

**Submission  
No 139**

## **INQUIRY INTO WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

**Name:** Ms Cecily Foster

**Date received:** 25 January 2018

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The Director,  
Portfolio Committee No.5,  
Parliament House,  
Macquarie Street,  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2018

Dear Director,

**I am writing to express my dismay at Windsor Bridge Replacement Project.**

**These are some points:**

1. Correct consultation has not been completed yet work has commenced prior to the pending Parliamentary enquiry.
2. National Heritage listing of the area of Thompson Square has been requested but is not dealt with at this stage.
3. Damage to proven heritage items and removal of soil and damage to convict made bricks is an ongoing concern as the "dig" at Thompson Square continues despite community protests. The latest being 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018. (Please see attached report by me.) There is to be another peaceful, non-violent but active protest this week to try to prevent this dig proceeding till the Parliamentary Enquiry has been completed and decided. Protests regarding this project have been active for over 5 years with a tent on the site of the Square which continues to be manned 24/7.
4. Thompson Square, an area for the public with the surrounding historic buildings and large trees is now a noisy hub due to the increased traffic over the last few years. Over 2,500 large trucks per day, and increased through traffic create noise and traffic delays. (Reports available from CAWB ). The building of a large bridge through the Square, destroying this heritage area and removing large trees is not providing a traffic solution.
5. This new bridge needs to be a BYPASS away from the town providing a better option for traffic and for flooding as the planned bridge through the town will allow floodwaters to go under it while the surrounding flats become unpassable. Thompson Square was listed in 1975 by the National Trust at which time they stated they looked forward to a rerouting of the highway around the town. The RMS also recommended this. (See other submissions for more detail.)

6. The present bridge has been proven to be safe and structurally sound and should remain to take local traffic rather than be destroyed. We do not want barges to go up and down the river mining sand which is another concerning issue.

These points are my summary of some of the many concerns regarding the Windsor Bridge Replacement Project. This plan will destroy Thompsons Square providing limited, if any, benefit and excessive negative impact to the town of Windsor. Negative impacts being noise increase, destruction and damage to heritage buildings and items and the impact on tourism due to the changes incurred by this structure across our Square.

I urge you as the Minister who is responsible for the decision regarding the National Heritage listing of Thompson Square and its precincts, many that are of significant heritage value, to proceed to get this listed as National Heritage ASAP. As you know it is a matter of extreme urgency.

The area does not need a bigger, higher bridge than the present one as that will do little to improve traffic flow as the traffic entering and exiting from the bridge will be little different. At times of flood, also little benefit. I urge you to try to prevent destruction of a historic bridge and precincts. The original and agreed best option is for a bypass of the town crossing the river away from the town.

This present project must be stopped. I care deeply and like many us are upset and angry that our Government can allow this project to be proceeding before the Parliamentary Inquiry later this month.

Yours Sincerely,

Cecily Foster

## PROTEST RALLY TO STOP DIG AT WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

On 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 I attended a rally at the dig site with many protesters. Our nonviolent, peaceful protest began at 6.30am with several protesters (about 100).

The reason for this Rally was to draw attention to the fact that this dig is in contravention to heritage preservation as historic drains, bricks a wharf and indigenous items are known to be there. We as a group, have been unable to obtain heritage listing. Our submissions for this have been lodged.

We linked arms across the gateway when the workers arrived. After a short while the police appeared. They went having given us a warning that we should move or action will be taken. With earlier talks with the police we were led to expect that action to be an infringement notice or an arrest.

Councillor Danielle Wheeler was there to support the cause and also Federal MP Susan Templeman and Greens MP Lee Rhiannon. Susan and Lee were in the line at the gate. The police arrived back, asked us to move, we did not move.

The action the police took was to physically move us rather than take our names and serve us with an infringement notice. They moved in behind the line and I was surprised to be grabbed by the scruff of my blouse by a policeman who said, "If you don't move I will arrest you". I immediately said yes, please escort me out of here as it was by then difficult to get through as we had been pushed together downhill. I heard someone scream and I was afraid I would fall. The police, 3 or 4 or more grabbed, shoved and pushed us, I saw Susan Templeman being lifted and carried away by a policeman, then because of more manhandling to me, I fell to the ground. I was told "Get up" by a huge policeman. I said, "I can't, and do not dare touch me again".

I was then helped by the female police officer and Kim Smith from our group.

I was asked for ID and I was uncooperative. I walked away at that stage, and could have continued to my car, but as I actually wanted to be arrested or have an infringement served on me, I took my chair and belongings and sat near the police car. I was arrested, police took my ID from my handbag, wrote out 2 infringements then told me I was free to go and I was now banned from the site for 6 hours.

The reason I wanted to be arrested or be served with an infringement notice was to enable our case to be heard in court regarding the demolition of heritage items with disregard for community, and broader community opinion, Federal MP Support from Susan Templeman, Support from Greens MP Lee Rhiannon and more importantly the fact there is to be a parliamentary enquiry later this month into the Windsor Bridge Replacement Project. Also there has been no tender signed for the project yet.

We as a community group believe and are fighting for the present historic bridge to be left intact and a new road and bridge built to bypass the town of Windsor.

Cecily Foster