

# Windsor Bridge replacement project

## Community Update – Archaeological investigations

March 2018



The NSW Government is building this bridge to provide a safe and reliable crossing over the Hawkesbury River at Windsor.

The existing Windsor Bridge is more than 140 years old and is deteriorating. The bridge has reached the end of its useful life. Roads and Maritime Services is planning to replace the existing Windsor Bridge with a new bridge 35 metres downstream.

New approach roads and intersections will be built and existing approach roads will be filled in and landscaped, unifying the green area of Thompson Square. The existing bridge will be removed once the new bridge is open to traffic.

### Discovery of historical brick barrel drain

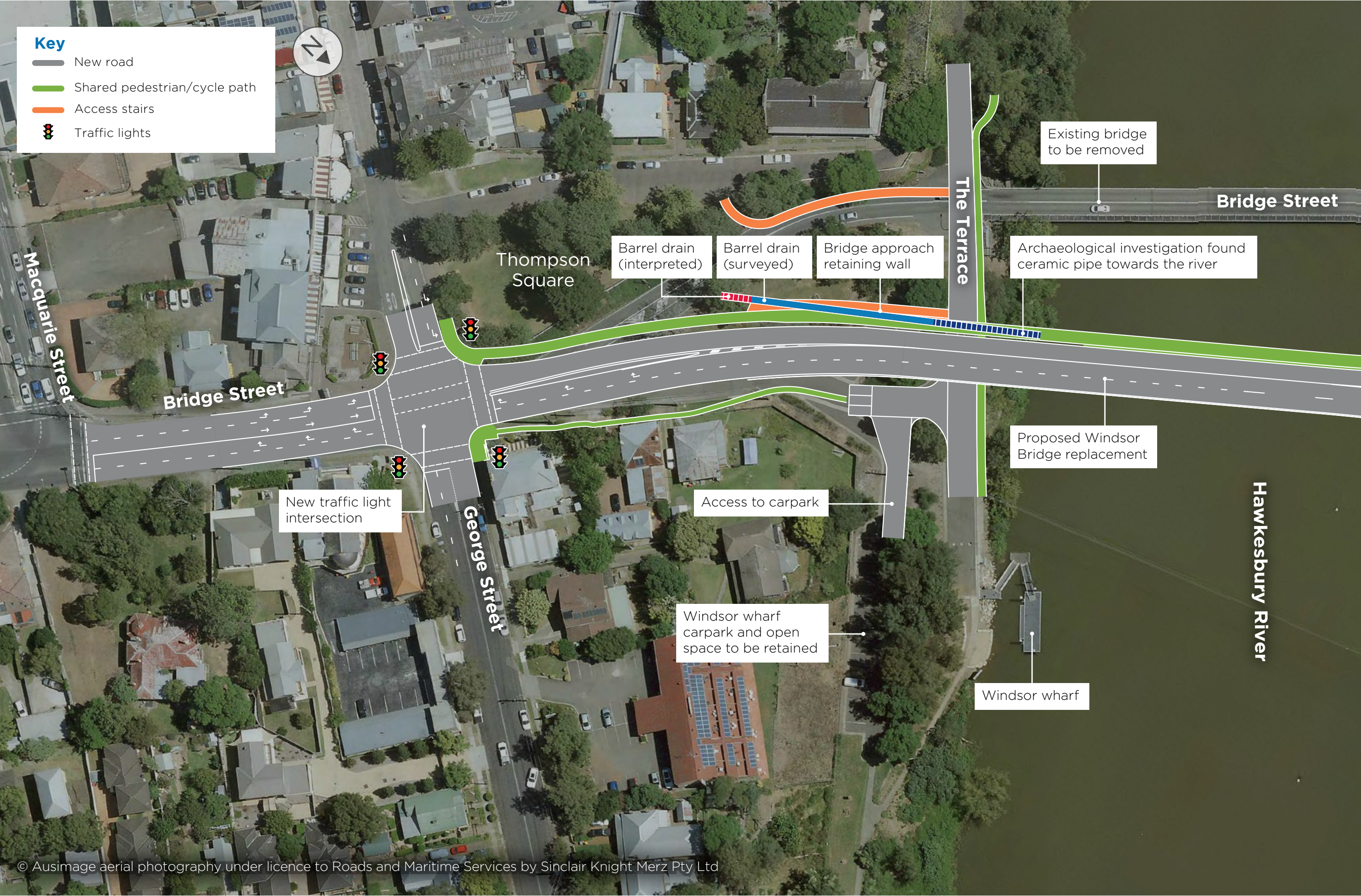
Archaeologists are carrying out salvage archaeological investigations, in close consultation with stakeholders, to minimise any potential impact to Aboriginal and colonial artefacts.

Several items of colonial and Aboriginal significance have been found, including Aboriginal stone tools and other non-Aboriginal artefacts (including ceramics, bottles, bricks, etc.).

The most significant colonial discovery to date is the uncovering of a brick barrel drain, dating back to 1814.



Windsor Bridge replacement project – map of brick barrel drain location





## What condition is the brick barrel drain in?

Most of the brick barrel drain is filled with silt but appears to be largely intact and has remained undisturbed to date. The end of the brick barrel drain was found approximately 15 metres away from the river. At this location the brick barrel drain was eroded and partially washed away. It had been repaired by the connection of a smaller ceramic pipe to direct the brick barrel drain towards the river, likely in the 20th century. It is possible the older section of the brick barrel drain was damaged during a flood.

Parts of three brick box drains have also been found during excavation work. The box drains were located above the brick barrel drain at the original ground level. These box drains collected surface runoff across the slope and directed the flow to brick sumps. The sumps built over the brick barrel drain allowed the water to drop down into the brick barrel drain which then flowed to the river.

Many of the brick box drains are damaged, with some sections destroyed. This is likely the result of an earlier road being cut through at this location and other 20th century activities. The archaeologists are using hand excavation methods to expose the box drains. The brick barrel drain will be able to be retained, however parts of the box drains will need to be removed. Although the box drains are not regarded by independent archaeologists as being as historically significant as the brick barrel drain, any sections of box drain that are to be removed will be exposed by archaeological excavation, then fully documented and investigated.



Damaged section of the brick barrel drain



Excavating a box drain



Brick sump and barrel drain

# What will happen to the brick barrel drain?

Due to the historical significance of the brick barrel drain, Roads and Maritime has updated the new bridge design to protect the drain and leave it intact.

The brick barrel drain is located close to where the southern approach of the new bridge will sit. Roads and Maritime is adjusting the retaining wall design in this area to ensure the brick barrel drain can remain unaffected.

Around 10 metres of the brick barrel will be located beneath parkland in Thompson Square and not beneath the retaining wall.

The brick barrel drain will be analysed, dated and catalogued by the archaeologists to ensure we further understand the history of Thompson Square.

Any significant discoveries will be analysed by archaeologist staff and a final report will be prepared on the results of the excavations.

# A Smuggler's Tunnel or just a drain?

We know that the drain was used to convey water and sewage. Although not proven, according to the Hawkesbury Historical Society and local folklore, the drains may also have been used as 'smugglers tunnels' to deliver casks of 'illicitly brewed' rum from the Hawkesbury River to Andrew Thompson's store.

# Can the brick barrel drain site be left open for the community to view?

Roads and Maritime has considered this option and sought advice from our specialist archaeologists. The archaeological team believe the brick barrel drain has been buried for over 150 years and if left open to the weather conditions, the materials will be damaged, and the brick barrel drain would further erode and deteriorate.

We acknowledge the historic importance of the discovery, and it is our intention to preserve and protect the brick barrel drain by leaving it in place and building around it as shown in the diagram below.

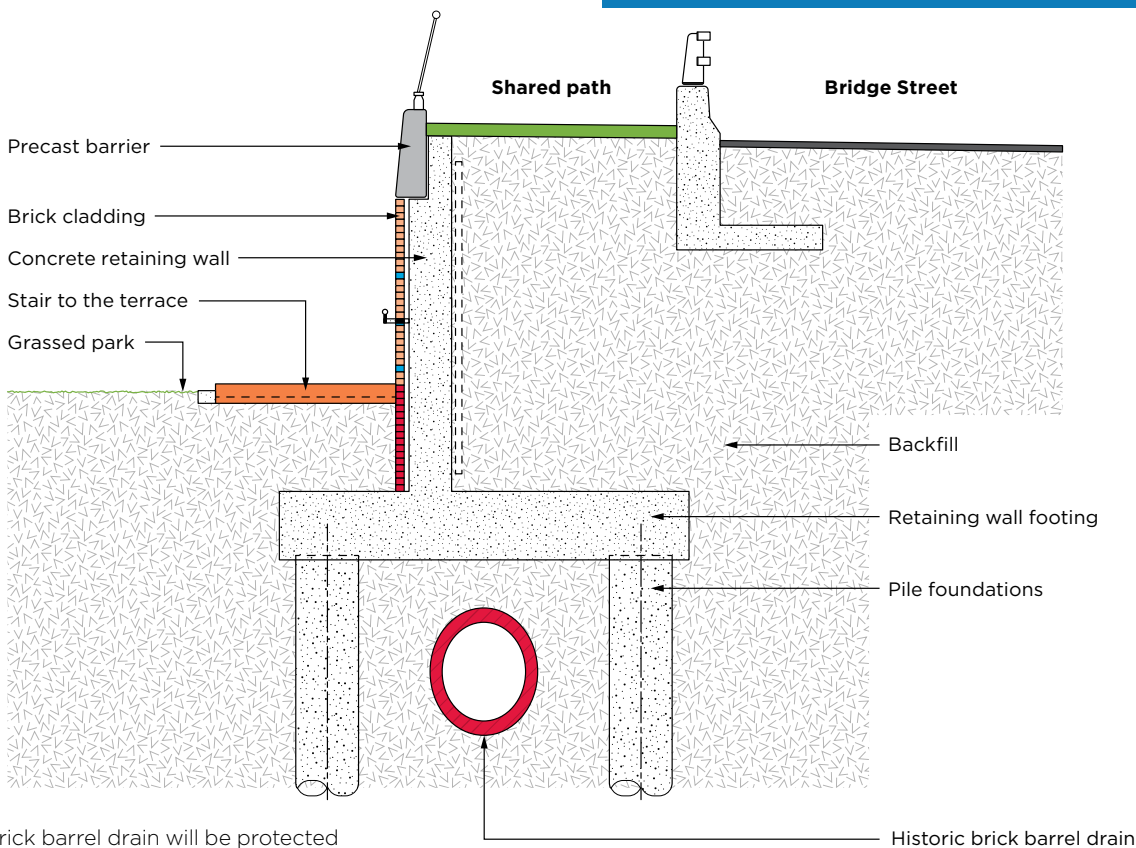
We are currently working closely with heritage experts to determine the best way to interpret and document the brick barrel drain for future generations. We are considering the following heritage interpretation options:

- Videography and photography
- Displays in the Regional Museum or historic society
- Artist's impressions and drawings
- Documenting stories and folklore.

## Comments welcome

Comments are welcome about our heritage interpretation options for the brick barrel drain. We want to hear your thoughts about how we plan to record and interpret the historical find.

Please provide your comments in writing to [Windsor\\_bridge@rms.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Windsor_bridge@rms.nsw.gov.au) by close of business on 4 April 2018.



How the brick barrel drain will be protected



## What happens to Aboriginal artefacts we find?

We are working with Aboriginal stakeholders and community members who are participating in the salvage work on site, to determine their preferred option for what happens with the artefacts. There are a few different options for the items of significance that are uncovered, such as:

- using for cultural teaching
- retaining for further study
- display in museums
- reburial to show respect for the elders who created them and the country where they were found.

This will be decided in the Aboriginal Focus Group which represents eight Aboriginal community groups with a cultural attachment to the project area.

These include:

- Gunjeewong Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
- Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Darug Land Observations
- Darug Aboriginal Land Care
- Tocomwall, Cultural Heritage Consultants
- Darug Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment
- Darug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation
- Darug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation.

## Who makes up the archaeological investigation team?



Archaeologists



Aboriginal community representatives



Urban Designers



Environmental experts



Engineers



Heritage experts



Machine operators



Work health and safety partners



Community engagement officers

## Where can I find out more?

Visit [www.rms.nsw.gov.au/windsorbridge](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/windsorbridge) to see our exciting interviews with the onsite archaeologists and image gallery, or follow NSW Roads on Facebook.



## Further information



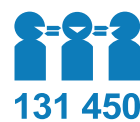
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