

**COMMUNITY ACTION FOR WINDSOR BRIDGE SUBMISSION WRITING
GUIDELINES
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INTRODUCTION

Submission writing is increasingly part of life in NSW.

It's not too difficult and it's an important part of current political processes. Basically your submission either says you support something, or oppose it, why, and how you think it might be fixed.

There is no right or wrong way to make a submission but it is a good idea to give some information to explain your position.

So, let's get started...

When writing a submission, no matter what format you use, we suggest you follow three simple rules:

1. Be concise
2. Be accurate
3. Be relevant

1. Concise

Your submission may be one of hundreds, even thousands. You want the person reading it to get your message.

You want your points to have punch...so don't pad them unnecessarily.

2. Accurate

You want your submission to be taken seriously. Avoid saying something "is" unless you can tell your reader where your fact came from.

e.g. "Up to three thousand trucks cross Windsor Bridge every week day on average" (CAWB 2017 traffic survey).

You can express your opinions, ideas and beliefs about things.

e.g. “In my opinion the removal of so many large trees will discourage tourists from visiting Thompson Square.”

“I think the current plan will be bad for local businesses...”

Relevant

In the case of the Upper House Inquiry into the Windsor Bridge replacement project, your first step is to read the Terms of Reference (see below, we’ve underlined the keywords).

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO.5 – INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORT Inquiry into the Windsor Bridge replacement project

1. *That Portfolio Committee No. 5 - Industry and Transport inquire into and report on the expenditure, performance and effectiveness of the Roads & Maritime Services’ Windsor Bridge replacement project, and in particular:*
 - a) *the **current** Windsor Bridge, including its maintenance regime, renovation methods and justification for demolition,*
 - b) *the **replacement** bridge project, including:*
 - i. *options presented to the community*
 - ii. *post construction strategic outcomes, including traffic benefits, transport and network service capacity*
 - iii. *economic, social and heritage impacts*
 - iv. *flood immunity benefits*
 - v. *project assessment process*
 - vi. *planning and procurement strategies and associated project costs*
 - vii. *cost benefit analysis process, and*
 - c) *any other related matters.*
2. *That the committee report by 29 June 2018.*

Once you’ve read the terms of reference, have a think about which things you would like to comment on. You can write about one topic, a few topics or all topics - it is entirely up to you.

So... you’ve chosen your topics...it’s time to put pen to paper...or fingers to the keyboard!

SUBMISSION FORMAT

We are going to show you two of the ways you can use to make a submission:

1. Write a Letter

Your submission can simply be a letter to the Committee. Your letter should talk about topics in the Terms of Reference. We have included a sample letter, but please, don't send the sample letter. It is much more powerful if you send a letter written by you.

Sample letter next page.

Sample Letter

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

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 to build a bridge 35 m downstream of the existing, historic Windsor Bridge.

In particular I object to this project because it represents poor value for money, in that it does little or nothing, (as confirmed in the Project EIS), to mitigate flood impacts and will have no more than a marginal impact on existing, chaotic traffic conditions.

Furthermore, as acknowledged by Government experts, the project will have catastrophic and irreversible impacts on the Heritage significance, tourism potential and public amenity of the oldest Town Square in Australia. It is disappointing to note that, despite tens of thousands of signatures testifying to both expert and community opposition to this project, the New South Wales Government has continued with a plan which will permanently force industrial vehicles through residential, recreational and retail urban space.

As a resident of the Hawkesbury who has attended RMS information sessions, read project documents and provided feedback regarding the project I have been frustrated and angered by the refusal of the RMS and the Government to respond in any meaningful way to the numerous and easily identifiable problems with the proposed Windsor Bridge replacement project.

In conclusion, this is a project that fails to deliver a quality outcome; whether assessed in terms of project expenditure, the performance of the RMS, or the effectiveness of the department's strategic planning. 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,
[Insert Name,
Address,
Contact details and
Date]

2. Write a Briefing

You may wish to provide your information to the Committee in a more formal document. The following briefing format is one way of doing that. Once again, it is important to consider the advice in the Introduction regarding writing a submission.

A sample briefing is included; but as previously advised, please don't just send this document. It is much more powerful if you send a briefing written by you.

Sample briefing below.

Sample Submission

SUBMISSION

To:

Portfolio Committee No.5 – Industry And Transport
Inquiry into the Windsor Bridge replacement project

Submitted by: *[insert your name, address, contact details and date]*

BACKGROUND (optional)

You can use this section to explain in one or two sentences why you are writing, or to put forward any other background information to help your reader understand your concerns.

*e.g. As a local resident I am concerned...
Driving through Thompson Square daily I am aware...
As someone whose family has lived here for generations...*

ISSUE/S

Identify, in bullet points, your concerns. At this stage these are just headlines, whether one, or many, they give your reader an overview of your submission. You can choose the headings as they are written in the Terms of Reference.

e.g.

- Traffic benefits
- Heritage impacts
- Flood immunity benefits

or you may want to talk about one aspect of the heading.

e.g.

- Traffic Benefits - the Bypass Issue
- Heritage Impacts – Archaeology
- Flood Immunity Benefits - What Benefits?

