

# THE TIMES

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# REVEALED

An artist's impression of the proposed Mid-West Bridge.

## Confidentiality clauses lifted as VicRoads reveals findings from Bridge studies

THE Yorta Yorta aboriginal group has agreed to the Mid-West Bridge's location; noise will increase by over ten decibels and traffic flow will be reduced by forty per-cent are some of the revelations VicRoads disclosed this week.

Basic details of the finalised reports from an eighteen month investigation into the Mid-West corridor were showcased at a public display meeting on Monday night.

A noise barrier will run over 700 meters long and five meters high along the corridor, if constructed.

VicRoads also claims that fewer trucks will travel in town; however Crofton Street, Vic Park, Warren Street, the Caravan Park and the Cemetery will all be affected economically and physically.

There will also be a management plan implemented if aboriginal remains are found in the

corridor, keeping in line with the Indigenous Heritage Act.

*The Times* revealed last week that Indigenous Heritage consultant, David Rhodes, has given the green light for construction across the sand hills – despite evidence they were used as a burial ground 150 years ago. However a geological membrane would be used to separate the road from the sand hills.

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Many people turned out to view the final reports at the Workers and Services club.



# Floodgates open

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Other Indigenous recommendations made include determining a road alignment that avoids all 29 scar trees and monitoring of all construction in sensitive areas.

“We would work through an agreement with the local Indigenous groups. We would develop a protocol with Yorta Yorta about how to manage cultural issues,” VicRoads Northern Region Manager Mal Kersting told *The Times* when asked what would happen if remains were found.

The public display meeting attracted over 400 people, with an exit poll revealing that 97.5% of all those surveyed were opposed to the alignment.

Visitors were asked to fill

## THE BRIEF

> Economy to suffer in Echuca CBD, Port and Caravan Park as a result of the Bridge.

> Bridge would take 40% of traffic off existing Bridge.

> Flood relief culverts will be 630m long, despite Warren Street flooding concerns.

> Noise will increase over 20 decibels with Bridge, and between one and 13 decibels with noise reduction technology.

> Mostly native flora and fauna will be affected the most.

out positive/negative feedback slips, with questions relating to the Bridge, however Mal Kersting has claimed in local media that there were “a number in support” of the alignment.

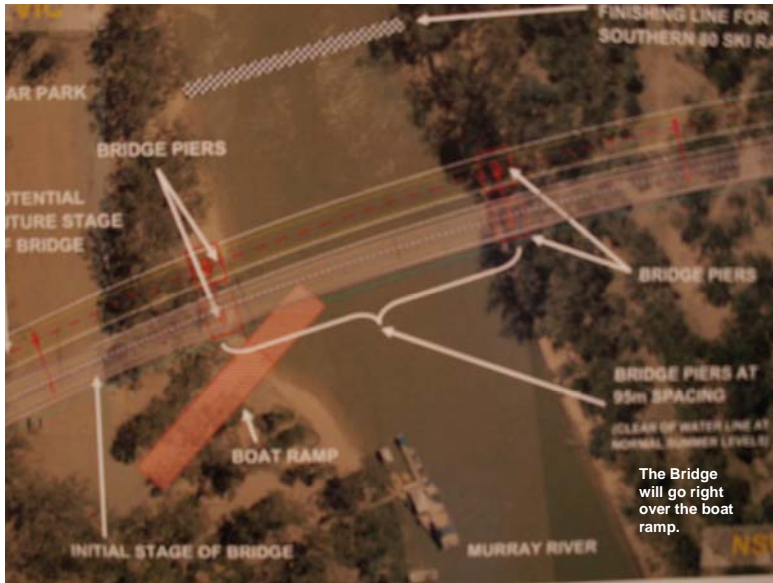
The release of the final reports is also a major political point for both the Campaspe and Murray councils, but also for the

Victorian Government.

The councils must now take a vote on the alignment, a decision which may approve or reject building the Bridge. However the Government still has powers to intervene and take planning control of the project, something the community is dreading.

VicRoads is yet to disclose the project’s cost, as they have not conducted any sort of cost benefit analysis yet. Observers are estimating it may be over \$150 million, although nothing has been confirmed.

Taxpayers will be footing the bill, if it does go ahead, although Councillor Kevin Simpson is not concerned. “Three quarters of taxes are paid by people in Melbourne. **Continued P3**



## ‘Other’ alternatives

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Why should it worry us? Cost is not an issue,” he said.

If this option were to be built, Crofton Street would be partly under an overpass and the bus turning circle at the end of the street would be moved forward, away from the ruins of the High School.

However opponents have come up with an alternative option that promises to avoid maximum damage to houses and heritage.

A group of Save Vic Park members stood out of the front of the meeting giving away copies of their plan to the public. VicRoads would not let them display the maps inside.

