

**Submission
No 49**

INQUIRY INTO WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Name: Ms Jennifer Kent

Date received: 4 January 2018

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

Dear Director,

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

Background

I was born & raised in Windsor. My father was a heritage builder who restored the "Doctor's House" which is adjacent to Thompson Square. The whole area around the Windsor Bridge is very historic, being the third oldest settlement in Australia.

The current traffic conditions are dangerous as heavy trucks compete with commuters to access the existing bridge.

Issues

- The proposed replacement bridge will not ameliorate present traffic congestion. Heavy trucks will continue to compete with commuters to access the wider bridge. The safer option would be to have a bypass built at Pitt Town which would reduce the traffic flow near Thompson Square.
- The loss of heritage values around Thompson Square, the oldest town square in Australia. (Independent Heritage Report, Mary Casey) The present process of attempting to "salvage" archaeology is in fact destroying it. Little care has been demonstrated in the use of bulldozers.
- The significant loss of tourist dollars as people will naturally avoid travelling to see a noisy polluted area. There has been an ongoing failure in the whole planning process to recognise the negative community impacts. Loss of amenity is one of the factors that leads to the disintegration of communities.

- Inadequate planning for flood mitigation. There have been no proposed changes to the height of surrounding roads and only a minor increase in the height of the bridge.

Conclusion

Unfortunately the plan to replace the Windsor Bridge is poorly conceived and executed. There has been no sincere attempt to offer a creditable explanation why such a historical precinct has to be destroyed and a town bypass can't be built. It is somewhat puzzling as it is standard practice to build bypasses in similar locations in NSW.

The lack of transparency in terms of the final cost is of concern. To date Treasury documents indicate expenditure of around \$30 million. This estimate is prior to any contract being signed and there is no indication the RMS has a final cost estimate for the project.

The proposed benefits of the proposed plan do not stack up when scrutinised by independent research. The low level of skills and expertise demonstrated by the RMS is of concern not only to local residents but to all citizens of NSW.

Recommendations

It is strongly recommended that the following actions be implemented immediately:

1. The Windsor Bridge replacement bridge be stopped.
2. Archaeological "salvage" cease
3. The RMS begins planning for a Windsor bypass.

Jennifer Kent