

11 Project justification and conclusion

*This chapter presents a justification of the project and a conclusion to the environmental impact statement. It considers a range of issues including project benefits, protection of the environment, the objects of the EP&A Act, ecologically sustainable development and community consultation. The relevant DGR for this section is presented in **Table 11-1**.*

Table 11-1 Director General's requirements

Director General's requirements	Where addressed
A statement of the objectives of the project, including a description of the strategic need, justification, objectives and outcomes for the project, the aims and objectives of relevant strategic planning and transport policies, including NSW 2021, the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036 and the draft North West Subregional Strategy.	This chapter and Chapter 3.

11.1 Justification

11.1.1 Project justification

Windsor bridge provides an important link for communities on each side of the Hawkesbury River in the Windsor locality, as well as an important regional link between western Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Hunter region. Around 19,000 vehicles use the bridge each day, with around seven per cent of these being heavy vehicles. The nearest alternative bridge crossing of the Hawkesbury is located around 10 kilometres away at Richmond, requiring a road detour of around 20 kilometres to drive between the southern and northern sides of the river at Windsor.

There are a number of reasons why a replacement river crossing at Windsor is required including:

- Deterioration in the condition of the existing bridge – Elements of the existing bridge are over 130 years old and substantially deteriorated.
- The existing bridge and approach roads do not meet current engineering and safety standards.
- The existing bridge has a lower flood immunity than the surrounding roads.
- The poor current and future traffic performance and capacity of the existing bridge and intersections.

In July 2009 RMS identified ten potential options for a new river crossing at Windsor: two options involving the refurbishment of the existing bridge, two options involving a bypass of Windsor and six for a new replacement bridge. Project objectives and criteria were developed to guide the assessment of the different options while a range of investigations were undertaken on key environmental aspects to support this assessment. Options for other aspects of the project such as bridge type, intersection types and urban design were also developed and assessed by the project team, adopting an integrated design approach with engineers, urban designers and architects working collaboratively with environmental and heritage specialists. The project development process also involved comprehensive community and stakeholder consultation input, including suggestions for refurbishment and alternative alignments that were also reviewed.

RMS selected the project as described in Chapter 5 as the preferred option based on an assessment of all the options against the project objectives and criteria. A summary of how the preferred option (the project) addresses the project objectives and criteria is provided in **Table 11-2**.

Table 11-2 Assessment of the preferred option (the project) against project objectives and criteria

Project objectives and criteria	Assessment of the project against objectives and criteria
To improve safety for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists	
Meets the various design codes	The project has been designed to meet RMS and Ausroads design codes for road and pedestrian safety.
Meets a road speed of 50 km/h	The project has been designed for a 50 kilometre per hour design speed. The design speed has been lowered to allow a reduction in the height of the southern approach road to minimise heritage impacts.
Ensures pedestrian safety	The project incorporates many features to improve pedestrian safety including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide shared path across the new bridge and beside the approach roads to provide safe access across the river. • Traffic signals at the George Street and Bridge Street intersection which allows pedestrian crossings to be incorporated across all legs of the intersection – where none now exists. • Other pedestrian facilities such as paths and crossings which link various pedestrian routes and provide safer access for pedestrians.
To improve traffic and transport efficiency	
Minimises queue length/delays	The project has been designed to minimise queue lengths and delays especially during peak periods. The traffic and transport assessment demonstrates that the road configuration and new intersections will provide high levels of service on opening and into the future.
Improves performance of road network	Network modelling undertaken for the project demonstrates that the project would improve the performance of the road network compared with the existing situation. As well as providing a higher capacity bridge to cater for future growth in traffic, the new northern and southern intersections would provide a high level of service on opening and into the future.
Enables two heavy vehicles to pass on the bridge without waiting	The width of traffic lanes for both the two and three lane configurations would comply with appropriate guidelines and would allow heavy vehicles to pass without waiting.
Improves load capacity of the crossing to meet current load standards	The replacement bridge would have a load capacity to meet current load standards
To improve the level of flood immunity	
Provides a crossing that has a higher level of flood immunity than the existing bridge	The project would have a flood immunity of about a 1 in 3 year ARI flood event – which would be higher than the flood immunity of the existing bridge which is about a 1 in 2 year ARI flood event. There was no advantage in providing a higher flood immunity as the Freemans Reach Road and Wilberforce Road would be cut by floodwaters for events greater than the 1 in 3 year ARI flood event.

