

**Submission
No 178**

INQUIRY INTO WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Name: Ms Christine Johnson

Date received: 25 January 2018

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

The Director,

Please accept this letter as an expression of my opinion regarding the replacement project for the Windsor Bridge, NSW. I bought my house in Bligh Park (a suburb of Hawkesbury City) in 2013 and moved in on the same date as the occupation of Thompson Square commenced. Although not an active guardian of the square I have attended many functions to hear speakers, see the plans and participate in community discussion about the project. I have been visiting Windsor on a regular basis since I first came as a babe in arms with my parents and consider myself well placed to have a clear view of the probably outcomes of this ill fated plan.

My opposition to the project centres mainly around the heritage of the Thompson Square being the point where convicts were called to muster in earliest colonial times and a grisly reminder of the fate of those who broke the law. The whole precinct surrounding the square is unique. From Tebutt's observatory through to the Royal Theatre in George street the whole area is a gem of colonial history. The town is worthy of preservation as an entire precinct and to divide the area permanently with a major arterial road is to ride rough shod over a site of National significance.

The proposed new bridge will do nothing to alleviate the traffic congestion experienced by those crossing the river - which will indeed get increasingly worse. Even with the projects already approved for development which include increased housing and significant agricultural investment in factory farming the need for an additional river crossing is clearly apparent.

Option one will also do little or nothing to improved flood mitigation with the bridge ending in the flood prone lowlands. One only has to observe the islands built by farmers to store farm machinery above the flat open fields to realise the plan will just not work. It is dubious that raising the deck of the bridge will alleviate the need for closures but it is a certainty that once across the bridge vehicle traffic will be unable to travel further through the flood plains.

In conclusion I would appeal to you to reconsider the siting of the new bridge and immediately cease the invasive archaeological dig now underway. Windsor would be better served with development in harmony with our colonial heritage. The town is inundated with visitors during school holidays and on the weekends and has a vital tourist industry. The preservation of the existing bridge for local traffic will revive business within the precinct as locals return to Windsor having been forced into Richmond by the horrendous traffic.

My recommendation would be to look at a by-pass option - sending the juggernaut trucks straight up the Singleton Road and leaving the existing Windsor Bridge for local traffic with an appropriate load limit to prohibit the dangerous precedent set by the current large vehicular traffic. Please help our town by following the advice already tendered by RMS staff and expert consultants which clearly states that the option being offered our community is not best practise. We deserve better and bitterly oppose this option.

Yours sincerely,

Christine Johnson.