

**Submission  
No 306**

**INQUIRY INTO WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT  
PROJECT**

**Name:** Mrs Jennifer Doughman

**Date received:** 28 January 2018

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The Director,  
Portfolio Committee No. 5,  
Parliament House,  
Macquarie Street,  
Sydney NSW 2000.

28 January 2018

Dear Director,

**Re: Inquiry into the Windsor Bridge replacement project**

Please accept this correspondence as a submission to the Windsor Bridge Inquiry. In making this submission, I wish to register my opposition and objections to the Government's proposal **(the Project)** to build a bridge 35m downstream of the existing, historic Windsor Bridge.

I grew up in the Hawkesbury and I am a resident of its oldest town, Windsor. I object to the Project because it will have catastrophic and irreversible impacts on the heritage significance of Thompson Square and on Windsor Bridge and because it does not provide quality long term traffic solutions. I feel Windsor's amenity, its history, its character, its vibrancy, its community and its economic prosperity will be affected as a result.

Windsor is the third-oldest place of British settlement on the Australian continent. It is located on the banks of the Hawkesbury River and the existing, historic Windsor Bridge proudly provides a safe river crossing. I have travelled over Windsor Bridge on hundreds, if not thousands, of occasions. Its exit and egress are through a historical precinct known as Thompson Square. Thompson Square is a town square that was planned by Governor Macquarie in 1811 at a time when the original town of Windsor was known as Greenhills. It is a large turfed open public space which is bordered by roads lined with period colonial architecture, convict laid sandstone guttering and hidden archaeology. It is the only public space remaining from the original town of Greenhills and continues to play an important role in the history of Windsor. It is the only remaining civic space as laid out by Governor Macquarie and is essential for preserving its early colonial character of our town (Environment.nsw.gov.au. (2018). Thompson Square Conservation Area: NSW Environment & Heritage. [online] Available at: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=5045195> [Accessed 28 Jan. 2018]).

I recently visited The Rocks in Sydney and was astounded at the similarities between this precinct and Windsor's Thompson Square in terms of its period architecture and cultural characteristics pertaining to early colonial life. Oddly, one precinct seems worthy of reverential preservation whilst the other does not. The Project is a bad design and is flawed. Our community and our nation are deserving of quality.

The premise on which the Project is based is flawed and represents very poor strategic planning. The current Windsor Bridge does not need replacing for reasons of safety. "...*the bridge is safe for current use.*" (Report on Structural Condition of the existing Windsor Bridge, pg.11). "*The bridge has not exhibited any signs that it is about to fail.*" (Report on Structural Condition of the existing Windsor Bridge, pg.16). As such, Windsor Bridge does not and should not be destroyed and replaced, like the Project proposes, with another bridge 35m downstream that will have no more than a marginal impact on existing traffic conditions. However, if a new river crossing were needed

on the sensible basis of easing traffic congestion through a highly significant and sensitive heritage precinct, improving traffic flow or accommodating growth in traffic numbers, the best alternative would be to retain the existing Windsor Bridge and build a bypass in a different location. *"Rather than constructing a three-lane (ultimate) bridge which has more traffic capacity than the roads and intersections feeding it, we would suggest considering alternative bridge crossing locations which may provide adequate traffic capacity for a longer period of time (e.g. a bypass option)."* (Cambray Consulting, Windsor Bridge Replacement Project, Traffic Review of Information Provided by the Applicant (Roads and Maritime Services), Prepared for NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure, 15 August 2013 pg. 24).

The Project will have catastrophic and irreversible impacts on the heritage significance of Thompson Square and the existing Windsor Bridge, both of which are deserving of preservation, restoration and a precautionary approach to development. *"This proposed design is not based on a full understanding of the significance of the heritage values of the place, nor on any heritage design principles or conservation policies, on which to base a future design. Therefore it is not mitigating impacts on heritage but an additional impact.... RMS's heritage consultants in Working Paper 1 state the proposed impacts on Thompson Square Conservation Area are so major the WBRP should not go ahead."* ( Windsor Bridge Replacement Project Independent Heritage Review August 2013, pg.8). As such the design is deeply flawed. The destruction of heritage will affect the public amenity of this space and tourism to Windsor. Long after the bulldozers have left and the concrete has hardened we will be left reeling from its impact. The cost to our community will be greater than any benefits the Project can provide.

In conclusion, the Project fails to deliver a quality outcome. Given the Project's obvious shortcomings, I would like to see the Project stopped, the historic Windsor Bridge renovated and a new bridge constructed on a Windsor bypass.

Yours sincerely,  
Jennifer Doughman,