

Drowning Prevention Aotearoa Albert Town Bridge Risk Assessment

Interim Recommendation Summary 11 June 2024

Drowning Prevention Aotearoa has undertaken an assessment at the Albert Town Bridge site and this preliminary executive summary was requested by Queenstown Lakes District Council. We are still completing our final assessment of the hazards and risks. This document will be submitted in approximately two weeks. The following has been provided to give some prior indication of our recommendations.

Please note that the recommendations outlined in this document are in draft form and are subject to change upon further review and analysis. Final recommendations will be compiled and presented in the completed risk assessment report.

Recommendations

Jumper / Manu

- Risk Level: Extreme
- Action: Prompt
- Recommendations:
 - Install signage to indicate site hazards.
 - Provide public rescue equipment with usage instructions.
 - Install a depth marker to inform the public of water depth, reducing the risk of spinal cord injuries.
 - Identify and mark a minimum safe jumping depth of 2.5 meters, with an optimal depth of 2.74 meters. If necessary, modify the riverbed to achieve this depth to reduce the risk and likelihood of injury.
- Priority: Top

Swimmers

- Risk Level: High

- Action: Recommended
- Recommendations:
 - Install hazard indication signage.
 - Install public rescue equipment, such as a throw bag attached to an angel ring, to aid in dry-based rescues and prevent the public from performing wet-based rescues.
 - Clear vegetation downstream from the jumping tree site to avoid entanglement in strainers.
- Priority: High

Powered Craft User

- Risk Level: High
- Action: Recommended
- Recommendations:
 - Designate a boat thoroughfare lane under the bridge to ensure a defined passage for powered crafts, separate from the jumping area.
 - Signpost the middle lane of the bridge as a powered craft thoroughfare to minimise collision risks with bridge jumpers.
 - Implement a reduced speed zone of 5 knots prior to reaching Albert Town Bridge.
- Priority: Moderate

Vehicles

- Risk Level: Medium
- Action: Optional
- Recommendations:
 - Consider installing a formalised jumping platform to enhance safe access into the water, preventing the public from climbing a slippery barrier fence.
 - Collaborate with the New Zealand Transport Agency, which plans to upgrade the bridge in three years, to potentially include the jumping platform in their designs.
 - If a jumping platform is not feasible, install a higher barrier between the road and the outer railing to reduce the risk of falls into traffic.

- Priority: Low

Track or Bridge User – Walker/Cyclist

- Risk Level: Medium
- Action: Optional
- Recommendations:
 - Install public rescue equipment, such as a throw bag attached to an angel ring, to aid in dry-based rescues and prevent the public from performing wet-based rescues.
- Priority: Low

Non-powered Craft (Passive) User

- Risk Level: Medium
- Action: Optional
- Recommendations:
 - Remove strainers downstream from the bridge to prevent entanglement of capsized crafts.
 - Install public rescue equipment, such as a throw bag attached to an angel ring, to aid in dry-based rescues and prevent the public from performing wet-based rescues.
- Priority: Low

Kai Gatherer

- Risk Level: Medium
- Action: Optional
- Recommendations:
 - Install hazard indication signage.
 - Provide public rescue equipment with usage instructions to prevent wet-based rescues by the public.
- Priority: Low