



# **Proposed intersection upgrades – Oxley Highway**

Strategic assessment consultation summary

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Background

The Oxley Highway forms part of the hub and spoke transport network that supports the North Coast and New England North West regions of NSW, as recognised in the Future Transport 2056 – Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan (SIP). The regional city of Port Macquarie is the central hub of this network that provides essential services, employment and social interaction.

The Oxley Highway corridor has diverse challenges impacting the safety and efficiency of the corridor, including:

- Managing safety and traffic efficiency as a result of mass growth and land use changes on the eastern end of the corridor around Port Macquarie and between Port Macquarie and Wauchope
- Improving access for heavy vehicles and freight productivity west of Tamworth.

Stage one of the Oxley Highway upgrade delivered safety improvements to the west of Wauchope, including highway realignment at Spencer's Cutting, an upgrade near Rosewood to remove tight curves and eliminate crests and raising the level of Hoss Causeway to improve reliability. Other improvements included upgrades to intersections, pavement, widening road shoulders, providing overtaking lanes, drainage and slope stabilisation at various locations.

The next focus for the Oxley Highway is to consider options and prioritisation for traffic efficiency improvements between Hastings River Drive, Port Macquarie and Billabong Drive, Sancroix.

## 1.2 The proposal

Proposed intersection upgrades were released for community feedback in April 2021. The designs included:

- An eastbound connection to John Oxley Drive to provide alternative access to the Health and Education Precinct in Port Macquarie
- Installation of additional lanes to increase capacity on the north and southbound exit lanes with duplication of westbound lanes on the Oxley Highway between Billabong Drive and the interchange. There is also the provision for future traffic signals on all approaches of the roundabout to address future growth if needed
- Three proposed options were provided to the community for the Wrights Road and Lake Road intersections.

This report provides a summary of the feedback received during the consultation period.

## 2 Community consultation

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### 2.1 Consultation objectives

Transport for NSW consulted with the community and key stakeholders on the proposed concept design to:

- Inform the community and stakeholders of the options and possible impacts
- Seek feedback on the options and issues of concern for consideration in developing the concept design. The feedback will be incorporated into the review of environmental factors (REF)
- Build a database of interested and concerned community members to continue engagement with during the proposal's development.

### 2.2 Consultation methodology

Community consultation on the proposed intersection options was open for feedback from Monday 12 April to Friday 7 May 2021.

The surrounding communities were informed about the release of the proposed intersection upgrades in a number of ways, including:

- Have your say, community update – published on the project's consultation website and 1000 printed copies were distributed to key community locations, including Council offices, libraries, visitor info centres and Service NSW office in Port Macquarie
- Video – a 60 second animation was produced to provide information about the project and invite the community to provide their feedback
- Social media – Facebook posts promoting the release of the intersection upgrade options and request for feedback ran throughout the feedback period
- Media – a media release was distributed and local media published articles about the proposed concept design
- Online survey – an online survey was created for the community and stakeholders to provide comments on each proposed option
- Meetings – face-to-face meetings were held with a number of stakeholders, including property owners directly impacted by the proposed options.

## 3 Consultation summary

### 3.1 Overview

Comments on the proposed concept design officially closed on Friday 7 May 2021. However, some submissions were received after this date and were included in the official totals. A total of 455 submissions were received about a range of issues via a number of methods. Some submissions included multiple comments and issues.

The total amount of feedback received via each method is outlined in the table below:

**Table 1 – Feedback statistics**

Method	Number
Online surveys completed	274
Pins dropped on a map with comments on intersections	22
Submissions received via email	144
Telephone calls received providing feedback	13
Meetings held with affected stakeholders	2

The online survey consisted of five questions, providing respondents with a draft design of each proposed option and an opportunity to provide comment on the three proposed options for the Wrights Road and Lake Road intersections, and the two new connections on the Oxley Highway at John Oxley Drive and Billabong Drive.

The feedback received in formal submissions and via the survey raised a number of issues including concerns about increased congestion in Port Macquarie due to new housing developments in the area, driver behaviour on the Oxley Highway, pedestrian safety (including the need for additional footpaths in the area), lack of bicycle paths in the area and general suggestions about the proposed design for each intersection. Some of these suggestions included installing additional lanes and access roads, overpasses and traffic lights. There were concerns expressed about proposed design and issues with accessing surrounding roads, and safety concerns about the Pacific Highway exit being too short to the Oxley Highway interchange.

