



Scoping Study

New Bridgewater Bridge Recreation Impact Assessment

Prepared for Burbury Consulting Pty Ltd



**inspiring
place**

August 2021

SCOPING STUDY NEW BRIDGEWATER BRIDGE RECREATION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Prepared for Burbury Consulting Pty Ltd

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Inspiring Place Project No. 21-12



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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

In a bid to respond to contemporary loading and design standards suitable to a National Highway, the Tasmanian government has pursued the construction of a new Bridgewater Bridge. The New Bridgewater Bridge was identified as a key project in the Tasmanian Infrastructure Strategy and the Southern Tasmania National Transport Network Investment Program and has received a commitment of \$576M in funding as part of the Hobart City Deal.

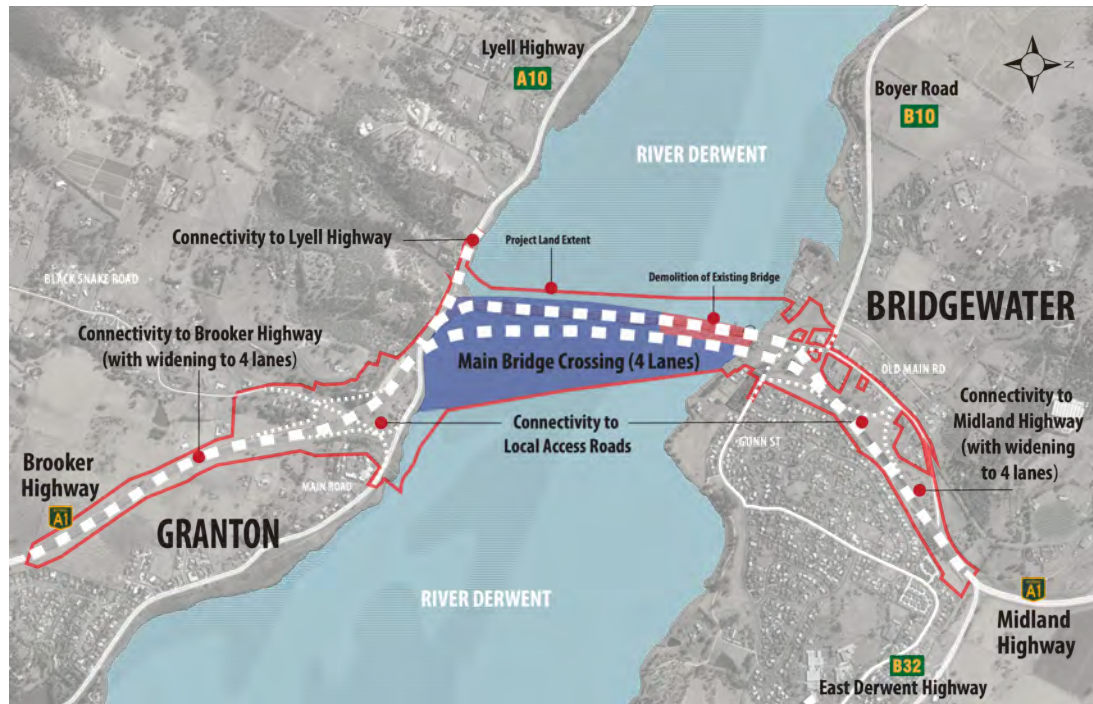
Planning for the project is in its early stages.

Map 1.1 shows the location of the New Bridgewater Bridge and its surrounds, including the potential connections to existing roads.

The New Bridgewater Bridge has been declared as a major project under Section 60 of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*. This process requires a Major Project Impact Statement to be prepared for planning approval.

The Recreational Impact Assessment is to be included within the Major Project Impact Statement. The report identifies the potential for the New Bridgewater Bridge to impact on recreational access and use. The report also identifies the potential for the proposed New Bridgewater Bridge to create opportunities that may benefit future recreational opportunities.

The Department of State Growth (DSG) consulted with a range of stakeholders, over recent years, about the future planning and concept designs for the New Bridgewater Bridge.

New Bridgewater Bridge - General Map of new bridge and road infrastructure proposal (Section 60F(1)e and (2) of LUPAA)

Map 1.1 The location of the New Bridgewater Bridge and its surrounds¹.

¹ Burbury Construction. Memorandum dated 28.09.2020 to Bridgewater Bridge Consultant Team re Design Basis for Assessment.

