

Hawkesbury City Council

Our Ref: CN: 122080

17 December 2012

Mr Andrew Beattie
Planner
Department of Planning and Infrastructure

andrew.beattie@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Beattie

Hawkesbury City Council Submission of RMS Windsor Bridge Replacement EIS

As you would be aware, Council is supportive of the replacement of Windsor Bridge and has been involved in a number of discussions with both the community and the RMS about this significant development proposal.

On 27 November 2012 Council resolved the following:

"That Council make representations to the RMS requesting that appropriate design elements which reflect and complement the surrounding heritage elements of the area, including sandstone buildings and structures, and that are sympathetic with the surrounding built and natural environment are incorporated within the design of the proposed new Windsor Bridge and that Council's local State Members of Parliament also be requested to support Council's representations."

Accordingly, please find attached a copy of Council's submission on the EIS for this project. Please note that a copy of Council's submission has also been forwarded to Council's local State Members of Parliament for support.

If you require further information please contact me on the number below.

Yours faithfully



Matthew Owens
Director City Planning

Direct Line: (02) 4560 4540

Encl

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All communications to be addressed to the General Manager
PO Box 146, Windsor NSW 2756
Website: www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au
Email: council@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au
Hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am – 5.00pm.

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Introduction

Hawkesbury City Council has previously indicated support (see background below) for the replacement of Windsor Bridge and a preference for Option 1 (as proposed by RMS). Council has also previously made comment on the matters to be covered in the preparation of the EIS. Hence this submission aims to provide specific responses only on the design elements of the proposed Windsor Bridge.

Background

1. Historical Significance of Thompson Square and support of Bridge Replacement

At its meeting of 27 March 2012 it was resolved that Council:

- “1. Recognise that at least since 1814, when a punt service connected the town of Windsor to land on the western side of the river, there has been a traffic corridor on approximately the alignment of Bridge Street.*
- 2. Recognise that the road connection through Thompson Square is as much a part of the square’s heritage as the buildings which were subsequently built around it.*
- 3. Supports Option 1 for the replacement of Windsor Bridge on the basis that the alignment and design are to be prepared to respect the heritage of Thompson Square, including specifically the 50km per hour design gradient to ensure the road enters Thompson Square at a level no higher than the lowest house.”*

2. Design Elements of New Windsor Bridge

Council at its meeting of 27 November 2012 resolved:

- “That Council make representations to the RMS requesting that appropriate design elements which reflect and complement the surrounding heritage elements of the area, including sandstone buildings and structures, and that are sympathetic with*

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the surrounding built and natural environment are incorporated into the design of the proposed new Windsor Bridge and that Council's local State Members of Parliament also be requested to support council's representations."

Consultation with Members of Parliament

A copy of the EIS submission has been provided to the local State members of Parliament namely:

- Ray Williams – Member for Hawkesbury
- Bart Bassett – Member for Londonderry
- Kevin Connolly – Member for Riverstone

Design Principles

It is clear that substantial analysis of the design components has been undertaken within the EIS. Overall no objection is raised to:

1. The urban design and landscape objectives listed 1-4 on page x of Volume 3
2. The bridge architecture objectives 1-8 listed on page x of Volume 3

However the resultant EIS design concept does not adequately detail the commitments the RMS will make to Council (and the community) in some key aspects, namely:

Extent of project – Note that Figure 8.1 in Volume 3 indicates the extent of the project however this is different to some other diagrams in Volume 3 and in other volumes.

- The EIS contains insufficient details to make adequate comment about embankment stabilisation, materials, planting schemes and remediation following completion.
- The EIS should be providing sustainability principles for re-use of existing materials. For example timber removed from the site should be re-used in the site either in an interpretative way or via street furniture.

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- The EIS provides insufficient details about the maintenance and transfer of acquired land back to Council including financial assistance and the period of time prior to handover.
- The EIS provides insufficient detail about the proposed water basin, use of the wharf area during construction and following completion in relation to management and maintenance obligations.

