



HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL SLAB BARN STUDY



Single Storey Elevated Barn with Lofts, Upper Colo (Hawkesbury)

Prepared by

GRAHAM EDDS & ASSOCIATES

March 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Hawkesbury City Council Slab Barn Study has identified that at least 106 slab barns and or slab outbuildings are located throughout the Hawkesbury City Council area and located on 91 individual sites. The majority of these have been photographed and 70 of these have generally been sketched in plan and/or elevation, section or both. The slab barns are widely spread across the city area but predominantly located in the rural areas associated with current and former agricultural land use and generally located along the Hawkesbury, Macdonald and Colo Rivers. Some barns are also located in the townships of Windsor, Richmond, Pitt Town, Wilberforce and Kurrajong.

There was determined to be twenty seven discernible types and potentially within a construction date range from the last few years of the eighteenth century (c1795) to the early twentieth century (c1925) with only a few constructed within the last 30 years.

A table identifying the typology of the barns and their locations has been included in the report to illustrate the range throughout the Hawkesbury.

A total of twenty five barns were found to be located on the early land grant promises of 1794-1796. Nineteen of these barns were identified as being located on the 1794 land grant sites. Many of these potentially early barns are located from Freemans Reach along the Hawkesbury River to Wilberforce and Pitt Town and are worthy of further detailed documentary and physical investigation. It is predicted that some of the barns identified could be worthy of State if not National heritage listing as the earliest rural timber structures remaining in Australia.

It can be categorically stated that of the 70 barns sketched, no two are identical and that no particular type of barn is particular to an area.

Recommendations for targeted owner and community consultation and education to dispel the misinformation regarding the various roles of government and community heritage organisations in the identification and care for these iconic assets have been identified. Other recommendations to promote access to the considerable Local, State and Commonwealth funds available to assist in the conservation of these places identified as of State and or National Significance have also been made in order to provide an incentive for owner support for the listing and conservation of these slab barns.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Graham and Carol Edds of Graham Edds & Associates were engaged to undertake a specific study of slab barns for the Hawkesbury City Council local government area. The study was jointly funded by the Department of Planning, Heritage Branch and the Hawkesbury City Council.

The outcomes of the study were to include the following:-

1. An historical overview describing the origins and contextual significance of the barns
2. Survey data that includes a full list of barns with details of location, description, sketches and a photograph
3. Comparative analysis sufficient to demonstrate the comparative values of the whole resource and individual; items in accordance with the NSW heritage guidelines
4. Listing proposals for the group (serial listing) and individual items considered to be of local and or state significance in the standard SHI format that can be entered into the Heritage branch SHI data base.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

A list of barns was generated from:-

1. personal local knowledge of the Hawkesbury base consultant team
2. items identified in the 2001 part Heritage Study Review as perhaps having slab barns
3. Council's LEP list of heritage barn items
4. review of Daphne Kingston's Hawkesbury Heritage Photographic Collection dating back to the 1970's and which included many slab structures
5. barns identified by the Hawkesbury artists community and organisations in response to the consultants request for assistance
6. barns identified by the local historical societies again in response to request for assistance
7. barns identified by local fire brigade personnel, known to the consultants, particularly in the outer lying areas of the LGA
8. barns identified by the Department of Agriculture including local field officers
9. barns whose owners had previously received funding under the HCC Heritage Assistance Grant Scheme
10. barns identified by their owners in response to an article in the Hawkesbury Gazette

This methodology generated an initial list of around 120 potential slab barns.

Between the months of August and November 2009 a series of 20 field days involving visiting each of the identified slab barns sites occurred. Where the occupants were in residence or by previously arranged contact, (where contact information had been provided), the consultants visited the site, provided the occupant with an explanatory letter, and an access permission note for signature. Where permission either verbal or in writing was granted the slab barns were photographed and sketched.

Some occupants refused permission to enter whilst in other cases the occupants were not on site at the time of the visit so a copy of the letter, permission note and reply paid envelope were generally left in the letterbox.

Where practical however many these sites were photographed from the street and in some instances it was possible to roughly sketch the barns from these photos in conjunction with a google search.

Those slab barn sites, where permission to enter was not granted and or there was no response to the letters, have generally been identified as requiring further analysis.

The brief required that the sites that have been identified be recorded utilising the Hawkesbury Heritage Inventory listing data base provided by the NSW Heritage Office. Listing sheets generated by this study commence at SHI no 1743034 through to SHI No 1743122.

In some instances barns previously identified as slab were found to be modern slab buildings and or barns covered structured and clad with corrugated iron. These items were eliminated from the slab barn study and the existing Hawkesbury Heritage data base inventory forms generally updated by removing the word “slab”.

Acknowledgment and thanks goes to all of the owners, persons and organisations who assisted us in identifying potential sites. Particular thanks goes to Ian Jack and Jan Barkley-Jack for their assistance with the historical context for some of the sites associates with the 1794 – 1796 promised land grants.