Of the three designs proposed for the Wrights Road and Lake Road intersection, option three was favoured by a large majority of survey respondents and submissions received.

This feedback will help inform the next steps of the project.

## Issues raised

### 3.2 Issues raised by classification

This table details the number of times an issue was mentioned in feedback received from the community and stakeholders.

Issue	Count
Oxley Highway interchange	240
Oxley Highway / John Oxley Drive / Phillip Charley Drive connection	237
Option 3 - Wrights Road & Lakes Road intersection	182
Option 2 - Wrights Road & Lake Road intersection	58
Option 1 - Wrights Road & Lake Road intersection	26
Traffic congestion, traffic and transport	15
Traffic management safety, safety	11
Supports project	10
Supports traffic lights	9
Build bypass or link road, planning	7

This table provides responses to some of the most mentioned suggestions or feedback, and issues raised by the community and stakeholders.

Issue category	Feedback/suggestion	Our response
<b>Most mentioned road design feedback/suggestions</b>	Lake Road needs to be four lanes from the Ocean Drive traffic lights to Central Road	All feedback on the proposed design will be considered by the project team, taking into account safety, constructability, network performance, environment and future maintenance costs.
	Installation of a grade separated interchange 500-600 metres west of Wrights Road	
	Installation of overpasses over both existing intersections	
	Construction of a new bypass to Port Macquarie CBD and industrial area	

	Construct a second access road to Health and Education Precinct via industrial area, facilitated by relocation of Hospital helipad	
	Remove Wrights Road and Lake Road roundabouts and replace with traffic lights	
	Construct a new road from the Oxley Hwy and John Oxley Drive directly over to Ocean Drive	
	An alternative road going south from this area needs to be considered, for the communities of Lighthouse Beach and Laurieton	
	Install new roundabout at the intersection of the off ramp, John Oxley Drive and the existing on ramp	
	Move eastbound off ramp to John Oxley Highway further back to Carlie Jane Drive to take pressure off Wrights Road intersection	
	Addition of a dedicated lane from John Oxley Drive at Wrights Road intersection to Oxley Highway interchange	
	Full grade separation intersection for these two intersections, potentially further west along Oxley Highway, linking to either Major Innes Road or The Ruins Way	
	Install three lanes from Wrights Road to Lake Road, with dedicated right lane turn	
	Grade separation of Lanes at Wrights Road intersection	
	Issue raised	Our response
Road safety	Current exit ramp from Pacific Highway to Port Macquarie at the Oxley Highway interchange is too short, is dangerous and gets very congested at peak periods	Transport expects that once the current interchange is upgraded with the installation of additional lanes at the three other ramps, traffic movement at this interchange will also improve.
	People do not stick to the speed limit in this area and exhibit poor driver behaviour (cutting in, speeding and not sticking to roundabout road rules)	Transport works with the Local Government Road Safety Officer at Port Macquarie Hastings Council to promote awareness of behavioural road safety issues in the community.

<b>Increased congestion on Oxley Highway</b>	Poorly managed urban sprawl development, dependence on private car usage	As part of project planning, Transport has developed the designs for the proposed upgrades taking forecast population growth into consideration, as well as referring to Council's development and environmental plans.
	Lack of alternative public transport options, park and ride facilities, cycling and walking infrastructure	Transport remains focused on working with Council to create long term, multi modal solutions that will support growth and connectivity in the region, including planning and supporting public transport facilities and infrastructure in the region.
<b>Oxley Highway/Kings Creek Intersection</b>	Installation of intersection traffic lights, left turning lane to Wauchope and a right turning lane to Port Macquarie	Kings Creek Road investigations are currently underway to improve safe access to the highway.
<b>Pedestrian access</b>	Installation of a pedestrian footpath on eastern side of Oxley Highway from Lake Road intersection to Lake Innes Shopping Centre	Planning for walking /cycling connectivity is continuing and forms an integral part of the overall strategy for the Oxley Highway gateway.
<b>Local roads</b>	Concerns about current conditions and maintenance of roads connected to the Oxley Highway, including Lake Road and Hastings River Drive	Local roads are managed by Port Macquarie Hastings Council. Contact Council on (02) 6581 8111 or <a href="mailto:council@pmhc.nsw.gov.au">council@pmhc.nsw.gov.au</a> to report any issues with local roads.

