

hawkin's lookout fact sheet

With spectacular views of the Hawkesbury River and Blue Mountains, the Hawkin's Lookout is the ideal stopover on a trip to Wiseman's Ferry or further north.

History

In response to a petition received from the wealthy and articulate settlers in the Hunter Valley to improve the transport between the burgeoning agricultural settlement north and Parramatta, Governor Darling commenced the construction of the Great North Road utilising convict labour.

The first task was to survey the best alignment for the road. This task was given to Assistant Surveyor Heneage Finch.

Finch's line, surveyed in 1825, branched off the existing Sydney to Windsor Road near Parramatta, running out to Castle Hill, then to Lower Portland Head (now Wiseman's Ferry) on the Hawkesbury River. Here it crossed the river and climbed to the top of a steep and rocky range (the Judge Dowling Range) running northwards towards Wollombi.

The line of road selected by Finch was a conglomeration of existing tracks, routes newly discovered by settlers and the lines of ridges north and south of Wiseman's Ferry.

Although details were changed along the way, this route was more or less the one which was finally built between 1826 and 1832 and named the Great North Road. The original Finch line passes through the reserve west toward the Webb's Creek Ferry.

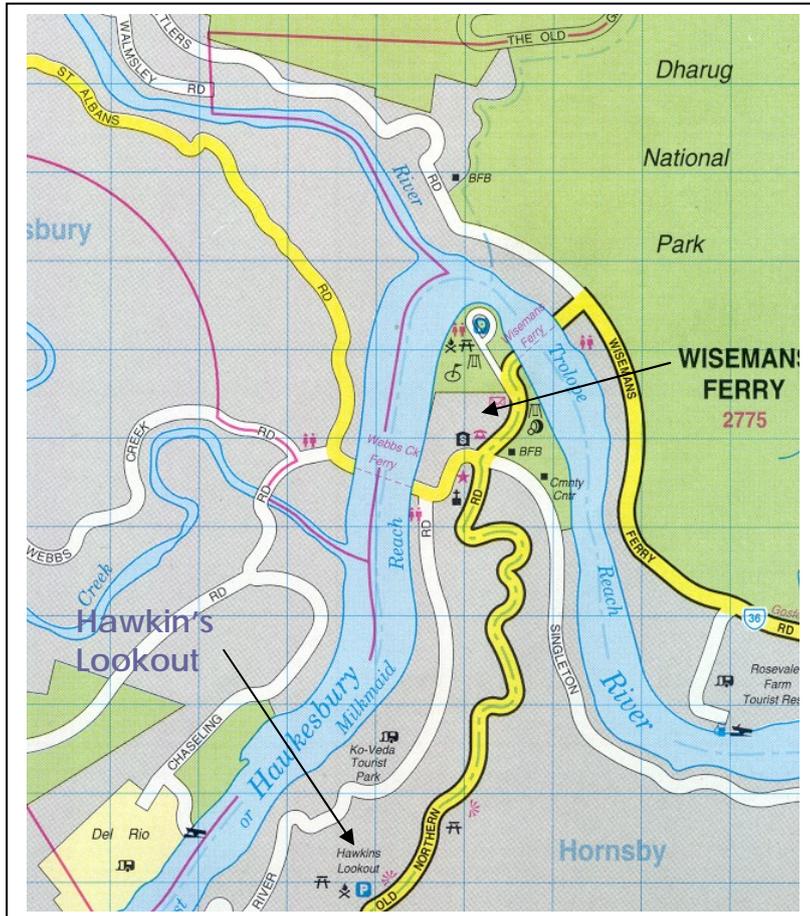
In the 1930's Fred Hawkins ran a bus service from Windsor to Wiseman's Ferry via Pitt Town. On his return journey he reportedly stopped at the top of the steep hill out of Wiseman's Ferry to allow passengers to enjoy the view. He also filled up his radiator with water from a can, or from the natural waterholes located along the roadside.

Thus Hawkin's Lookout was established.

Purchased by Council in 1961 the lookout still provides a respite from the long journey north. Steeped in Aboriginal culture and containing sandstone artefacts from the convict road, the reserve remains a popular stopover.



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Location and access

Hawkin's Lookout is located on the western side of Old Northern Road before the descent into Wiseman's Ferry.

Roadside sign posts indicate the entrance.

Things to do and see

Great North Road: Some remnant sandstone walls and culverts remain from the 1832 convict built road. A sandstone retaining wall still supports the Old Northern Road.

Aboriginal History: The land below the lookout is rich with Aboriginal occupation from the Darug people.

Picnicking: There is one sheltered picnic table available at the lookout. There is however no electric barbeque facilities the BBQ is wood fired.

Bush Walking: Many unformed walking trails leave the car park for an invigorating bush walking experience. Experienced walkers only.

Car Parking: There is parking for a few cars. Due to the nature of the land, no bus parking is provided.

Public Toilets: There are no public amenities at this site. Wiseman's Ferry is only five minutes away.

Getting involved

- Join a bush care group and assist with the management of the bushland. For more information contact Council's Bushcare Officer on 9686 4842
- Keep pets out of the bush
- Report vandalism to Council's 24-hour hotline 1300 884 885

For further information:

Visit the Local Studies Collection at the Castle Hill Library.

Contact Council's Parks and Reserve Team on 9843 0555.