



Aboriginal Artefacts Unanticipated Discovery Plan: Pipeline Works and Construction Footprint

Prepared for

Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme

This is a sub plan of the Construction Environmental Management Plan

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1 EMP Scope and Purpose

1.1 Scope

This document is to be read in conjunction with Tasmanian Irrigation’s (TI) Construction Environment Management Plan Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme EPBC Number:2022/09295 (TIs CEMP).

The Aboriginal Artefacts Unanticipated Discovery Plan (AAUP) addresses the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage values, both artefacts and landscape values, that may be encountered during construction of the Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme. The AAUP applies to the scope of work described in the Project Integrated Construction Management Plan (ICMP) and complies with the TI *Environmental Protection Guideline - EPG 3 Aboriginal Artefacts – Unanticipated discovery plan* and the commitments made in the Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme Preliminary Documentation (EPBC Act Ref: 2022/09295), report for Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd by North Barker Ecosystem Services.

The AAUP contains measures to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage values, both artefacts and landscape values, that may be encountered during construction as well as minimise impact on any Aboriginal cultural heritage values along the construction corridors.

2 Objectives and Targets

The goal of the AAUP is to prevent and mitigate harm to protected matters by minimising the potential for impact on any Aboriginal cultural heritage values along the construction corridors.

Environmental objectives are assigned based on project environmental aspects. Environmental targets assist in providing verifiable evidence the environmental objectives have been achieved.

The environmental objectives and targets for this project are:

Table 1: Environmental Objective and Targets for Aboriginal Heritage and Artefacts Unanticipated Discovery Plan

Environmental Aspect	Objective	Target
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	Protect Aboriginal heritage sites and artefacts	No unauthorised disturbance to aboriginal heritage sites or artefacts.

3 Environmental Management Measures

Management of aboriginal cultural heritage sites and artefacts shall be informed by preconstruction heritage surveys and contract specifications. Known sites identified as requiring protection from disturbance will be delineated with appropriate fencing and must not be disturbed by construction activities. Any unanticipated discovery of an aboriginal cultural heritage site will be managed in compliance with TI EPG 3 Aboriginal Artefacts – Unanticipated Discovery Plan and Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania (AHT) [Unanticipated Discovery Plan](#).

In summary, this will require work to stop in the immediate area and for the site to be reported to the client representative and protected from disturbance whilst further expert advice is obtained on the site's significance and ongoing management requirements.

3.1 Unanticipated Discovery Response

In the event that any unanticipated discoveries of Aboriginal cultural heritage materials are made during the construction period, the following processes are to be followed so that the requirements of the Aboriginal Relics Act 1975 and the Coroners Act 1995 are met.

Discovery of Cultural Heritage Items

- If any project personnel, contractors or subcontractors believe that they have discovered or uncovered Aboriginal cultural heritage materials, the individual must notify machinery operators that are working in the general vicinity of the area that earth disturbance works must stop immediately.
- Immediately notify the Superintendent and TI Project Manager.
- A buffer protection zone of 10m is to be established around the suspected cultural heritage site or items.
- No unauthorised entry or earth disturbance must be allowed within this 'archaeological zone' until the suspected cultural heritage items have been assessed, and appropriate mitigation measures carried out.
- Where required, cooperate with management instructions applied relating to site preservation in accordance with the Aboriginal Relics Act 1975.

Discovery of Skeletal Material

- Unless obviously the remains of a common animal (e.g. brush tail possum, wallaby, sheep), under no circumstances are the suspected skeletal remains to be touched or disturbed. If these are human remains, then this area potentially is a crime scene. Tampering with a crime scene is a criminal offence.
- Any person discovering suspected skeletal remains must notify machinery operators that are working in the general vicinity of the area that earth disturbing works must stop immediately.
- A buffer protection zone of 50m should be established around the suspected skeletal remains and the Superintendent and TI Project Manager is to be notified immediately.
- No unauthorised entry or earth disturbance must be allowed in this buffer zone until such time as the suspected skeletal remains have been assessed.
- If it is suspected that the remains may be human, then the relevant authorities (police) must be contacted immediately and informed of the discovery.
- Where required, cooperate with management instructions applied relating to site preservation in accordance with the Aboriginal Relics Act 1975.

