

**Submission
No 218**

**INQUIRY INTO WINDSOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
PROJECT**

Name: Ms Louise Wilson

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I write as a regular visitor to the Hawkesbury (from Melbourne) and the author of three acclaimed books about the early settlement of the Hawkesbury ('Robert Forrester, First Fleeter', 'Paul Bushell, Second Fleeter' and 'Southwark Luck'). The numerous readers of these books live all over Australia and swell the numbers of tourists visiting the Hawkesbury every year.

In particular, these tourists come to see Windsor - the old town square precinct, St Matthews historic church precinct and the bridge across the river taking them on to Wilberforce and Freemans Reach. The Bushell family in particular has a connection to Thompson Square, as innholders for decades of the hotel known as the Royal Hotel or Macquarie Arms Hotel. It seems sacrilege to us that anyone would even think of demolishing one of the few remaining aspects of the heritage sites where Australia's earliest convict settlers lived.

As a regular driver on the Hume Highway, where all the historic towns in NSW (and Victoria) have been by-passed for heavy and through traffic, it makes absolutely no common sense to me that the same policy will not be applied to Australia's 3rd oldest settlement. The current plans for a replacement bridge are an expensive stopgap measure which won't solve the long term problem of flooding, or of congestion in the heart of old Windsor, but which will permanently destroy the heritage value of Windsor as a meaningful tourist destination.

This latter point I find extraordinary, given the heritage hoops I had to jump through in order to restore the grave of the Second Fleet settler Paul Bushell at Wilberforce Cemetery, at a cost of approx. \$17,000. I organised a sizeable group of individuals to put up the money via crowd funding. How is it that powerful large bodies can override our Heritage laws with gay abandon while the man in the street has to meet strict standards?

Everyone involved needs to take a step back and consider the big picture, the long term. I sincerely hope that the current plans for the Windsor Bridge will be abandoned and a sensible, high-level bypass route around the town and onwards to the Putty Road will be developed, similar in concept to the high-level bypass at the other end of Windsor, on the road leading to Richmond.

Thanks for the opportunity to state my opinion.
Louise Wilson