

## **INQUIRY INTO WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

**Name:** Mr Peter Nicholson

**Date Received:** 19 April 2018

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**Supplementary  
Submission  
No 114b**

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**From:** Peter Nicholson  
**Sent:** Thursday, 19 April 2018 6:09 PM  
**To:** Portfolio Committee 5  
**Subject:** Windsor Bridge project

[portfoliocommittee5@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:portfoliocommittee5@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Hi

Following on from our phone conversation on Tuesday, I have set out below some information regarding the Francis Greenway-designed wharf at Thompson Square in Windsor, which I understood was to have been the initial stage of archaeological work for the bridge replacement project.

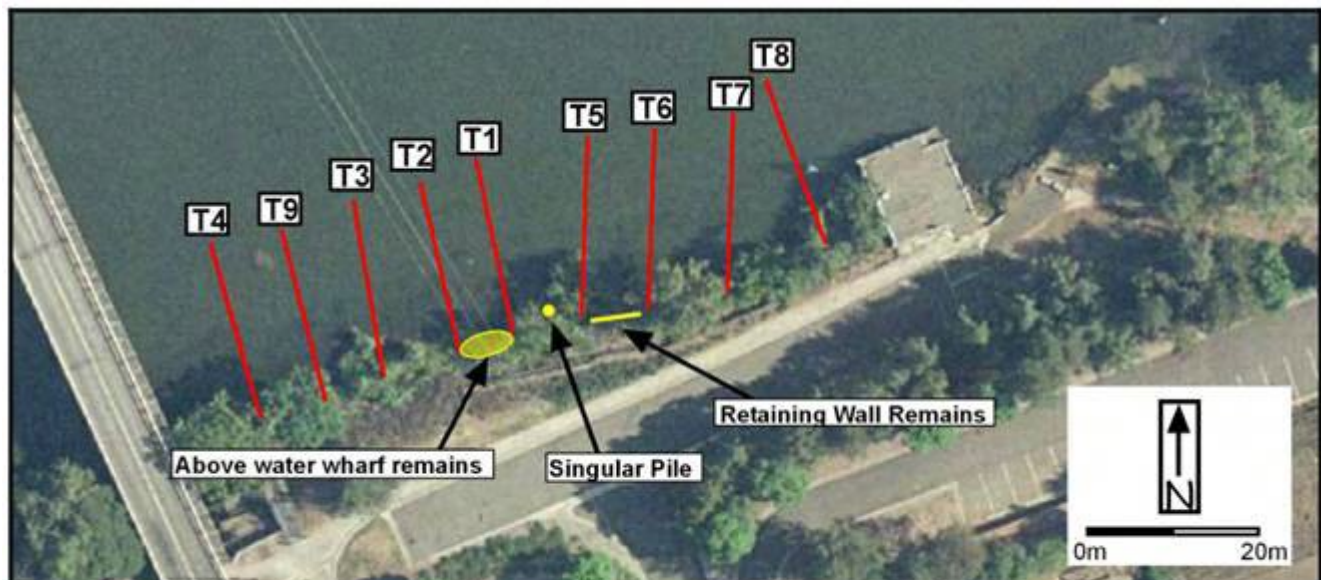
In August 2011 the RMS published a document titled "Punt and wharf sites, maritime archaeological inspection", prepared in February 2009 by Cosmos Archaeology Pty Ltd which was commissioned on 24th November 2008 to undertake a "maritime archaeological assessment to locate any remnant features of the jetty, punt crossing or any material washed up on the bank."

Note this appointment was more than 5 years before the project was approved in December 2013, and more than 6 months before the first community update in July 2009.

The study area for this initial investigation is shown as Figure 1 in the document, and includes the entire area between the existing bridge and wharf. Section 3.0 of the report details the findings but it appears from the results and the photos included in Figures 5 to 17 that no effort was made to clear any of the vegetation from the riverbank in order to properly assess the extent of remains. As you will see from the following photos, this has been done by me and another volunteer, Neil Dand, and we have documented further remains which are present.

The Cosmos report indicates in Figure 6 that the remains found consisted of:

- Above water remains consisting of 3 beams resting on 2 or 3 walers with large iron bolts
- A singular pile
- Retaining wall remains




**Figure 6: Location of the recorded above water features.**

Note Figure 6 shows the "old" wharf which was replaced with the current wharf in 2014 according to the SCMP.

While the identified remains are still in situ, the area between T4 and T2 in Figure 6 has been found to contain further remains including the end point of the brick barrel drain, and additional piles have been located within the "above water wharf remains" between T2 and T1. These additional "finds" were easily visible once the vegetation was removed.

Section 2.1.12 of the SCMP details changes to the wharfage in Thompson Square over many years and mentions that the Greenway wharf was possibly extended at some point in the late 1800's, which is inconsistent with the description of the wharf in the Maritime Archaeological Statement Of Heritage Impact which states "To erect a Wharf or Platform in the front of Thompson's Square in the Town of Windsor in this Territory which shall extend the width of the Square on a line with the present Jetty or Wharf but three feet higher, the said wharf to be constructed to have two Rows of Piles without the present platform and one Row behind the whole to be secured with Land Ties and Caps and planked with sound two inch Planks, and not more than six inches wide to be spiked with five inch Spikes, and the whole of the Square to slope down from the Crown or Range on which His Majesty's Store stands gradually to the point of the said platform, the Bank to the Westward of the New Wharf and adjoining to that point of the River where the Punt and Ferry Boats Land is to be cut away sufficiently wide to admit of carts turning at the Landing Place"

It is not unusual that the documentation available from the RMS is inconsistent within itself. The Historic Heritage Assessment & Statement of Heritage Impact Part 9b November 2012 includes the following diagram which has the wharf in a totally different location to that investigated:

		<b>Map:</b> Detail of Figure 3. The location of the wharf is shown as 23 on the plan.	
<b>Condition:</b>	<b>Integrity:</b>	<b>Current Use:</b> describe use	
<b>No statutory heritage listings</b>			
<b>Level of Significance:</b>	State: ✓	Local: ✓	Assessed: ✓ Potential: ✓
<b>Statement of Significance:</b>			

Oddly, this is the area that contains the additional remains.

The Maritime Archaeological Statement of Heritage Impact concluded that the wharf remains have State significance. The photos below show what additional items have been found and their locations.



Photo 1. This rubble appears to be sandstone and may have been kerbing removed in the construction of Windsor Mall. It is located immediately east of the end of the retaining wall.





Photo 2. The remains of the retaining wall identified by Cosmos Archaeology. Cleared of vegetation 20/2/2018.

Cosmos described the retaining wall as “The retaining wall consisted of two iron girders 2 m apart with two timber cross pieces. The iron girders are square in shape and stand 1.5 m above the riverbank, and are 0.20 m wide. The two timber cross pieces are approximately 2.5 m long x 0.30 m wide and 0.11m thick, and are spaced close together. Material behind the wall consists of dressed sandstone blocks, bricks and broken up concrete deposited onto up the riverbank. A concrete cap has been placed over the top of the fill at one stage, possibly to create a surface or to contain the backfilled material.

This is blatantly incorrect as 3 posts are clearly visible, and they are I-beams or RSJ's, not square..





Photo 2a. The retaining wall viewed from the northern bank, showing the concrete capping



Photo 2b showing sandstone under the concrete capping. Most bricks under capping are frogged PBC but source and age unknown to date.



Photo 2c. Beams holding retaining wall are 20cm wide, clearly not square.





Photo 3. The solitary pile identified by Cosmos Archaeology



Photo 4. Two walers protruding from the riverbank toward the “solitary pile”.



Photo 4a. The 2 walers near the solitary pile.





Photo 5. Shows the two walers in Photo 4 on the left, to the east of the “above water wharf remains” on the right.





Photo 5a 22/3/2018. Shows proximity of wharf remains to solitary pile.



Photo 6. Above water remains showing 2 iron fasteners (and a beer bottle).





Photo 6a showing 2 piles spaced 3 feet apart as per contract, and sandstone slab between walers. There are 2 other sandstone slabs buried under the pile of weeds at the west adjacent to these remains (top end of picture)



Photo 6b showing closer shot of piles (third now visible). These piles were not mentioned by Cosmos.





Photo 6c closer image of iron fastener through Waler and beam



Photo 6d. Additional sandstone slabs now visible and 3 piles clearly shown.





Photo 7. Bricks consistent with barrel drain, wharf deck timbers and an iron fastener, to the west of the above water wharf remains. Most of this is visible only at low tide. Brick position consistent with estimated drain outlet.