### 3.3 Recommendations and next steps

We have considered all submissions and will ensure our team is aware of concerns raised by the community. We will ensure issues highlighted by stakeholders and the community that fall outside the scope of this project will be passed to the relevant members of the project team or to Port Macquarie Hastings Council to consider.

We will work closely with local residents and stakeholders in relation to the potential impacts of this project. We will do this by:

- Informing the community and stakeholders of consultation outcomes and the next steps for the proposal via publication of this summary report
- Continuing to carry out communication activities as the project progresses and informing the community through the Transport for NSW website and project notifications.

We will continue to keep the community informed and liaise directly with residents and businesses impacted by the project.



The next step in the process will involve confirming the preferred option for the Wrights Road and Lake Road intersection, and develop a preliminary design and project justification. A review of Environmental Factors (REF) will then be carried out, and displayed in the community for feedback.

We will continue to work closely with Port Macquarie Hastings Council to progress planning for an integrated transport network that will embrace cycling and walking connectivity, public transport services, infrastructure upgrades and land use development planning. This will be important to provide the necessary transport connections that will enable the development of areas such as the Hospital and University precinct, the Airport Business Park and planned residential expansion.

Using the feedback received, we will also work with Council to identify the preferred options for proposed Oxley Highway upgrades, particularly at Wrights Road and the Pacific Highway interchange, and also the relative timing for these upgrades.

### **Contact**

For further information on the project please contact us at:

Phone – 1800 653 092

Email – [region.north@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:region.north@transport.nsw.gov.au)

Post – PO Box 576, Grafton NSW 2460

## Appendix 1 – Project update

Transport for NSW

## Proposed upgrades on the Oxley Highway between Billabong Drive and Hastings River Drive

Have your say - Intersection options - April 2021

**Existing Wrights Road roundabout**

Transport for NSW is delivering vital local road network improvements along the Oxley Highway at Port Macquarie. This community update provides information on proposed activities, focusing on the 3.5 kilometre section from Billabong Drive to Hastings River Drive. With forecast population growth and increased tourist activity, the planned road

network improvements would ease congestion, improve traffic flow and improve safety for all road users. Works completed to date include survey, geo-technical, traffic, design and environmental investigations. Further modelling is also underway to assess the impacts of future growth areas planned within the Health and Education and Airport Activation Precincts.

April 2021

**Oxy Highway / John Oxy Drive / Phillip Charley Drive connection**

Altitude eastbound connection to Health and Education Blvd

Oxy Highway

John Oxy Drive

Phillip Charley Drive

Kingsport Farmstead

Health and Education Blvd

0 50 100 Feet

0°

Eastbound off ramp connection onto John Oxy Drive to provide an alternative access to the Health and Education Blvd

**Oxy Highway Interchange**

Oxy Highway

Pacific Highway

Additional line on the Pacific Highway northbound exit ramp

Additional line on the Pacific Highway southbound exit ramp

Proposed Highway Service Center site

Additional line on the Oxy Highway northbound exit ramp

0 50 100 Feet

0°

Install additional lanes to increase capacity on the north and southbound exit lanes with duplication of northbound lanes on the Oxy Highway between Ralston Drive and the interchange. There is also the potential for future traffic signals on all approaches of the roundabout to address future growth if needed.

yourtransport.nze.gov.nz/oxy-highway

## The proposal

Transport is developing a proposal to improve traffic flow at several busy intersections of the Ocala Highway at Port Macquarie.

The proposal includes the gateway into Port Macquarie from the west and include the interchange with the Pacific Highway along with the intersections of the Ocala Highway with the Pacific Highway, the Wrights Road and Lake Road. Intersections along the Ocala Highway at Carle Junction, Lake, Clifton Drive and Warrumbungle Street are also included.

Kinra Creek Road investigations are also underway to improve traffic flow at this intersection.

The proposal to improve these intersections will improve safety and increase capacity to take traffic flowing smoothly now, and into the future. A number of measures are being considered, including setting targets around various modes of travel with Transport seeking community comments for what is needed to improve the area.

