

ITEM DETAILS						
Name of Item	Sandstone Culvert, approx 200m south of Meurants Lane					
Other Name/s Former Name/s						
Item type (if known)	Built					
Item group (if known)						
Item category (if known)						
Area, Group, or Collection Name						
Street number						
Street name	Old Windsor Road					
Suburb/town	Glenwood				Postcode	2153
Local Government Area/s	Blacktown City					
Property description						
Location - Lat/long	Latitude				Longitude	
Location - AMG (if no street address)	Zone		Easting		Northing	
Owner	Roads and Traffic Authority					
Current use	Culvert					
Former Use	Culvert					
Statement of significance	The sandstone culvert 200m south of Meurants Lane on the disused portion of the Old Windsor Road is of local significance as it is part of one of the earliest road systems of the Colony. It possesses technical and research value embodied in its construction and associative significance in its association with early road builders of the Colony, Lt. Francis Grose and surveyor Charles Grimes. The culvert is a rare remnant of early road infrastructure, more so as the road upgrades in the area are either impacting physically on the original road alignment or in this case, the original alignment has been abandoned and neglect is a potential threat to the culvert's survival.					
Level of Significance	State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Local <input type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIPTION			
Designer	Unknown		
Builder/ maker	Unknown		
Physical Description	Very old sandstone culvert on both sides of a disused portion of the Old Windsor Road. Constructed of sparrow-pecked, hammer-dressed sandstone. The mouth of the culvert on the eastern side (upstream) of the road has collapsed to three courses from the top. A clay pipe runs under the base of the road at ground level. It was recorded as having four courses visible in 1993 (Casey & Lowe). The west side of the culvert is in good condition, although the general area is infested with weeds such as Lantana and blackberry that may compromise the structural integrity of the items by growing in cracks etc. Seven courses visible although the first course is almost obscured by silt. It appears as though the lintel has moved across to south on the western side.		
Physical condition and Archaeological potential	Original condition assessment: 'East side of the culvert (upstream) has partially collapsed although the sandstone blocks are still in excellent condition. West side of the culvert is in excellent condition. Clay pipe (1993-94) in good condition.' (Last updated: 8/03/2005.) 2007-08 condition update: 'Poor (east) - Fair (west).' (Last updated: 17/4/09.)		
Construction years	Start year	1800 - 1814	Circa
Modifications and dates	Unknown		

HISTORY	
Historical notes	<p>The Cumberland region was first accessed via the Hawkesbury River and all supplies arriving and agricultural goods departing were transported by this route. Many factors constrained this mode of transport. The cost and difficulty associated with transporting produce to the Sydney markets by boat was inhibitive and the fear of "convict escape by boat was a significant restraint on early maritime construction" (HLA, 2001:8).</p> <p>Lt. Francis Grose, recognising the dilemma of reliance on a river based transport system, sought to make an overland route joining the Hawkesbury settlements with Sydney via Parramatta. Charles Grimes surveyed the road in August 1794, and later that year Grose claimed:</p> <p>"I have caused a very good road to be made from Sydney to the banks of the Hawkesbury by which we discover the distance from this place by land is much less than expected</p> <p>(Cited in Tanner 1984:2.3.1)."</p> <p>This road was initially known as the Hawkesbury Road, later becoming the Old Windsor Road. The Government Stock Yard, north of Meurants Lane was established by 1800, indicating that this alignment of the Old Windsor Road was in use. The construction of the subject culvert is harder to date as it may have been part of the original road construction or it may have been part of the overall upgrade ordered by Governor Macquarie in 1809 (Casey & Lowe 1993b: 4-5).</p> <p>The branch of Windsor Road linked to the Great North Road via Castle Hill (known as Windsor Road to distinguish it from Old Windsor Road) was established around 1812 (Casey and Lowe 1993b:5). It appears that this newer branch of Windsor Road</p>

