

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

14 October 2009

Mr Martin Gormley
RTA Project Manager
Roads and Traffic Authority
PO Box 973
PARRAMTTA NSW 2124

Dear Mr Gormley,

**RE: SAFETY BARRIER ON LONG GULLY BRIDGE (Suspension Bridge)
NORTHBRIDGE**

Council considered a Mayoral Minute at its meeting of 12th October 2009 concerning the Roads and Traffic Authority's (RTA) proposal to erect a palisade style fence as a safety barrier on the Long Gully Bridge Northbridge and resolved that:

- a) Council make a submission to the RTA concerning the proposal for anti-suicide fencing on Long Gully (Suspension) Bridge, Northbridge as contained in the Attachment to the Mayoral Minute.
- b) The Mayors of Willoughby and North Sydney issue a joint Press Release on the two Councils' concerns on the matter.
- c) Council advise all parties involved with Council in the consultation to date, (including the Northbridge Progress Association) of Council's action.
- d) Council endorse approaches being made to social welfare associations seeking their advice and support to assist the RTA to minimise the potential for any further incidents on the Suspension Bridge.
- e) Representations be made to the Minister for Health seeking a commitment to expanding community based health services, especially mental health services at the Hercules Street Community Health Centre, having regard to the circumstances of the Suspension Bridge and giving particular attention to suicide prevention strategies.

Attached is Council's submission, highlighting the key issues concerning the proposal.

Primarily, Council considers that the issue involving the bridge is a wider community health problem that must be urgently addressed by community health workers and by State Government action on mental health. Our community has fought for several years to retain and expand community health services particularly community based mental health services at the Hercules Street facilities in Chatswood.

Contact: Greg Woodhams
Phone: 9777 7651

Willoughby City Council

The circumstances of the Suspension Bridge reinforce the need for strong and permanent community based health care services especially for sufferers of mental health problems. Instead of funding the fencing, the funds earmarked for the project should be directed at mental health support and suicide prevention services.

The RTA has determined a fencing option that has not had wide community consultation nor is there community support for the proposal. There are heritage, pedestrian amenity and design issues with the 2 fencing options proposed by the RTA.

The RTA is able to undertake the work without the Councils' approval under the State Infrastructure SEPP. Notwithstanding this, the RTA is required to undertake an Environmental Assessment and obtain prior approval under Part 5 of the EPA Act, including the necessity to give both North Sydney Council and Willoughby Council adequate time to make a submission on a Part 5 Application Proposal.

Council looks forward to your response to this submission and all submissions received on the proposal.

Should you have any enquiries on this matter, please contact Lynette Morris, Heritage Planner on 9777 7502 (Tuesday to Friday).

Yours faithfully,

Greg Woodhams
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIRECTOR

Reference: Greg Woodhams

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