

THOMPSON SQUARE EST 1795  
UNDER GOVT. ATTACK 2013  
**DEFENDED BY  
THE PEOPLE**



<b>TOWN PLANNING .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Thompson Square .....</i>	<i>3</i>
An Issue of Scale: Georgian Aesthetics .....	3
The 'Reunification' Argument .....	4
Monumentalism.....	6
"Human Scale" Today .....	8
Planning and Behaviour .....	9
Case Study: Toll House.....	11
Case Study: Rouse House.....	13
RMS Principles .....	14
<i>Other Project Concerns: .....</i>	<i>16</i>
Speed limits.....	16
Landscaping .....	17
Archaeological Impact .....	18
Trees .....	19
Visual Amenity .....	19
<b>1. SUMMER IN WINDSOR.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Town Planning.....</i>	<i>22</i>
Planning to Enhance A Sense of Community .....	22
Planning and Diversity .....	22
Planning and Community Consultation .....	23
<i>Planning in the Hawkesbury .....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>So, what are the options? .....</i>	<i>25</i>
Strengths .....	25
Weaknesses .....	25
Opportunities .....	26
Benefits.....	26
<i>Way Forward.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>A 10 Point Plan.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>The Value of a Waterfront .....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>The Roads.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Fear of the River.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Getting There .....</i>	<i>30</i>

## TOWN PLANNING

### Thompson Square

Sir John Sulman in 'An Introduction to the Study of Town Planning in Australia', (Sydney 1921 p.98) notes that *'Direct road connection with the centre of the town or city is essential for the suburb; but for through traffic to the country it is desirable that there should be a bye-pass road or a separate radial avenue. In the latter case it might with advantage be confined to quick transit only, and should be formed of materials that would be dustless and suitable for motor traffic. It should run through the open land that ought to surround every suburb. The dangers of quick traffic in a busy street, and the loss by dust to the residents, as well as loss of time by travellers, would thus be avoided.'*

It is difficult to comprehend why something so apparently self-evident, so completely inappropriate as a major road in a heritage town square requires any rebuttal at all, but apparently in the NSW of 2013 it does.

The rejection of Option One is based on wide-ranging concerns, which are the object of other chapters in this submission. This chapter is a particular response to issues of visual impact within the Square.

As has been repeatedly pointed out, Thompson Square is a collection of (by Australian standards) very old buildings. That, of itself might alert the conscientious bureaucrat to the need for caution. However there are other significant concerns, beyond both heritage and objections raised in other chapters.

#### *An Issue of Scale: Georgian Aesthetics*

Probably the single most difficult thing for many people to appreciate the significance of, yet is arguably the most brutal of all the impacts of the Windsor Bridge Replacement Project, is the issue of scale.

Much has been said elsewhere (EIS, Vol 2, Biosis) of the historic credentials of Thompson Square. It is frequently described as Australia's oldest Georgian square.

The Georgian Period is defined as the years from 1720 to 1840. Thompson Square has existed as a public space since 1794 (see Chapter 1), and was named by Governor Macquarie in 1811.

The Royal Institute of British Architects describe Georgian architecture as “perennially popular” going on to speak of “elegant town developments, the tree-lined terraces, select squares and crescents that proliferated after 1740”

In terms of a streetscape we are also told that “Regularity of house fronts along a street was a desirable feature of Georgian town planning.” and “Georgian designs usually lay within the Classical orders of architecture .

<http://www.architecture.com/HowWeBuiltBritain/HistoricalPeriods/GeorgianWestAndIreland/GeorgianBuildings.aspx>

But Thompson Square in 1794 was about as far away from Georgian England as it is possible to imagine... it existed in the farthest reaches of the Empire. It was not a neat tidy, elegant town development. There was a variety of house fronts, with some of the more substantial buildings only appearing as late as the 1860's and Windsor Bridge itself being added to the landscape in 1874. Indeed, whilst the Doctor's House can claim the distinctive air of Georgian aesthetics, other buildings in the Square speak somewhat of Victoria loyalties.

And yet, the Square retains a charm and consistency that defies its architectural stylistic variations, perhaps unified instead by its Georgian roots. British architect, Stephen Gardiner said that "Georgian architecture respected the scale of both the individual and the community" and Thompson Square today still respects the scale of both the individual and the community. Its defining buildings, whilst extraordinary achievements in a fledgling colony, are of relatively modest scale, even the tallest rising no more than xx metres from ground level. And at a community level, the Square is equally proportionate, generous enough for community events, whilst respectful of its country-town responsibilities.

Put bluntly, Thompson Square is a place of human scale, defined and blessed by its history. Whether speaking of the structures that form the Square, or the spaces within, the scale neither intimidates nor overwhelms. Views and sightlines allow views within the Square as well as vistas across the Hawkesbury River to the agricultural lands beyond.

The view to the floodplain, where today farms still produce fresh food for Sydney, allows the visitor to see the Square in context and perhaps gain some small appreciation of its history.

### *The 'Reunification' Argument*

No consideration of the Thompson Square landscape can avoid the much maligned 1934 cutting, which dives modestly down from the George and Bridge Streets intersection to access the Windsor Bridge at the Terrace. The evolution of traffic routes is dealt with under the 'Precedent Argument' however this cutting has become part of a rhetoric designed to deliver a specific outcome: Option One. It has been made responsible for the 'reunification' argument.

The Option One rhetoric, in the case of the precedent argument ignores historical evidence; it ignores the defining character of the Square when speaking of 'reunification'.

In the Biosis Report (Historic Heritage Assessment for Windsor Bridge Replacement Project, page 263) the writer repeats the oft-repeated mantra that Option One would *"unite the two parkland areas of Thompson Square by infilling the existing road cutting from George Street to the Windsor Bridge"*

Two parklands, of themselves, are not a bad thing. The creation of large and smaller spaces within the domain of the Square arguably contributes to its interest and charm. The cutting itself is demonstrably proportionate. Human scale. An element like the

bridge it was built to serve, it is functional and has an honesty and lack of pretention. This is unquestionably a road that is the product of cultural and technological development yet to challenge the Square's 'human scale'.