	<p>was developed to avoid crossing the Government Domain at Parramatta, resulting in a more direct route to Sydney. It also increased the road haulage capacity over the length of both Windsor Roads (HLA 2001:8).</p> <p>However it was the Old Windsor Road which remained the principal route for settlers and the movement of produce. The condition of both roads was a source of much complaint. Despite Grimes assertions that it was a "very good road", Governor Macquarie thought differently, declaring shortly after his arrival that "the present road is scarcely entitled [sic] to that name. It is in so bad a state of repair as to be scarcely passable" (cited in Tanner 1984:2.3.1). It is likely that the culvert in this section of Old Windsor Road was present by the time the Government Stock Yard was installed on the north side of Meurants Lane in 1800 (Casey & Lowe 1993b: 4) although it may have been constructed as part of the 1797 programme of road upgrades undertaken by the residents in the region. An earlier bridge was located 0.25km north of the culvert as shown on the Survey plan of 1885, but has since been demolished leaving no trace (Casey & Lowe 1993b: 17).</p> <p>Macquarie initiated general road maintenance program in 1810, tenders were invited for the improvements of roads and the construction of tollhouses in order to self fund improvements. The specification for Windsor Road at the stage was:</p> <p>"Two rods wide with a ditch on either side from 3 ft to 18 inched deep, for keeping the road perfectly dry, and carrying the water off; the centre of the road to be sufficiently elevated and made of lasting Materials, with the necessary Bridges, the timber to be cut down 4 Rods wide on each side of the Road all throughout. The whole of this work to be completed within six months" (cited in Lavelle 1997:3)</p> <p>The contract was awarded to James Harrex. However, as he failed to complete specified tasks, the contract was rescinded and then reissued to Messrs Howe and McGrath. Governor Darling (1826-1832) followed Governor Macquarie in promoting the road network in the colony. Darling's road system was to be based on the 'Great Roads' of England and be maintained and constructed by convict labour.</p> <p>Windsor Road was under the ministrations of No. 12 Road Gang during the 1830s, however most of their efforts were concentrated on the bridge over South Creek and the condition of the remainder of the road continued to deteriorate. In 1837 the road was described as being in a "dilapidated state", the section to McGraths Hill described as "nearly impassable owing to the number of large holes" (cited in Lavelle 1997:5).</p> <p>The economic depression of the 1840s contributed to the already inadequate funding for maintenance, let alone improvement. The first issue of the Hawkesbury Courier (11/7/1844) states that "the road from Windsor to Parramatta has long been in a disgraceful state." The Sydney Morning Herald gives the following description of the state of Old Windsor Road:</p> <p>The poor horses were tried to the utmost by the deep ruts and almost interminable sloughs, the soft yellow clay ploughed by the narrow wheels and hollows of veriest mud. We passed several teams on the road struggling for existence". About midway a large load of hay was capsized in the centre of the road and by the side of a hill a dray full of grain had also upset. (23/6/1857).</p> <p>The official opening of the Railway Line from Blacktown to Windsor and Richmond in 1864 significantly reduced the importance of the road by offering a more comfortable and reliable transportation service. The introduction of a direct service to Sydney in the early 1890s further signalled the decline of Windsor Road. Road maintenance during the twentieth century is unclear.</p> <p>During World War II sections of the road were reputedly widened. This was</p>
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	<p>apparently so Windsor Road was able to support the rapid transport of large vehicles, thereby serving as one of the contingency evacuation routes from Sydney. Minor upgrades were part of this improvement however it is thought that some of the road cuts were also widened to accommodate the wider road (ERM 2001: 7).</p> <p>During all the changes which have occurred in the region, Windsor Road, until recently, followed its original alignment. Those changes that have been made are relatively minor overall, as the new sections of road are adjacent to the old.</p>
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THEMES	
<i>National historical theme</i>	
<i>State historical theme</i>	

HERITAGE LISTINGS	
Heritage listing/s	
Historical Significance	The culvert has a high level of significance beyond the local level, for its role in the expansion of the Colony in the early period. It is part of a network of roads constructed to facilitate movement from Sydney to the Hawkesbury and good agricultural lands, possibly before 1800.
Aesthetic/ Significance	The culvert near Meurants Lane is a fine example of early road associated construction. It displays a high degree of aesthetic value associated with the early roads in NSW. It's location on a disused section of the Old Windsor Road contributes to the overall aesthetic value of the place evoking a sense of the past that is being lost with the necessary upgrades of the road. Particularly evocative is the stretch of road where the culvert is located, now disused, surrounded just to the south by a narrow cutting overshadowed by large eucalypts.
Social Significance	More research required to establish the social significance of the culvert specifically as its value is enhanced by its context on section of this section of Old Windsor Road, which as one of the oldest roads in NSW is valuable for its evocative qualities, relating to the early days of the British Colony.
Technical Significance	
Integrity/ Intactness	The culvert maintains a high degree of integrity on the western side of the road. The three top courses on the eastern side have collapsed, however the condition of the sandstone blocks is very good and the potential to reinstate them successfully is high.
Representativeness	Whilst the culvert is now rare on this stretch of road, it is representative of road infrastructure construction whilst the Colony was being established. It is representative of the organisation and structure of road gangs and convict labour under the supervision of the colonial engineers.

Rarity	The culvert is rare in the local and regional context as it is a remnant of the early road structure in the Colony, particularly as the road upgrades in the area are either modifying the original road or moving from the original alignment. The culvert was one of only two bridging structures along the stretch of Old Windsor Road between Seven Hills Road and Sunnyside Road. The other bridge, 0.25km north of the culvert has since been demolished leaving only a dip to indicate its earlier presence. The culvert maintains a good degree of its physical integrity and its relationship to the road and associated features.
Assessed Significance	Local

INFORMATION SOURCES Include conservation and/or management plans and other heritage studies.				
Type	Author/Client	Title	Year	Repository
Written	Lavelle, S.	Historical Archaeological Assessment of Alignment Stones, Windsor Road. Between Mulgrave and Kellyville, Sydney, NSW.	1997	
Written	HLA EnviroSciences P/L	Windsor Road Significance Assessment Environmental Overview - Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Heritage Study.	2001	
Written	Tanner, H. and Associates	Heritage Study of the North Western Section of Sydney.	1984	
Written	Casey & Lowe	Historical archaeological heritage study and assessment of Old Windsor Road and Windsor Road, Rouse Hill NSW		
Written	Casey & Lowe	Historical archaeological heritage study and assessment of Old Windsor Road and Windsor Road, Rouse Hill NSW for Rouse Hill Infrastructure Project (Stage 1).	1993	
Written		Hawkesbury Courier	184	

RECOMMENDATIONS	
Recommendations	



NSW State Heritage Inventory form

PROPOSED HERITAGE ITEM 7

SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION			
Name of study or report		Year of study or report	
Item number in study or report			
Author of study or report			
Inspected by			
NSW Heritage Manual guidelines used?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
This form completed by		Date	

IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption					
Image year		Image by		Image copyright holder	

Images



The west side of the culvert on Old Windsor Road south of Meurants Lane. Note the clay pipe in the lowest course beneath the range pole.



The stretch of former Old Windsor Road at the approximate location of the culvert. Meurants Lane to the north can be seen in the background. The new road alignment is to the east at the right of the photo.



The east side of the culvert showing the collapsed top three courses. Despite the failure of the culvert, the sandstone blocks are still in good condition and should be reinstated.