

SOUTHERN
MIDLANDS
COUNCIL



COMMERCIAL SIGNS on the MIDLAND HIGHWAY

Possible New Approach from the State Government:

Pilot Project Proposal

21 July 2014



The commercial advertising signs on the Midland Highway at Oatlands (and most other locations) is 'unauthorised'.

The signs are in contravention of State Government laws and Council's planning scheme rules.

Under the State's Road Signage Policy, businesses in bypassed towns cannot have advertising signs on the highway.



The only exceptions are:

- Directional signage for businesses recognised by the government as being of 'state significance':
 - Name plate: yellow-on-blue, or white-on-brown.
 - Minimum opening days / hours.
- Service stations:
 - Petrol company logo.
 - Daily fuel price.
 - Minimum opening days / hours.



Either the State Government or Council could bring legal action to have the signs removed.

Clearly, to date neither the State nor the Council has gone through with such action:

- In 1998 the (then) new State Government commenced a state-wide program to have all illegal signs removed from State highways.
- The program ceased after several months following the political pressure from local businesses.
- For the same sorts of reasons, Southern Midlands Council has not determined to use its powers to have the signs removed.



Therefore in Southern Midlands, (and some other Council areas in Tasmania), there has been no enforcement of signage laws on the highway.

Southern Midlands is arguably the council area in Tasmania with the most numerous unauthorised highway signs.

The new State Government is now received political pressure from businesses elsewhere in the State to address the situation at Oatlands.

Department sends a different message to the Coast while . . .

Oatlands signs in

Advocate 21-5-14

By JASON THOMAS

FOR YEARS road signs have advertised fuel, chicken and accommodation at Oatlands, 80 kilometres from Hobart.

Some signs, metres from the Midland Highway, have rust marks.

Some are crude boards screwed to wooden stakes, with their protective finishes peeling off.

Many have marks of prolonged exposure to Tasmania's elements.

There are at least 10 signs off the highway at Oatlands.

On the North-West Coast businesses have grappled with regulations that prevent them having road signs.

Some are tourist operators, like the Cherry Shed at Latrobe or the Turners Beach Berry Patch, which would benefit if spontaneous travellers

