

**Submission
No 45**

INQUIRY INTO WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

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WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT INQUIRY SUBMISSION

I would consider myself to be one of the great majority of typical Australians – although we often contribute little ourselves we complain loudly about our politicians & how our country is run, but in reality, always with a deep underlying faith & pride in the solidity & integrity of our government & legal systems

That is, until the Windsor Bridge Replacement Project - a government initiative in my own backyard, so apparently & unbelievably ridiculous, that it could not be rationalised.

I leave the astounding technical facts, some of which have already been beautifully presented in earlier submissions, to those who have recorded them in full detail

I would however, like to address some examples of the flagrant disregard & misuse of the systems installed in our country for its protection, improvement & the legality of our government processes.

State Heritage Protection

What is the *intent* of the legislation to allow State Heritage Protection to be overridden for 'State Significant Infrastructure' projects?

- What makes this particular project State Significant?
- Apparently only the fact that it will severely damage an area which has State Heritage protection?

How was this legislation used?

In 2011 legislation was changed to allow State Heritage Protection to be 'switched off' for projects identified as 'State Significant Infrastructure'

A few days later, this law was used to 'switch off' Thompson Square's Heritage protection to allow the WBRP to go ahead on the basis that it will do 'significant' damage to the (now no longer) protected area.

Independent Project Reports

What is the intent of commissioning Expert Reports on government projects?

- Heritage
- Structural Engineering / Bridge Condition
- Traffic

Each of these expert reports strongly advise against this project.

Rather than attending to these expert opinions, it would seem the requirements of commissioning them has been met purely by the commissioning itself.

Community /Economic Benefit

- Standard procedure is to bypass towns – what is really behind the refusal to do so in such an important historic area?
- Why is a major Heritage Tourism opportunity, only 1 hr from Sydney, being left to die?

Conclusion

At least in this particular project, much work is seen to be done so all the legislative requirements to safety guard public funds & project integrity are classed as 'met', ie; the steps are gone through, but unfortunately, purpose & intent of this legislation is ignored

What are the *real* reasons behind this project?

No satisfactory explanations to these & many other questions have ever been given.

Unfortunately the only answer that makes sense of such ignorance does not reflect well on an honourable government.

I hope this Inquiry will cause the actions needed to correct this wrong.