Angered Community Consultative Group members came up with the map as a “less destructive alternative” to the Mid-West option, and has

already received positive support from the community. Nationals Member for Rodney, Paul Weller has thrown his support behind the alternative, at the same time objecting the Mid-West Bridge route.

“I have now had the chance to carefully consider the latest planning study details and I believe the concerns held by many in the community over noise, traffic and aesthetic issues have not been adequately resolved,” he said. “For that reason I can not support this proposed alignment.”

The alternative boasts being able to avoid all residential houses by about 250 meters and travels over an old tip site, avoiding most culturally sensitive areas. It also bypasses the High School and tennis courts. **Continued P4>**

### Street

- CROFTON Street will be partially under and overpass and the bus turning circle at the end of the street will have to be moved forward if the Mid-West Bridge goes ahead, finalised studies have revealed. A public display of the reports also saw that noise barriers will travel 700m and will be 5m high, if constructed.

### Local

- NORTHERN Region Manager for VicRoads, Mal Kersting, has publically dismissed an alternative “less destructive” version of the Mid-West corridor, saying that it is “Impractical.” Despite community support, Mr. Kersting says they’ve already looked at it and have a number of concerns with it.

### National

- AUSTRALIA’S financial system has been ranked the second best in the world, by the World Economic Forum, even above the United States. Britain, despite it’s banks being almost bankrupt, scored the top position with the US coming in third. It comes as Treasury wants to wind back Government stimulus.

### World

- UNITED States President Barack Obama has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his “extraordinary” diplomatic efforts, just nine months into his presidency. Mr. Obama said he was humbled by the award, after the committee said he had created a new political climate.

# Council yet to vote on Bridge

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However Mal Kersting has rejected the alternative, saying that VicRoads had already looked at the route “early in the tracks.” “We have a number of concerns with it. First of all there’s a much greater impact on Vic Park. It’s closer to and could impact on cultural heritage issues and it puts another road in the immediate vicinity of Warren Street,” he said. However the Save Vic Park group has dismissed this as “spin.” When asked what he thought of the feedback at

the meeting, Mr. Kersting said that he “acknowledges that not everyone was agreeing to a Bridge in that location.”

“The feedback we got was that the people were appreciative of the information being given and they were able to discuss it directly with VicRoads.” There were no Murray Shire representatives at the meeting, despite them being a major stakeholder in the Bridge, with excuses about being at meetings given. Campaspe Shire mayor Peter Williams was there, Saying that it was well

attended. “People had a lot of interesting questions and got a lot of interesting answers,” he said.

Cr. Williams, who has removed himself from the upcoming Bridge vote because of a conflict-of-interest, says the social study wasn’t “done well enough.”

He also said that the alternative route “is very worthy of investigation.” “It certainly will minimise impact on a number of residences and it helps the two streams of traffic. Provided an agreement on the route, that would be excellent,” he said.



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# SPORT

## Season opening victory for Echuca

FOUR wickets were all it took for Echuca to finish off the Rochester Tigers in the opening match of the Campaspe Cricket Association last weekend.

In a thrilling and high scoring match, Echuca topped off its healthy score to take the lead in the last hour – winning by four wickets.

Rochester was batting first, and after a good session, drinks breaks saw the score settle at 78. Tigers captain Brad Major and Adam Ward took on the pitch, scoring six runs and over for the next ten overs.

It was not until the opening score reached 175 – in the thirty fourth over – that the juggernaut duo were dismissed by Echuca’s Adrian Beer, who got out Ward for a quick 87, with runs including 10 boundaries and two sixes, in a crowd pleasing round.

Major fought on, until he was eventually dismissed in the final over of the innings for 90.

Echuca’s new found talent Jason Carlile, along with captain Simon Maddox opened



Echuca won by four wickets last weekend.

the bowling, being the best bowlers of their side by far.

After making 3/224, Rochester was confident of securing a win, however after Echuca’s quick start at batting – Adam Jones and Grant Harrison being the openers, making 57 runs – the scores started to even out.

Jon Varcoe and Ryan Hon then began an important partnership to make 79-runs, bringing the score to 144. Echuca then needed 75 runs in 10 overs to win, but thanks to work from Varcoe and Maddox, Beer steered Echuca home to victory.

# EDITORIAL

## Sports camp a hard but enlightening time



The North West Athletics group at Runaway Bay.

THOSE who travel north to the Gold Coast are usually treated to the normal indulgences of a holiday: late nights, excessive eating and sunbaking on the shores of the Pacific.

However last week was an enlightening time, even if it meant doing nothing of these things.

I, along with 22 of my fellow athletes (runners and swimmers) travelled to Runaway Bay as part of the North West Athletics delegation.

We were there to live like elite athletes. Eating correctly, training smartly and, of course, recovering appropriately.