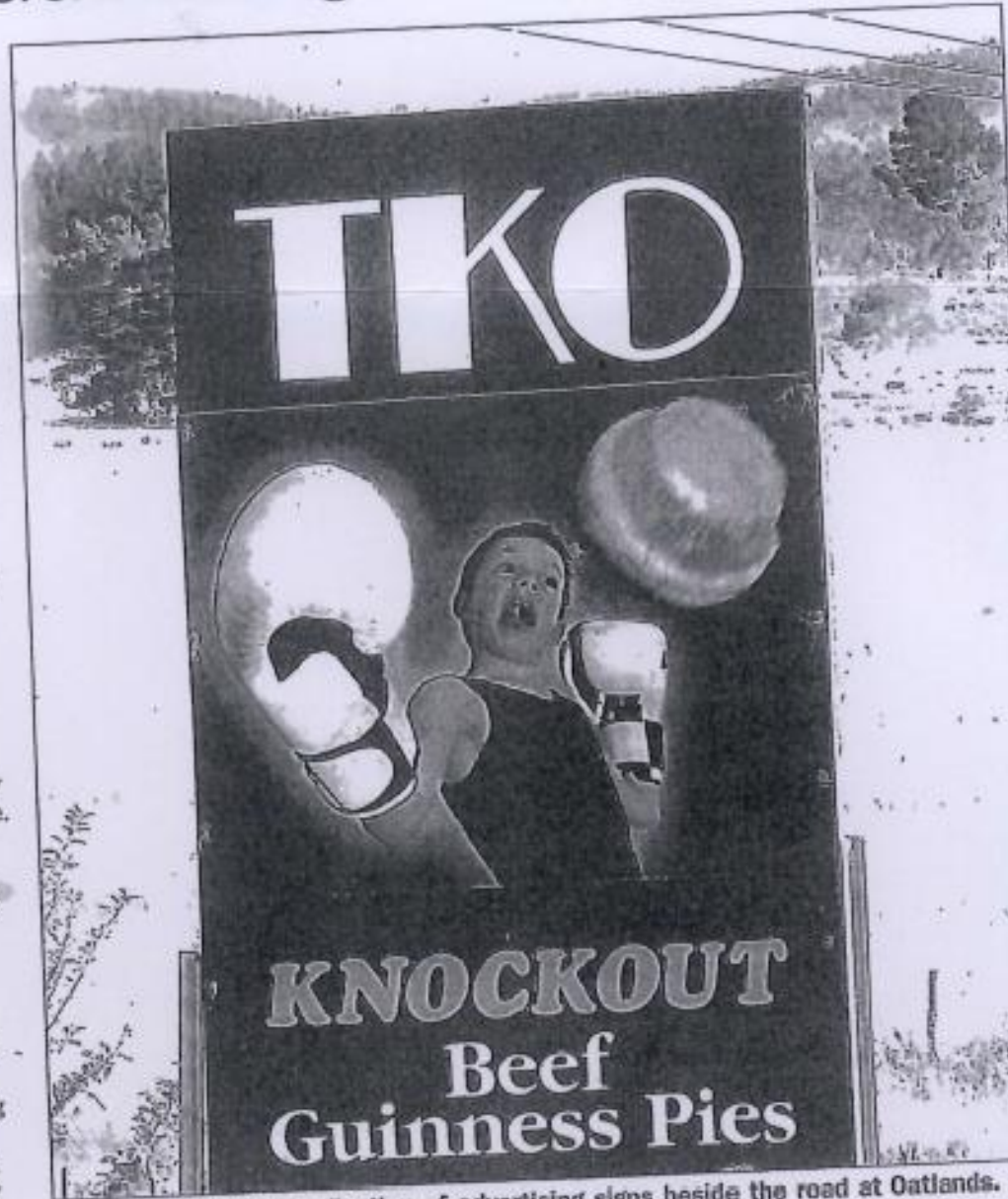
knew where they were.

Just an hour from Oatlands, Hobart-based representatives from the Department of Infrastructure and Resources have repeatedly said their policies for removing road signs ensured road-user safety.

However, on Friday the department could not comment on the signs at Oatlands, other than to say it would look into the issue.

"DIER's maintenance team will undertake an inspection of the Oatlands area and remove any unauthorised signs," a spokesman said.

The department said decisions to remove signs depended on dangerous locations, cause confusing messages or obscuring important warning signs, cluttering the roadside or getting in the way of maintenance operations.



STANDING COUNT: A collection of advertising signs beside the road at Oatlands.





Since the early 2000s, Southern Midlands Council has lobbied the State Government for a legitimate alternative.

- An option that would allow businesses in bypassed towns to have some form of legitimate highway signage presence.
- An option that would enable the current hotch-potch of signs, of various types and standards, to be tidied up.



Reasons to tackle the unauthorised signs issue:

- Inconsistent standard in visual appearance can create a negative image of the town.
- Spoils the visual amenity of the highway.
- Should we have a system that advantages those who break the rules and disadvantages those who do the right thing?
- If it is OK for one business to have six signs, then it must be OK for all businesses.
 - Would 60, 80 or 100 signs be OK on the highway?
- Political pressure on the State Government from other parts of the Tasmania (where rules are enforced) will possibly lead to action being taken anyway.



A possible solution!



In May 2014, Council received a proposal from the new State Government to be involved in a pilot project:

- A possible new approach to roadside advertising signage for bypassed towns.
- Seeking to balance the Government's objectives of economic development with the need to maintain road safety and amenity.
- Latrobe is already pursuing a pilot project. It has developed a proposal to put to the State Government.
- Suggest Southern Midlands Council also develop a similar proposal to put to the State Government.
- By trialling solutions at Latrobe and Oatlands, a new approach might be developed to roll out to other bypassed towns.