Identification of heritage and architectural principles to guide the design – The EIS acknowledges Thompson Square’s high heritage significance and provides some good observations and analysis. However, the proposed design concept does not seem to have responded to the heritage assessment guidelines. In particular the guideline of “How to Prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI)” report as outlined by the NSW Heritage Office. This requires that any development must look at alternative options and to articulate the effect of each option on the significance of the heritage items and all its components and then to choose options that mitigate any negative impacts. The SoHI should be prepared by a heritage consultant team including: architect, historian, landscape architect and archaeologist. During the preparation of the SoHI report the applicant should work together with Council and NSW Heritage Office.

These two points are discussed in more detail below.

Extent of project

1. The alignment of different consultants reports in the EIS are conflicting. For example in Figure 7-39 (on page 391 in Volume 1) shows the outline of the concept design footprint together with vegetation information. It shows the extent of the concept includes:
 - The proposed new alignment of Windsor Bridge across Hawkesbury River
 - Macquarie Street /Bridge Street intersection
 - George Street/Bridge Street intersection
 - Wilberforce Road/Freemans Reach Road intersection
 - The Terrace/Bridge Street intersection

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- Part of Windsor Foreshore
- Part of the Doctor's House embankment

However, the concept design footprint excludes:

- The existing alignment of Windsor Bridge across Hawkesbury River
 - The existing alignment of Windsor Bridge through Thompson Square (lower section)
 - Part of Windsor Foreshore
 - Part of the Doctor's House embankment
2. The alignment of Thompson Square Road (Figure 8.1 Volume 3) does not match the current road alignment outside the Macquarie Arms Hotel. There are historical origins in the street pattern and the logic of re-positioning this section seems not to have been justified.
 3. The concept designs and materials for Area 7 and the adjacent area (currently outdoor decks) on Figure 8.1 Volume 3 also have not been clearly designed and further discussion with Council would need to occur to consider the pedestrian, vehicle and retail interaction/edge treatment.

Identification of heritage and architectural principles to guide the design

1. The final statement of heritage impact should consider archaeological findings during construction. The final interpretative elements and structures should reflect those findings. Consultation should occur with Council's officers including Urban Design Consultant prior to finalisation of the concept designs
2. The overall design strategy appears not to encompass Indigenous design, interpretative elements and materials based on observation or analysis of the site and context. These should be integral to the design concepts.
3. The overall interpretation strategy (including flood interpretation elements) needs to be developed in a way that reflects Council's adopted "Interpretative Signage and Public Art Policy – Telling Hawkesbury Stories Policy" (see Council's website:

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<http://council.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/masterviewui/modules/documentmaster/getdocument.aspx?docsetid=3399005>) and occur in consultation with Council.

4. The proposed shared path material pavement (Plate 8.3) is noted. No objection is raised to the use of that material and the shared usage is supported subject to adequate subgrade and suitability for purpose (eg. use by buses and service vehicles)
5. Area 8 on Figure 8.1 Volume 3 appears not to have a design concept or material proposed. The materials for the pavement (Plate 8.3) identified in Section 2 in George Street could be used within the George Street entry into Windsor.
6. The retaining walls/abutment walls should be comprised of a material that are not stark in colour or material or treatment as this would be at odds with Thompson Square's subdued palette of colonial materials. Preferably the walls should adhere to the materiality of other elements in Thompson Square such as the base wall of the Doctors House paths and verandahs i.e. to be dry laid sandstone
7. Further to the Figure 5.8 comments on Page 101 of Volume 1, similar commentary needs to be done for the bridge, the road and the area through Thompson Square i.e. it needs articulation and design principles, a landscape strategy and a comprehensive materials palette needs to be developed for the site. This needs to be derived from the heritage significance and the purpose should be based on the analysis of options explored and the consideration of, and mitigation of, impacts upon the Thompson Square. The landscaping on the two sides of the new bridge is fundamentally different. The Thompson Square end is a cultural landscape while the western end is a more natural environment. Preference is for all heritage significant existing trees and plantings to be preserved and if necessary transplanted (in particular the existing silky oak trees).
8. Council has an adopted Plan of Management (POM) that relates to land around Windsor Bridge and the proposal should respond positively to the POM. See copy of POM on Council's website:
http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/14616/2817AdoptedPlanOfManagement_SEPT_INSERTS.pdf
9. The use of native species versus introduced species is contradictory to the cultural landscape of the Southern bank and the Northern bank with its agricultural landscape. The existing trees within and around Thompson Square provide a cultural

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significance and despite documenting them they seem not to have been used to inform the proposed planting schedule or style of landscape approach.