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PLA-CST-003-C21150

Table 2: Aboriginal Heritage and Artefacts control measures

Works Activity	Value/Issue	Impact	Risk	Management Control Actions
Operation and movement of vehicles, equipment, and machinery	Site access	Disturbance to sensitive areas	Low	i) Minimise the number of site access points. ii) Restrict site accesses to a corridor of no more than 6 m.
	Vehicle use	Damage to artefacts	Low	i) Keep vehicles on designated roads and tracks wherever practicable.
Clearing	Removal of vegetation	Exposure of artefacts	Medium	i) Clearly mark areas for clearing to avoid unnecessary disturbance. ii) Use manual or low-impact methods where possible.
	Topsoil removal	Displacement of artefacts	Medium	i) Conduct soil removal in phases to manage and control the area of disturbance. ii) Store topsoil separately and protect it for future rehabilitation.
Trenching	Ground disturbance	Damage or destruction of artefacts	Low	i) Avoid trenching near known artefact locations.
		Accidental unearthing of artefacts	Medium	i) Train all workers in recognising and reporting artefacts. ii) Implement the Unanticipated Discovery Plan as outlined in this plan and AHT guidelines.
		Further disturbance	Medium	i) Implement buffer zones around sensitive areas. ii) Train all workers in recognising and reporting artefacts. iii) Follow the Unanticipated Discovery Response process, stopping work and reporting to the Superintendent and TI Project Manager.
Rehabilitation	Restoration of disturbed areas	Incomplete recovery	Medium	i) Rehabilitate areas progressively, as soon as practicably possible following construction activities. ii) Monitor rehabilitated areas for effective remediation monthly and/or following rain events. See HB Rehabilitation and Reinstatement Plan for additional information.

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Unanticipated Discovery Response	Discovery of cultural heritage items	Potential damage to artefacts	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Stop all earth disturbance works immediately. ii) Notify machinery operators and the Superintendent and TI Project Manager. iii) Establish a 10m buffer protection zone around the suspected site. iv) No unauthorised entry or disturbance until assessment and mitigation measures are completed.
	Discovery of skeletal material	Potential crime scene	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Do not touch or disturb the remains. ii) Stop all earth disturbance works immediately. iii) Establish a 50m buffer protection zone around the suspected remains. iv) Notify the Superintendent, TI Project Manager, and relevant authorities (police) immediately. v) Cooperate with management instructions and legal requirements.

4 Environmental Monitoring & Reporting

4.1 Environmental Monitoring and Inspections

Environmental monitoring and inspections will be conducted to ensure compliance with the established control measures related to the protection of Aboriginal artefacts and heritage sites. The specific monitoring and inspection activities include:

Activity	Frequency	Objectives/Actions
Monitoring of Heritage Sites	Regular inspections of known heritage sites as delineated by preconstruction heritage surveys and contract specifications	Ensure that heritage sites are protected from disturbance and that protective measures (e.g., fencing) are intact and effective
Unanticipated Discovery Monitoring	Continuous monitoring during construction activities to promptly identify and manage any unanticipated discoveries of Aboriginal artefacts or heritage sites	Implement the Unanticipated Discovery Response procedure immediately upon the identification of potential artefacts
Record keeping	Weekly environmental checklists	Complete and submit checklists to Tasmanian Irrigation (TI) at the end of each month along with a monthly report.

4.2 Records

The project is subject to internal and external audits as determined by the Hazell Bros Audit Schedule.

Written records must be kept showing:

- The date of any unanticipated discovery.
- Details of the actions taken.
- The date and details of responses from the relevant authorities regarding any unanticipated discovery.

4.3 Project Audits

The project is subject to internal and external audits as determined by the Hazell Bros Audit Schedule. The aim is to conduct an internal management system audit on all projects within three months of project commencement and six monthly thereafter. Projects may also be subject to external surveillance and recertification audits depending on project size, funding and duration. Client audits will be scheduled as per the requirements of section 2.2.2 in the technical specification.

5 Environmental Incidents

In the event of an emergency related to the discovery of Aboriginal artefacts or heritage sites, the following procedures will be implemented:

5.1 Immediate Actions

1. **Stop Work:** Immediately cease all construction activities in the vicinity of the discovery.

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2. **Notify:** Inform the Superintendent and TI Project Manager without delay.
3. **Protective Measures:** Establish a buffer protection zone around the discovery site (10m for cultural heritage items, 50m for skeletal remains) to prevent any further disturbance.

5.2 Assessment and Mitigation

1. Arrange for an expert assessment of the discovered artefacts or heritage site to determine their significance and necessary mitigation measures.
2. Follow the advice of the experts to protect and manage the discovered artefacts or heritage site in compliance with the Aboriginal Relics Act 1975 and relevant guidelines.

5.3 Coordination with Authorities

1. If suspected human remains are discovered, contact the relevant authorities (i.e., police) immediately and follow their instructions to preserve the site as a potential crime scene.
2. Document and report the incident and the actions taken to the relevant authorities and TI Project Manager