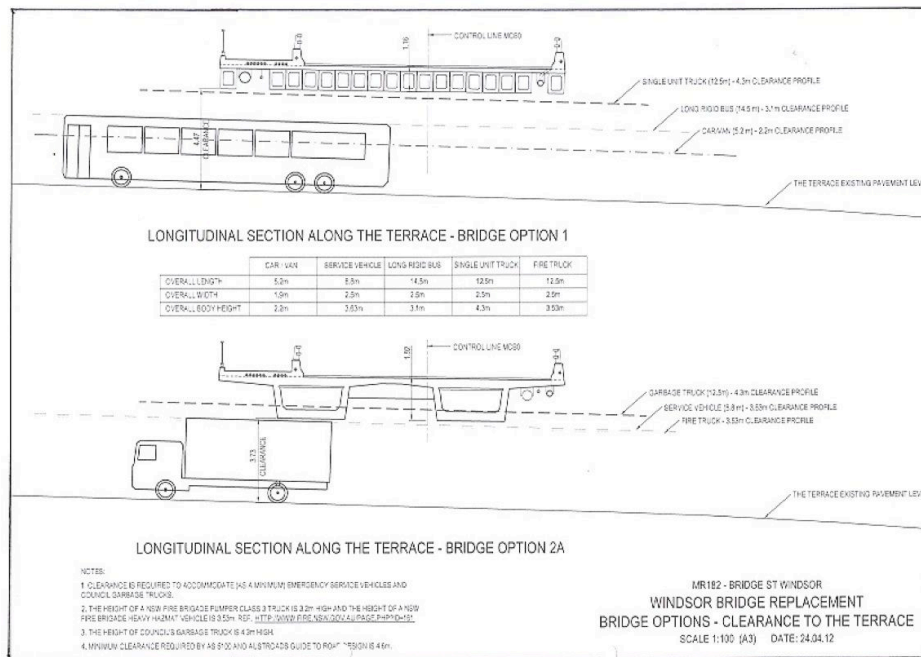
And yet the rhetoric continues, (Biosis, page 263). *"By locating the southern approach road close to the eastern perimeter of Thompson Square, the opportunity has arisen to consolidate the two open spaces that create the upper and lower parkland area at present."* Like the precedent argument, the reunification argument does not withstand even moderate scrutiny. The Biosis Report goes on to say *"The Bridge Street cutting physically disconnects the two spaces and makes access from the commercial side of Windsor to the lower parkland area difficult and dangerous. Bridge Street disconnects eastern Windsor from the rest of the town during peak traffic periods."*

This is a remarkably disingenuous approach to the issue. The current road is 6 metres wide: a dimension consistent with a road that might have carried the types of vehicles that Andrew Thompson would have been familiar with. It is a dimension consistent with human scale.

What is proposed is 15 metres wide, which although a significant change, does not tell the entire story. The road that is supposed to 'reunify' Thompson Square has another significantly different characteristic from the modest 1934 cutting: it is elevated. Not for its entire journey, but 'lift off' occurs approximately halfway between the George Street intersection and the riverbank, although the bridge, of course, continues out across the river and despite having now "left the square" so to speak, its influence will still be felt. This influence is no longer a simple two-dimensional impact because it now has elevation impacts and the elevation includes additional elements: massive concrete foundations and piers holding this huge structure aloft.

Nonetheless, the RMS insist that *"While the project would have a substantial impact on landscape character, some of the landscape character changes are likely to benefit the community and enhance the experience of visitors to the area in the long term."* (page 283 EIS Volume 1). This seems highly unlikely.

Furthermore any suggestion the RMS has selected the most discreet engineering solution available to them is challenged in correspondence between the RMS and Hawkesbury City Council which reveals that, of the two design solutions under consideration, the incrementally launched bridge would have an more significant elevation than the rejected 'plank' alternative.



## Two construction options for Windsor Bridge

And at the landscape level, Biosis continues to insist, “Another substantial physical impact would be the results of the consolidation of the two parkland areas into one. The purpose of consolidation and one of the outcomes of the project would be to transform the two parkland areas into a more useable space with a connection to the river”.

This is a curious promise, given Biosis had previously said that a road xxx metres wide “physically disconnects the two spaces and makes access from the commercial side of Windsor to the lower parkland area difficult and dangerous. Bridge Street disconnects eastern Windsor from the rest of the town during peak traffic periods.” So, in reading the Biosis promise, it is important to understand intent. The project does NOT reunify Thompson Square. It replaces what would become an increasingly pedestrian-friendly local road with the hostile environment of an inter-urban arterial road.

The visual difference between the proportionally unified, human scale elements of existing architecture, landscape and 1934 road versus the brutalist concrete intrusion of the proposed bridge is comparable to the differences between Georgian and European architecture around the second World War.

### Monumentalism

Wikipedia says that, “Most regimes, especially new ones, wish to make their mark both physically and emotionally on the places they rule. The most tangible way of doing so is by constructing buildings and monuments.” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazi\\_architecture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazi_architecture)

It goes on to say that in the case of one particular regime “architecture has three primary roles in the creation of its new order: (i) Theatrical; (ii) Symbolic; (iii) Didactic” and in the Didactic mode apparently, “Engineering could be coupled with architecture to teach lessons ... It is clear



*that the Autobahn was seen as a way of creating a community, which was both physically and symbolically linked. When Carl Theoder Protzen entitled his painting of the Autobahn bridge at Leipheim, "Clear the forest - dynamite the rock; conquer the valley; overcome the distance; stretch the road through the German land," he was linking clear connections between what should be done and what it was to accomplish.... The effort that went into the styling of Autobahn bridges and garages shows plainly that it was more than just a motorway. In some circumstances, the design used for the Autobahn actually affects the functioning of its supposed purpose."*

However, whilst it might be conjectured that making a "mark both physically and emotionally on (the) places" may motivate some local politicians, the issue is neither that, nor functionality. Neither is it about a cult of victory.

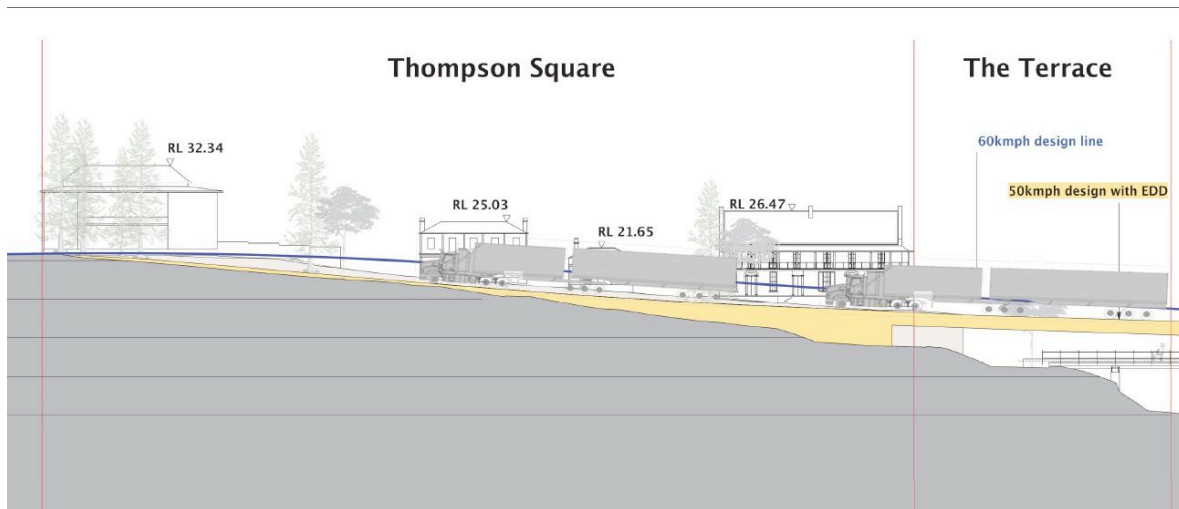
The comparison is between the domestic and comfortable scale and proportions of Thompson Square and a structure whose DNA comes from gray, massive, looming structures like Zeppelinfeld stadium in Nuremberg. It is the monumentalism of the proposed new structure in Thompson Square that references such architectural influences.

The life-span of Thompson Square is significant. It has been a period of enormous and increasingly rapid change. Change that has particular implications for the Square today.

Despite American statistics that show the energy cost of carrying one ton of freight a distance of one kilometre averages 337 kJ for water, 221 kJ for rail, 2,000 kJ for trucks, and nearly 13,000 kJ for air transport, heavy transport continues to dictate road standards in NSW. And it is those standards that which require the increasingly monumental structures to carry them. And so, from the days of horse and cart and trucks like this:



... Thompson Square will finally arrive in the twenty first century:



### *“Human Scale” Today*

The Georgians do not hold exclusive rights to human scale architecture. Today these precepts are recognised in theories such as Principles of Intelligent Urbanism (PIU).

PIU includes *“environmental sustainability, heritage conservation, appropriate technology, infrastructure efficiency, placemaking, “Social Access,” transit oriented development, regional integration, human scale, and institutional integrity.”* (Harvard, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Principles\\_of\\_Intelligent\\_Urbanism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Principles_of_Intelligent_Urbanism))

In fact PIU says that the should integrate *“with existing cultural assets, respecting traditional practices and precedents of style (Spreiregen: 1965). This urban planning principle demands respect for the cultural heritage of a place, “ and calls for respect for “historic monuments and heritage structures, leaving space at the ends of visual axis to “frame” existing views and vistas. Natural views and vistas demand respect, assuring that buildings do not block major sight lines toward visual assets.”*

The principle that *“Planning decisions must operate within the balance of tradition, aggressively protecting, promoting and conserving generic components and elements of the urban pattern.”* is considered particularly relevant to Thompson Square.

A philosophy that creates, sustains and promotes *“people friendly places, pedestrian walkways and public domains where people can meet freely* is needed: ... parks, gardens, glass-covered gallerias, arcades, courtyards, street side cafes, river- and hill-side stroll ways, and a variety of semi-covered spaces,”

And so, PIU offers a philosophical model that is entirely consistent with the Georgian respect for *“the scale of both the individual and the community”*

Right now Windsor needs a planning philosophy that *“promotes the scale of the pedestrian moving on the pathway, as opposed to the scale of the automobile on the expressway... and imaginable precincts, as opposed to the imagery of façades and ... monumentality”.*



In developing a genuine town plan Windsor must not go down a route that creates artificial barriers, promotes vehicles in recreational precincts and fails to respect the precepts of its historical origins.

### *Planning and Behaviour*

The structures and spaces within any townscape provide the backdrop for peoples' lives. They shape the community's connection with the workings of a town and therefore how the community interacts within itself. It is the interaction between the built structures and the community response that creates and sustains the intrinsic nature of a town.

In the process of planning, it is important to examine the community's preferred response to a space and the behaviors within it, and then plan accordingly. In a number of ways the local community has clearly and unequivocally expressed their ambitions for Thompson Square. Online surveys (Chapter xxx) and feedback forums, along with social media have made clear the community's rejection of the current plans for this particular townscape.

In light of this expressed community position there are serious questions that remain unaddressed by the EIS:

- How would the noise, vibration and visual impacts of a large road through a public square contribute to the behaviours of humans in the adjacent spaces?
- Will they genuinely be inspired to stay and partake in activities within the square, or will they feel inclined to move away?
- If they do stay away, will the space then attract anti social behavior, and then detract further visitors to the area?
- What contingency plans does the Government have prepared to mitigate social and economic consequences of Option One, post –construction?
- If the preferred response is to have a lively, bustling area that is attractive, safe and welcoming, then what needs to change in the planning to facilitate this?

When considering parks, Sulman (pp.130-131) remarks:

*'In the suburbs where there is no congestion of population, or much through traffic, the park may well be treated on more natural lines ...Dwellers in the suburbs, though they have more space than dwellers in the city itself, still need a change from their surroundings, and this only a real park can supply ... For change, rest, and fresh air any waste piece of land can... be satisfactorily utilised, provided it is properly laid out . ... Riverside reserves lend themselves to the formation of a continuous road or path, and a varied treatment of the different sections, making full use of any natural features, would be desirable.'*

Thompson Square can be all that and more. It is a true 'Square'. It should have a vibrant economic life, in addition to the functions that Sulman proposes.

Planning that encourages areas to have high pedestrian activity will generally be perceived as safe, welcoming and attractive. Providing well-lit areas that allow for after hours access

can also enhance this. It is important as well to make it easy for people to want to engage in a event or activity, for visitors to feel embraced and their needs considered.

In this climate, local residents who have not been passionate about supporting their town may have an interest sparked, leading to greater participation within the community and bringing about an interest in where they live. This increased patronage by both visitors and locals can bring about a sense of well being within the community, and the feeling of pride that comes with being involved in a thriving and popular town.

It is not difficult to connect the images of a vibrant public space, which experiences high pedestrian activity and is perceived as safe, welcoming and attractive with the Thompson Square of today. It is considerably more difficult to reconcile it with the current proposal.

### *Case Study: Toll House*

The Hawkesbury is rich in architectural gems dating from as early as 1815 when the Macquarie Arms was constructed. One that tells a most poignant story is Windsor's Toll House, one of only two intact toll houses remaining in NSW (the other is at Mt Victoria)

Tenders were called for a Toll House in 1834 and the building was completed in 1835, although it was practically demolished as a result of the 1864 flood. However it was rebuilt with some alterations shortly after. It is a small building, with a projected bay window, which the toll keeper could view the road from both angles, to collect tolls.

In 1975 a new high level bridge was constructed over South Creek almost concealing the Toll House from view. The Toll House provides a salutatory lesson regarding heritage destruction for questionable transport outcomes.

Below is a photograph of the 'flood free' Fitzroy Bridge circa 1990. The photo tells its own story: yet another example of Government investment in a 'flood-free' bridge at the expense of heritage.

The next photograph shows all that is generally visible today of the Toll House, and the third image is of the Toll House prior to the construction of the current Fitzroy Bridge, which replaced the 1853 structure of the same name.

These pictures of the Toll House, viewed in light of the meaningless contribution made by this new Fitzroy Bridge to flood-free access, and the consequent destruction of the historic context of this little building, are illustrative of the destruction that inappropriate, inadequate and poorly conceptualized projects can inflict on heritage assets.

References : "Exploring the Hawkesbury" Ian Jack;  
"Macquarie Country" D. G. Bowd  
"Windsor Toll House : user pays in the 19th century"



The Fitzroy Bridge over South Creek, surrounded by water, circa 1990



The Fitzroy Bridge dwarfs the historic Windsor Toll House



National Library of Australia

nla.pic-vn4653912-v

The Toll House before the new Fitzroy Bridge.

### *Case Study: Rouse House*

In contrast to the poor outcome for the Toll House at Windsor, the story of co-operation between various authorities in regard to Rouse House and the adjacent Old Rouse Hill School House is a testament to just what can be achieved when there is shared values and a will to achieve a positive outcome amongst responsible authorities.

The story of Rouse House goes back to 1813 when Richard Rouse, the Colonial Superintendent of Public Works, chose the site for his new house and farm at Rouse Hill. He cleared a small area of native Cumberland Plain woodland adjacent to Windsor Road half way between the towns of Parramatta and Windsor on the Hawkesbury River.

The grant of 450 acres, however, was not made until October 1816 and sometime between 1818 and 1825 Rouse, his wife Elizabeth (1772-1849) and their family moved from Parramatta to the new house.

The property was passed down the generations to Richard Rouse's second son Edwin (1806-1862), to Edwin Jnr (1849-1931). Edwin Jnr and his wife Bessie had two daughters the elder of which, Nina (1875- 1968) married wealthy George Terry of nearby Box Hill House, where they brought up six sons and she lived in the house until her death in 1968.

Subdivision of the property began in 1951 and continued until 1974 when only 8.15 hectares of the original 182 hectares remained.

Nina's sons Gerald Terry, Roderick Terry, Roderick's daughter Miriam and her husband Ian Hamilton occupied the house as co-tenants until Roderick's death in 1980. Foreseeing problems with 'multiple ownership', Gerald persuaded the New South Wales government to resume the property in March 1978 and it came under the management of the Historic Houses Trust (HHT) in 1986.

The HHT sought three major and interrelated planning outcomes for the estate pledged by the then-Premier, The Hon. Bob Carr: the acquisition of the old Rouse Hill School; the deviation of Windsor Road and the realisation of stage two of Rouse Hill Regional Park.

An opportunity came after the HHT had purchased the Old School Site from the Dept of Education and with the construction of the upgraded Windsor Rd taking place, the RTA agreed in 2001 to deviate approximately 1.5 kilometres of the new Windsor Road to the north of the school building in an arc from Second Ponds Creek to Guntawong Road. The HHT worked closely with the RTA to achieve quite outstanding results. Instead of carving a scar through a nationally significant cultural landscape, the RTA engineers and designers worked with the HHT to enhance the historic site.

The cutting between the house and school has been refilled so that they are once again connected. The original section of Windsor Road has been re-gravelled and the overhead power lines removed so that the historic Windsor Road will also be a focus of the museum site.

Overall the result has been a big win for the people of NSW and Australia.





Aerial View of the “deviation” of Windsor Rd



The Old School House



Rouse House

#### References:

Historic Houses Trust.

[http://www.hht.net.au/discover/highlights/insites/rouse\\_hill\\_house\\_and\\_farm\\_planning\\_for\\_the\\_future](http://www.hht.net.au/discover/highlights/insites/rouse_hill_house_and_farm_planning_for_the_future)

Rouse Hill Estate by [Terri McCormack](#), 2008

#### *RMS Principles*

The role of the RMS in the Windsor Bridge Replacement Project should be consistent with a range of publicly stated policy positions, including:

*Roads and Maritime Services is committed to achieving good urban design outcomes. This means:*



- Road projects must fit sensitively with the built, natural and community environments through which they pass, in both urban and rural locations.
- Road planning and design must contribute to the accessibility and connectivity of communities by all modes of movement, including walking, cycling, and catching public transport.
- The design and management of roads must contribute to the overall quality of the public domain.

[http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/community\\_environment/urban\\_design/index.html](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/community_environment/urban_design/index.html)

*“A key principle in roads and maritime services’ Beyond the Pavement urban design policy is □to incorporate heritage and cultural context□ in infrastructure planning and design and, in particular, **to protect bridges of heritage significance** not only in themselves but also in relation to their physical and community context.”*

RMS staff are also encouraged (7.2.3) to *“Respect the setting □heritage is part of place. Bridges of heritage significance often define and sometimes are□ an icon within the community. They are often □an important visible element. preservation of, modifications to, and duplication of, such bridges should respect their setting by:*

- *preserving the curtilage, in this instance, the envelope around, below and above the bridge necessary to protect its heritage or cultural value. The bridge and its curtilage form a spatial and aesthetic entity, and may also be part of a listed heritage precinct, such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge. therefore, keep the curtilage as intact as possible and ensure that design changes of the bridge are sensitive to the character of that curtilage. consider that the curtilage is also part of a wider setting. (refer to Heritage Curtilages publication – companion to NSW Heritage Manual).*

Engineers Australia, Practice Note on engineering and industrial heritage, April 2010 says *“the present generation of engineers owe a duty□ of care in dealing with significant engineering heritage works.”*

It is deeply disappointing to how how significantly the Windsor Bridge Replacement Project diverges from these standards and to contemplate how very different the project might have been if the RMS had adhered to its own standards.

## Other Project Concerns:

### *Speed limits*

The RMS online resource, NSW Speed Zoning Guidelines indicate that Thompson Square is in a built up area.

*“Built-up area – In relation to a length of road, an area in which either of the following is present for*  
☐*a distance of at least 500 metres or, if the length of road is shorter than 500 metres, for the whole road:*

*buildings, not over 100 metres apart, on land next to the road.*

*street lights not over 100 metres apart.”* ☐ (page 5)

If Thompson Square is part of a built up area, the original objective of achieving a speed limit of 60 km/h is in breach of RMS Guidelines, which say:

*“Default speed limits, which are statutory speed limits that apply in the absence of speed limit signage and do not require signposting. There are two types of default speed limits: 50 km/h in urban (built-up) areas and 100 km/h in rural (non-built-up areas).”* Page 11.

However, if the original speed limit was correct, the only reasonable assumption is that the route is, in fact an arterial road.

*“Arterial road – Roads that provide for traffic movement across and between regional areas.”* (page 5)

☐ If Bridge Street is, in fact or will become a arterial road, will the 80 km/h speed limit, which also applies to rural roads in semi-urban/rural fringe areas (with pavement width greater than 5.6 metres) with limited adjacent development or undivided arterial roads passing through fringe urban areas. Semi-urban/rural be applied in Thompson Square?

The RMS advises that fringe areas can be defined as having one to two intersections per kilometre and five to six regularly used driveways or private accesses per kilometre.

☐ [http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/downloads/nsw\\_sza.pdf](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/downloads/nsw_sza.pdf)

This question is asked in some trepidation: Thompson Square is a commercial, tourist and heritage area, which would significantly benefit from a shared zone classification:

#### *(a) 10 km/h speed limits*

*A shared zone is a road or a network of roads in an area where pedestrians and motor vehicles share the road space. Drivers must not exceed 10 km/h, must give way to pedestrians at all times and must park only in marked bays.*

10 km/h urban shared zones including:

- Carparks.□
- Reserves/parks.

*The most common uses of shared zones are in commercial, tourist and heritage areas. However, this facility may also be used in other appropriate situations, such as some shopping malls.*

Shared traffic zones must:

- Clearly indicate pedestrian priority.
- Be a self-enforcing speed environment.
- Have low traffic volumes. □For detailed guidelines for the implementation of shared traffic zones, refer to TD 2000/6 Shared Zone Signs.”

Given European models of traffic management in similar situations, it is strongly recommended that a shared zone be implemented in Thompson Square; most particularly should the situation arise where the current speed-calming roundabout was no longer part of traffic management.

### *Landscaping*

The final appearance of Thompson Square, should Option One go ahead, is a matter of deep concern to the community and is, once again, a matter of deep cynicism

EIS Volume (page 100) says, “Urban design and landscape works....within Thompson Square parkland would include: “Minor earthworks in the upper Thompson Square parkland to provide a gentle slope.” The present contours of the Square being as they are, it would seem likely that, in the interests of mutual understanding, the RMS should provide definitions of ‘minor’ and ‘gentle’.

The issue of landscape remains contentious EIS Volume 1 (page 195) which talks about, “a gently terraced slope down to the river,” and (page 194) “The result would be a greater area of continuous parkland that would slope gently to The Terrace and the river.”

Thompson Square cannot be sloped down to the river. To be sloped in such manner would see the removal of The Terrace and the river bank and the slope, and even if terraced it would be very, very steep.

This observation is offered as there appears to be some confusion regarding gradient, which, while describing the proposed slope of the grasslands as being ‘gentle’ also says, “The steep grade on Bridge Street increases the noise levels generated by heavy vehicles due to the need to use low range gearing and engine breaking (sic).”

The RMS cannot have it both ways. The slope can either be gentle or steep.

But in fact the steepness of the slope actually increases. The current road starts sloping from George Street. Using Figure 58 (page 101 EIS Volume 1) it could be assumed the area closest to George Street would have a flatter component sloping gently towards the river and sloping more to the Thompson Square Road. The slope down to The Terrace would start from about half way to The Terrace. Given the reduced distance from The Terrace it would have to be very steep, so steep the EIS plans to have it terraced.

Although it is appreciated the planning for the grassland is still under consideration, there is no indication within the EIS whether the use of retaining walls is being considered. Therefore it is assumed there would be a series of flatter sections and other sections of a severe slope. This raises the question as to whether the joined upper and lower grasslands would result in more usable space.\*

*In summary:* The plan by the RMS is to reshape the grassland into a “gentle slope” to the foreshore. (It is assumed the RMS means The Terrace, which is about 6 metres above the river. To slope Thompson Square to the river would mean the removal of The Terrace and a very steep slope.) The current road does that and that slope is not “gentle”. In the EIS the road is described as being steep. However that road curves down to The Terrace so the slope is minimised. A better example would be the road to the wharf. Now that road is certainly not a gentle slope. However, the grassland area portrayed in the RMS diagrams retains a flatish area at the top so the slope has to start nearly half way along the grassed area. Therefore the “gentle slope” becomes steeper. The RMS intends to terrace the slope, which will provide some flatish land and some embankments. Section 4.3.1 on page 50 of the EIS states in part: “While The Terrace could be lowered to achieve the required clearance under the replacement bridge this was considered undesirable due to the potential disturbance of terrestrial and maritime archaeological sites.” Yet to totally reshape Thompson Square is considered appropriate. This reconstruction will have a major negative impact on the public use of this space. In addition this means the oldest civic square in Australia will be totally reconstructed and not restored to the vision of Governor Macquarie as claimed by the RMS. Fewer people using the park will reduce business activity.

### *Archaeological Impact*

Section 4.3.1 (page 50) states in part: “While The Terrace could be lowered to achieve the required clearance under the replacement bridge this was considered undesirable due to the potential disturbance of terrestrial and maritime archaeological sites.”

On the other hand, the RMS plans to lower the grassland by up to around three metres if not more. If it was deemed not appropriate to lower The Terrace actions that lower the grassland must be questioned.

The EIS and the specialist urban design landscape report indicate that the degree of the incline in ‘open space’ within Thompson Square will be altered so as to consolidate the two grassy areas and provide “a more direct connection down to the river” (Spackman Mossop Michaels and Hill Tallis p.273). Yet the images showing sections and cross sections of Thompson Square suggest that the open space will be in filled in places and excavated in

other places. Further, it will be affected by new tree plantings and the removal of older, established trees. This activity would suggest impact on levels that may contain intact archaeological resources.

Only two test pits were excavated in Thompson Square, one in Old Bridge Street and one in the northern car park (Biosis p.212), both within the footprint of the proposed bridge and approach road. There is no record of exploratory excavations in the areas of Thompson Square which may be affected by landscaping, tree plantings and tree removal. There is, therefore, deep concern the information obtained from the archaeological assessment does not provide adequate information for decision-making on the proposal.

### *Trees*

Page 100, EIS Volume 1, reports, "Removal of some trees that would be impacted by the project."

Page 64 says, The Thompson Square upper parkland... is predominately grassed parkland with about 14 medium to large trees... The Thompson Square lower parkland contains ... about 10 medium to large trees...

A count of trees in that area (local resident, Harry Terry) basically agrees with these figures, counting 2 extra trees in the upper parkland. However, given the scope of works that is required to slope the grassland down to The Terrace, questions arise as to how this work can be completed without the majority, if not all of trees being removed to complete that work: 15 trees removed is not "some" as claimed.

### *Visual Amenity*

The section on visual impacts in 7.4 does not include anything on the construction phase whereas the section on landscape character does. Visual impact during construction should be addressed

In considering visual impacts attention is drawn to the RMS Bridge Aesthetic Guidelines, which advise

*"Bridges with a horizontal form are generally preferable to bridges on a grade over flood plains and significant expanses of water." And goes on to suggest ... "if this is unable to be achieved due to differing levels either side of the water body then **fine-tuning the location of the bridge** should be considered, or adjusting the levels along the bridge approaches."*

Helpfully, we are advised that "Water always forms a horizontal plane and a bridge structure when skewed to this plane can appear discordant: this may be because it introduces another plane adding unnecessary complexity. consider a horizontal bridge in the same location"

[http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/community\\_environment/urban\\_design/documents/rms\\_bridge\\_aesthetics\\_guidelines\\_2012.pdf](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/community_environment/urban_design/documents/rms_bridge_aesthetics_guidelines_2012.pdf)

Despite its own clear and explicit guidelines indicating that Thompson Square, topographically, is a less desirable location for the proposed bridge, the RMS continues to pursue this option.





# 1. SUMMER IN WINDSOR

# The following pages are offered as a 'conversation starter regarding the future of the historic Windsor Township



## Town Planning

### *Planning to Enhance A Sense of Community*

A sense of community is reflected in the interactions of people with each other and their connection with the built townscape. A connection within the community can be enhanced by planning that encompasses an appealing urban landscape, access to retail spaces and services, recreational facilities and pedestrian friendly spaces.

The benefits of having a sense of belonging can only impact positively on the town as a whole. The need for human interaction and its importance for the health and well being of individuals and communities can be facilitated by planning for a connected, cohesive community. Planning that aims at enhancing a sense of community will see a greater embracing of the facilities and activities within the region. Increased employment through development of tourist areas can give community members a sense of belonging. The general feeling of well being that exists when the needs of a community are nurtured will help promote a lively, thriving town that will in turn foster greater community spirit and participation.

### *Planning and Diversity*

Diversity in planning when revitalizing a town relates to both the physical spaces in the townscape, as well as the individuals and groups who use them.

The differing needs of the community have to be recognized when planning amenities, services and public spaces, as well as the desires of those visiting the town. The activities within those spaces can also appeal to a range of audiences. Displays and reenactments that are targeted to school groups during the week, can then be promoted for families and day visitors on the weekend. It is the diversities in activities that will show to people a view of the town that may differ from the one they know, but within a space that retains a sense of familiarity.

Planning also has to take into account those with varying physical needs. Wheelchair access and convenient Disabled Parking areas are essential to provide access and opportunities for wide ranging participation.

The diversity of social and cultural groups within a common space can also help promote a tolerant and inclusive community.

### *Planning and Community Consultation*

For successful outcomes in the redevelopment process it is paramount that Governments and Planners take into account the thoughts, desires and opinions of informed locals regarding the community in which they live and have helped create. The encouragement of public participation will facilitate the quality of planning outcomes and strengthen civic identity, both of which enhance community well being.

Dismissal of the opinions of locals and unwelcome changes to a cherished space can lead to a disconnection of locals from their sense of place.

### **Planning in the Hawkesbury**

Outside the Rocks in Sydney, it is conceivable the Hawkesbury has the richest repository of Colonial landscape heritage in NSW. Chapter xx, on the economy of the Hawkesbury identifies the enormous benefits of heritage tourism to local economies. Yet, it would appear that, between the State Roads departments (see page xx, Toll House) and the local council there has been a persistent and constant erosion of the heritage ‘capital’ of the Region.

While scrutiny of Hawkesbury City Council’s online documents reveals significant investment in reports and investigations, to date, this investment has failed to deliver anything of substance in the way of visionary planning for the Hawkesbury in general, or Windsor in particular.

Historical photographs reveal the extent to which Council has allowed the heritage qualities of the built environment to be compromised and eroded. The damage this has historically, and what it will potentially do to the Windsor economy is almost incalculable. (See Tourism and the Economy).

Whilst perplexing and disappointing, the actions of Council are not the object of the submission beyond observing their unreliability as a source of advice on town planning strategies in this arena.

This inadequacy might be excused on the basis of the Council’s limited resources for such strategic planning (although expenditure on consultants’ report could call such an assertion into question) however the Roads and Maritime Services cannot claim such a defense for the inadequacies in their strategic planning for the Windsor Bridge Replacement Project.

The diminishing and devaluing of the Region’s heritage capital is being further hastened by an apparent lack of appreciation of the extraordinary value of ‘context’ when considering the value of these assets. As has been outlined in Chapter 1: Context, Windsor is unique. The combination of a rich inventory of extraordinary architecture like St Matthews Church, Tebbutt’s Observatory and the Windsor Court House, to say nothing of Thompson Square itself, set within the fertile Hawkesbury floodplains, all within a forty five minute drive of the Nation’s only global city sees the town ideally placed as an economic powerhouse, driven by its natural resources.



However, rather than protecting the visual and physical attributes of the town, the Local Council and State Government have apparently united to again embark on an attack upon these very assets. Regardless of ANY mitigations claimed for the Windsor Bridge Replacement Project, the fact remains, and is comprehensively and exhaustively supported by the research undertaken by Biosis and detailed in Volume 2 of the EIS, this project is wrong. It is simply in the wrong place. There is no genuine cost benefit to the State in destroying a region's economic and heritage capital. It is an unconscionable misuse of Ministerial and Parliamentary powers to continue to expend public resources to pursue such a project.



The Chapter on Project Processes, visits this issue. Arguably a more objective and comprehensive upfront analysis would have more adequately identified the significant risks inherent in the plan, whilst also identifying the extraordinary opportunities that might be leveraged, thus avoiding the waste of time, money, effort and emotional resources caused by a determined, but misplaced loyalty to Option One.

Whilst in no way pretending to the type of expertise of resources required for such analysis, the following general points are made, in addition to and including points made elsewhere in this submission.

Heritage landscapes have significant economic value beyond that attributed to individual ownership. (Tourism and the Economy)

The vibrancy and charm of, for example, French and Italian mediaeval villages shows that sensible management of heritage precincts, their historical relevance and landscape integrity, produces economic growth, when coupled with suitable planning strategies. Arguably the NSW State Government is potentially depriving business owners and general economic stakeholders of future prosperity by eroding the quality of this prime heritage asset.

There are observable and simple components to the European formula for success in managing key heritage locations:

- Retain the original place (do as little as possible, only as much as strictly necessary)
- Incorporate essential contemporary changes invisibly
- Ensure seamless availability of and access to consequent services
- Provide transport access that is convenient for visitors without compromising the authenticity of what is visible
- As far as possible keep vehicles OUT of heritage precincts (*San Gimignano, CINQUE TERRA*)

### So, what are the options?

From a planning perspective the new Hawkesbury River Bridge represents a once in a lifetime opportunity to make a difference.

As C.S. Lewis once famously said, “We all want progress, but if you're on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; in that case, the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive.”

The options are:

1. do nothing and burden future generations of the Hawkesbury to a destructive, sub-standard solution;
2. be progressive and find the right road. It isn't through Thompson Square.

### ***Doing nothing is not an option.***

Windsor is a fantastic part of NSW: properly managed as a tourist destination it presents a unique opportunity to counterpoint Sydney destination options for the international traveller. Close enough to provide a rural experience for even the briefest of stop-overs, yet a world away from the sophisticated offerings of Australia's only Global City

Its location also positions it perfectly for weekend breaks for jaded urbanites and opens up endless possibilities for day trips.

The Tourism industry has come to recognize the power of heritage as a tourist magnet and the value of the heritage tourist, frequently a longer stayer and better-resourced traveller.

Finding the 'right road' means building on Windsor's economic strengths, not diminishing them.

### Strengths

- ❖ Distance from Sydney
- ❖ Hawkesbury River
- ❖ Heritage
- ❖ Agriculture
- ❖ Landscape
- ❖ Services – capable, innovative, reliable
- ❖ Existing and experienced hospitality
- ❖ Surrounded by floodplain

### Weaknesses

- ❖ Civic Presentation - no sense of arrival, anodyne streetscape at Sydney gateway
- ❖ Traveller services – toilets and parking, information



- ❖ Precinct identification and interpretation
- ❖ Traveller information not well-located
- ❖ Under capitalised, poorly presented and under utilised waterfront

### Opportunities

- ❖ Bypass to take industrial vehicles out of heritage precinct
- ❖ Identification of Georgian Township
- ❖ Identification and co-ordinated promotion of key heritage assets
- ❖ Increased economic return from river waterfront
- ❖ Hawkesbury boardwalk – improved circulation around historic precinct, better use of river asset
- ❖ Thematic approach that identifies the Windsor experience, increasing recognisability
- ❖ Build on maritime heritage and waterfront opportunities
- ❖ Manage business risk associated with flooding through high season concessions to location-appropriate stalls – ice cream, ‘fingerfood’, deckchairs, canoes
- ❖ Strategic planning around new river crossing to facilitate tourist circulation and parking.
- ❖ Invest in a Windsor Gateway, incorporating tourist information at entry to Windsor.
- ❖ Cinema in the Square
- ❖ Examine ways to provide start up support for fledgling local tourist initiatives.
- ❖ Potential to extend to other ‘Macquarie Towns’
- ❖ Encourage small boat access to wharf, boardwalk areas to access economic potential from existing river users

### Benefits

- ❖ Sustainable local economy, if managed properly
- ❖ Lifestyle benefits for community
- ❖ Improved facilities
- ❖ Economic growth
- ❖ Environmental and heritage protection.





## Way Forward

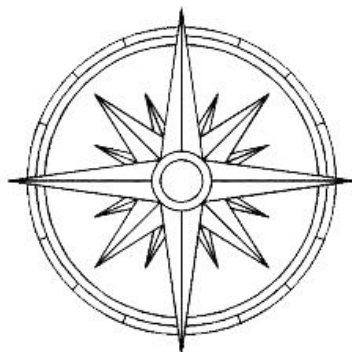
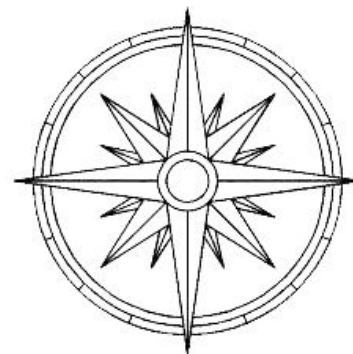
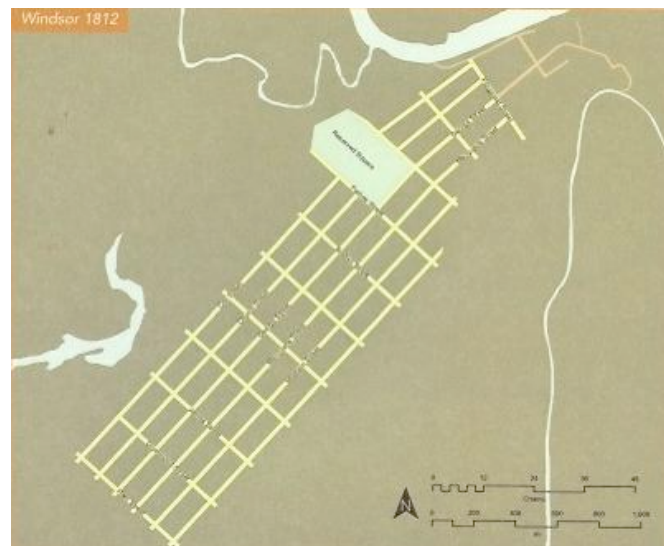
### COLONIAL WINDSOR: GROWING THE BRAND

In Windsor today, the town planning legacy of arguably the most visionary, humane and capable of Australia's Colonial Governors: Lachlan Macquarie remains visible, although undefined and unrecognized.

The 'bones' of Governor Macquarie's breathtakingly ambitious plan for the young colony still exist today in the roads of the Five Towns.

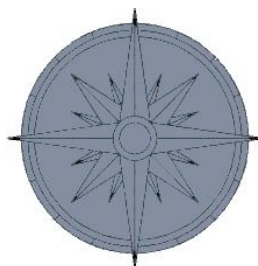
Macquarie's plans were visionary, but not complex. Each town consists of a simple grid.

**Images from Macquarie's Towns, (Jack, 2010) below:**



## A 10 Point Plan

1. Identify the actual Macquarie roads with signage that alerts drivers when they are entering and leaving the original colonial precinct.
2. Impose vehicle weight limits within the original colonial precincts.
3. Impose 'shared zone' speed limits within these precincts.
4. Identify each significant building within the historic town:
  - *Red medallion*: more than 150 years old (medallion states original function and year of construction).
  - *Blue medallion*: between 150 and 100 years old (medallion states original function and year of construction).
  - *Cream medallion*: Other locations/buildings of significance (medallion states significance).
5. Install interpretive signage promoting the significance of the historic precinct and the meaning of the plaques.
6. Offer incentives to property owners within the identified precincts to reflect the historic nature of the location in property maintenance and building presentation.
7. Gradually introduce civic furniture, plantings and colour schemes consistent with the historic nature of the precinct.
8. Identify colonial buildings currently 'at risk' and explore opportunities to incorporate these buildings into the revitalization of Windsor (See notes re 'Jolly Frog')
9. Reinstall a low level bridge at South Creek and create a 'gateway precinct' to the historic township.
10. Undertake local route adjustments to enhance traffic flows, parking and cyclist and pedestrian circulation.



### The Value of a Waterfront

- ❖ The Windsor riverbanks are probably the most undervalued waterfront real estate in the nation
- ❖ Boats bring business (generally boaties have disposable income)
- ❖ Boating activities have been quarantined from the local economy to date. This must be addressed/reversed for the local economy to develop a more robust economic framework.
- ❖ Boats then bring second level business, the romance of the 'nautical' attracts the dreamers!
- ❖ Boats also bring associated business, directly servicing the pastime (repairs, services, supplies, etc)

### The Roads

- ❖ It's time to reclaim our Georgian Town
- ❖ Its time to reclaim Macquarie Street
- ❖ Trucks out, cars and people in
- ❖ Better directional flows
- ❖ Better, more convenient, less ugly parking
- ❖ A new gateway at South Creek: Tourist Information, Bus Parking, Toilet Facilities



### Fear of the River

The Hawkesbury River winds across its flood plain: a mighty waterway, snaking through the verdant countryside. Water.

One of the most desirable landscapes, yet, historically the great asset that Windsor has ignored.

History and geography have combined to make invisible Windsor's greatest natural asset: riverfront assess.

Anywhere else in NSW, almost anywhere else in the world....prime real estate.

It's time for Windsor to rediscover it's maritime history and capitalize on it. It's time to leverage the economic benefits of a waterfront location.

Imagine... summer... canoes...deckchairs. A boardwalk linking the riverfront below the commercial centre of Windsor with the community, recreational and tourist energy of Thompson Square.

Places for visiting craft to tie up. Ice cream concessions. People promenading... or just sitting in the sun, maybe fishing?

*Anything is possible in Windsor.*

## Getting There

Concept	Benefit	Action
To develop a master plan that embodies the principles of a sustainable and adaptable environment in order to honour the integrity of the heritage of the town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within historical renewal exists the potential to compensate current deficiencies.</li> <li>• To reenergise existing spaces and see history in a different way.</li> <li>• Revitalises the township.</li> <li>• Addresses the interests of tourist as well as the need of the locals, without producing a static environment. (Windsor is a working town, not a theme park e.g. Port Arthur)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding that the visual appeal of the town depends on its historical &amp; heritage authenticity.</li> <li>• Careful management of the continuing regeneration process.</li> <li>• Design charter for new development to maintain the historic urban landscape and rural vistas.</li> <li>• Widespread promotion of the unique aspects of Windsor to attract day visitors and tourists as well as engaging local interest and participation.</li> <li>• Thoughtful planning of restaurants, cafes and specialty shops aimed at visitors to Windsor.</li> </ul>
Careful restoration and revival of historical and heritage areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The possibility of uncovering previously lost historical details through new research during the restoration process.</li> <li>• Public investment into the revitalisation process encourages private owners and townspeople to engage in historic rehabilitation and cultural renewal.</li> <li>• Identification of key historical sites to attract tourist activity and generate excitement within the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well planned traffic management to unburden public spaces from moving traffic, and therefore ensuring pedestrian safety and reducing pollution, noise and vibration.</li> <li>• Divert through and heavy traffic away from the township.</li> <li>• Informative signage and story boards displayed at the various historical locations and buildings in the town.</li> <li>• Sufficient traffic signage to allow easy movement of tourists through the town and around different attractions.</li> </ul>

Concept	Benefit	Action
Promotion of Special Events such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sand Sculpting</li> <li>• Music Festivals</li> <li>• Movies in the Square</li> <li>• Night Food Markets</li> <li>• Art by the River (think Sculptures by the Sea)</li> <li>• Performances on the riverbank in Macquarie Park (Shakespeare by the River).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The potential to attract day trippers due to the close proximity to greater Sydney as well as those who are planning a longer stay.</li> <li>• Engage new audiences with increased visibility and foster community involvement.</li> <li>• Exploration of new collaborations and funding possibilities.</li> <li>• Integrating cultural needs into the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the diversity of uses of the area.</li> <li>• Improve entrances to the town.</li> <li>• Ensure careful planning into parking and public toilet facilities for visitors to the tourist precinct.</li> <li>• Reliable connections to public transport.</li> </ul>
Development of tourist and educational attractions such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-enactments in Thompson Square and on the river</li> <li>• Working Models</li> <li>• Walking Tours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased employment opportunities.</li> <li>• The potential to bring groups from over 1400 schools in the Sydney region, and therefore promoting the town for families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the participation of school groups through the development of educational attractions.</li> <li>• Relating the importance of Windsor to the development of the colony and the mores of the Nation</li> <li>• Involve local established families in the telling of their stories</li> </ul>

Concept	Benefit	Action
Identification of existing precincts within the community e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical/heritage</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Industrial</li> <li>• Medical etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure tourist activity does not impact negatively on locals and their ability to move through the town freely in the undertaking of their daily tasks.</li> <li>• To ensure large retail and industrial areas do not impact negatively on the heritage and tourist precincts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise traffic restrictions within the town</li> <li>• Careful investigation into traffic management to ensure ease of movement through the town.</li> <li>• Ensure ease and safety of pedestrian activity</li> <li>• Convenient parking facilities for locals and those frequenting services and retail spaces.</li> <li>• Providing locals with shopping facilities and services without the need to compete with surrounding, larger shopping precincts.</li> </ul>

