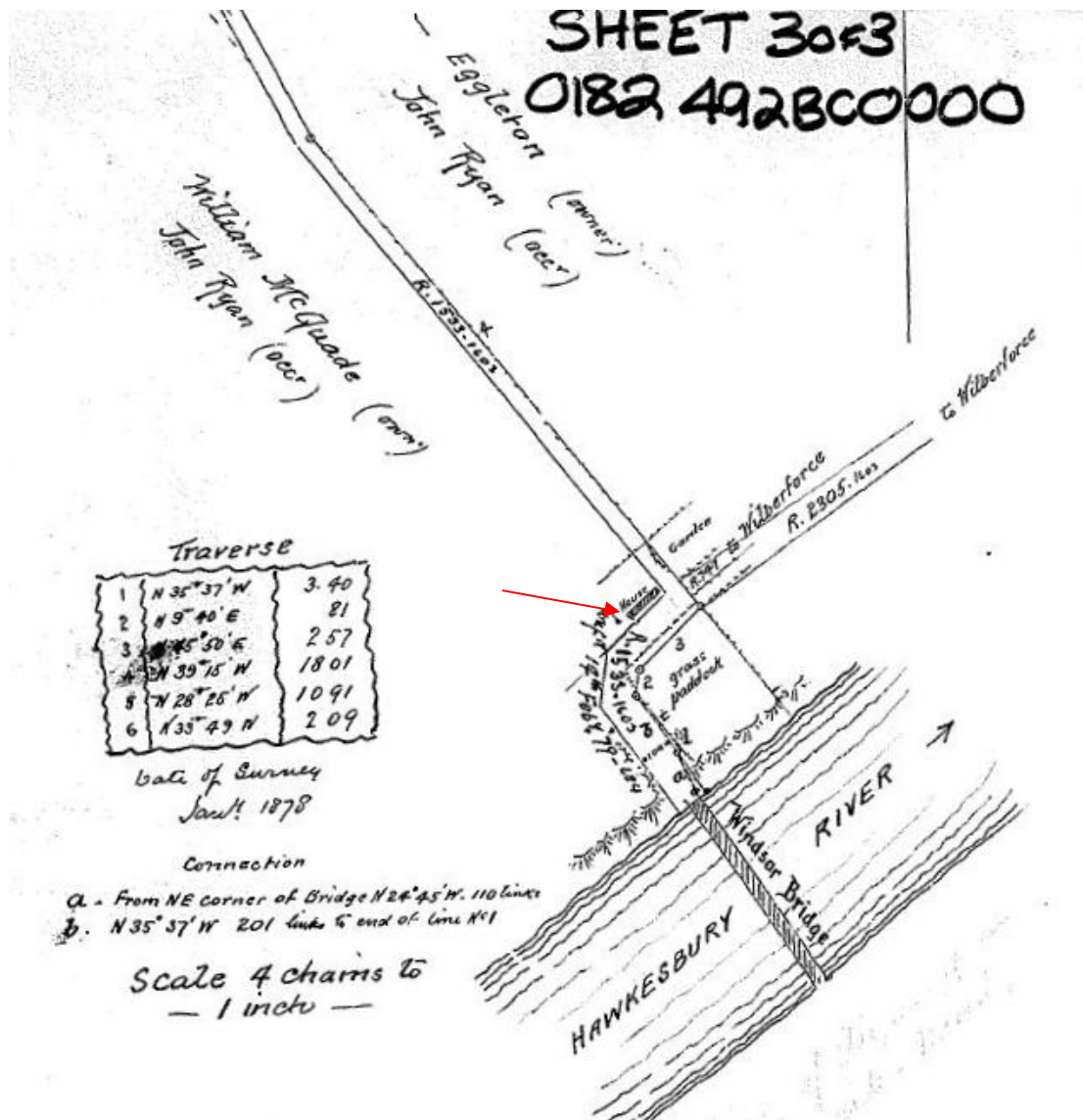


Plate 12: Plan showing the “house” on the northern side of the river. The “house” (red arrow), which is believed to have been the “Squatters Arms” mentioned by the Reverend Steele, is on the left side of what is now Freemans Reach Road. Source: Roads and Maritime Service.