In June 2014, Council resolved the following:

THAT Council:

- (i) develop a proposal to be provided to the Department of Infrastructure Energy & Resources for consideration, centred on the concept of replacing the unauthorised signage with communal town signs incorporating spaces for community event notifications and for advertising the commercial businesses within the town either by generic description or by individual business name; and**
- (ii) consult with the local business community and community groups in developing a proposal;**

noting that the proposal is to include draft sign design and protocols for managing the community event and any business name elements of the signs, as well as a program with DIER for removal of the unauthorised signs.

The Latrobe Solution: Two communal town signs (four in all)

- First Sign: The 'Welcome To' sign

4400

2200



WELCOME TO LATROBE

- Australian Axemans Hall of Fame
- Bells Parade and Sherwood Hall
- Teddy Sheean Memorial and Walk
- Darrel Baldock Monument

130

200

150

240

350

160

120

160

120

160

120

160

130

LETTER TYPE:

200mm Trajan Pro

240mm Trajan Pro

160mm E modified

Class 2 White legend on

Class 2 Background

EYE SPY®

Job No. 44353
DER 18/3/2014

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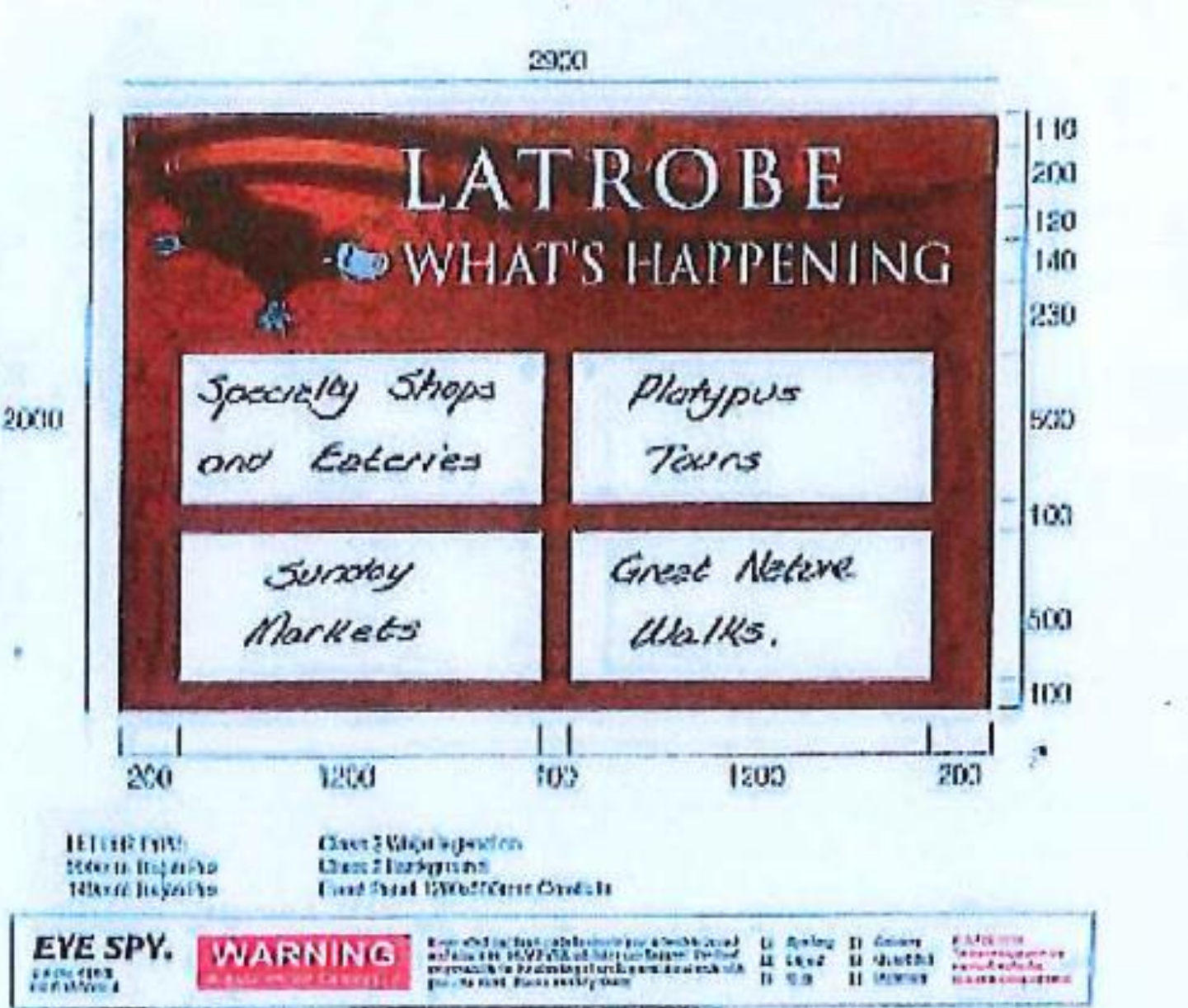
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The Latrobe Solution: Two communal town signs (four in all)