Project objectives and criteria	Assessment of the project against objectives and criteria
Provides a crossing with a flood immunity that is compatible with the surrounding approach roads	The flood immunity of Freemans Reach Road and Wilberforce Road was assessed and for both roads is about 1 in 3 year ARI. The project flood immunity would be compatible with these roads.
To meet long term community needs	
Provides an efficient connection for local traffic	The project would provide a very efficient connection for local traffic as it provides a direct connection to the town centre
Provides an efficient connection for regional traffic	The project provides a reasonably efficient connection for regional traffic by providing direct access to Windsor Road and to Macquarie Street.
Provides a pedestrian and cyclist connection to surrounding locations	The project would substantially enhance pedestrian and cyclist connections between the northern and southern bank, between the town centre and east Windsor, between the foreshore and George Street and to Macquarie Park.
Minimises impacts on recreational spaces	The project would have a minimal direct impact on recreational spaces – and would result in an increase in the area of public open space in Thompson Square and on the northern bank.
Minimises impacts of noise	While noise levels at sensitive receivers immediately adjacent to the project would be high, these receivers are already impacted by noise from the existing road and architectural noise mitigation would be provided to affected residential properties. The project would not have any impacts on properties currently not affected by road noise.
Minimises impacts to businesses and the shopping environment	The project has been designed to maintain access to business and shops in the town centre by allowing access to George Street (west) for both northbound and southbound traffic. Amenity impacts experienced by businesses adjacent to the project would be similar to those experienced from the existing road and intersections. Overall the project would have negligible impacts on businesses and the shopping environment.
Minimises impacts on property access	The project would result in the loss of direct access from the northbound direction for two residential properties, however direct access would still be available from the southbound direction. This would be the only loss of access due to the project.
Minimises need for acquisition	On the northern bank full acquisition of two properties and partial acquisition of two further properties, all of which currently used for turf farming would be required. The land is flood prone. On the southern bank two Crown properties would be acquired and the majority of land (>90%) would be retained as public open space. Overall the land acquisition required would be minimal especially in comparison to other crossing options.
Provides a 100 year life span for the bridge	The replacement bridge would be designed and constructed to have a 100 year life span.

Project objectives and criteria		Assessment of the project against objectives and criteria	
To minimise the impact on heritage and the character of the local area			
Minimises impact on Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal heritage and conservation areas		The project would have an adverse impact on the Historic heritage and to a lesser extent Aboriginal archaeology. The project would directly impact Thompson Square Conservation Area and any archaeological resources within the project footprint. While mitigation measures have been incorporated in the project design and would be implemented during the further design and construction of the project, impacts on heritage and the Thompson Square Conservation Area would not be totally mitigated.	
Protects the town built heritage and its setting		<p>Apart from the visual impact of the project, the town built heritage around Thompson Square would be protected. The main potential impacts would be during construction and mitigation measures have been developed to protect heritage buildings and items.</p> <p>There would be both benefits and adverse impacts on the heritage setting of Thompson Square from the project. The project would allow the reunification of the currently bisected Thompson Square parkland and would enhance views to the river with foreshore improvements, removal of weeds and landscaping. However the modern bridge would contrast with the heritage setting of Thompson Square.</p>	
Minimises visual impact and impacts on the character of local area		<p>The project would be higher in the landscape than the existing bridge and would be a modern structure in an essentially heritage and rural landscape. While mitigation measures have been incorporated in the design of the project to reduce its visual intrusiveness, it generally would have a high visual impact.</p> <p>However the project would only be one element in character of the local area. Other important elements such as heritage buildings adjacent to and outside the project area would be directly impacted.</p>	
To be a cost effective and an affordable outcome			
Provides a cost effective solution - capital cost		The project would provide a cost effective solution as it requires only short approach roads and paths to connect to existing infrastructure and only minimal land acquisition.	
Provides a cost effective solution - maintenance		The project would be designed to have minimal maintenance costs.	
Provides a cost effective solution - investment on return		An economic analysis was prepared for the project using the most up to date costs and other design information. The benefit cost ratio for the project was 14.6 indicating that the project provides substantial value for money and an excellent return on the investment.	
Minimises the impact of construction in regards to length and timing		Due to the relatively short approach roads, the construction period would be reduced. As the majority of the construction activities would be undertaken from the northern bank, impacts from construction on urban areas on the southern bank would be minimised.	

The preferred option addresses the project objectives and provides a higher value for money than other options considered. However, it does not address the project objective of minimising impact on heritage and character as well as other options that were considered. While other options have lower heritage impacts, the costs and other potential impacts of these alternative options are considered to exceed their benefits.

Mitigation measures have been incorporated in the design and construction of the project to reduce heritage impacts, however, the impacts would not be eliminated. The replacement of Windsor bridge would clearly be in the public interest as the existing bridge does not effectively meet ongoing safety and traffic requirements. With future traffic growth predicted at between 25 to 30 per cent by 2026 due to primarily increased urban development in the townships on the northern bank of the Hawkesbury River, traffic and safety issues would increase. The existing Windsor bridge has reached the end of its design life and the most appropriate long-term cost effective option would be to build a new replacement bridge.

The views of the community have also been taken into account in the consideration of the public interest. Some members of the community strongly oppose the project due chiefly to concerns about impacts on the heritage values and vistas of Thompson Square. However, there is also considerable support within the community for the preferred option as it is seen by parts of the community as the most practical option and does not expose currently unaffected residential areas to impacts from traffic and noise. The project would provide a new bridge, approach roads and intersections that address the deficiencies of the existing crossing of the Hawkesbury River. The project design meets accepted design standards, improves the level of flood immunity to that of the surrounding approach roads, and provides safer crossings for pedestrians. The existing bridge would be removed thereby removing the risk of deterioration and failure.

The improved intersections and higher capacity bridge would provide acceptable traffic performance immediately and into the future when the bridge would be reconfigured to provide three lanes (two lanes southbound and one lane northbound).

11.1.2 Objects of the EP&A Act

The objects of the EP&A Act provide a framework within which the justification of the project can be considered. A summary of this assessment is provided in **Table 11-3**.

Table 11-3 Justification of the project in consideration of the objectives of the EP&A Act

EP&A Act objective	Comment
<p>To encourage the proper management, development and conservation of natural and artificial resources, including agricultural land, natural areas, forests, minerals, waters, cities, towns and villages for the purpose of promoting the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment.</p>	<p>Overall the project would manage, develop and conserve natural and artificial resources appropriately and would result in social and economic benefits to the community. However there would be the loss of the existing Windsor bridge. Environmental management measures have been developed for the construction, demolition and operational phases for all environmental aspects. These management measures comply with relevant national, State and RMS guidelines, policies and legislation. The design of the project has been developed to conserve natural and artificial resources through measures such as minimising land acquisition, providing efficient connections to the existing road network and minimising impacts on flora, fauna and water quality.</p> <p>The project would not directly impact threatened species, ecologically endangered communities and key habitats and would involve minimal clearing of mainly weed infested vegetation.</p> <p>The project would provide efficient and safe road crossing of the Hawkesbury River which would support the social and economic welfare of the community. The project would improve flood immunity compared to the existing bridge, reducing the frequency and duration of closures of the river crossing. However the project is not intended to be a new flood evacuation route.</p> <p>The project has also been designed to withstand regular inundation by flood waters and would be able to cope with climate change impacts such as increased flooding.</p> <p>Greenhouse gas reduction measures have also been identified to minimise emissions during the construction and operation of the project</p> <p>The removal of the southern approach road to the existing bridge would increase the area of open space in Thompson Square and pedestrian linkages between recreational areas, along the foreshore and across the river would be substantially improved.</p> <p>The project would have a significant impact on the heritage vistas of the Thompson Square Conservation Area. While this impact has been minimised through sympathetic urban design, the selection of bridge type with lower visual impact and other measures, the impact on heritage vistas of the Thompson Square Conservation Area cannot be totally mitigated. The project would also involve the demolition of the heritage listed existing Windsor bridge.</p> <p>However the project would meet most of the other functional and environmental project objectives and criteria and would provide the best value for money for the community.</p>