The stakeholders have included agencies and groups with an interest in recreational access and use – Brighton Council, Glenorchy City Council, Derwent Valley Council, Marine and Safety Tasmania, Bicycle Network Tasmania, Birdlife Tasmania, Derwent Estuary Program and various Yacht Clubs.. A set of high-level design requirements were confirmed with stakeholders and included within the scope for the major project. These requirements include:

- a minimum design speed limit of 80 km/h for vehicles and two lanes for traffic in each direction;
- a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists from the northern and southern shores;
- a minimum water clearance of 16.2 metres AHD to enable passage of vessels consistent with the existing Bowen Bridge located downriver; and
- safety screens and barriers.

The communication with stakeholders also indicated that due to the substantial maintenance and upgrade requirements of the existing Bridgewater Bridge, the planning approvals being sought include its decommissioning and demolition. The New Bridgewater Bridge Project does not include new rail infrastructure.

1.2 METHOD

The following tasks were undertaken in the preparation of the report:

- liaison with Burbury Consulting, the project managers, to agree the scope of investigations and the background to the project;
- review of project scoping and background documents prepared for the New Bridgewater Bridge;
- review of online information and reports regarding recreational use of the River Derwent and surrounds of the New Bridgewater Bridge;
- field investigations to assess existing access and recreational facilities;
- consultation with a range of stakeholders and recreational interest groups; and

preparation of the report.

Consultation was undertaken with:

recreational interest groups including Bicycle Network Tasmania, Cycling South, Bridgewater Anglers Association Inc, Derwent Canoe Club, BirdLife Tasmania, Royal Yacht Club Tasmania, Derwent Sailing Squadron, Bellerive Yacht Club, Cruising Yacht Club Tasmania, Lindisfarne Motor Yacht Club; and

key agencies including Brighton Council, Derwent Estuary Program, Derwent Valley Council , Glenorchy City Council, Marine and Safety Tasmania, Inland Fisheries Service and Community Sport and Recreation.

The Tasmanian Canoe Club indicated most of their recreational activities occurred elsewhere.

SECTION 2

EXISTING RECREATIONAL USE

The Derwent Estuary Program has conducted community surveys² in 2007, 2013 and 2019 which are indicative of the level of recreational engagement with the Derwent Estuary. The key findings from the surveys are:

walking is the highest participation activity (71.0% of all respondents), followed by swimming (31.7%), boating/sailing/rowing (23.3%), fishing (22.5%) and 'other recreation' which includes bike riding, kayaking, dog walking and photography (14.1%);

walking has been the most prevalent recreational activity across all the surveys;

walking was the highest activity from respondents in all Councils, across all age groups and across all household types;

Bridgewater was not specifically mentioned by respondents as the location for where they had undertaken swimming but was mentioned by Brighton residents for fishing and walking;

some 80% of all respondents indicated that the Estuary was important to them and their family;

71% of Brighton residents indicated that the Estuary was important to them and their family with the highest ranking given by Hobart residents (92.4%) and Derwent Valley residents (90.9%); and

recreational use and enjoyment were highly ranked by respondents when indicating why the Estuary was important to them and their family.

Tables 2.1 and Table 2.2 provides a summary of the identified recreational access and use within the general location of Bridgewater Bridge based on research and consultations.

² Myriad Research Report 2019 Derwent Estuary Program – the survey (online and telephone interviews) was conducted with 404 residents living within the Greater Hobart Urban Area.

The following River Derwent based recreational activities are assessed in Table 2.1:

boating and sailing;

fishing;

swimming;

canoeing/kayaking;

rowing; and

jet skiing;

The following land based recreational activities are assessed in Table 2.2:

recreational walking;

bike riding;

play and picnic; and

bird observing and nature studies.

Most of the existing recreational activities are focussed on the River Derwent, and the northern shore at Bridgewater where there are some existing facilities (e.g., boat ramp, foreshore trails, play facilities). Recreational use of the southern shore is generally constrained by the location of the Brooker Highway, Lyell Highway and rail infrastructure close to the foreshore. Granton Park has a range of recreational infrastructure and facilities but is separated from the foreshore by the Lyell Highway.

Photographs 1- 5 show some of the sites mentioned in Table 2.1 and 2.2.

Recreational activity	Existing access and facilities	Brief description of existing recreational use	Future expectations of recreational use
Boating and sailing	Access by vessels on the River Derwent are limited to those that can be accommodated by the minimum air draft clearance of the Bowen Bridge.	Discussions with the yachting and cruising boat clubs indicated past trips by members to New Norfolk on the River Derwent. However, the operational issues and limitations of the lifting span (e.g., wind conditions) for the existing Bridgewater Bridge have constrained this use in recent years. Navigation requirements are that no vessel shall exceed a speed of 5 knots when within 60 metres of a wharf, jetty, mooring, the shoreline or another boat. No vessel shall exceed a speed of 5 knots when within 120 metres of a person swimming, a person diving (displaying the A flag) or a person wading in the water.	There remains continued interest by Club members to take boats and yachts upstream to New Norfolk, especially to attend events in the future. (e.g., Autumn Festival) or for weekend trips.
Fishing	Existing jetty and boat ramp on northern shore at Bridgewater is administered by the Brighton Council and used for small boats. Other nearest boat ramps are located at Millbrook Rise (New Norfolk), Old Beach or Austins Ferry.	<p>Anglers fishing for all species upstream of the Bridgewater Bridge or to take trout or Atlantic salmon downstream of the bridge must hold a current Inland Angling Licence unless being under the age of 14 years. Fishing downstream of the New Norfolk bridge is open all year round.</p> <p>The Bridgewater Anglers Association Inc. started in the 1890's but the Club was not established until 1913. The Club currently has about 75 members of which 15 are juniors.</p> <p>Range of fishing can occur including trolling with lures, bait, casting and fly fishing from boats or the foreshore. Some foreshore areas are difficult to access due to foreshore vegetation and private land tenure. Fishing generally occurs along the northern shore where the deeper river channel exists.</p>	<p>The River Derwent upstream and downstream of the Bridgewater Bridge is renowned as a spring fishery with the productive months between August – November when resident and sea-run trout chase migratory whitebait (source <i>Derwent River Anglers Access Region South brochure, Inland Fisheries Service</i>). The Derwent River Challenge event is usually organised during August at the start of the season.</p> <p>It is expected that fishing interest in the River Derwent will continue to grow in the future.</p>

Some fishers use recreational craft that can be paddled. Some local fishers are known to use the old bridge abutments on the northern foreshore for fishing or have also fished along a smaller channel adjacent to the causeway. There are nominated angler access locations at Mason Point jetty (located ~1km north of the Bridgewater Bridge) and Woods Point (located ~500m south of the Bridgewater Bridge). There is no safe access for recreational users under the existing Bridgewater Bridge on the northern shore.

Fishing is permitted within the Derwent River Conservation Area which contains important habitat including feeding, breeding and rest areas for whitebait and sharks. The use of boats in the Bridgewater area are restricted by speed limits applying to all vessels (as listed above for boating and sailing).

The Bridgewater Anglers Association Inc. has organised annual fishing events in the past using the existing Bridgewater boat ramp and surrounding foreshore space. Due to low stocking levels for the River Derwent, some events have been transferred to the lakes in recent years.

Table 2.1 Existing River Derwent Recreational Activities

Recreational activity	Existing access and facilities	Brief description of existing recreational use	Future expectations of recreational use
Swimming	Swimming may occur off the foreshore in some locations but is not a common activity near the Bridgewater Bridge or on the shallow southern shore. Long distance swims from New Norfolk to Hobart are supported and promoted by the Derwent River Big Swim and Australian Long Distance Swimming Federation (ALDSF).	The Derwent River Big Swim from New Norfolk to Hobart has occurred at various times during the last 50 years and has been recently revived with 10 successful attempts during the summer of 2021. The ALDSF run the Australian Triple Crown of Marathon Swimming and refer to The Derwent River Big Swim as being one of the world's "Toughest Thirteen". No swimming is allowed within 30m of the boat ramp on the northern shore. The Derwent Estuary Program monitors pollution levels in the Derwent and swimming is not recommended for two days after heavy rain and never in the vicinity of stormwater pipes or urban rivulets.	This swim requires experienced and well-trained swimmers. English Channel training is similar in water temperatures and distance. A 6-hour qualifying swim (solo or in a known event) needs to be completed before attempting the Derwent River Big Swim. It is expected that the interest in the Derwent River Big Swim will grow and attract increased swimmers, especially when COVID 19 travel restrictions become less restrictive for visitors.
Rowing	The existing Bridgewater Bridge always provides sufficient air draft clearance for this activity as it does not require the lift span to be in operation.	This activity occurs very occasionally when some crews see the challenge of rowing a long-distance training session from New Norfolk downstream to Clubs based in Hobart and Glenorchy.	It is expected this may occur but rarely more than a few times a year.
Jet skis	The existing Bridgewater Bridge always provides sufficient air draft clearance for this activity as it does not require the lift span to be in operation. Jet skis are launched from the existing boat ramp on the north shore.	Informal or casual use of the river occurs. The use of jet skis in the Bridgewater area are restricted by speed limits applying to all vessels (as listed above for boating and sailing).	Local community indicated that jet skis have become more regular users of the existing boat ramp, with most users tending to head upstream towards New Norfolk. It is expected this will continue to occur.

