

Community Outraged at Failure to Tackle the Underlying Issue

The Northbridge and Cammeray communities are furious at the RTA for ploughing ahead with plans to degrade a significant heritage listed icon with a cheap metal fence. The quick fix option has been chosen by the RTA as a solution to safety issues surrounding the Northbridge Suspension Bridge.

The Mayors of North Sydney and Willoughby City Councils have issued this joint media release given the concerns that have been raised by the local communities of both council areas.

The fencing solutions chosen by the RTA are higher and more imposing than the RTA initially suggested and plans were not taken to the community for comment.

The Mayors agree that the RTA has completely disregarded the local community and offered no real community consultation. The local communities agree that safety is the paramount concern but also believe a solution can be found that protects the local architectural treasure.

"This is a serious issue involving a wider community health problem where action should be directed by the State Government to community based mental health support and suicide prevention services," said North Sydney Mayor, Genia McCaffery.

"Putting up fences will not stop suicide attempts; it may just move the problem elsewhere. What we should be focusing on is why people of this area are not receiving mental health support before it gets to this point," said Willoughby Mayor, Pat Reilly.

The local communities of Willoughby and North Sydney strongly support the urgent need for action to prevent suicide attempts but are urging the RTA to protect the loved local landmark as well.

The councils have also raised legal issues about the way the fencing will be approved by the RTA.

"The RTA is not above the law and it must follow the proper legal process under the legislation if it intends to proceed with its scheme," said Willoughby Mayor, Pat Reilly.

We are calling on the State Government to commit to expanding community based health services at facilities such as Hercules Street and Greenwich, with particular attention to suicide prevention strategies and mental health support so the circumstances of the Northbridge Suspension Bridge are properly and sensitively addressed.

For more information phone Willoughby City Council on 9777 1000.



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