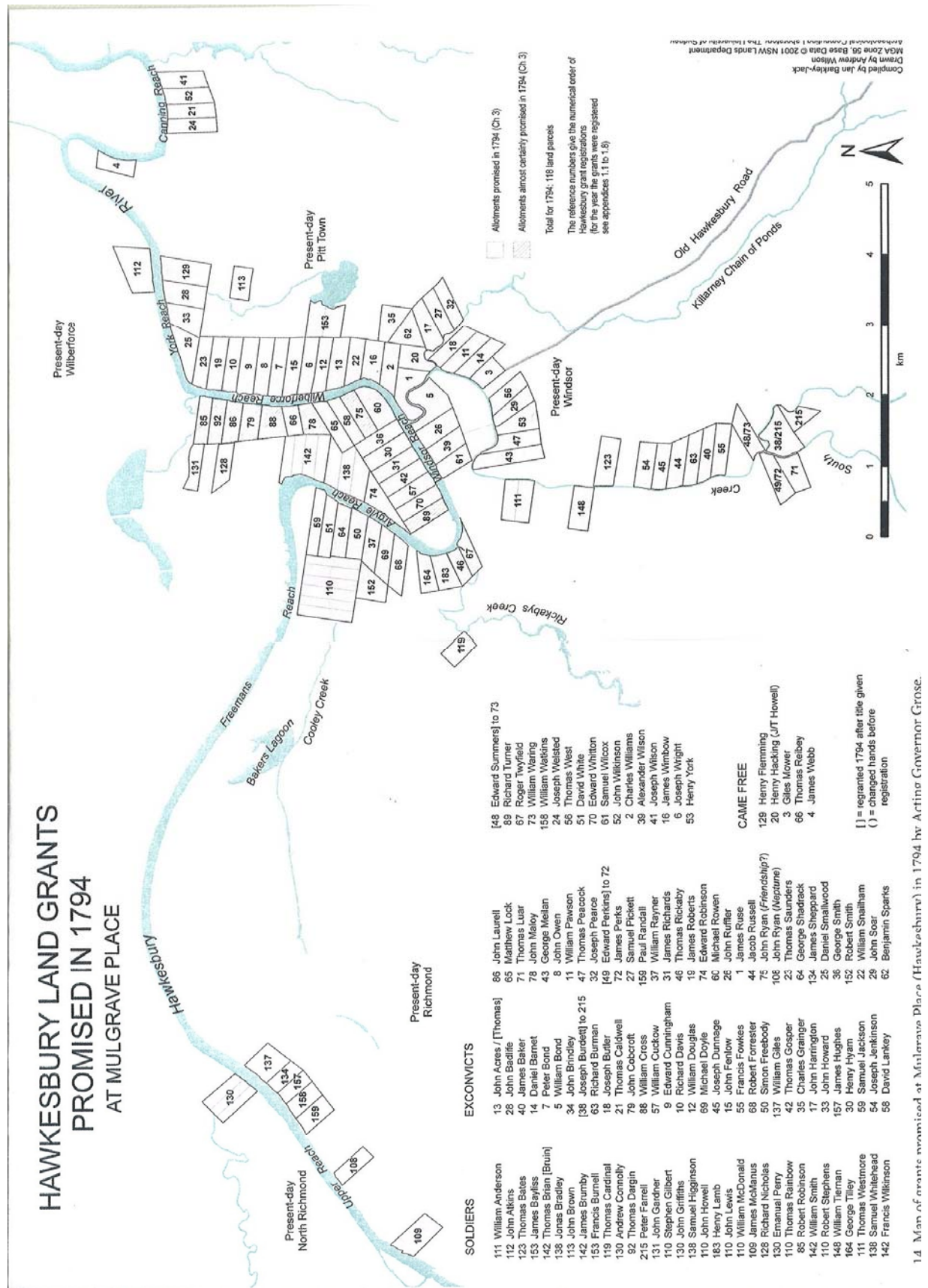
3.0 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Prior to the European settlement of the area, the Dharug people were drawn to the banks of the Hawkesbury River (which they called the Deerubbin). Before 1788 up to 3000 Dharug people lived in the Hawkesbury River Valley.

The Hawkesbury was first explored by Governor Phillip in 1789 in an effort to find suitable grazing land to feed the then starving colony of Sydney but it was not until the beginning of 1794 that land was first issued on the Hawkesbury River .¹

Contrary to the commonly held historical account not 22 but 118 land parcels were promised at Mulgrave Place in 1794. These early land parcels are located in the areas known today as Wilberforce, Pitt Town, Windsor, Richmond and North Richmond. The majority of these land grants were allocated to ‘exconvicts’ but both ‘soldiers’ and ‘came free’ allotments were also promised. The following maps from Hawkesbury Settlement revealed by J Barkely Jack pages 57 & 58, 110 & 111 and 218 & 129 respectively provide illustrations of the land grants promised in 1794, 1795 and 1796.

¹ Barkley – Jack, J Hawkesbury Settlement Revealed A new look at Australia’s third mainland settlement 1793 – 1803, 2009, p18



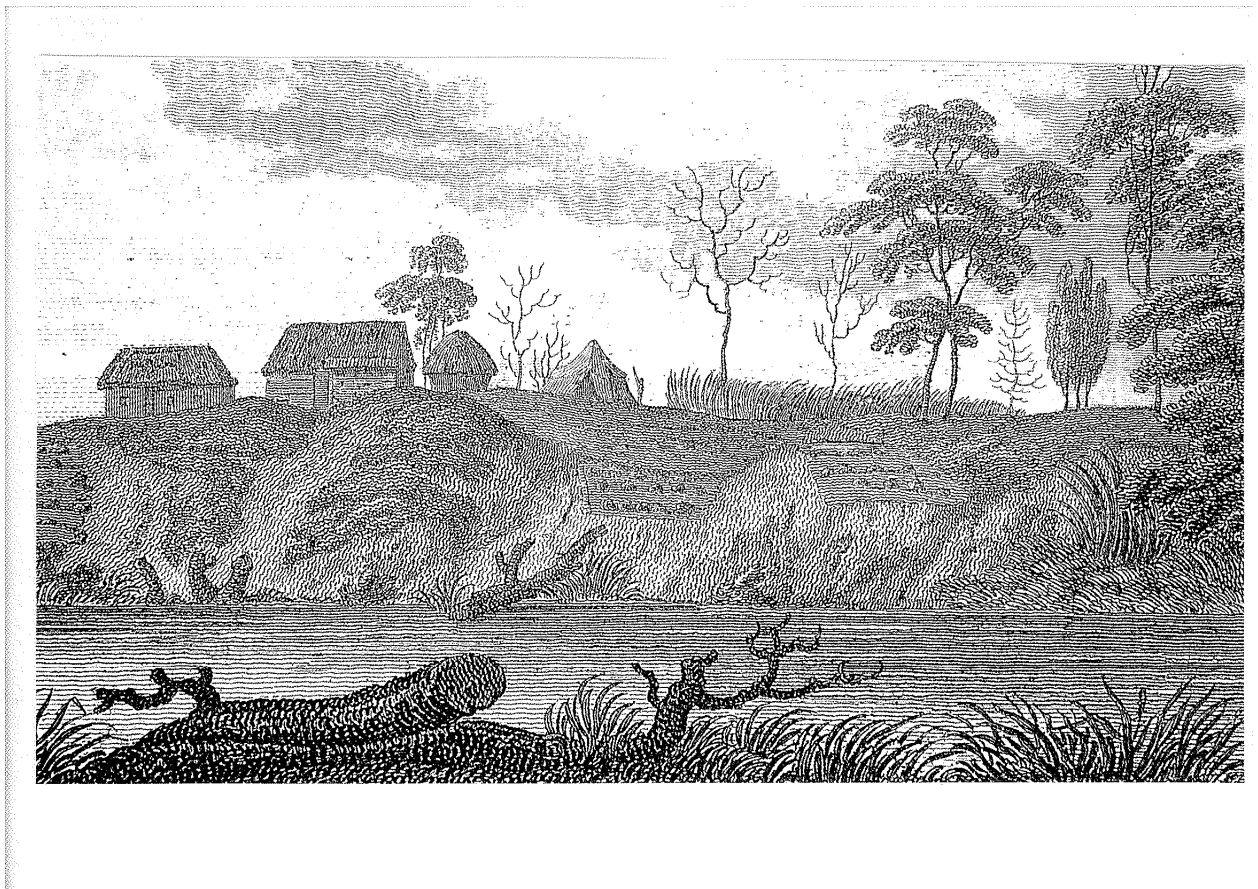
Of the 118 Land parcels promised in 1794, 33 were to 'soldiers', 83 were to 'exconvicts' and 5 to 'came free'.

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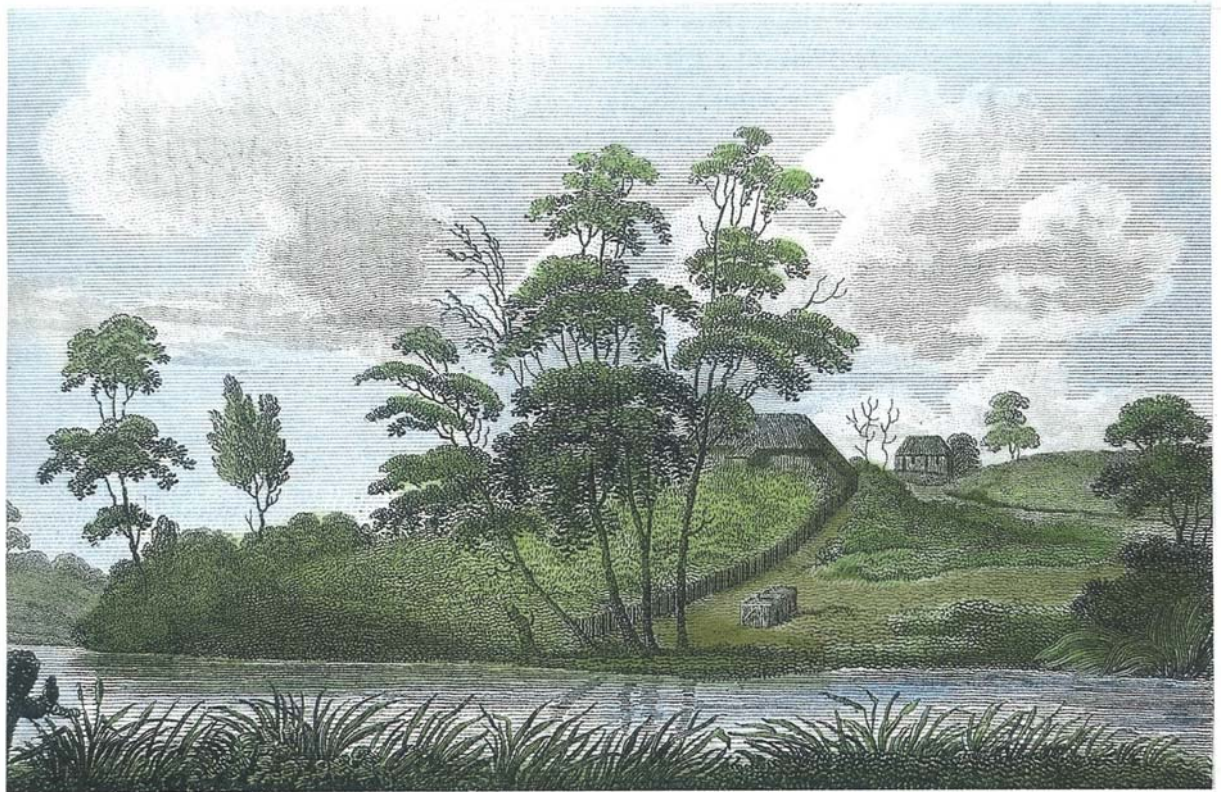
Not long after the promise of these first land grants at Mulgrave Place the first flood recorded for the Hawkesbury River occurred in 1795. Others followed in 1799, 1806 and 1809. In 1810, after a series of major floods on the Hawkesbury, Governor Macquarie proclaimed the 'Macquarie Towns' of Windsor, Richmond, Wilberforce, Castlereagh and Pitt Town in an attempt to ensure that development was restricted to higher ground, free of flooding.

It appears that these first settlers, possibly armed with the awareness of the potential for further floods constructed large barns to store their grain. Documentation supports this hypothesis in that substantial slab barns have been documented in the Hawkesbury as early as 1795 – 1796 as illustrated below:-



"Engraving by William Lowry, c1795 –1796, Bakers farm high on the banks of the river" Barkey – Jack, J, Hawkesbury Settlement Revealed. p127.

Note the large barn with loft already constructed on the early land grant.



“Engraving by William Lowry, c1795 –1796 Saunderson’s Farm, Looking down the river” Barkey – Jack, J, Hawkesbury Settlement Revealed, p12

David Collins, the first Judge Advocate of New South Wales records that for some seasons between 1795 and 1798 some 15,000 to 20,000 bushels of wheat were produced in the Hawkesbury. In 1795, from February to June, Collins reported that large quantities of grain were lying in front of the public granary, kitchen gardens plentifully stocked and over 2,212 bushels of maize sent to Sydney.²

The construction of a barn provided many of these early grantees a measure of protection against the ever present threats of flooding. Produce could be stored in a barn away from the weather or above in the loft or in some cases a second storey, features which have been incorporated in many of the Hawkesbury barns. These lofts and or second storeys not only provided storage for the harvest but also provide refuge for small animals, farm implements and families in the event of a sudden flood.

Just as they were recorded in some of the earliest illustrations on the Hawkesbury, slab barns continue today to be a source of inspiration for many artists.

²

ibid p 177

For most of its early history the Hawkesbury was a major supplier of agricultural products for the colony of New South Wales. Today agriculture is still an important industry and continues to play a vital role in defining the character and landscape of the district.

4.0 SLAB BARNs REMAINING IN THE HAWKESBURY IN 2010

This study has identified that at least 106 slab barns and or slab outbuildings are located throughout the Hawkesbury City Council area over 91 individual sites. The majority of these have been photographed and 70 of these have generally been sketched in plan and or section or both. The slab barns are widely spread across the City being predominantly located in the rural areas associated with agricultural land use or former agricultural usage but some are also located in the townships.

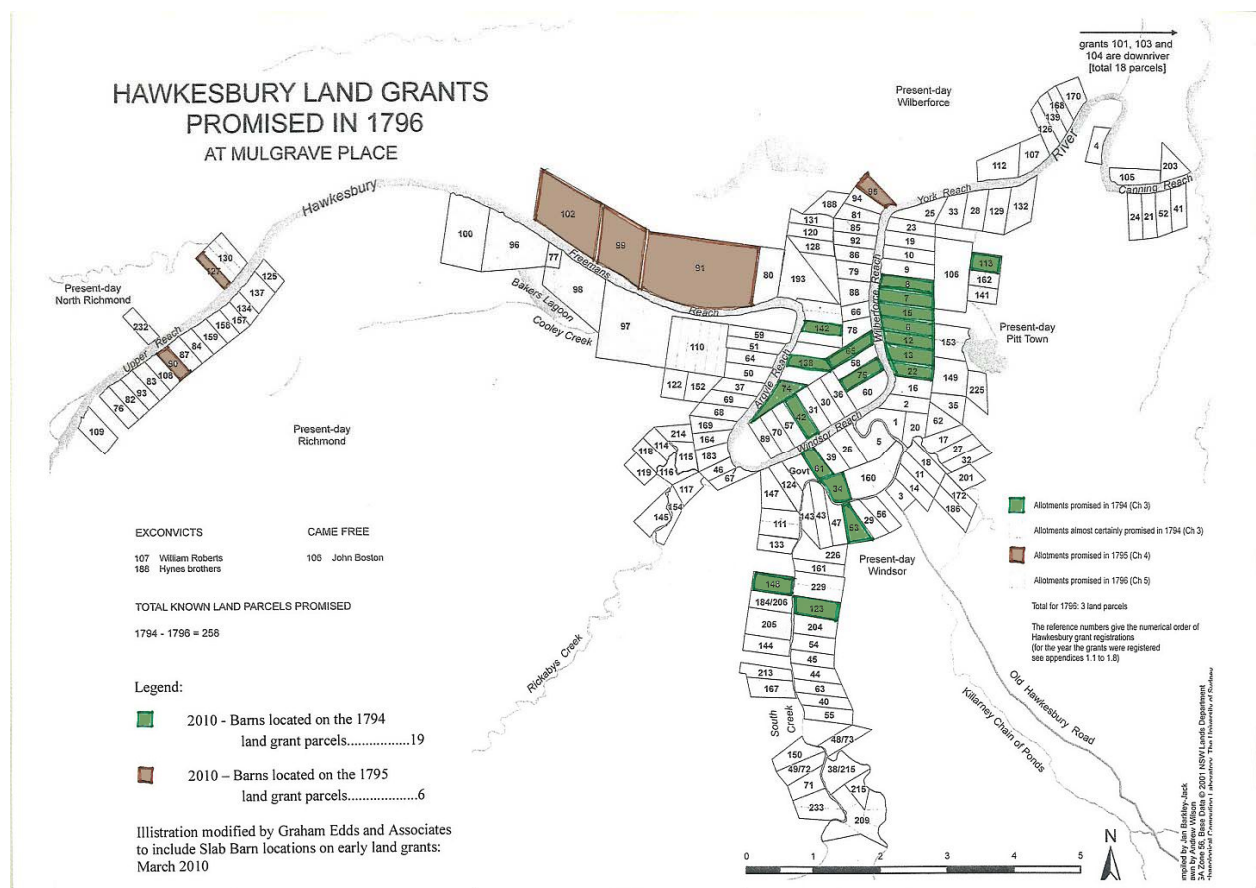
Some of the early 19th century barns reviewed as part of this study were not clad with timber slabs but found to have a range of timber claddings mainly timber palisade (vertical timber rounds) and corn crofts (horizontal timber rounds crossed at the corners).