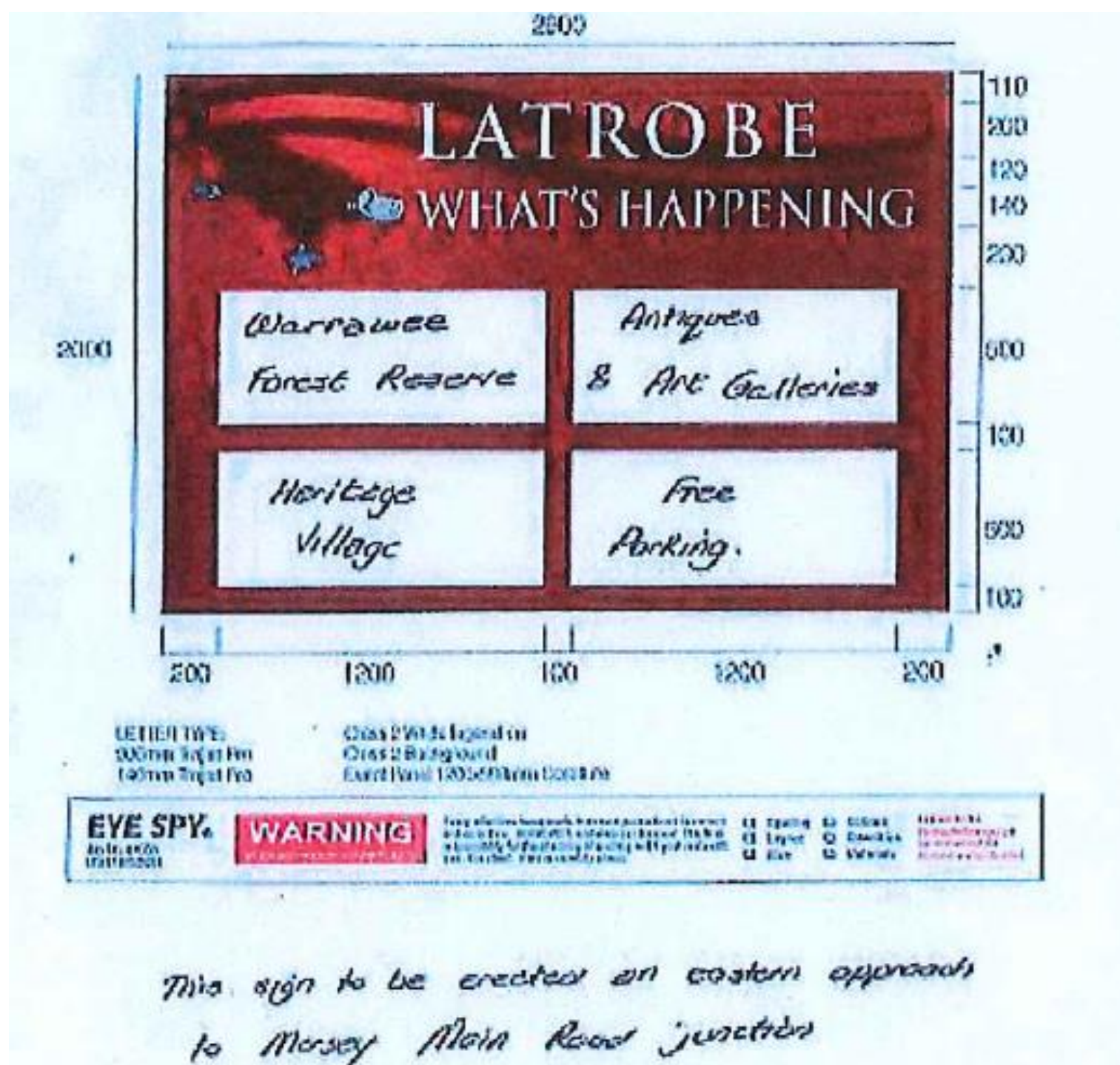
- Second Sign: The 'What's Happening' sign:



*This sign to be erected on western approach
to Monarty Roundabout.*

The Latrobe Solution: Two communal town signs (four in all)

- Second Sign: The 'What's Happening' sign:





Key aspects of the Latrobe solution:

- From each direction, two communal town signs:
 - A 'welcome to' sign.
 - 4.4 m x 2.2 m (approx.)
 - A 'what's happening' sign.
 - 3.0 m x 2.0 m (approx.)
- Town branding – key point of difference – (platypus viewing).



Key aspects of the Latrobe solution:

- Town branding – key point of difference – (platypus viewing).
- The '**Welcome to**' sign:
 - Permanent signage spaces for key attractions.
 - Non-private enterprise attractions.



Key aspects of the Latrobe solution:

- The **'What's Happening'** sign:
 - Four slots for events.
 - Changeable.
 - Not-for-profit events – no charge.
 - For-profit events – must pay a fee.
 - For-profit events out of municipality – higher fee, and subject to no events in the municipality
- **Note: No private business names.**



Possible Oatlands 'Pilot Project' Proposal

- A '**Welcome to**' sign, with key 'point of difference' attractions. e.g.:
 - Australia's Best Georgian Village
 - Callington Mill
 - Heritage Highway Visitor Information Centre
 - Lake Dulverton
- Similar to the Latrobe solution.



Possible Oatlands 'Pilot Project' Proposal:

- A **'What's Happening'** sign, with four interchangeable slots:
 - The next festival ...etc
 - The next market ...etc
 - Under the slots (when no events) permanent words. e.g.:
 - Antiques and Art Galleries
 - Cafes and Eateries
 - Accommodation
 - Free Parking
- Similar to the Latrobe Solution



Possible Oatlands 'Pilot Project' Proposal

- A '**Businesses**' sign, with interchangeable slots:
 - May or may not be agreed by the State Government.
 - If agreed, the number of slots would be limited.
 - Council would have responsibility for managing the slots.

- **Additional to the Latrobe solution.**



Possible Oatlands 'Pilot Project' Proposal

- A '**Businesses**' sign:
 - Issues with managing the business slots:
 - How do we determine which businesses get a slot?:
 - An annual auction – slots to the highest bidders?
 - A lottery – of businesses expressing an interest?
 - Fees would need to apply. At least to cover the cost of producing the sign panels, and Council costs.
 - Minimum opening hours requirements: If the business name is on the highway, the business ought to be open a reasonable amount of time.



Possible Oatlands 'Pilot Project' Proposal

- Questions and feedback.



Possible Oatlands Highway Signs 'Pilot Project' Proposal

- Do we put a proposal to the State Government?
- Do we include the concept of private business names?
- If so, how do we manage private business names?



Next Steps

- If general endorsement from this meeting, Council will draft a proposal:
 - Draft sign designs.
 - Draft management protocols.
- Council will seek comment from businesses and community groups, before finalising a proposal to put to the Government.
- We need to determine how Council will consult.

Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 1st Sign:



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 2nd Sign:



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 3rd Sign:



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 4th Sign:



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 5th Sign:



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 6th Sign (group):



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 7th Sign:



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 8th Sign:



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 9th Sign:



Existing Tourism / Directional Signage at Oatlands

- Driving from South to North: 10th Sign:

