

Transport Rebuild East Coast



Historic Heritage Management Advice

To: Nick Beattie
From: Andy Brown
Cc:
Date: 09/09/2025
Project Area: BR217 River Berm Works
Fault ID: BR217

Purpose

This assessment is focused on the physical remains of human activity and historic heritage values; assessment of Māori cultural values should be sought from iwi/hapu via the TREC Pou Arahi. This advice should be read in conjunction with the works overview document.

Project Description

During Cyclone Gabrielle significant damage occurred to Kiwirail Bridge 217 on the PNGL, south of Napier. Emergency works were carried out to re-instate a bridge at this location with the intention that a more permanent solution would be established at a later date. It is proposed to carry out works that will extend the life of the temporary bridge. This works include abrasive blasting of the bridge, span replacement and pier removal and River berm works. The latter will involve the removal of accumulated silt and gravel laydown pads established in aid of the emergency works. It will also remove remaining slash and other obstructions with the intention of increasing resilience for future flooding. Access to the work areas will be via existing tracks, the works area to the north of the backwater and east of SH51 will be accessed via an informal track at the rear of the beach.

Works area viewed

Site Visit Photographs

Documented historic heritage places within 50m of the works area

Yes No HNZ List – Rārangī kōrero

- Yes No Listed/scheduled places or areas
Yes No Memorials
Yes No Recorded archaeological sites

Evidence of potential historic heritage places within 50m of the works area

- Yes No Historical aerial photographs
Yes No Historical survey plans/maps
Yes No LiDAR
Yes No Modern aerial photographs
Yes No Other

Discussion of findings

No recorded historic heritage places or memorials are recorded within 50m of works. However, the eastern access track will pass within 50m of V21/258 (Figure 1, 2), a buried pill box associated with coastal defence efforts in the twentieth century. The structure is not protected by the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act (2014) but has considerable heritage value. The proposed eastern access route will make use of informal beach tracks, which are approximately 20m removed from the site (Figure 1 and 4).

Two archaeological sites are recorded both north and south of the project area, which relate to William Colenso's Waitangi Mission Station. This is also memorialised approximately 300m south of the proposed works. The Mission's precise location is unknown, but, based on the landscape context of the proposed work, any remaining features associated with the Mission are unlikely to be affected.

A review of historical aerial photographs, general historical photographs and maps is clear that the project area is in a dynamic riverine environment, which has been greatly modified by the construction of bridges and flood defences. It is also notable that since this arm of the river has developed into a backwater there has been considerable silting up.

Assessment of effects

The works will take place in a dynamic riverine environment where natural processes are likely to have removed any intact archaeological deposits / features (if ever present). The area has also been heavily modified by bridge construction, including the recent emergency works. There is no evidence of historic heritage sites in the work zones or access tracks. Access along the beach is suitably removed from V21/258 and will have no effect.

Low potential for effects to historic heritage.

Recommendations

All archaeological sites whether recorded or not are subject to the provisions of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. As such, the TREC Project Archaeological Site Discovery Protocol should be in place during works on sites and any finds should be reported to the TREC archaeologist, who will inform Heritage New Zealand.

It is recommended that the recorded location of the pillbox is included in pre-work briefings and toolboxes to ensure operators are aware of the site and maintain a safe working distance during machine movements.



Figure 1 – Location of proposed access near V21/258 (LINZ, ArchSite).



Figure 2 – The top of the pillbox.



Figure 3 – West-facing image looking inland toward the pillbox (buried). The seat on the top of the pillbox is visible at the top of the mound.



Figure 4 – The propose access track (black line) and the location of the pillbox (red arrow).