Some slab barns have been relocated but most are in their original location and reveal their original structure. There are other barns identified as slab that have not been studied or recorded. This has generally occurred where owner's permission to enter was not granted as part of this study. These identified barns will require further study. The preliminary physical assessment undertaken for this study has provided an understanding of the individual structures, most of which are considered individually unique and nearly all ranging in age from the early 19th to early 20th Century. The illustration on the following page provides an indication of the spread of slab barns throughout the Hawkesbury City.

The earliest barns were considered to emanate from the original land grants within the Hawkesbury floodplain dating from 1794 to 1796. It is believed that some of the Freemans Reach, Wilberforce and Pitt Town Bottoms slab barns located within the flood plain and fronting the Hawkesbury River and South Creek are the earliest.

Nineteen slab barns were identified as being located on the 1794 land grant sites and many of these are considered worthy of detailed investigation. A further 29 original 1795 land grants, only two of which were to exconvicts, also retain slab barns. Of these 26 land parcels were consolidated further in 1795 and involved John Stodgell, (8 soldier allotments) David Collins (4 soldier allotments) and John Palmer (14 Soldier allotments) at Freemans Reach.³. At least six slab barns remain on these 1795 allotments. See Illustration following:-





Sites where slab barns are still extant. Green outline indicated a 1794 grant and brown 1795 land grant.

Similarly later grants within the St Albans, Upper Macdonald and Upper Colo also feature special barns with similarly unique vernacular structures.

It is extremely difficult to ascertain the exact or precise age of slab barns without undertaking both a detailed physical analysis and recording as well as detailed documented history should such documentation be available. In an attempt to provide a guidance to the potential age of the barns sketched in relation to the date of the land grant, where identified in this study, a range of dates has been included on the State Heritage Inventory (SHI) Data Sheets in the sections "year started" and "year completed". All of these are circa and require further investigation to provide a more accurate construction date. Features such as pole structure and height, pole spacing, slab lengths, methods of timber hewing and roof framing spacing and batten spacing determining whether the roof has been shingled or sheeted with corrugated iron were considered in attempting to provide a relevant date for each of the barns. The jointing of the structural frame formed an integral part of this assessment.

The SHI Data Sheets for the barns are attached as Appendix A.

5.0 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

One of the aims of this study was to identify a typology of the remaining slab barns in the Hawkesbury City Council area. It can be categorically stated that of the 70 barns recorded by plan and possible section no two are identical and that no particular type of barn is particular to an area.

Of the 106 barns studied within the Hawkesbury City Council area a barn typology has been established which considers the shape, the size and configuration of the parts, whether it be single storey, single storey with loft, two storey or two storey with loft. These variations relate mainly to the form of the primary structure. Added to this primary structural form are the skillions which have been located to the sides or the ends and with varying combinations. Many are integrally constructed with the primary structure whilst others are clearly additions that have occurred over varying time periods.

There was determined to be twenty seven discernible types and within a construction date range within the last few years of the eighteenth century to the early twentieth century with only a few constructed within the last 30 years.

The slab barn study established that the commonality of the slab barn structures was two rows of hardwood timber posts 6.0/7.0 metres apart, set into the ground to provide barn stability, with a top plate or perimeter beam atop then cross beams to hold the post parallel. The roof structure, providing lateral triangulation, was constructed of varying slopes and rafter spacings. Neither the roof nor the wall structure was braced. Barns with lofts utilised the loft floor structure to provide lateral stability. The structural post spacings varied from 1.2 metre to 3.6/4.0 metre and usually continued for the full height of the external walls. Considering the massive height of some of the two storey barns the Australian Eucalypt trees felled for the structures must have been of a size capable of providing poles in excess of 10 metres in one length and having a minimum diameter of 200-250 mm at the top. The earlier barns with raised timber floors were nearly always structured independent of the primary barn post structure and the majority of barns retain their earth floor today although some have been concreted.

External wall cladding was predominantly timber slabs with variations depending upon the size and the use of the barn, whether it be fully enclosed or slatted for drying of the stored produce. Wall combinations included slab lower claddings with horizontal boarding above lining the loft walls sections, two lifts of slab, slabs with timber slats and timber planks of varying widths. It is thought possible that the earliest cladding form could have been timber saplings (thin poles) fixed as a palisade. This timber palisade form of cladding was found to be extremely rare, with only two barns both located along 'Argyle Reach' within the floodplain of Freemans Reach, the closest locality to Windsor, and within the area of the first land grants on the Hawkesbury River.

The current roof cladding for all of the barns was corrugated metal. At least 24 of the sites identified below retained battens at close spacing for the fixing of timber shingles although only a few retained the timber shingles in-situ beneath the current metal cladding. Examples of barns previously clad with timber roof shingles were mainly observed in the early barns associated with the early land grants of 1794 to 1796 although there were also examples located in the towns of Windsor, Pitt Town, Kurrajong and Wilberforce. It must also be acknowledged that some barns have had their entire roof framing replaced and others where the change of roof cladding to corrugated metal the battens for shingles may have been removed.

Each of the slab barns has been described by form in an attempt to establish a typology, which is visually distinguishable. The table below provides a listing of the types of barns and their locations throughout the Hawkesbury.

TYPOLGY DESCRIPTION	STREET NAME	SUBURB NAME
Collapsed Large Slab Barn with Skillions - Spring Hill	Beddeck Street	McGraths Hill
Complex of Five Slab Barns - The Industrious Settler	Wollombi Road	St Albans
Complex of Four Slab Barns	Freemans Reach Road	Freemans Reach
Complex of Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Corn Shed - Harmony Farm	Pitt Town Ferry Road	Wilberforce
Complex of Single Storey Slab Barn with Skillion and Adapted Corn Shed (Former)	Palmer Street	Windsor
Complex of Slab Barns	George Street	Windsor
Complex of Three Slab Barns and Corn Shed - Bona Vista	Amelia Street	Pitt Town
Complex of Three Slab Outbuildings - Trevallyn	Day Street	Windsor
Complex of Two Slab Barns	Old Kurrajong Road	Richmond
Complex of Two Slab Barns	Wilberforce Road	Wilberforce
Complex of Two Slab Barns - Glenridge Turf Farm	Freemans Reach Road	Freemans Reach

Complex of Two Slab Barns - Hobartville Stud	Chapel Street	Richmond
Complex of Two Slab Barns - Jacks Dairy	Upper MacDonald Road	St Albans
Complex of Two Slab Barns with Loft - Strathmore	Buckingham Street	Pitt Town
Complex of Two Slab Barns with Lofts	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms
Complex of Two Slab Barns with Skillions	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms
Elevated Single Storey Slab Barn with Side Skillions	Settlers Road	St Albans
High Single Storey Barn with Skillion	Gorricks Lane	Freemans Reach
Modern Slab Barn Complex	Sackville Road	Sackville
Raised Single Storey Slab Barn with End Skillions - Hillview	Kurmond Road	Freemans Reach
Raised Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Side Skillion	Threlkeld Drive	Cattai
Reconstructed Adapted Two Storey Slab Barn - Hannabas Dairy	George Street	Windsor

Reconstructed and Adapted Town Slab Barn with Loft	George Street	Windsor
Reconstructed Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft - The Peninsula Inn	North Street	Windsor
Resited and Altered Slab Barn - Clear Oaks	Francis Street	Richmond
Resited and Altered Slab Barn with Loft - Tizzana Winery	Tizzana Road	Ebenezer
Single Storey Barn	Freemans Reach Road	Freemans Reach
Single Storey Barn - Grose Farm	Burgess Road	Freemans Reach
Single Storey Barn with Loft - Price Morris Cottage	Upper MacDonald Road	St Albans
Single Storey Barn with Loft and Skillion	Chatham Street	Pitt Town
Single Storey Barn with Loft and Skillions - Glenroy Stud	Kurmond Road	Freemans Reach
Single Storey Barn with Skillion Additions	Terrace Road	North Richmond
Single Storey Elevated Barn	Freemans Reach Road	Freemans Reach
Single Storey Elevated Slab Barn with Lofts	Upper Colo Road	Upper Colo
Single Storey Palisade with Side Skillion Addition	Freemans Reach Road	Freemans Reach

Single Storey Plank Barn with Skillions	Upper Colo Road	Upper Colo
Single Storey Plank Barn with Skillions - Springrove	Springrove Lane	Kurrajong Hills
Single Storey Plank Town Barn with Loft - Pitt Gallery	West Market Street	Richmond
Single Storey Slab - Huxleys Blacksmith Shop (Former)	Pitt Town Road	Oakville
Single Storey Slab Barn	Blacktown Road	Freemans Reach
Single Storey Slab Barn	Greenway Crescent	Windsor
Single Storey Slab Barn	King Road	Wilberforce
Single Storey Slab Barn - Johnsons Farm	Laws Farm Road	Cumberland Reach
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft	Bensons Lane	Richmond
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft (former) with Skillions - Salter's Barn	Wilberforce Road	Wilberforce
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Chimney	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and End Skillion	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms

Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Side Skillion Addition - Goldfinders Inn	Old Bells Line of Road	Kurrajong
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillion	Bathurst Street	Pitt Town
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillion	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillion	Tizzana Road	Ebenezer
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillion	Bathurst Street	Pitt Town
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillion - Oak Hill	Wolseley Road	Oakville
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillion Addition	Upper Colo Road	Upper Colo
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillion Additions - Overbrook	Tierney Road	Kurmond
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillion Additions - Reibycroft	Blacktown Road	Freemans Reach
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillions	Pitt Town Bottoms Road	Pitt Town Bottoms
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillions	Pitt Street	Windsor
Single Storey Slab Barn with Loft and Skillions	Sackville Road	Sackville
Single Storey Slab Barn with Side and End Skillion Additions - Oakensville Lodge	Comleroy Road	Kurrajong
Single Storey Slab Barn with Side Skillions - Pear Tree Cottage	Upper MacDonald Road	St Albans

Single Storey Slab Barn with Skillion	Mulgrave Road	Mulgrave
Single Storey Slab Barn with Skillion	Upper MacDonald Road	Upper Macdonald
Single Storey Slab Barn with Skillion and Mezzanine	Buckingham Street	Pitt Town
Single Storey Slab Barn with Skillions	Freemans Reach Road	Freemans Reach
Single Storey Slab Outbuilding - Former Black Horse Inn	Wilberforce Road	Wilberforce
Single Storey Slab Town Barn with Loft	Catherine Street	Windsor
Single Storey Slab Town Barn with Loft	Thompson Square	Windsor
Single Storey Slab Town Barn with Loft (Adapted)	Catherine Street	Windsor
Single Storey Town Slab Barn (Demolished)	Bathurst Street	Pitt Town
Single Storey Town Slab Barn with End Skillion	King Road	Wilberforce
Single Storey Town Slab Barn with End Skillion - Rutherglen	March Street	Richmond
Single Storey Town Slab Barn with Side Skillion	Francis Street	Richmond
Small Slaughter Barn (Purpose Built) - Griffin Manor	Griffin Road	Tennyson
Two Storey Palisade Barn with Side Skillion	Hibberts Lane	Freemans Reach
Two Storey Plank Barn with Skillion - Sundown	McKinnons Road	Wilberforce
Two Storey Slab Barn with Loft	Freemans Reach Road	Freemans Reach

Two Storey Slab Barn with Side and End Skillions	Upper Colo Road	Upper Colo
Two Storey Slab Barn with Side Skillions	Terrace Road	North Richmond
Two Storey Slab Barn with Skillion	Bathurst Street	Pitt Town
Two Storey Slab Barn with Skillion	Wilberforce Road	Wilberforce
Two Storey Slab Barn with Skillion	Freemans Reach Road	Freemans Reach
Two Storey Slab Barn with Skillion	Wilberforce Road	Wilberforce
Two Storey Slab Barn with Two Storey Side Skillions - Smallwoods Barn	Cattai Road	Cattai

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is acknowledged that despite perceived distrust of government articulated by many of the owners of the slab barns, particularly in the more remote areas of the City, they were very generous in allowing us, as consultants, the access to photograph and sketch their slab barns. As a result of this generosity 70 individual slab barns of the 106 sites recorded have now been sketched.

Misinformation about the perceived benefits and constraints of heritage listing coupled with the confusion regarding the respective roles of State and Local Government and the National Trust were also outcomes of discussion with owners. Although the recommendations listed below address statutory issues first it is strongly recommended that the sequence for the adoption of these recommendations by Council are implemented in a differing order as prioritised below:-.

Priority 1 Preparation of a simple slab barn brochure as outlined in recommendation no 8.

Priority 2 Distribution of the brochure in conjunction with a letter of thanks and a copy of the inventory sheet information on their respective slab barn to all owners whose barns were identified in this study including those who did not allow access.

Priority 3 Council support the consultant in the distribution of a letter of thanks to all of the community groups and individuals who contributed to the study by identifying potential sites. A copy of the brochure should accompany this letter.

Priority 4 Council support the presentation of a power point presentation to targeted community groups in the study area. Examples of these groups would be the Historical Societies, the Art Societies and the Macdonald Valley Association.

Priority 5 Council target owners of barns identified as State significance and who have indicated an interest in conserving their slab barns for specific assistance either through the Council Local assistance fund or through the Department of Planning, Heritage Branch Heritage Grants Funding. Note the next funding round is due to be offered in September 2010 and \$5.324 million was offered in the previous round.

Priority 6 Council commence the implementation of listing those items identified as of local significance on the Hawkesbury LEP and nominate those of State significance both individually and as a serial listing on the State Heritage Register.

Priority 7 Council should seek owner and community support for the serial listing of those slab barns identified as having National Significance prior to the April 2011 so that owners are eligible to apply for the 2011 funding round with a value of \$4.4 million.

6.1 SLAB BARN ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR LISTING

It has been determined that slab barns remain on 25 properties associated with the first land grants promised from 1794 to 1796 at Mulgrave Place. Whilst not all of these have been surveyed or sketched, it can not be considered coincidental that so many remaining barns that have been identified are located on the earliest Hawkesbury land grants.

Recommendation No 1

It is recommended, to assist with historic verification, that these barns be further investigated with detailed historic research and detailed physical assessment being commissioned.

Recommendation No 2

It is recommended that all of those slab barns located on the 1794 – 1796 promised land grants be recommended for listing as a serial listing at State level.

Recommendation No 3

It is recommended that those barns nominated on the inventory sheet as worthy of state significance also be endorsed for listing at the state level on the State Heritage Register (SHR). These could also be considered for further detailed investigation both historically and physically.

