
Barham - Koondrook Bridge



B4916 Barham-Koondrook
Lift Bridge



B4916 Bahram-Koondrook
Bridge

Location

Kerang-Koondrook Road,, KOONDROOK VIC 3580 - Property No B4916

Municipality

GANNAWARRA SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0795

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 19, 2005

Built in 1904, the Barham Bridge is historically, scientifically, socially and aesthetically significant at State Level. It is a complex seven-span structure of timber, steel, iron and concrete, featuring a steel lift-span on an iron and concrete substructure, and two large De Burgh composite timber-steel through-truss spans (modifying the American Pratt pattern) one at either side of the main lift span.

The De Burgh (Pratt) composite timber-steel trusses which are such an important and attractive element in the structure, were built for only a brief period between 1889 and 1904, being largely displaced by Dare's new version

of the composite steel-iron-timber Howe Truss on N.S.W. Public Works projects after 1905. For this reason alone, the lift bridge at Barham-Koondrook is a rare item. The use of a steel lower chord in these composite trusses permitted longer span lengths on broad river channels, than had been normal with standard timber-truss designs. This bridge was among the last of the New South Wales lift-span bridges to be constructed, near the end of the main steam-boat era. The steel lift span represents the peak in evolution of New South Wales lift-span technology associated with the leading Sydney bridge engineer Percy Allan. This bridge survives as a proud monument to the design abilities of the prominent Sydney engineers Allan and De Burgh and the Victorian bridge-construction skills of Monash and Anderson.

The Barham Bridge is also of considerable social significance. It has played a vital role for over ninety years in linking the twin settlements of Koondrook and Barham, which would otherwise be separated by the Murray river. These little riverland townships operate as one social entity. The bridge has also played a very important role in linking Riverina centres like Moulamein and the Wakool irrigation area to Victorian centres such as Kerang. For many decades the bridge directly connected the Wakool area with the Victorian rail-head at Koondrook and it has long been an important link in a major north-south stock-route connecting Queensland and New South Wales pastoral centres with Victorian markets.

The Barham-Koondrook Lift Bridge is aesthetically significant. It is situated in timbered reserve amidst river red gums at a relatively high site on the Murray River floodplain, immediately past the western end of Gunbower Island. This floodplain context reminds the viewer of the district's long history as a centre for the timber trades. This bridge has changed very little from when it was built in the early years of this century. The combination of tall steel lift span and the heavy timbers of the lengthy De Burgh composite-truss spans on either side, is conspicuous and aesthetically appealing.

Classified: 06/07/1998

Hermes Number 68028

Property Number

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.

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