10. Further investigation with the landscape architect (heritage experience) is needed to look at the significance and identify the history and progression of species culminating in the current collection of trees within Thompson Square. This will then guide the species characteristics and overall layout of the remainder of the re-landscaped Thompson Square amphitheatre.
11. Any trees should where possible firstly be retained, relocated or if they need to be removed that the materials are re-used for timber elements in the final design eg. interpretative panels, street furniture or the like.
12. Whilst the contemporary bridge style is accepted where it crosses the river, the generic treatment of the bridge elements (eg. Abutment, road, railings etc.) on the southern bank are not considered appropriate. From the point at which the bridge 'lands' on Southern bank the materials palette for the bridge and the square should be considered.
13. The lighting, street furniture and other fixtures within Thompson Square and on the bridge elements on the Southern Bank need to be developed with a suitable architectural style and in consultation with Council
14. The EIS and design concept needs to explore a range of options to ameliorate negative impacts on Thompson Square (NOTE: This follows the statement of heritage impact report standard methodology adopted by the NSW Heritage Council). For example, road impacts on a considerable portion of Thompson Square and forms a continuous 'border' along its Northern edge.
15. The texture of the road pavement needs to be differentiated to indicate an arrival point into Windsor and the pedestrian environment. This should continue east (Macquarie Street) and south (to Thompson Square Road) to connect with the extent of the project scope i.e. the red construction work zone lines shown on Figure 6.4 in Volume 3.
16. The pedestrian pavement materials for the project appear not to have been identified. The pavement materials also need to be reflective of the materials palette for Thompson Square. This should be identified in conjunction with Hawkesbury City Council and the review of the draft Windsor Master Plan. The specific materials of some elements should be amended for example:

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- a. The fabric of the handrails over the bridge and into the park (to reduce the visual impact) could of a metal fabric and once into Thompson Square change to complement the significance of the site.
 - b. The Southern abutment could be a dry laid stone wall (similar to the one at the Doctor's House) to complement Thompson Square.
17. Terrace Road access to the wharf area is identified at a 3.6m clearance, however, this height will not maintain the existing 4.3m height for coach access. A modified height to achieve coach access is required and may impact on the design elements and the constructed levels for The Terrace pavement.
18. The applicant's landscape consultant should work together with Councils landscape specialist and NSW Heritage Office's landscape specialist re the overall landscaping of Thompson's Square. All plantings need be appraised with heritage significances attributed to each planting and agreed upon by the three specialists. Then, the treatment of each specimen needs be agreed upon.
19. Paving and Road way treatments:
 - The final choice of pavers should be consistent for the whole path and road treatments within Thompson's Square.
 - The shared paths using terra cotta pavers, as shown on Table 8.3 Volume 3: is seen as a reasonable option. Subject to subgrade and suitability for truck and bus loadings.
20. The lighting should be suitably neutral, contemporary lighting that is consistent throughout Thompson's Square.
21. Similarly the choice of street furniture should be consistent throughout Thompson's Square.
22. All services required for the overall Thompson Square should be considered and integrated into the design. Services such as: Power (including solar), water.

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23. Road patterns: The final road patterns should be agreed with the Council and NSW Heritage Office. For example: the road pattern in front of Macquarie Arms Hotel shown on Table 8.1 Vol 3 should for historical reasons maintain its current alignments.
24. The resultant re-designed Thompson Square should be capable of meeting the needs for an event space. In this regard the installation of lighting, electricity, water, sewer, vehicle access and communications technology etc. should be considered and be inherent in the design. Please also see Council's Sustainable events Policy (on Council's web site: <http://council.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/masterviewui/modules/documentmaster/getdocument.aspx?docsetid=3701656>)