Table 2.1 Existing River Derwent Recreational Activities (cont)

Recreational activity	Existing access and facilities	Brief description of existing recreational use	Future expectations of recreational use
Recreational walking	There are no designated pedestrian walking paths that connect the southern shore to the northern shore along the existing causeway. Two foreshore trails are developed and promoted on the northern shore by the Brighton Council.	The 5.2km Bridgewater Foreshore Trail follows the River Derwent foreshore from the Jordon River (East Derwent Highway) to Gunn Street, located to the east of the Bridgewater Bridge. Informal walking routes occurs around the foreshore to connect to Nielsen Street and the existing boat ramp. A 2.7km Riverside Drive Foreshore Trail extends from Masons Point along the foreshore to the west. There is no formal track connection between these two northern foreshore trails given private land tenure, no safe access under the Bridgewater Bridge and distance.	Recreational participation surveys conducted across Australia have typically indicated that recreational walking is one of the most participated activities undertaken by local communities. It is expected that recreational walking will continue to grow and be a major demand for improved accessibility and connectivity within proximity of residential areas. The New Bridgewater Bridge will provide new shared paths that will encourage greater use by recreational walkers and runners in the future. It will also provide scope for greater connectivity with existing walking tracks along the shores and with residential areas. The Councils and Derwent Estuary Program share a long-term vision for a continuous trail along the River Derwent foreshore, where this can be practically achieved.
Bike riding	There is no shared path or dedicated bike paths on the existing causeway and Bridgewater Bridge.	Whilst the existing highway is used at times by experienced bike riders, the traffic volume and mix of vehicles make it unattractive for recreational bike riders.	There has been a rapid growth in bike riding throughout the community, including the provision of electric bikes which has helped overcome some limitations of distance or terrain in the past. There are clear community expectations that safe, accessible and well-connected bike paths should be provided. The New Bridgewater Bridge will provide new shared paths that will encourage greater use by a wider range of bike riders in the future, both on-road and off-road.

Table 2.2 Existing Land Based Recreational Activities

Recreational activity	Existing access and facilities	Brief description of existing recreational use	Future expectations of recreational use
Play and picnic	Picnic and play facilities are located at Granton Reserve on the southern shore and on the northern shore near the boat ramp.	Granton Reserve is a large park with a major car park, toilets, community hall, play equipment, barbeque facilities, picnic tables, shelter, kiosk and seating. The Reserve is easily accessed off the Lyell Highway and attracts a high level of regional and passing-by visitor use. It is also well used as an informal 'park and ride' location which encourages shared use of vehicles using the highways. A 'local' play facility and picnic table is located on the north shore to the east of the boat ramp.	The Granton Reserve is relatively well-known and accessible to residents and visitors. It is expected that with growing population base in the Derwent Valley and return of the visitor market in the future, this Reserve will continue to attract high use. It is expected that the small play facility on the northern shore will remain primarily for local use.
Bird observing/nature study	The water birds are frequently seen from the highways adjacent to the Derwent River Conservation Area, particularly on the southern shore where the birds are resting, feeding and breeding. Pedestrian access to the shore is currently constrained by the highways and lack of safe trails.	The Derwent River Conservation Area is the largest reserve on the Derwent River Estuary between New Norfolk and Dogshear Point (located to the east of Cadburys). The reserve area includes most of the wetlands and mudflats and contains habitat for several threatened species, including the Australian grayling. The Conservation Area provides valuable habitat for migratory wading birds, black swans and native ducks. There is currently no designated access points, trails or interpretation points on the southern shore. The nearest location is Goulds Lagoon Sanctuary which is located ~2.5kms to the south of Bridgewater Bridge. These locations are valuable for regular monitoring of bird species numbers by BirdLife Tasmania and volunteers.	It is expected that access to bird observing/nature study opportunities could grow with the New Bridgewater Bridge. There is potential to consider future use of redundant land on the southern shore of the existing causeway which affords excellent views of waterbirds in the Derwent River Conservation Area.