Recommendation No 4

Following further detailed investigation identified above some of these barns considered worthy of inclusion on the SHR could also be further recognised at higher level as a group or serial listing at the National significance level.

Recommendation No 5

It is recommended that those slab barns nominated on the inventory sheets as of local significance be recommended for inclusion within the Hawkesbury Council LEP schedule of heritage items and be included on the State Heritage Inventory (SHI).

6.2 FUNDING SUPPORT FOR OWNERS

HCC receives funding from the Department of Planning, Heritage Branch to support the Local Heritage Financial Assistance Grants. The next round of applications for 2011 – 2013 Heritage Grants will be advertised by the Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning around September 2010 with a probable value of around \$5.5 million. Advice from the Heritage Branch is that there is a possibility that emergency funding for heritage items under immediate threat may be reinstated for the next funding round. Another possible funding source, at the state level is \$ for \$ to a maximum of \$4,000.00 to fund Conservation Management Plans or feasibility or Engineering studies available from the NSW Department of Planning, Heritage Branch. This area of funding is quickly exhausted once it is announced so early distribution of the release of this grant opportunity is important.

The Department of Environment, water, Heritage and the Arts offer a National Historic Sites program annually with \$4.4 million available to owners of sites recognised on the National Heritage List to assist with conservation.

Recommendation No 6

It is recommended that those slab barns items identified as of state significance be targeted for support under the Hawkesbury Heritage 2010 Financial Assistance Grants and that Council bring to the attention to those owners the benefits of listing on the State Heritage Register such as being able to apply for funding under the conservation works program and seek their support for nomination on the State heritage Register.

Recommendation No 6

It is recommended that Council use this study to identify such heritage items that may be eligible for emergency funding and support the owners in applying for such funding as and when it becomes available through the Heritage Advisory Service.

Recommendation No 7

It is recommended that Council use this study to identify such heritage items eligible for \$ for \$ funding and support the owners in applying for such funding as and when it becomes available through the Heritage Advisory Service.

Recommendation No 8

It is recommended that for those slab barns items identified as of possible national significance that Council bring to the attention to those owners the benefits of listing on the National Heritage Register such as being able to apply for funding under the conservation works program and seek their support for nomination on this register.

6.3 PARTICIPATING OWNER/ OCCUPIER AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND EDUCATION

This study has recognised that there is differing worth put to timber farming structures by owners. Some prefer to let the old timber barn gracefully disintegrate and collapse, some owners then replace them with modern steel structures. Other owners respect and maintain their historic or simply old barns as they feel there is benefit and worth in their preservation not only for their working farm but for the greater community appreciation. The majority of owners indicated that many barns are considered iconic landmarks, that there is benefit in their preservation as they weather the physical elements better than modern day steel structures.

It has also been indicated to the study team that modern steel farm outbuildings prefabricated today are considered incompatible in design for inclusion within heritage properties. These modern structures can however be designed with attention to roof slope, bulk and proportion to better suite their historic environments. Examples of these were also noted, some steel and other timber emulating their forebears on some properties.

Many of the owners of the barns that we have spoken to, particularly those still using them for farming have indicated an interest in conserving their asset but are not sure what is involved or how to go about it.

As part of the wider distribution of the findings from this study a conference paper and power point presentation titled “Management of the Remote Hawkesbury Settlements” outlining the preliminary results of this study was presented at the 2010 ICOMOS Conference – “Outback and Beyond – The Future of Historic Towns, Industrial Heritage and Pastoralism” held at Broken Hill 22 – 25 April 2010.

Recommendation No 9

It is recommended Council send a letter of thanks to all participation owners, provides them with a copy of the listing sheet identifying their slab barn and a brochure as detailed below.

The brochure should address the results of this study and provide preliminary advice on the following:-

- Funding opportunities for owners of heritage items. Ie Council grant assistance scheme, State and National funding grants;
- The impact and roles of the various listing agencies, ie State. Local and community listing such as the National Trust of Australia;
- The available heritage adviser role within the Hawkesbury and assistance available;
- The fundamentals of maintenance, including what to do about termite attack, strategies to deal with characteristic leaning barns, vegetation overgrowth etc;
- Insurance of the asset and claims after storm damage;
- Sources for professional advice and experienced tradespersons for heritage items

Funding support for the preparation of this brochure should be sought from all levels of Government who have a role in the identification and care of our heritage and in kind support should be sought from as many of the community groups who contributed to assist with its distribution.

Recommendation No 10

It is recommended that Council, in conjunction with the consultants, also send a letter of thanks to all of the community groups and individuals who provided information on the location of some of the slab barns. The brochure could accompany this letter of thanks thus reinforcing the information and consultation throughout the general community.

Recommendation No 11

It is recommended that a power point presentation titled the “Hawkesbury Slab Barns – the unrecognised timber icons” be prepared and presented to as many owners and community groups who are willing to receive this information. Targeted Hawkesbury based community groups could be for example: the

Historical Societies, the Art Societies, The Rural Fire Brigades and the Macdonald Valley Association
Macdonald Valley

Recommendation No 12

Although not specifically part of this brief it has been recognised that a characteristic barn style was developed in the Hawkesbury. Council should give consideration, as part of its Hawkesbury Character Study to reinforce the Hawkesbury barn is style with the development of a DCP for barns and outbuildings through out the Hawkesbury as an identifying feature for the City.



Graham and Carol Edds