
MAIN DRAIN BRIDGES

Location

Ballarto Road KOO WEE RUP NORTH, CARDINIA SHIRE

Municipality

CARDINIA SHIRE

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO134

Heritage Listing

Cardinia Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The series of drains and timber bridges (some from the 1930s and others perhaps earlier), are significant to the Cardinia Shire as evidence of the massive swamp drainage project carried out there and the eventual development of transport networks when the swamp was turned into rich farming land. This project, carried under the direction and design of the Public Works Department was one of the largest undertakings by the Victorian Government. Identified timber bridges evoke the early period of swamp drainage and are generally notable for their age, judged among other bridges in the Shire. The timber construction being also evocative of the thriving local timber industry and plentiful supply.

Regional Significance

References:

Butler, G.& Assoc 1998. Cardinia Shire (Emerald and Cranbourne Districts) Heritage Study. Vol. 2. p146
Mickle (1987): 49;
Roberts, D `From Swampland to Farmland' 1985;
G Butler & Associates, `Cardinia Shire Heritage Study' (north) 1996: 401-4

Hermes Number 197480

Property Number

Physical Description 1

The swamp drains form a rectilinear grid of small and large drains across the flat southern half of the Shire. They divide what is largely agricultural plots into finite areas with, sometimes, the road bridges and small crossover bridges as the only form of communication. The scale, if not the visual effect, of the project is immense. This drainage scheme was protracted such that today the drains are difficult to date but nevertheless each must be considered as part of one important campaign of achievement.

Physical Conditions

The following elements in the former Cranbourne Shire area aid in expressing the special nature of this area. They include the timber bridges needed to cross the drains.

Contributory elements:

First Public Works Department drainage network which includes:

- the Bunyip River (Main Drain) from Western Port Bay to the Bunyip River south of Bunyip
- embankment creation for the Main Drain near Western Port Bay

Bridges cited in the *Cardinia Shire Heritage Study* 1996:

Since the survey in late 1994, early 1995, many of these bridges have been demolished and replaced with unrelated concrete structures. This work was done with the co-operation of the Shire and Melbourne Parks & Waterways. The current state of each bridge (in brackets) has been provided by Don Jackson who was in the Shire engineering department from the 1970s.

Elements:

- * Timber Bridges, Ballarto Road, Pakenham (thought built by Shire in the 1950s-60s)

Description below applies to the range of bridges used in the drainage system:

The bridges are timber decked and framed and most have angle-rail timber balustrading. Some, such as the bridge over the Main Drain opposite St. Joseph's, Iona, have been reinforced with steel stringers.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>