Table 2.2 Existing Land Based Recreational Activities (cont)



Photo 1 View on the southern shore towards Granton showing the limitations for access for recreation on the foreshore.



Photo 2 Existing boat ramp and jetty on the northern shore



Photo 3 Existing play and picnic table area located to the east of the boat ramp on the northern shore.



Photo 4 Fishing occurs from the foreshore/abutments on the northern shore.



Photo 5 The lift span required for vessels passing under the existing Bridgewater Bridge.

SECTION 3

RECREATIONAL IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

Map 3.1 shows the location of the New Bridgewater Bridge and its surrounds. It shows that the proposed works will involve:

use of the northern shore, including the existing boat ramp site, as a secured civil zone (e.g., earthworks, vegetation clearance etc) for the duration of major works and for construction use including wharf access to the River Derwent;

demolition of the existing Bridgewater Bridge;

construction of piles on the eastern side of the current causeway and Bridgewater Bridge;

temporary access along the causeway during construction;

a civil zone (e.g., earthworks, vegetation clearance etc) on the southern shore along the Brooker Highway and Lyell Highway; and

a reclamation zone on the southern shore.

A suite of high-level urban design principles³ has been prepared to act as a guide to the treatment of parts of the site that will no longer be used as a road corridor once the bridge is completed as well as how to treat general corridor improvements on the approaches to the new bridge and the bridge itself. In addition, there have been various Technical Requirements for specific design elements such as shared pathways and safety screens which may be used in some locations.

Section 3.1 identifies the potential impacts and benefits of the proposed works for river based recreational activities - boating and sailing, fishing, swimming, canoeing/kayaking, rowing and jet skiing.

Section 3.2 identifies the potential impacts and benefits of the proposed works for land based recreational activities - recreational walking, bike riding, play/picnic, bird observing and nature studies.

³ Inspiring Place 2021 Scoping Study – New Bridgewater Bridge Urban Design Guidelines



Map 3.1 Impacts of Works Plan

The indicative timing for the New Bridgewater Bridge Project is to have design and construction plans completed with ECI Tenders submitted in August 2021, contract to successful tenderer by the end of 2021, commence works in 2022 and complete all works by the end of 2024. This requires a 3-year construction period where there may be restrictions or managed limited access to some locations in or adjacent to the Project Land.

3.1 RIVER BASED RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

3.1.1 Potential Impacts

Three potential impacts have been identified:

closure or limited access by vessels and other watercraft on the River Derwent during bridge construction period;

limited access by swimmers undertaking the Derwent River Big Swim events; and

loss of access to the existing local boat ramp (unless alternative temporary boat ramp facilities).

Limited vessel and watercraft access

At times during the construction of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project there will be interruptions or restriction of vessels and watercraft seeking to traverse the River Derwent. This will impact more on the smaller watercraft (e.g., jet skis, small boats, kayaks) that have been able to easily pass under the existing Bridgewater Bridge in the past.

Discussions with yacht and motorboat clubs indicated that past use of the River Derwent to the north of Bridgewater Bridge had been constrained by the ongoing risk and operational requirements involved with the lift mechanism to allow vessels to pass through the channel. Consultations with various stakeholders indicated an understanding of the limited access during construction but that there would be major accessibility improvements in the longer term.

Limited access for the Derwent River Big Swim

The proposed works are likely to interrupt or restrict the opportunity for swimmers to undertake the individual challenge of the Derwent River Big Swim during the construction

of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project. This may occur given major construction work is operated from the northern side of the river.

Loss of local boat ramp access

The boat ramp is located on Crown Land with an adjoining area to the north owned by the Brighton Council. The Council has given consent to the State Government to include this parcel of land (and other required land) in the Major Projects Proposal for the New Bridgewater Bridge.

It is anticipated that the existing boat ramp on the northern shore will be closed to public use to facilitate construction of the sub-structure during the New Bridgewater Bridge Project. It is also expected that the boat ramp will be significantly altered or removed during the works to suit the requirements of larger equipment access and materials at the site.

The Development commits, at the end of the works, to the remove all temporary works and reinstate a jetty and boat ramp within this portion of foreshore land, of an equivalent or superior standard and functionality as existing, unless agreed otherwise by Brighton Council.

It is anticipated that the Developed Design of the successful design and construction Contractor will provide for more convenient public access and a range of opportunities for enhanced use of the Bridgewater foreshore. The Contractor's temporary works (e.g., wharfs and jetties installed for construction access) may be of long-term public value, if they can be suitably modified into facilities for community use rather than demolished. Therefore, it is possible that the State, its Contractor and Brighton Council may work collaboratively in consultation with the local community to identify alternative works and outcomes in lieu of reinstatement of the jetty and boat ramp. Such arrangements would be subject to agreement on associated matters, with Brighton Council representing its local community.

Burbury Consulting was engaged to assess the existing use of the boat ramp and a camera was installed to record usage between mid-November 2020 to mid-February 2021. The general findings from the assessment were:

there is general use of the boat ramp daily, but typically low levels of boat launching;

boat launching was higher on weekends;

the boat ramp was being used for launching non-powered watercraft including paddle boards, kayaks and windsurfers; and

the jetty was used by some for fishing.

Consultation with the Bridgewater Anglers Club indicated that higher and more regular use of the boat ramp occurred during the spring fishery productive months between August – November when resident and sea-run trout chase migratory whitebait.

If a temporary boat ramp was not provided during the period of New Bridgewater Bridge Project, recreational boat and watercraft users are able to access existing boat ramps located at Old Beach (northern shore of Brighton Municipality, ~ 7kms distance to south), Austins Ferry (southern shore of the City of Glenorchy, ~ 7 kms to the south) or Millbrook Rise (southern shore of the Derwent River Valley Municipality, ~ 17kms to the west). Some watercraft (e.g., kayaks, paddler boards) may be able to be launched from the foreshore in various locations without the need for a boat ramp.

Burbury Consulting was engaged to investigate the preliminary feasibility for an alternative or temporary boat ramp during the construction period of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project. Mason Point, some 1.4 km to the west of the existing boat ramp was investigated. This site already has a jetty and car parking area although no waterside vehicular access currently exists. The jetty at the site is owned by Brighton Council with public access by road and pathway.

The investigations identified there were some limitations with the proposed site including limited space for vehicle/trailer turning and parking, soft mud sediments, shallow water, exposure of the ramp to winds and currents and high costs for remediation. In addition, the site is a starting point for the Riverside Drive Foreshore Trail which attracts regular use by locals and visitors that use the parking area.

The Temporary Bridgewater Bridge Boat Ramp Concept Design Memorandum identified that the proposed Mason Point site is suitable for an all-weather (i.e., tidal access, wave, and current protection) boat ramp if the design addresses the issues identified. Further investigative work and cost analysis would be required (plus separate planning and PWS approval). The Department of State Growth indicated the current position is that given other boat launching facilities along the river, the limited use of the Bridgewater boat ramp would not justify the expenditure of public money on the provision of a temporary boat ramp nearby for the duration of major works for the Development.

The above issues with Mason Point were also confirmed in discussion with the Bridgewater Anglers Association. The Club indicated that an alternative location for a temporary boat ramp would be off Nielsen Esplanade, 200m to the south of the existing boat ramp.

3.1.2 Potential Benefits

Two potential benefits have been identified for water based recreational uses:

greater accessibility for future river based recreational activities at all times; and

potential for major upgrade of the local boat ramp infrastructure

Upgrade accessibility

The New Bridgewater Bridge Project will provide a minimum water clearance of 16.2 metres AHD to enable passage of vessels consistent with the existing Bowen Bridge located downriver. This will allow access of vessels at all times of the day that meet the aircraft clearance provided.

Discussions with yacht and motorboat clubs indicated this would be a major benefit for users as compared with the current situation of using the existing bridge lift. The Clubs expect that this will encourage more club members to take the opportunity to access upriver to New Norfolk in future years.

The New Bridgewater Bridge Project will also always maintain access for small boat and watercraft users in the future.

It is expected that the new works will also lead to installing new navigational markers and wider span distances that will help improve safety for vessels approaching to the New Bridgewater Bridge.

Potential to upgrade boat ramp infrastructure

The existing boat ramp and jetty on the northern shore are currently in poor condition and whilst still in use, there has been very little investment into upgrading these facilities in recent years. The jetty platform is high and becomes problematic for safe pedestrian access to boats during low tides.

The stakeholder consultations indicated an expectation by the Brighton Council⁴ and Bridgewater Anglers Association Inc. that a temporary or alternative boat ramp should be provided during the period of construction for the New Bridgewater Bridge Project. They also advocated that a new or significantly upgraded boat ramp and jetty should be provided after completion of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project. The improvements could include a new boat ramp surface, better designed jetty or floating pontoon and

⁴ Brighton Council feedback of the Bridgewater Bridge Reference Design, email to State Growth submission dated 12th November 2020

designated parking area. The Brighton Council also indicated that allowance should be made for a larger ferry to be able to use the upgraded jetty in the future.

3.2 LAND BASED RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

3.2.1 Potential Impacts

The potential impact is the limitation on public foreshore access on the northern shore during construction period for the New Bridgewater Bridge Project. Access to the site will be restricted or may be diverted around the site designated for construction use and wharf access to the river.

Whilst there no existing formally developed or constructed foreshore trails extending through to the existing boat ramp, there are informal tracks indicating the foreshore is being used. The video camera installed at the boat ramp area also indicated daily use by visitors as general open space for walk/exercise, use of the small play equipment and parking for sightseeing, eating food or socializing.

3.2.2 Potential Benefits

The potential benefits were identified as:

- improved foreshore accessibility after completion of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project;

- improved shared access by cyclists and pedestrians on the New Bridgewater Bridge; and

- opportunity to enhance bird observing, walking and interpretative trails.

Improved foreshore accessibility

The New Bridgewater Bridge Project will provide the opportunity for developing a continuous foreshore trail along the northern shore, from east of Woods Point to the existing boat ramp site. The foreshore trail could continue to the western side of Midlands Highway and connect to Riverside Drive leading onto the Riverside Drive Foreshore Trail at Mason Point.

Improved shared access

The New Bridgewater Bridge Project provides significant benefits to cyclists and pedestrians by providing a safe and shared path connection from the northern and southern shores.

Discussions with Bicycle Network Tasmania and Cycling South⁵ indicated some concerns about:

the shared path being 3m as this would better cater for cyclists, walkers, and other modes (scooters, skateboards etc.);

connection for riders off the bridge to join Main Road on the southern shore;

cyclist's safety and convenience when required to negotiate crossing points at the main roundabouts for the Lyell Highway and Main Road connections on the southern shore with preference to have grade-separated crossings;

the preference for a better shared path transition onto Main Road for road cyclists on the southern shore;

the inconvenience for cyclists on the Bridge riding north to transition into local trails in Bridgewater rather than have the option to continue on a shared way along the Midlands Highway (and vice versa if cyclists are travelling south to the Bridge and have to leave the Midlands Highway to reach the Bridge share way); and

the bike path under the New Bridgewater Bridge on the northern shore should be upgraded to 2.5m to provide a continuous and legible off-road cycling network.

The Glenorchy City Council recommended installing a ramp and building the shared footpath infrastructure to provide safe fully graded infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists as this would remove the need for these users to cross traffic on the Lyell Highway⁶.

⁵ Cycling South feedback of the Bridgewater Bridge Reference Design, email to State Growth date unknown

⁶ Glenorchy City Council feedback of the Bridgewater Bridge Reference Design, email to State Growth dated 12th November 2020

The Brighton Council⁷ indicated the need to improve the connectivity of shared paths on the north shore including:

achieving a safer and continuous shared path along the Midlands Highway to connect with the East Derwent Highway;

the path being located on the northern side of Gunn Street and the proposed road extension under the new Bridgewater Bridge; and

linking the shared path to Woods Point which leads onto Bridgewater Parkland.

Bird Observing Opportunities

The existing round-about located at the junction of the Lyell Highway, Midlands Highway and Brooker Highway on the southern shore may not be required for road works for the New Bridgewater Bridge Project (refer to Photo 6).

