

The Jordan River Levee Site

Key Points

- The Brighton Bypass is being constructed to save lives, support a growing community and improve the efficiency of the movement of people and the freight that we all rely on in these modern times.
- The need for a future Brighton Bypass was identified around 40 years ago and extensive planning has occurred in the last 20 years.
- The alignment that was determined in the 1980s and 1990s was based on archaeological surveys at the time. No sites had been identified on the Jordan River at that time.
- DIER had full confidence that the chosen route avoided any heritage sites. The route selection was a major strategic decision for Government that was made with the best possible information at the time.
- As late as mid 2008 a survey of the alignment was undertaken by an Aboriginal Heritage Officer and still did not identify the potential for the Jordan River levee to be either a site or an important place
- On this basis, detailed design and land acquisitions continued.
- Importantly, the Jordan River levee was not a place that the Aboriginal community was known to either recognise as important or visit for cultural purposes at this time.
- It was not until later in 2008 that the levee site was identified as having potential for containing significant Aboriginal cultural values.
- Once the site was discovered in late 2008, DIER supported and funded an extensive archaeological investigation. Many of the methods utilised in the investigation were a first for Tasmania. The cost of the investigation was around \$1.3 million with \$3 million spent across the Brighton projects on Aboriginal heritage investigations.
- Throughout this process, DIER continued to meet with Aboriginal community organisations to discuss outcomes of the investigation and construction options to reduce the impact on the site.

- As the values in the levee became apparent, DIER responded by significantly modifying the design of the Jordan River crossing, which now includes a long span bridge that does not impact the Jordan River levee.
- Archaeologists worked to define the extent of the levee deposit so that the bridge could be designed to avoid it. This has been achieved with the current design. On this basis, the bridge design is consistent with the archaeologist's recommendations to avoid the levee.
- Around 75% of the important levee deposit is located on Private land, 25% on DIER land.
- DIER fully supports implementing mitigation measures as recommended by the archaeologist that will protect the site during construction and for the long term.
- The cost to build the bridge, adjust construction methods to avoid the levee which will allow the site to be protected and the associated delays is now over \$15 million.
- The Jordan River crossing does not have any physical impact on the important levee deposit containing the heritage values.
- NO artefacts contained within the important levee deposit will be destroyed as a result of the construction of the proposed bridge.
- The alternative alignment proposed by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre would result in an unsafe highway and impact on another levee that has not been investigated as yet. It would also require either extensive demolition of homes or relocation of rail infrastructure into the heritage site that contains the levee. At least DIER knows that:
 - it can avoid the levee in the current road alignment;
 - no important scientific values are located outside of the levee deposit; and
 - no burials are located at the site.
- This cannot be said for any other alignments proposed by the Aboriginal community.
- DIER is committed to constructing the Brighton Bypass. DIER will NOT destroy any part of the important levee deposit.
- DIER has always been very clear that there is no other practical and feasible alternative route. The Aboriginal community has misinterpreted DIER's clear statements and claims DIER offered viable alternatives.
- In all likelihood, if the Brighton Bypass had not followed this alignment, the site would not have been discovered and the area may have been subjected to incremental development resulting in the permanent loss of very important heritage values.

CONTACT

Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources
 GPO Box 1002, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001
www.dier.tas.gov.au



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