

Springboard

into
Comprehension



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RA 11.5–12.5



Discussion

My Way or the Highway?



Written by Pam Rushby



My Way
or the
Highway ?

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Written by Pam Rushby

New Highway for Oxley Valley

The main news in Oxley this year is that a suggestion for a scheme has been put forward, a **proposal**, to build a new highway through the town. It was first reported in the town's local newspaper, the *Oxley Valley News*.

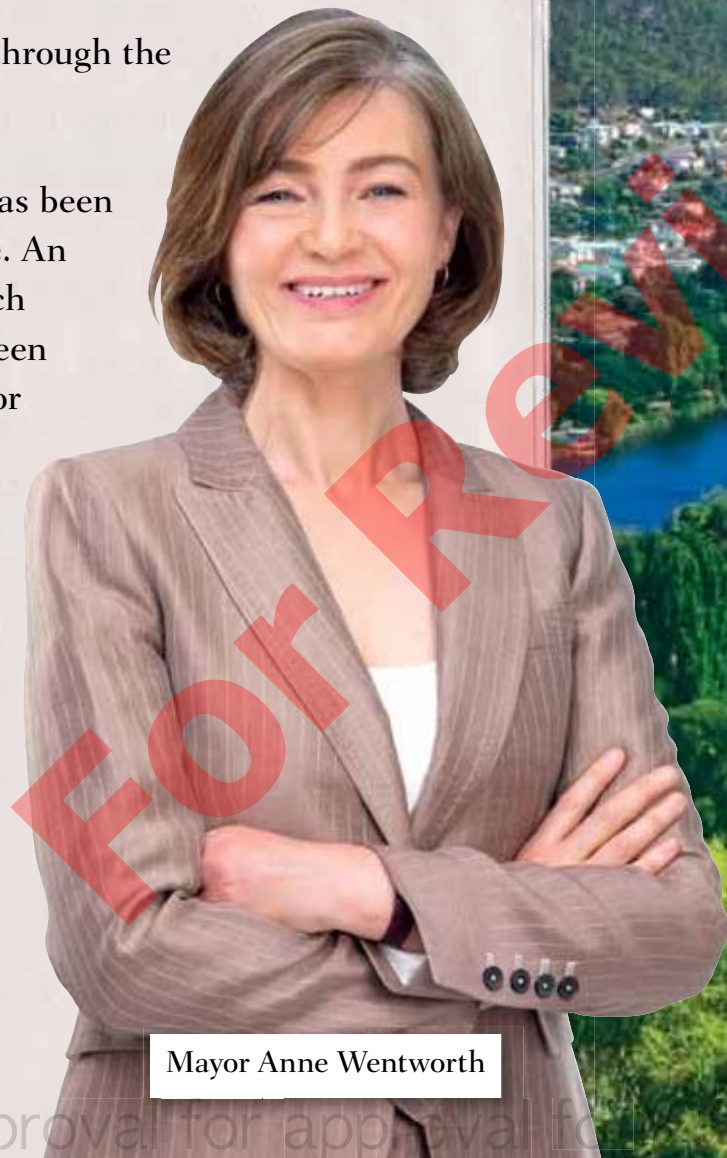
NEW HIGHWAY FOR OXLEY VALLEY

MONDAY, MAY 20

A new highway will be constructed through the Oxley Valley, the mayor of Oxley, Anne Wentworth, announced today.

The multi-million-dollar project has been in the planning stages for some time. An analysis of the need and value of such a project, or **feasibility study**, has been carried out and has been available for viewing by the public. Yesterday, council approved the project.

The new highway will carry traffic from the Oxley Valley across a new bridge over the Oxley River and will link with an existing highway to the city. The new route is expected to cut at least 30 minutes' driving time off the trip to the city and is expected to carry a heavy volume of traffic, especially long-distance trucking.



Mayor Anne Wentworth

"This highway will change all our lives for the better," Mayor Wentworth said. "The many farmers who grow fruit and vegetables in the Oxley Valley will now be able to get their produce to the markets in the city much fresher and faster. As well, tourists will pass through our town and bring **more** business to the shops and motels. A local

firm, Kendall & Co., has been contracted to build the highway, so many jobs will be created and more people will come to live in our town."

Mayor Wentworth said all residents of Oxley Valley would benefit from the new highway. "I just can't wait for construction to start!" she said. "This is going to be such an exciting time for Oxley!"

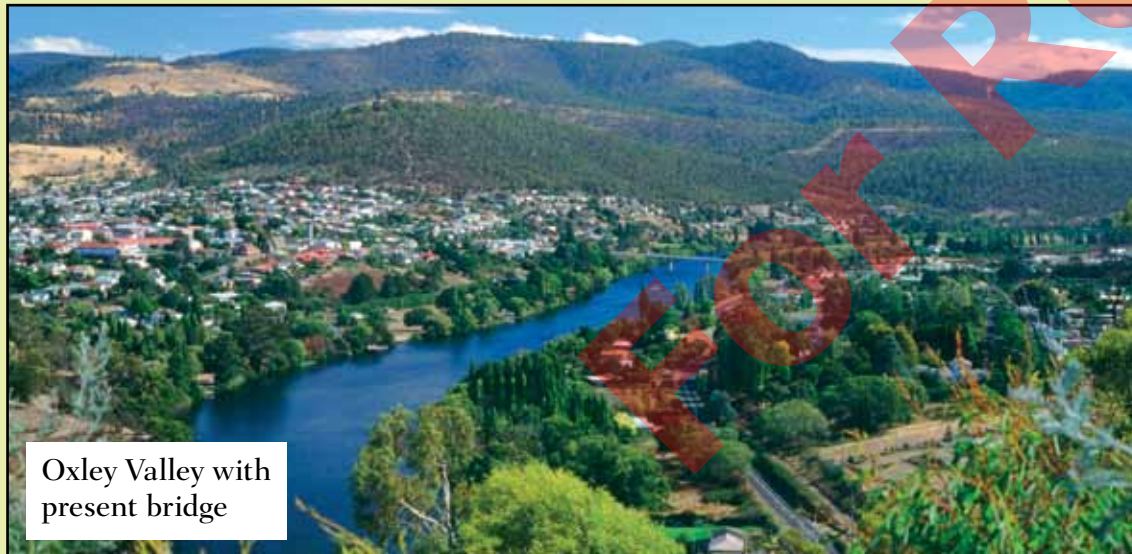
Options for Oxley Valley Highway

Earlier this year, the Oxley Valley Council put out an order, or a **commission**, for a feasibility study on the proposed highway. It analyzed how realistic the project is, given existing means and circumstances, that is, its **viability**. Here is a copy of the document submitted to the council.

**Study conducted by —
Kendall & Co.**

**Commissioned by —
Oxley Valley Council**

Our firm has been commissioned to prepare a feasibility study for a proposed highway through the Oxley Valley. Options include a proposal for a stretch of four-lane highway passing through the Oxley Valley and over the river on a new, wider, and higher bridge. The study is to investigate the viability of constructing this highway and identifying any major issues. The aim is to investigate the options that exist.



Oxley Valley with
present bridge

Several options were identified:

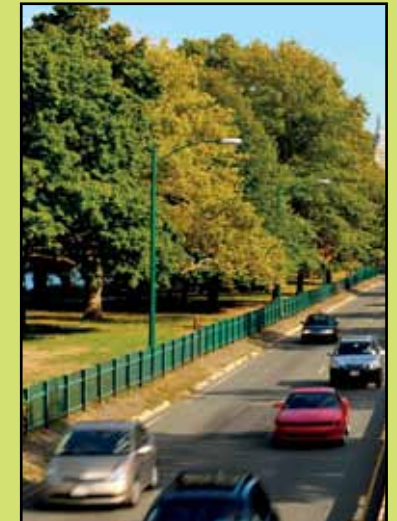
Do nothing; upgrade the existing highway; or construct a new highway.

1. "Do nothing"

If a "do nothing" option is considered, the existing two-lane highway that bypasses the Oxley Valley will remain. Only normal maintenance roadwork will be carried out.

This means that farmers in the area will continue to transport their produce to market in the current way. Tourist traffic will continue to bypass the town of Oxley.

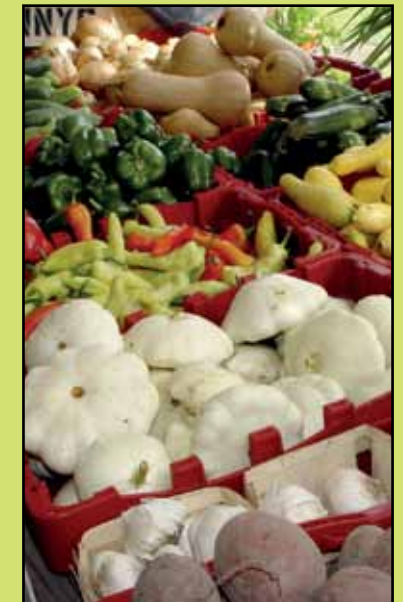
It is expected that traffic volume will increase greatly on this route in the future. Traffic jams, which already exist, are expected to become more frequent. The current accident rate on this stretch of old highway is also expected to rise in the future.



2. Upgrade the existing highway

Under this option, the existing two-lane highway would be widened to four lanes. This means that more traffic can be accommodated, so traffic jams will decrease. As the highway will be upgraded, accident rates may fall.

However, the highway will still bypass the Oxley Valley, so produce transport times to market will still be an issue. As the highway will not pass through the town of Oxley itself, an opportunity to increase the tourist trade will be lost.



3. Construct a new highway

This option involves the construction of a completely new stretch of highway, passing directly through the Oxley Valley and the town of Oxley itself, and including the construction of a new flood-free bridge over the Oxley River.

Under this option, far more traffic can be carried, traffic jams will not exist, and accident rates will fall. As well, produce transport times to market will be cut by up to 30 minutes and tourist traffic will pass directly through the Oxley Valley and the town of Oxley.

Oxley will also gain a new bridge, which will reduce the traffic problems caused when the river floods and the old bridge is submerged.

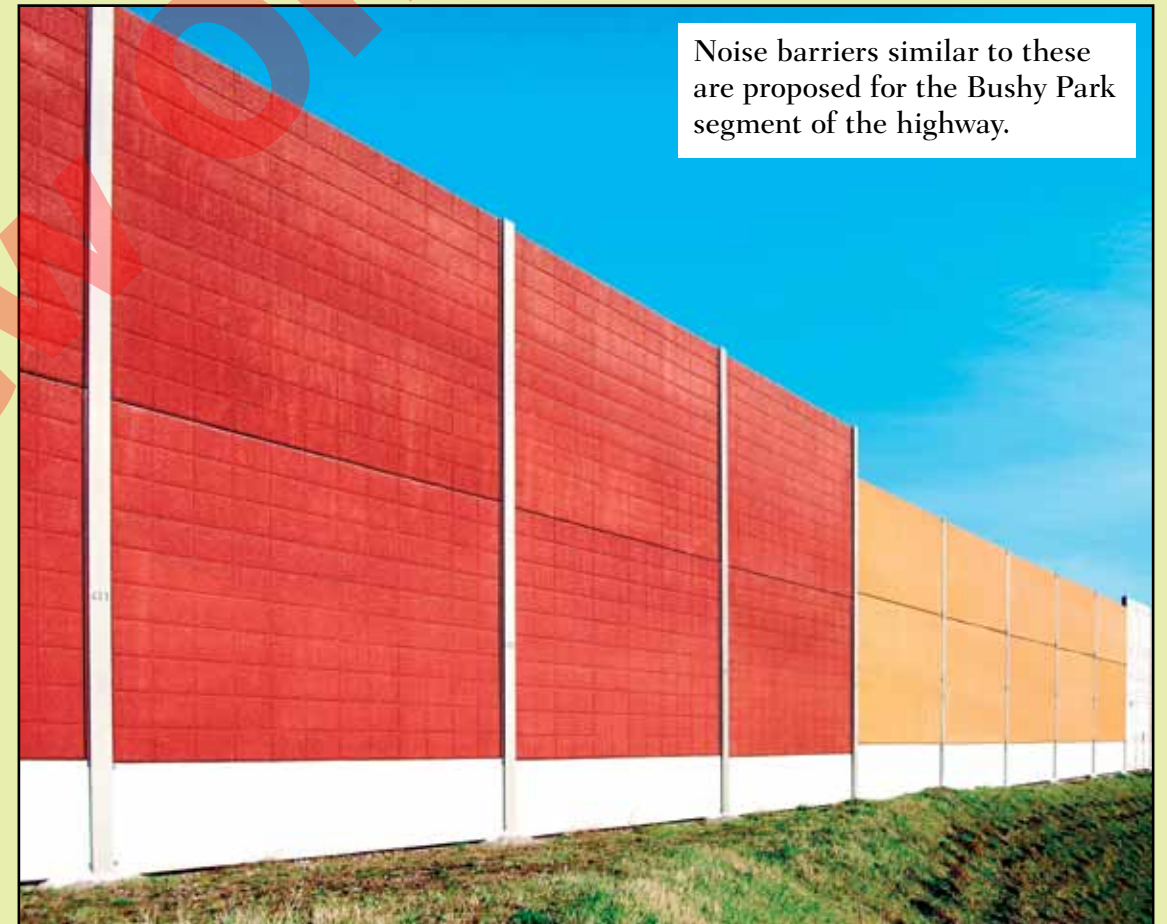
Construction of a bridge in Maxwell Springs similar to the Oxley Valley proposal



Environmental issues:

Noise from the highway that might affect the new satellite suburb of Bushy Park can be managed, if necessary, by erecting structures to protect against noise pollution, known as **noise barriers**. The group of old buildings known as Mulligan's Farm will require either relocation or knocking down, in other words, **demolition**. (Note that relocating buildings and trees, while possible, would be a big budget operation.)

Noise barriers similar to these are proposed for the Bushy Park segment of the highway.



Recommendation:

All three options are feasible. Option 3 is recommended as the most viable for its many benefits – improved traffic flow, lower accident rates, and the advantages of shorter transport times and increased tourism.