Photo 7a. Wharf timber embedded in river bank.



Photo 7b. Wharf timbers and bricks embedded in riverbank. All bricks unfrosted.





Photo 7c. Wharf deck timbers on river bed. Remains of a beam are contained in the bank.



Photo 7d. Iron fastener in remains of beam in bank.





Photo 7e. Iron fastener in remains of beam in bank.



Photo 7f showing proximity to new wharf to east. The above water remains are central with the solitary pile just above.





Photo 7g 1/3/2018. Additional wharf timbers some of which appear to have been later removed.





Photo 7h 1/3/2018. Note concrete pipe fragment appears to be consistent with that located at the "end" of the barrel drain, and wharf timber bottom right. Modern bricks and other fill in general area.



Photo 7i 1/3/2018. Convict bricks on river bed in approximate location of barrel drain outlet. Wharf timber at bottom





Photo 8. Beam embedded in bank to the west of area in Photo 7.



Photo 9. 3/4/2018 Uncovering the western end of the wharf. Beam and pile visible.





Photo 9b 3/4/2018. Rotted beam in water disintegrated due to weight of iron fastener in one end.





Photo 9c 3/4/2018. Westernmost pile obscured by large piece of concrete.



Photo 9d 3/4/2018. Iron fastener, now held by Hawkesbury Museum. Disintegrated beam under iron.





Photo 10 3/4/2018. Scour protection at western end of wharf, pile at left of looped tree root.



Photo 10a. This appears to be the most western pile attached to any beams, the pile next to the concrete (photo 9c) is smaller and lower, and the fill angles back toward the bank per photo 10. The southern bridge pylon is visible in the background.





Photo 10b. Arrowed westernmost piles show proximity to bridge.

Location of photos



- Photo 1
- Photo 2
- Photo 3
- Photo 4
- Photo 5
- Photo 6
- Photo 7
- Photo 8
- Photo 9
- Photo 10

The blue line approximates the location of the replacement bridge. View from bridge south to Thompson Square.



## Conclusion

All of the above was uncovered through the efforts of me and Neil Dand, a gentleman aged 80. The failure of the specialists employed by the RMS to investigate this properly and document their findings is indicative of the lack of attention and effort which has plagued this project since its inception.

The Windsor Bridge - Maritime Archaeological Statement of Heritage Impact prepared by Cosmos Archaeology in October 2012 concluded that "The archaeological remains associated with the former ca.1814 wharf have been assessed as being of State significance" and that "Redesigning elements of the bridge that would allow for the retention and protection of the known and potential archaeological remains has been investigated; however, impacts cannot be avoided."

The detailed Archaeological Salvage Strategy published by AAJV in 2017 stated "The Detailed Salvage Strategy for Maritime Archaeology is contained in a separate report." No evidence of this report can be found on either the RMS website or the documents published by the Department of Planning and Environment. This strategy also refers to a document titled "Underwater Surveys and Test Excavation Report (Cosmos Archaeology 2017)" and another titled "Historical and Maritime Archaeological Research Design and Excavation Methodology (HMARD)" which also can not be found. There is a document titled "Historical and Maritime Archaeological Research Design" but it contains no detailed methodology for maritime work. It is notable that the detailed strategy simply says "The maritime archaeological salvage program can take place independently of the terrestrial archaeological works." AAJV have stated that they do not do maritime archaeology, so it appears the RMS has not commissioned anyone to do the salvage work required.

The preferred outcome in regards to the preservation of these State significant remains would be to abandon the project due to its cumulative impacts, and invest the funds in the preferred option of a bypass of Windsor without the associated heritage costs. This view is supported by Hawkesbury City Council, the Heritage Council, the National Trust and an ever-increasing number of residents.

As a minimum, the RMS should inform the public on what they propose to do to salvage the wharf remains. It is apparent from the Urban Design and Landscape Detailed Design Report released in September 2017 that the southern river bank including the 1814 wharf area will be covered in scour protection, with no indication of any heritage mitigation elements. This is unacceptable in light of the elements that will be impacted.

I propose that the southern riverbank needs to be properly examined by qualified archaeologists to ascertain exactly what remains are buried in the bank, and an appropriate strategy employed to recover and/or preserve not only the wharf elements but any remains of the drain outlet that exist. This needs to be done in conjunction with Hawkesbury City Council, the Heritage Council and any other relevant bodies.