### Improving the local road network

Over 35,000 vehicles use this section of the highway every day, including about 1500 'light' vehicles, such as motorbikes, mopeds and scooters. It is so important. Transport is seeking input from key stakeholders and the community to ensure journeys are as safe and as quick as possible.

Transport remains 'focused on working with Council and the community to ensure the highway will support growth and connectivity in the region, and

are seeking feedback on options for the upgrade. Planning for supporting public transport facilities and funding /cycling connection: a continuing and forms part of the overall strategy for the Ocala Highway upgrade.

Transport acknowledges road growth in the area and the need to increase capacity to take traffic along the Ocala Highway corridor, particularly between Wrights Road and Lake Road intersections.

## Proposed improvements

The Wrights Road and Lake Road roundabouts will be replaced with a new interchange. The City's Health and Education precinct and industrial estates. The existing roundabouts do not have the capacity to take the increasing number of vehicles travelling through this area. Given the importance of this area, Transport is proposing Wrights Road roundabouts these upgrades will be delivered alongside each other.

The other proposed improvements for this section of the Ocala Highway include the construction of an eastbound off-ramp connection onto John's Ocala Drive to provide an alternative access to the Health precinct.

Additional lanes will also be installed to increase capacity on the north and southbound exit lanes, and the southbound on-ramp to the westbound Ocala Highway between Bittabong Drive and the interchange with the Pacific Highway.

Transport will continue to work with Council to address future growth if needed.

**Next steps**

A summary report will be produced and published summarising feedback received from the community and stakeholders. More information will be provided to the community and stakeholders as the project progresses.

**Project development process**

Project planning

Design options

Display of concept options

Review of environmental factors

Display of preferred option

Project approval

Construction

**Have your say**

Community and stakeholders are invited to comment on the overall proposed concept and options for Friday 7 May 2021 via the following online treatments, along with the potential to use sustainable travel modes. We encourage the community to have your say so we can understand your concerns and preferences for each option. Transport values consulting and engaging with the community because we know it leads to better outcomes for stakeholders. The community is invited to provide comments by 5pm on Friday 7 May 2021.

**Contact us**

Feedback about the proposal can be submitted by Friday 7 May 2021 via the following options:

- 0800 695 092 (business hours)
- region.northerntransport.gov.au
- your.northerntransport@region.northerntransport.gov.au
- Online Highway Project Team
- Transport for NSW
- PO Box 1576 Grafton
- NSW 2460

**reliable trips**

**congestion**


























**improving**

**productivity**

### Wrights Road and Lakes Road roundabouts - options being considered

The following options were developed based on the six criteria listed below:

- **Road safety:** Reduce likelihood and severity of crashes.
- **Constructability:** Impacts to normal operations during construction, complexity.
- **Road network performance:** Addressing the traffic demands of the road network.
- **Directional signage:** Signage to help guide road users and pedestrians along the corridor.
- **Environment:** Environmental impacts, adverse impact to wider community.
- **Future maintenance costs:** Funding cost, comparison utility disturbance, new infrastructure.

Criteria	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Road safety			
Constructability			
Road network performance			
Directional signage			
Environment			
Future maintenance costs			
Best to worst	   	 	

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**Figure 1** Map of the proposed highway interchange and access roads. The figure consists of four panels. The top row shows three aerial maps of the interchange area with different proposed access road configurations labeled "Option 1", "Option 2", and "Option 3". Each panel includes labels for "To the West", "To the East", "To the North", and "To the South", as well as "Access Road" and "Main Road". The bottom panel is a larger map showing the "Proposed Highway Interchange" and "Access Roads" in a blue line, with labels for "To the West", "To the East", "To the North", "To the South", "Access Road", "Main Road", and "Interchange". A scale bar and north arrow are also present.

## 5 Appendix 2 – Online survey

### Sample question

All fields marked with an asterisk (\*) are required.

1.



Option 1 - Wrights Rd and Lake Rd Intersection \*

Please add your comment here...

Installing metered signals and have three lanes westbound capacity at the Wrights Road roundabout so that it operates as a signalised intersection during peak times, along with a signalised intersection at Lake Road

0/255