EP&A Act objective	Comment
To encourage the promotion and co-ordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land.	<p>The project would support the further urban development of the villages and townships north of the Hawkesbury River by providing an essential river crossing and road link to Windsor and the greater metropolitan area of Sydney. It would also support agricultural and horticultural development north of the river by providing a safe and efficient link to markets and services south of the river.</p> <p>The project would allow businesses, agricultural / horticultural enterprises and residents north of the river efficient and safe access to services, employment and markets – which would make urban and agricultural development of land north of the Hawkesbury River more attractive and economically viable.</p> <p>Businesses in Windsor would be largely unaffected by the project as motorists would still be able to access the town centre and the noise and air quality impacts from the project would be similar to the impacts from the existing bridge.</p> <p>While there would be impacts on the heritage vistas of Thompson Square, the other important heritage elements of the town that attract tourists would not be affected. Also with a larger usable open space in Thompson Square and improved pedestrian access across the river to Macquarie Park, to the foreshore and to east Windsor, the area would become more attractive to visitors.</p> <p>During construction there would be some temporary amenity and access impacts on businesses, however these will be minimised through the implementation of environmental management measures detailed in the EIS.</p>
To encourage the protection, provision and co-ordination of communication and utility services.	The project would involve the relocation of a number of communication and utility services, which would be undertaken in consultation with the relevant service providers as described in Chapter 5.
To encourage the provision of land for public purposes	The project itself is a public purpose and would provide roads, paths and a bridge that would be used by the public. The project would also increase usable public open space on both the northern and southern banks and improve safe access for the public to parks and other recreational areas.
To encourage the provision and co-ordination of community services and facilities.	<p>The project includes the reconfiguration of Thompson Square by the removal of the southern approach road to the existing bridge which currently bisects Thompson Square parkland. As a result the area of usable green space in Thompson Square parkland would increase – and the parkland would be landscaped to maximise its potential community uses in consultation with the community and Hawkesbury City Council.</p> <p>Other community facilities that would be provided as a result of the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared path across the bridge that would provide a safe and efficient link between Macquarie Park and the Windsor town centre. • Safe pedestrian crossing of Bridge and George Street to provide a link between east Windsor and the town centre. • Reconnecting The Terrace to provide pedestrian access along the river.

EP&A Act objective	Comment
To encourage the protection of the environment, including the protection and conservation of native animals and plants, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats.	The project would only have minor potential impacts on the natural environment. No threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats would be affected by the project. The environmental management measures identified for the construction and operation of the project would minimise and in some cases reduce any impacts from land, water and air pollution on the natural environment.
To encourage ecologically sustainable development.	Ecologically sustainable development has been considered in Section 11.1.3.
To encourage the provision and maintenance of affordable housing.	Not relevant to the project.
To promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning between different levels of government in the State.	Not relevant to the project.
To provide increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment.	<p>The options development and selection process for the project has involved a comprehensive community and stakeholder participation process. Feedback from community and stakeholders has been sought on different options for the location of the new river crossing, the bridge type and the final form and use of Thompson Square. Where possible community and stakeholder feedback has been included in the development of the design. Also concerns and issues raised by the community and stakeholders on the preferred option have been noted and addressed wherever possible in the design, environmental impact assessment and development of mitigation measures. Details of consultation activities are contained in Chapter 6.</p> <p>There will be further opportunities for the public to be involved in the project through the submissions process for the EIS and through the further development of the design and use of Thompson Square and other areas.</p>

11.1.3 Ecologically sustainable development

Ecologically sustainable development (ESD) is development that improves the total quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends. The principles of ESD have been an integral consideration throughout the development of the project.

ESD requires the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes. The four main principles supporting the achievement of ESD are discussed below.

Precautionary principle

The precautionary principle (as defined in Schedule 2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*) states that if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation. In the application of the precautionary principle, public and private decisions should be guided by:

- Careful evaluation to avoid, wherever practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment.
- An assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of various options.

The environmental impacts of the project have been comprehensively assessed in the EIS using appropriate guidelines, policies and procedures. The assessment approach has meant the impacts of the project are certain, predictable and largely able to be mitigated. Apart from impacts on historic heritage, the project would not result in serious or irreversible damage to the environment provided the identified environmental management measures are implemented.

Impacts of the project on historic heritage include direct impacts on in-situ terrestrial and maritime archaeological resources within the project footprint. While these archaeological resources would be directly impacted, a comprehensive archaeological investigation and salvage program would be undertaken before construction to enable archaeological recording of the historical development of Thompson Square and the river bank and also the salvage of any relics that may still exist. With these investigation and salvage activities the archaeological resources of areas impacted by the project would not be irreversibly lost.

The other major impact from the project would be on the heritage vistas and values of Thompson Square. Appropriately qualified and experienced engineers, architects, heritage specialists and urban design practitioners have been involved in the project development process attempting to minimise impacts wherever practicable. The impacts have been thoroughly assessed and environmental management measures and design solutions have been developed to further minimise these visual impacts. The community and government stakeholders have also been extensively consulted to obtain their feedback on design options for the project. Additional consultation and further refinement of the design is also planned before construction commences which aims to further mitigate the visual impact of the project. While these measures would reduce the overall visual impact of the project, it is recognised that the project would still have a significant impact on the heritage views and vistas of Thompson Square.

This impact is, conceivably, reversible as the replacement bridge and approach roads could be removed from the square at a later date – as has been demonstrated by the numerous redevelopments and reconfigurations of Thompson Square over the past 230 years. However, demolition of the existing bridge, which contributes to the heritage views and vistas, would be an irreversible impact. While other options for a river crossing at Windsor have been identified that avoid impacts on Thompson Square, they would have other potential impacts or would not meet the functional requirements for the river crossing. All options were assessed against project objectives and criteria that considered their risk of environmental impacts, their functional performance and their costs and benefits to the community. On the basis of this assessment, the project as described in Chapter 5 was determined to be the best solution on-balance.

Greenhouse gas reduction measures have been identified to minimise emissions from the project, while the implications of climate change have been considered during the design of the project. The replacement bridge has been designed to overtop during floods and to withstand regular inundation by flood waters. A formal flood evacuation route has been constructed by RMS separately as part of the Windsor Road Upgrade Program.

Inter-generational equity

Inter-generational equity (as defined in Schedule 2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*) requires that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment are maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.

The preferred option for the project was assessed and selected in consideration of a set of project objectives and criteria which reflected economic, social and environmental costs and benefits. While the preferred option did not meet some project objectives as well as other options met those objectives, on balance it was considered to be the best option. Other options such as a bypass of Windsor may have had lower heritage impacts, however, there were other environmental impacts and social costs of these options and the financial costs were considerably higher. The other options did not provide sufficient benefits to outweigh their costs.

Apart from heritage, the project would at least maintain the health, diversity and productivity of the environment and for some aspects would enhance the environment. Impacts from the project such as noise and air quality would be similar compared to if the project was not to proceed. Other features of the project such as improved water management and provision of additional areas of usable public open space in Thompson Square and on the northern bank would improve the local environment. However the heritage vistas of Thompson Square would be adversely impacted by the project, as has occurred previously with the redevelopment of Thompson Square on numerous occasions over the past 230 years.

The project would also provide an essential, efficient and safe local and regional link in the existing road networks, with capacity for future traffic growth. Where possible the assessment of impacts from the project have taken into account future growth in traffic – to determine whether the project would have impacts on future generations. Based upon these impact assessments, apart from the loss of heritage vistas and values the project would not have significant additional impact on future generations. The project has also intrinsic design features (eg designed to undergo regular immersion by floodwaters) which allow its ability to cope with potential future impacts of climate change.

Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity

Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity (as defined in *Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*) states that conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration.

The project would not result in any significant impacts on biodiversity or the ecological integrity of the local and regional environment. There are no threatened species, ecologically endangered communities or key terrestrial habitats within or adjacent to the project area. Environmental management measures detailed in the EIS would minimise the impacts of construction on the Hawkesbury River and the ecological integrity of the river would be protected. Compared to the existing bridge, the project would reduce risks to biological diversity and ecological integrity through improved operational water treatment and the removal of lead based paint from the existing bridge.

Improved valuation and pricing of environmental resources

Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms (as defined in *Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*) states that environmental factors should be included in the valuation of assets and services, such as:

- (i) polluter pays, that is, those who generate pollution and waste should bear the cost of containment, avoidance or abatement.
- (ii) the users of goods and services should pay prices based on the full life cycle of costs of providing goods and services, including the use of natural resources and assets and the ultimate disposal of any waste.
- (iii) environmental goals, having been established, should be pursued in the most cost effective way, by establishing incentive structures, including market mechanisms, that enable those best placed to maximise benefits or minimise costs to develop their own solutions and responses to environmental problems.

As noted previously, the project would not have a significant impact on the natural environment and the amenity impacts would not significantly increase over the existing situation. Some aspects of the project would result in a reduction in environmental risks and impacts. The project would not generate significant additional pollution or wastes.

The major environmental impact of the project is the impact on heritage vistas and values of Thompson Square Conservation Area. In recognition of this cost, considerable effort has been invested in minimising the impact of the project on this aspect including selecting a bridge type that has a lower visual impact and urban design and landscaping of Thompson Square open space and other areas in and adjacent to the project. Development of the design would be ongoing to further identify opportunities to minimise the impacts of the project on the heritage vistas of Thompson Square.

RMS also intends to deliver the construction of the project via an alliance contract. This type of delivery method involves establishing a collaborative team of design, construction, other specialist practitioners and RMS personnel to design and construct the project. Unlike conventional delivery methods, an alliance contract can provide incentives for innovative solutions, environmental performance and minimising impacts.

11.2 Conclusion

This EIS has addressed the key issues identified in the DGRs issued under Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act and the requirements of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*. Checklists showing where the DGRs and the requirements of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* are addressed are provided in **Appendix A** and **B**.

While Windsor bridge replacement project addresses the project objectives it would result in significant impacts on the heritage vistas of Thompson Square Conservation Area and its archaeological resources. These impacts have been minimised as much as possible through reducing the height the bridge, selecting a bridge type that has a lower visual profile and including appropriate urban design features and landscaping, however, they cannot be ameliorated completely. These impacts are unavoidable unless an alternative option was selected, however the alternative options would have other impacts and do not provide as high value for money as the project.

In terms of the historical context of Thompson Square, it has been and is the primary location for crossing the Hawkesbury River at Windsor. Crossing of the river pre-1874 was via a ferry or punt crossing and post 1874 via the existing bridge. Consequently a road from George Street to either the wharves or the bridge has been a constant feature of Thompson Square, although the alignment, size and layout of roads in Thompson Square has varied considerably over 200 years. While other options for a river crossing at Windsor may have less or no impacts on Thompson Square, they would generally result in noise, traffic and visual amenity impacts on residential areas which do not currently experience these issues – as well as other environmental impacts. Also many of the alternative options would cost significantly more than the project and benefits that they may provide do not justify the additional costs.

Other operational impacts of the project such as noise, air quality and flooding would be similar to impacts from the existing bridge and approach roads.

Construction of the project would result in short-term temporary impacts on noise, air quality, water quality, traffic and access. However, these impacts would be minimised through the development and implementation of construction environmental management plans and careful planning of construction activities. Only minimal clearing of vegetation would be required and no threatened species, ecologically endangered communities or habitat areas would be impacted.

There are a number of benefits to Thompson Square from the project including the consolidation and creation of a larger green space area in Thompson Square parkland and improved pedestrian and cyclist paths and crossings linking Thompson Square with Macquarie Park, The Terrace and east Windsor. This would improve both the use and accessibility of the Thompson Square parkland and would return Thompson Square to a form closer to the earliest colonial space prior to the creation of formalised roads.

The project has been designed to accommodate future growth in traffic and would provide a cost-effective, efficient and safe route for local and regional traffic. It would provide a crossing of the Hawkesbury River with a higher flood immunity than the existing bridge and appropriate for the surrounding road network. In comparison to the other options for a road crossing of the Hawkesbury River at Windsor, the project provides the best value for money and apart from its impacts on heritage, which have been discussed in detail, it will have minimal additional impacts on the surrounding environment.