
Fergusons Bridge



B7033 Fergusons Bridge

Location

Campaspe River crossing, Bendigo-Murchison Road, approx. 4 km east of Midland Highway,, GOORNONG VIC 3557 - Property No B7033

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1853

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 10, 2005

Ferguson's Bridge is scientifically and historically significant at State level for its superelevated timber deck and curved plan, signifying the transition from horse-drawn to motor vehicle traffic. Technically, this timber and steel road-over-river bridge is extremely unusual in being one of only three known extant Victorian examples of a large curved and super-elevated timber-decked road bridge featuring rolled steel joists in its superstructure. It is the earliest extant example of the type, and probably the first of its kind to be built in Victoria. Very few similar curved and super-elevated composite road bridges with timber decks appear ever to have existed in this State. When constructed by the Country Roads Board in 1939 it incorporated the most up-to-

date engineering theory, the technique of super-elevating road curves having been developed in Victoria during the mid-1930s to cater for the faster automobiles then becoming common on our main roads. The use of this technique to overcome problems associated with acutely-angled road approaches to bridge sites that had originally been developed for slow-moving horse-drawn vehicles, was still novel in Victoria in 1939. Historically, Fergusons Bridge occupies an historic Campaspe River crossing place adjacent to the Pre-emptive Right (homestead site) of what was Robertson's 'Campaspe River' squatting run in the earliest days of white settlement. In 1939 the current structure replaced an earlier all-timber low-level river bridge that was named Fergusons Bridge, after an early selector upon whose property it encroached. That earlier Fergusons Bridge had replaced a pioneers' ford that had functioned from the earliest days of white settlement until 1881. The current Fergusons Bridge is a very rare curved-deck timber and steel road-over-river bridge, representing a post-Depression/pre-World War 2 era of Victorian transport history when the rapidly increasing numbers of faster-moving automobiles forced road authorities to abandon traditional horse-era bridge designs, often aligned at right angles to the stream and involving a sharp change of direction at the point where cars moved onto the bridge deck.

Classified: 08/11/1999

Hermes Number 68331

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.

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