The three topics here are examples. There is a list of other issues at the end of this template. This list is not exhaustive; you may have additional concerns.

COMMENT ON ISSUES

Next, use each bullet point as a heading and underneath briefly tell the Inquiry Committee why they are important. The text provided here is only a sample. You might say something quite different on each subject. It is important to write in your own words.

Traffic Benefits - the Bypass Issue

Throughout New South Wales, with good reason, governments invest in bypasses (RMS and Treasury documents); getting heavy vehicles out of towns improves everyone's safety, it improves the overall amenity of the place, improves air quality, noise levels and it is safer and more efficient for truck drivers (CAWB EIS Submission). It is just good planning. What is being done at Windsor is the exact opposite; it sets a new low in strategic traffic and transport planning.

Heritage Impacts – Archaeology

The RMS is currently destroying the archaeology of the third oldest settlement in Australia. This destruction is being justified by describing it as “salvage”. Salvage requires the removal of the archaeology. Once removed it can never be replaced. It has been destroyed. Describing destructive salvage as mitigating the destruction of heritage (Mitigation = lessen something) is completely inaccurate. This “mitigation” is not lessening the damage to rare and valuable archaeology; it is destroying the archaeology and this process will ultimately destroy the Heritage significance of the oldest Town Square in Australia (Independent Heritage Report, Mary Casey).

Flood Immunity “Benefits” - What Benefits?

The current Windsor Bridge goes under in a 1:2 flood. The proposed bridge height is less than a 1:3 flood (EIS documents). There have been no changes to the height of surrounding roads, which go under during floods. This project is therefore not delivering an acceptable level of flood mitigation.

CONCLUSION

[This is where you get a chance to comment on the issues you have raised about the Windsor Bridge replacement project and explain the ‘big picture’, particularly in relation to the expenditure, performance and effectiveness of the RMS. One or two paragraphs would be fine, maximum four of five.]

e.g.

Windsor Bridge replacement project is a poorly conceived and executed plan. No effort has been made to genuinely explain why such a destructive plan is better than building a town bypass – which is standard practice in similar locations across the rest of the New South Wales.

The suggestion the project is justified because it will improve flood immunity is disproved by the RMS's own documentation. Experience indicates the bridge itself is not cause of the traffic problems, but rather the intersections at either end are.

To date, Treasury documents indicate expenditure of around \$34 million, prior to a construction contract being let, and there is no indication the RMS has a final cost estimate for the project.

The Windsor bridge project is a poor reflection on a department driving the largest infrastructure program in the nation. The skills knowledge and expertise being demonstrated in relation to this infrastructure project fail to meet the most basic expectations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This is your opportunity to make suggestions to the committee on ways to correct the problems or issues.

e.g.

It is recommended the following actions occur immediately:

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

Name and date

Blank Template for you to copy and use.

SUBMISSION

To:

Portfolio Committee No.5 – Industry And Transport
Inquiry into the Windsor Bridge replacement project

Submitted by: *[insert your name, address, contact details and date]*

BACKGROUND *[optional]*

ISSUE/S

- X
- X
- X

COMMENT ON ISSUES

CONCLUSION

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXPANDED ISSUES LIST

- Lack of maintenance of the current Windsor Bridge, (see information in CAWB's EIS submission)
- Proposed renovation methods for the existing bridge, (see information in RMS Response to Submissions)
- Justification for demolition of a heritage asset (see Independent Heritage Report, Mary Casey, EIS project documents)

- Options presented to the community for the proposed replacement bridge (see information in CAWB's EIS submission)
 - Quality
 - Purpose
 - Scope
 - Justification (see information in CAWB's response to the proposed landscape plans and to the proposed SCMP)

- Strategic traffic outcomes, once the bridge is built, (RMS Project Documents)

- Transport and network service capacity, post construction of the proposed project, (RMS Project Documents) (see also the results of traffic studies commissioned by CAWB)

- The economic impacts of the proposed project,
 - During Construction
 - Post-construction

- The social impacts of the proposed project,
 - Community use of the Square

- The heritage impacts of the proposed project,
 - Archaeology
 - Impacts on heritage building fabric

- Flood immunity benefits of proposed bridge
 - Existing immunity vs. proposed immunity
 - Heights of surrounding roads

- The project assessment process
 - Options considered
 - Community consultation
 - Budget considerations
 - Documents

- Project planning and procurement strategies
 - Project approval
 - First construction contract
 - The Albert 'Tibby' Cotter Bridge

- Associated project costs
 - Contract variations
- Cost benefit analysis process, and
- Any other related matters.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Inquiry website says:

“Submissions are confidential until the committee decides to publish them. Once published, submissions are usually placed on the committee's website. Please note that personal contact details will be removed. If you would like to request that all or some of your submission be kept **confidential**, including your identity, you need to state so clearly in your submission. The committee will consider your request.

Further information about participating in an Upper House inquiry can be found at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/pages/about-committees-lc.aspx

If you would like any further information about the inquiry or making a submission, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie Galbraith, Principal Council Officer, on (02) 9230 3324 or Emma Rogerson, Senior Council Officer, on (02) 9230 2898.”

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