### 3.6.6 Features 1820 – 1850s

**Table 4: Features dating to 1820 – 1850 identified through research**

Date	Name	Discussion	In Project Area
c. 1827	Unidentified small building	On the Thompson Square frontage in the government reserve; purpose unknown and removed by 1831	Adjacent but unlikely to be within it
c.1827-1848	Police barracks, prisoners barracks, police stables	In a ruinous condition by 1848, probably demolished soon after	Adjacent but unlikely to be within it
c. 1830s	Punt across the river	At the bottom of Thompson Square on the western side of present bridge and a wide cutting on the northern side of the river	Possibly. The punt cutting on north side may be to the west of the existing bridge.
c.1846-1867	Squatters Arms Hotel	Located on Freeman's reach Road	Possible

## 3.7 A Fringe Area 1850s- 1900

The position of the wharf and the punt at the bottom of Thompsons Square meant that the square was a hive of activity during the later years of the nineteenth century 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 from 1864 when the railway line was constructed, rail transport began to dominate. Despite this change in the strategic role of the square it remained the only means to cross from the southern to northern banks of the river via the punt.

### 3.7.1 A New Bridge

There had been agitation for a bridge across the Hawkesbury since 1864 but it was not until 1874 that the new bridge was opened at the foot of Thompson Square. The low level bridge was frequently affected by flood water and demands were made to raise the level. Approval was given for this improvement and a temporary bridge was completed and opened for traffic

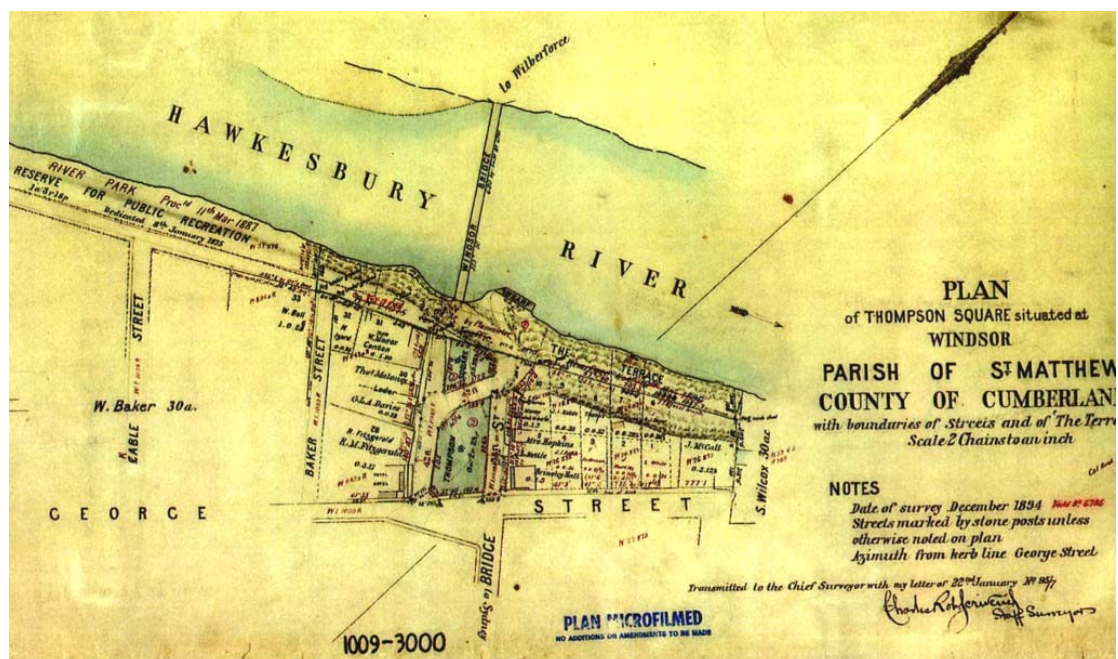


in 1896<sup>20</sup>. This allowed the deck of the main bridge to be raised by eight feet and it was also lengthened by about twenty feet by the construction of a new pier on the northern side of the river<sup>21</sup>. It was opened in April 1897. The concrete decking and kerbing and much of the concrete superstructure were added in the 1920s<sup>22</sup>.

