

**Submission
No 284**

INQUIRY INTO WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Name: Mr Timothy Bell

Date received: 28 January 2018

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The Director,
Portfolio Committee No.5 – Industry and Transport
Parliament House,
Macquarie Street,
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Director,

Re: Inquiry into the Windsor Bridge replacement project

As a member of the NSW community and a retired Professional Engineer with extensive experience at senior level in major transport and urban infrastructure projects in NSW, I am interested in effective improvement and development of transport infrastructure whilst preserving and conserving our natural and built environment and heritage.

I am not a local Windsor resident and do not have any business interests in the Hawkesbury Local Government area, but I am very concerned about the detrimental impacts that the proposed Windsor Bridge replacement project appears to have on:

1. Aboriginal and European archaeology within and adjacent to the current and proposed works sites, and;
2. Amenity of the local community of Windsor and the wider NSW community.

The proposed Windsor Bridge replacement project involves mapping / disturbance / retrieval of Aboriginal and European artifacts / items of significance. I understand expert archaeological advice is that these artifacts / items are much better left in tact in an undisturbed state. Retention of the existing Windsor Bridge and development of a Windsor Bypass would provide for these Aboriginal and European archaeological artifacts / items to remain in-situ.

The proposed Windsor Bridge replacement project requires resumption of part of Thompson Square which is claimed as the “Historic Heart of the Hawkesbury”, and as I understand the place of origin of the Australian “Fair Go” ethos. Thompson Square is also the centrepiece of the eastern entry to historic George Street Windsor.

I believe Thompson Square needs to be conserved in its entirety as a place of Local, State and National historic and heritage value.

Only a new bridge over the Hawkesbury River as part of a properly planned Windsor Bypass (which would have social, environmental and commercial benefits both locally and regionally) will facilitate retention of Thompson Square as a usable community space, free of adjacent thundering heavy vehicles and the effects of increasing other traffic, as would be the case if the Windsor Bridge replacement project goes ahead.

As I understand from recent traffic studies the southern approach intersections of Bridge St / George St and Bridge St / Macquarie St are close to full capacity levels at peak periods. This adds to the grounds for a Windsor Bypass to be planned and developed to address current and future traffic needs of the area.

There is considerable talk of the Windsor Bridge replacement project as being thrust on the local community to appease the sand extraction and haulage industry in the Hawkesbury / Colo River region which appears to be replacing the Penrith / Nepean River region as providing river sand to the Sydney building industry. If this is the case, once again this is good reason to develop a Windsor Bypass.

I advocate it is not too late to stop the Windsor Bridge replacement project. I would be confident if a Value Engineering Study and Cost / Benefit Analysis (triple bottom line) were done it would be abundantly evident that the Windsor Bridge replacement project is ill conceived and is a very substandard solution to address comprehensive project objectives.

In conclusion I respectfully request Portfolio Committee No.5 – Industry and Transport to provide a report to the NSW Parliament, which addresses the weight of argument and evidence in support of:

1. Retaining the existing Windsor Bridge (with necessary maintenance regime) specifically for local traffic, and;
2. Developing a flood free new bridge with approach roads as a Windsor Bypass (either upstream or downstream of existing bridge but away from the Windsor township) for arterial / through traffic including heavy vehicles.

Yours sincerely,

Timothy J Bell