It was a very different experience, like something I

have never done before. Being cut off from the outside world, with no mobiles and regulated television; it was definitely out of a lot of the athletes comfort zones.

But we didn't care. We had all became friends and we were all too busy training to worry.

At the beginning of each day the runners and swimmers would part their separate ways, obviously to go to the pool and the track. Under the guidance of coaches Russell Parsons, Brendan Dixon, John Beckworth and Michelle Lonergan, we knew we were in good hands.

Once there, we would begin to train. Running eight

150's or sixteen 100's were some of the harder sessions. For the swimmers, trying to paddle 10 laps within ten seconds of their personal best, then descending by a second each lap was also a difficult task, however one mustered by most.

The runners went to a competition whilst there, with the younger runners competing against huge older athletes. We all did well, some being courageous enough to run in races they've never done before. I personally qualified nationally for the 400m and many others got personal bests.

If nothing else, we had a great time – making friends and getting fit – but also living, and feeling, like an Olympian.

**ODD BOX** A Swedish family has asked for damages after a pastor performed a funeral service apparently drunk. He also raised eyebrows when he kissed the hand of the deceased's daughter and gave an exaggerated hug to the 20-year-old granddaughter.

### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

I drank some boiling water because I wanted to whistle.  
**Mitch Hedberg**

### JOKE BY JAKE

Why was the Cyclops fired from his job as a teacher?  
Because he only had one pupil.

## HOROSCOPE



I WONDER what life will be like in 100 year's? We'll probably all be really fat, living in crowded cities and constantly connected to MySpace on futuristic phones. That, or we'll all be dead. But it's hard to imagine what the future holds. Probably something really grim I guess, but we try not to think about that. Some things might not have changed though. Kerry Anne Kennelly will still be on TV and *The Simpsons* repeats will probably still be showing – so it's not all doom and gloom. Perhaps we'll discover a cure for cancer or half of us will live on Mars? Oh, and of course there'll be heaps of robots that we can treat as our personal slaves. I have a feeling that none of these things will happen, but at least it fills up this space which is meant to be about Horoscopes...

## “Was the *Hey Hey* skit as racist as people believe?”



**Cadbury family**

“Oh, gee, I hope not. People might think we're racist soon!”



**Daryl Somers**

“Who would've thought people with black faces could turn out with Red Faces?”



**Blackened performer**

“Does anyone actually care about how well we danced? I don't think so...”

## Critic's choice

### Hey Hey it's Saturday Channel 9, 7.30 Wednesday

I FIND it funny that *Hey Hey its Saturday* is broadcast on a Wednesday, but perhaps it's just me that's noticed. Anyway, the show is brilliant. It's really dorky and I hate Daryl Somers, but apart from that it's great. Oh, and I wish people would stop moaning about the "racist" skit. They were impersonating the Jackson 5 for gods sake! The Jackson 5 can't be black, so naturally the impersonators should be as well! It's political correctness gone mad, or should I say, clinically insane.

### Flash Foward Channel 7, 8.30 Monday

OH God. I can already see where this show is going. It will be like *Lost*, constantly getting weirder and weirder until finally it's axed after 42383 seasons. The first episode was ever weird! It's about everyone on Earth blacking out for a few minutes and seeing the future. Chaos reigns for a while, but then the search turns to why it actually happened.



## “Hungry Beast”

IF a combination of greenies, hippies and uni graduates could combine to have one voice, *The Hungry Beast* would be it.

The show, which has just started on ABC, is wacky and original, and really very clever. It looks as if a group of uni friends have gotten together, with a healthy budget, and made a TV show about what ever they want.

From talking about interest rates rises to how and if skinny jeans decrease your fertility; It's almost like a junior version of *The Chaser*, but a bit more serious. Besides, after just two episodes we can't say too much yet.

Already, people have said that the show is boring and uninteresting. But I don't think so. It's not hilarious, it's probably not meant to be. But it's still subtly funny.

The first episode saw an argument about saving pandas or not. Their reasoning: pandas mate for 9 hours of the year, and they wonder why they're going extinct?

It's also very educative – which can be a bad thing, but not on this show.

Who knew that the US Military has a crowd control device that heats up crowds of people using microwave technology? There's a heap of random stuff just inserted into the show, you have to watch it to know what I mean.

However the thing that put *Hungry Beast* on the map was their ability to dupe Australia's media. They constructed a fake study on which city is the most naïve, citing the bogus Levitt Institute as the researchers. Then they sent it out to AAP and hundreds of news sites ran the story, without checking the report (which actually said it was completely made up, but no one read that.)

It was a genius idea to expose the churnalism style media that exists today, although the reporters across Australia weren't too happy. The show is smart and innovative, with much of it's content online, and has lots of potential to go further from where it is.