### 3.7.2 Changes to the Square

Much of the present form of the square almost certainly dates to the development of the bridge and its subsequent improvement. Two reserves were created and the road plan that is still legible today in the square came into being. Prior to that, before 1879 a road was made to provide access to the Terrace.

Trees were planted within the reserve between the 1870s and the 1880s. By 1888, saplings had been planted in the reserve (Plate 16 & Plate 14).

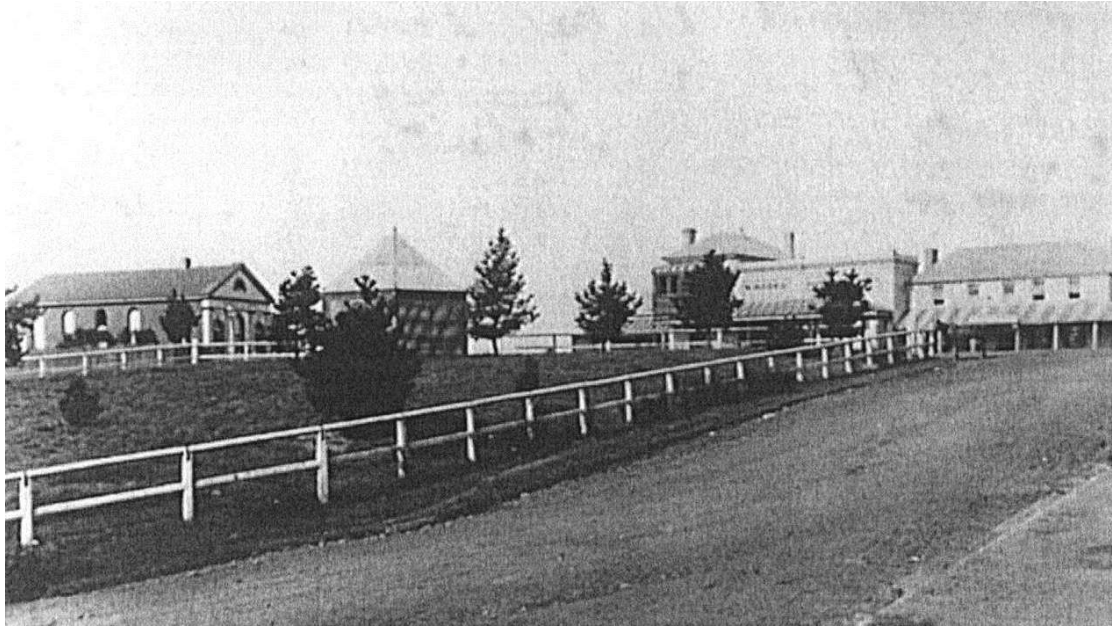


**Plate 13: Survey of 1894 showing the reconfigured Thompson Square after the construction of the bridge and the earlier access provided to the Terrace (LPI 1009-3000)**

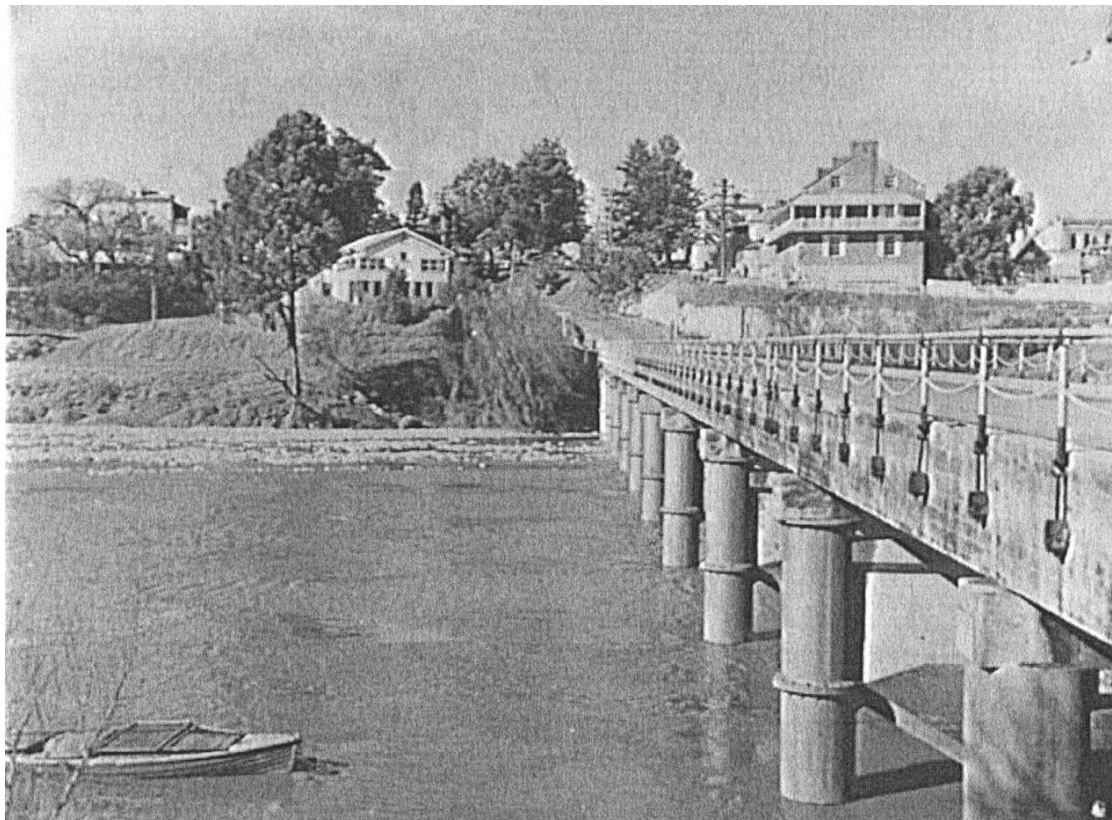
<sup>20</sup> D. G. Bowd (1982); *A History of the Hawkesbury*; 64

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>22</sup> Higginbotham, E (1986); *Historical and Archaeological Investigation of Thompson Square Windsor*: 30



**Plate 14:** *The highest part of Thompson Square where it joins George Street 1889 showing the size of the planted trees. The school of Arts building is visible in the far left and a “summer house” is standing in the area that the anchor memorial stands now. Source: Hawkesbury Images Local Studies Photographic Collection.*



**Plate 15:** *A view from the north side of the river to Thompson Square. The bank on the south side is markedly different to what it is today and the Hawkesbury Motor Boat Club is on the lower part of Thompson Square Reserve. Source: Hawkesbury Images Local Studies Photographic Collection.*

### 3.7.3 Residential Buildings

The western side of the square had been devoted to private development, commercial and residential, from before 1850 and after the sale of the police buildings and land on the eastern side more houses were added to the square. Largely because of the changes in trade and its transport along the river Thompson Square entered a lacuna from the later years of the nineteenth century leading to many of its buildings remaining largely intact. All are listed as individual items within the State Heritage Inventory.



**Plate 16:** *Part of an 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. The photograph dates to between 1874 and 1897 as the bridge is shown at its original level (ML SPF).*



### 3.7.4 The North Bank of The Hawkesbury

No specific surveys of the northern side of the river have been found as yet but many images from the later half of the nineteenth century show the northern side of the river to be sparsely occupied and primarily devoted to grazing, dairying and horses and crops; it was very sparsely settled.



**Plate 17:** *View across the original low level bridge (1874 – 1897) 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. Note the scouring of the banks, presumably by floods (ML SPF Windsor NSW Bridges).*

### 3.7.5 Features 1850s - 1900

**Table 5:** Features 1850s – 1900 identified through research

Date	Name	Discussion	In Project Area
1874	New bridge across river		No
1896	Bridge raised		No
1896	Temporary bridge opened		Possible
1874-	Changes to roads and drainage in reserve	Aerial shows E and W roads have a deep margin gutter	Yes

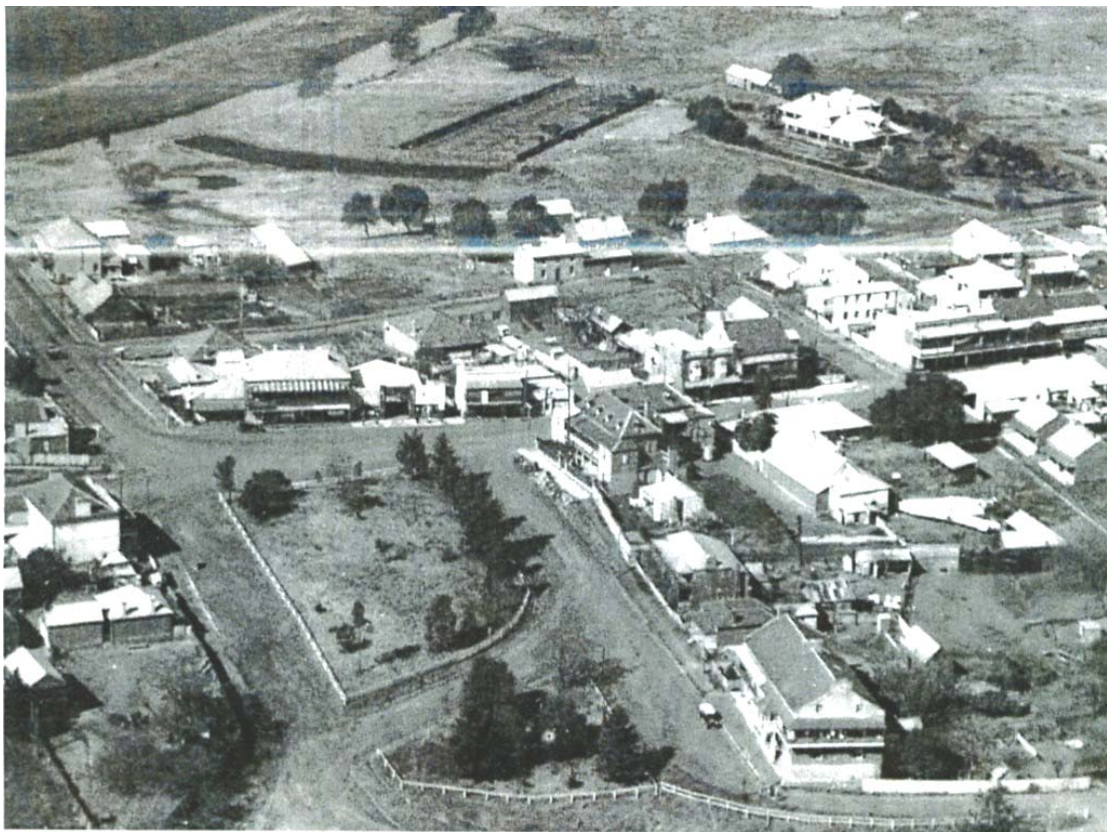


### 3.8 Final Touches

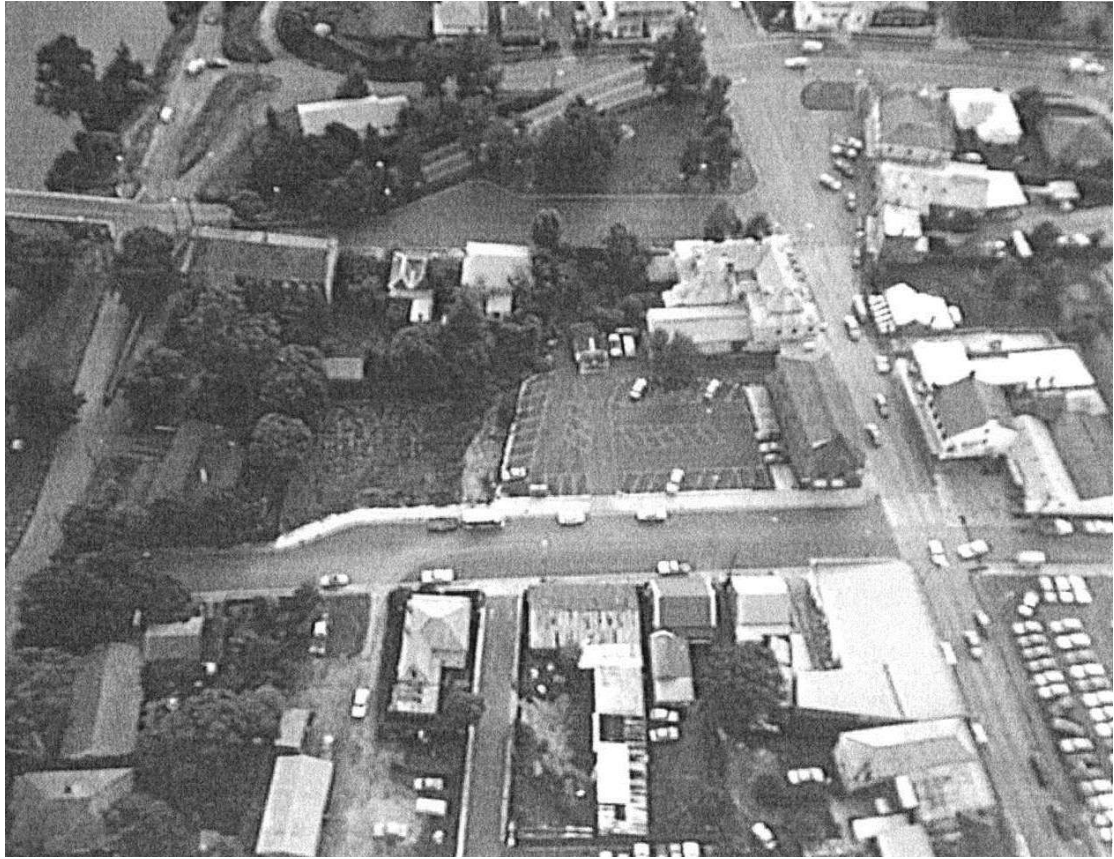
Between 1947 and 1951 the existing cutting and roadway across Thompson Square to the Bridge was constructed about the same time the land immediately behind the wharf was raised to the level of the bridge. Aerial images of Wilberforce demonstrate that up to the later years of the twentieth century and still today it remains a relatively sparsely settled area.

The Upper Hawkesbury Powerboat Club House was built on the lower reserve in the 1950s and demolished by 1978 (Plate 15 & Plate 19). Built on brick footings, it is not expected to have significantly damaged the anticipated archaeological resource beneath..

In more recent years, Thompson Square has had utilities installed, which include underground electricity and communications cables in the footpath and a sewer main crossing the lower reserve. North of the river, the largest impacts related to utilities are underground drainage and water pipes (Figure 7 & Figure 8).