This provides an opportunity to rehabilitate the area and possibly part of the causeway to enhance recreational use and access. Consultation with Birdlife Tasmania indicated the potential to enhance observation and interpretation of the waterbirds that are seen from the highways adjacent to the Derwent River Conservation Area. This site would complement the information and interpretation located at Goulds Lagoon Sanctuary, which is expected to be linked with a shared path along the Main Road and foreshore in future years.

⁷ Brighton Council feedback of the Bridgewater Bridge Reference Design, email to State Growth submission dated 12th November 2020



Photo 6 Potential site for rehabilitation, future open space and recreational use.

SECTION 4

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The report has identified a range of existing recreational users, both river based, and land based, that access and use the environs within the Project Land for the New Bridgewater Bridge Project.

Consultations were undertaken with many of these existing recreational users as to the potential for impacts or benefits resulting from the proposed development.

The overall assessment is that there will be significant benefits for recreational users following the construction of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project including:

- upgraded accessibility for future river based recreational activities at all times;

- potential for a major upgrade of the local boat ramp infrastructure on the northern shore;

- improved foreshore accessibility on the northern shore after completion of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project;

- improved shared access by cyclists and pedestrians on the New Bridgewater Bridge; and

- the opportunity to enhance bird observing, walking and interpretative trails.

There will also be restrictions and some inconvenience for some users as regards access and use of the River Derwent and its northern foreshore areas during the construction period between 2022-2024. This includes:

- closure or limited access by boats and other watercraft on the River Derwent during bridge construction period;

- limited access by swimmers seeking to undertake the Derwent River Big Swim events;

loss of access to the existing local boat ramp; and

limited public access to some locations on the northern shore, albeit some trail diversions may still provide connections.

4.2 INDICATIVE CONCEPTS FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

On completion of the project, areas of publicly owned land will become available as community open space. The detailed plans for the public open spaces are best resolved by State Growth in the review of the planning and design options for the New Bridgewater Bridge as part of the Tender process.

Indicative concepts were identified by Inspiring Place to highlight some of the potential opportunities available for enhancing public open spaces the northern and southern shores of the river.

The suggested improvements to the southern shore included:

upgrading the overall amenity of planned redundant road sites to be more attractive open space;

restoring freshwater/saline sedgeland on the western foreshore;

creating a safe turn-in and car parking area for visitors off the Lyell Highway;

developing paths leading to bird hide/lookout interpretation nodes with the advice of Birdlife Tasmania and Tasmanian Parks and the Derwent River Conservation Area managers Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service; and

investigating the opportunity to utilise the causeway for path(s) allowing recreational walking and some fishing (where deep water and side channels) dependent on the final design and construction outcomes of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project.

The improvements to the northern shore included:

future upgrading of the jetty and boat ramp facilities after the completion of the construction program for the New Bridgewater Bridge Project;

future upgrading of Nielsen Park area including amenity/landscaping, parking, play, picnic and trail connections; and

provision for a foreshore shared trail that would eventually connect with existing trails at Mason Point in the west to Bridgewater Parkland in the east.

Current boat launching users may be required to use existing boat ramps at Old Beach, Austins Ferry or Millbrook Rise. Whilst this would be an inconvenience to regular users, the proposition may be based around an understanding that there will be a significant upgrading of the existing boat ramp, jetty and facilities following the completion of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made:

1. Given the Project position is not to allocate public money on the provision of a temporary boat ramp nearby for the duration of major works for the Development, ramp users will need to access other existing boat ramps (e.g., Old Beach, Austins Ferry, Millbrook Rise). This is based on an understanding that the Development commits, at the end of the works, to the removal of all temporary works (at the Nielson Esplanade site) and reinstate a jetty and boat ramp within this portion of foreshore land, of an equivalent or superior standard and functionality as existing, unless agreed otherwise by Brighton Council.
2. The issues and ideas for addressing safety and connections for cyclists and pedestrians (as outlined in Section 3.2.2) be investigated by State Growth during ongoing review of the New Bridgewater Bridge Design.
3. The initial concepts for enhancing public open spaces be progressed for improving recreational access, facilities and experiences at two key 'hub' locations – the southern and northern sides of the New Bridgewater Bridge.
4. Engagement with the key stakeholders and recreational users continue regarding the opportunities to improve recreational access, facilities and experiences during the construction period and following the completion of the New Bridgewater Bridge Project.