
HO84 - Melton Weir, over Toolern Creek



Former Melton Weir

Location

Nixon Street MELTON, Melton Shire

Municipality

MELTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO84

Heritage Listing

Melton City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The McKenzie Street Weir and Ford over Toolern Creek, built 1890, and now used only as a road causeway, is historically significant at the LOCAL level (AHC D2, B2). It represented the realisation of a local idea to mitigate the particularly low rainfall of the Melton district, and was also the second and last attempt to provide a dependable supply of healthy drinking water in the town by means of a major public engineering work. The idea for the weir appears to have originated in an idea of Shire Secretary Stewart in 1886 to build weirs where watercourses required to be bridged. The Council responded positively to the idea of combining bridges with dams, 'a dry district like this'.

While, like all other early public works attempted, the Weir does not appear to have been successful in achieving its objectives, and the town was essentially dependent on bore and tank water until the provision of reticulated water from the Djerriwarrh Dam in 1963.

The weir, now used only as a road, stands as a substantial testament to the problem of water in Melton, and a local attempted resolution of the problem.

Overall, the McKenzie Street Weir and Ford over Toolern Creek is of LOCAL heritage significance.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Melton - Shire of Melton Heritage Study phase 2, David Maloney, David Rowe, Pamela Jellie, Sera Jane Peters, 2007;
Construction dates	1890,
Other Names	Melton Reserve Causeway, Nixon Street Melton (over Toolern Creek),
Hermes Number	30134
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Physical Description -

The causeway across the Toolern Creek, McKenzie Street / Reserve Road, Melton was originally constructed as a combined bridge and weir. It was described at the time of its construction as consisting of a concrete wall 140 feet (42.5 metres) long, and 12 feet (3.5 metres) deep. This wall was 2 feet wide at the top, and 4 feet at the bottom, embedded in solid rock. It was filled with clay and pitched on the front and top with 9 inch pitchers. The roadway was 20 feet (6 metres) wide. It had a 'strong chain' running through posts on the downstream side of the roadway (which was nevertheless washed downstream in times of heavy flood), and a wire cable on the upstream side. It is not known whether it was built with the sluice valve and outlet pipe that some local people thought would be necessary to keep it clean and effective. When completed it was judged to have 'the appearance of a strong piece of work', that would 'speak for itself in time'.

The battered sides of the structure are still paved with roughly squared bluestone blocks. Its road pavement is also cobbled with bluestone, although this may have been renewed in recent years. Two reinforced concrete pipes have been inserted into the bottom of the dam to carry the stream, effectively converting the weir and ford into a simple causeway. This alteration is sizeable and visually intrusive, but not large enough to diminish the appearance or overall integrity of the substantial causeway structure.

Historical Australian Themes

Melton Historical Themes: 'Water', 'Transport'

Integrity

Integrity - Altered Sympathetically

Physical Conditions

Physical Condition - Fair

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/>