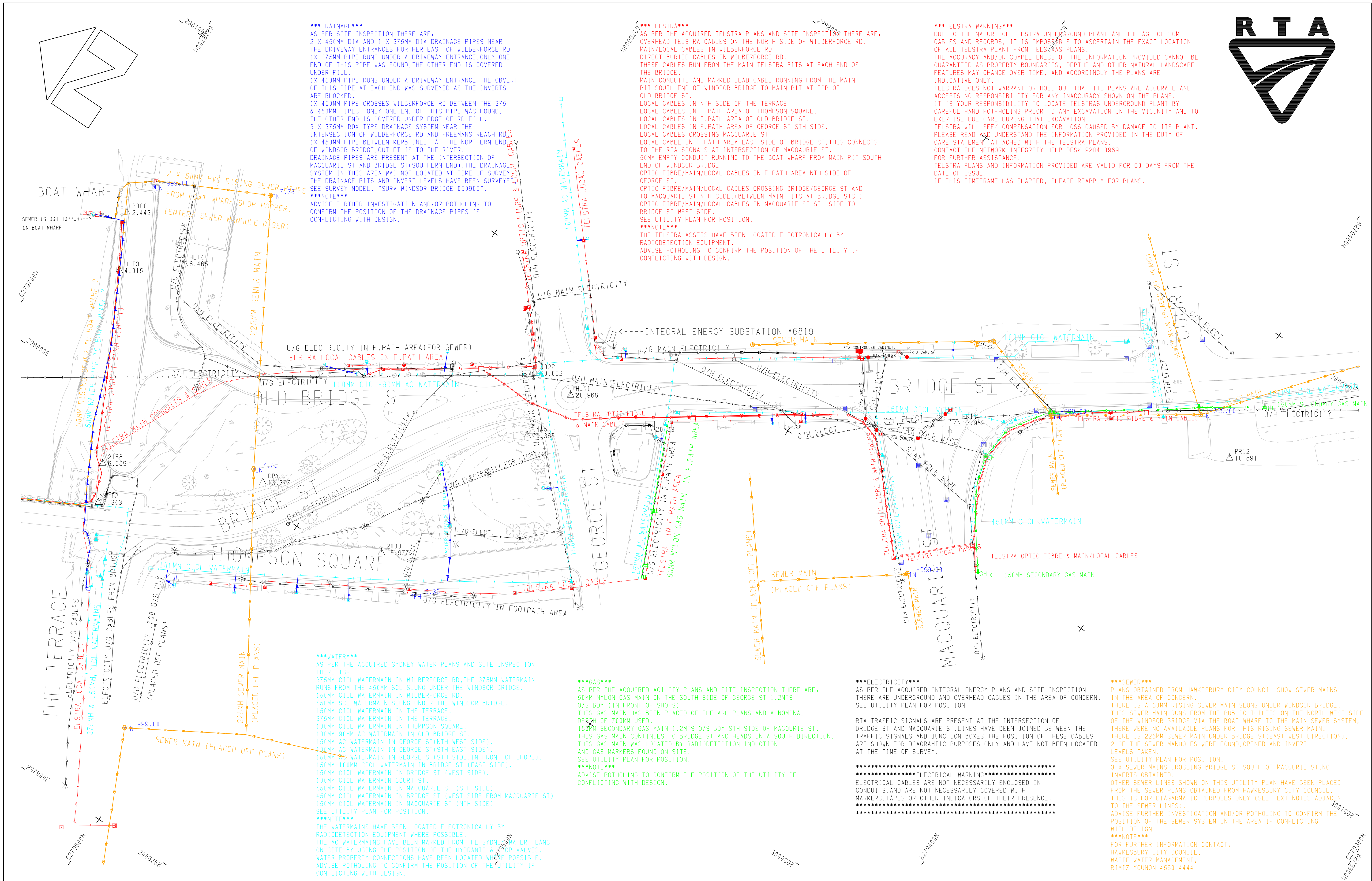


**Plate 18:** *Thompson Square in 1929 before the final changes were made to the roads (JHHS 2011 No 2: 21)*



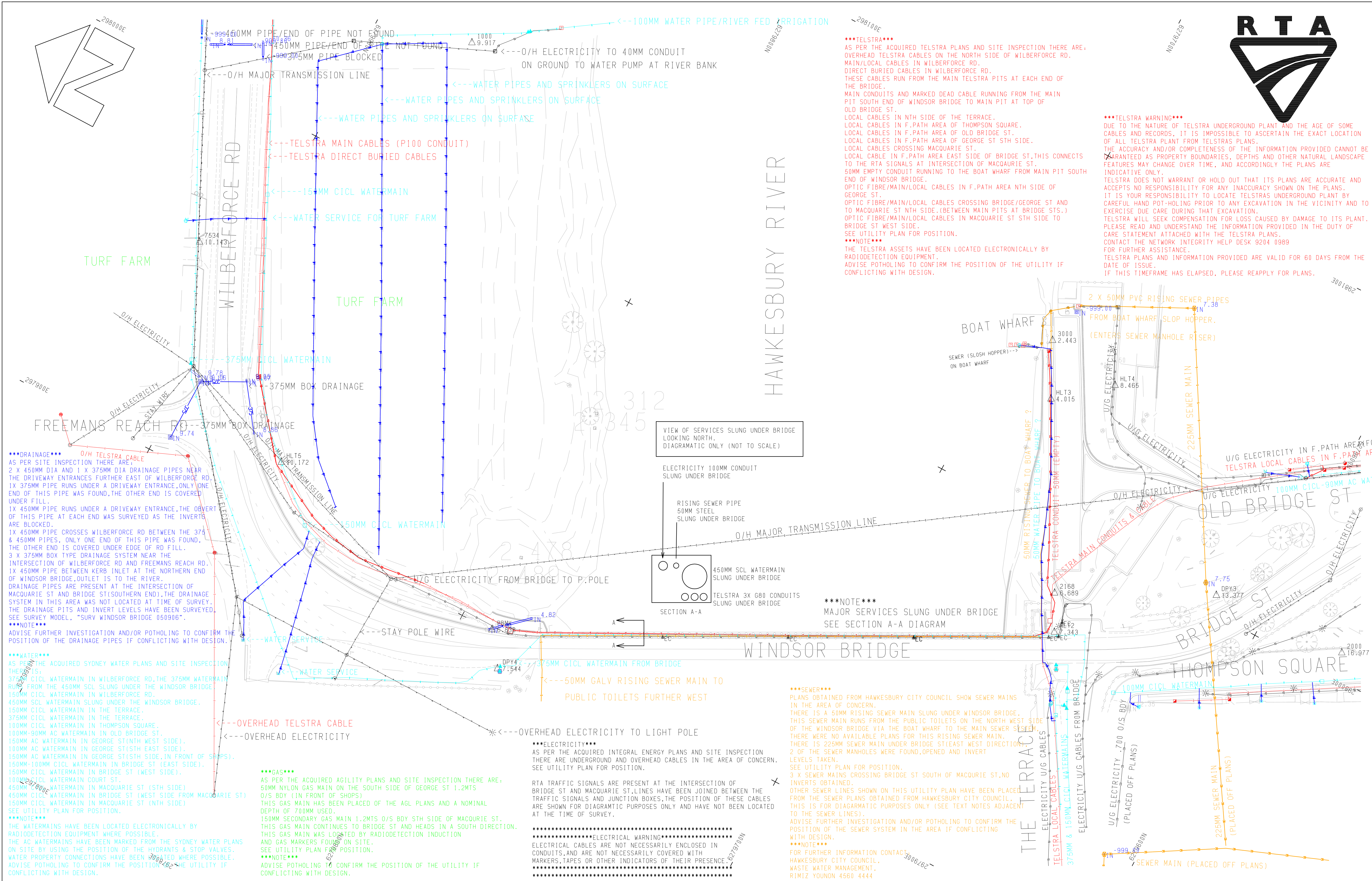
**Plate 19:** *Titled “Aerial view North Richmond Bridge During Floods 1978” but is clearly Windsor with Thompson Square at the top of the photograph and the bridge to the left. Note that the motor boat club is still standing on the lower reserve. Source: Hawkesbury Images Local Studies Photographic Collection.*





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Alpha character on line symbols is sometimes suppressed, or replaced by text note, to avoid distortion of the true path by a software anomaly. This occurs when a directional change co-incides with the preset spacing of alpha characters.				DATUM AHD <td>FILE PATH: 0184 UT 0724<td colspan="2">HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL AREA<td>2</td></td></td>			FILE PATH: 0184 UT 0724 <td colspan="2">HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL AREA<td>2</td></td>	HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL AREA <td>2</td>	
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ELECT. LIGHT POLE				SEWER MANHOLE	PLAN PREPARATION DATE: 3RD DECEMBER 2005 <td colspan="2"></td> <td></td>				





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