
Wannon River Rail Bridge

Location

BRANXHOLME/CASTERTON RAILWAY LINE, LOT 1 TP606262, CA2002 PARISH OF CASTERTON, LOT 1 TP591020, CASTERTON, GLENELG SHIRE

Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Glenelg Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 17, 2005

Taken from National Trust citation, HERMES No. 68059:

The Wannon River Bridge, situated a few kilometres east of Casterton and built in 1884 as an important component of the Bransholme-Casterton Railway, is historically and aesthetically significant at State level. It remains by far the most impressive surviving artefact from the historic Bransholme-Casterton Railway, once part of the regular overland link between Melbourne and Adelaide.

This railway was originally intended to be the first section of a larger Portland-oriented rail network that would penetrate north into the Wimmera and Mallee wheat lands, and westwards into South Australia. For some years prior to the construction of the inter-colonial Melbourne-Adelaide rail link via Serviceton, the Bransholme-Casterton-line station at Casterton was the Victorian Railways terminus for passengers travelling overland between Melbourne and Adelaide.

It is a single-track timber-trestle and all-timber railway bridge, consisting of 64 timber-beam spans each of 4.57 metres (15 feet). Its total length is 292.61 metres, and its maximum height is an impressive 9.22 metres. The timber piers include very rare tall vertical-four-pile structures at the main river channel, and the bridge deck sweeps in a grand curve.

The Wannon River Bridge near the end of the Bransholme-Casterton Railway is the longest surviving example of a Victorian Railways 15 feet (4.57 metre) timber-beam bridge still retaining its all-timber integrity, possessing a deck almost 293 metres long. It is the longest nineteenth-century Victorian railways timber bridge still in existence. Dating from 1884, it also rates highly among the oldest surviving Victorian Railways timber bridges,

and has unusual early structural features, particularly the very rare tall vertical-four-pile piers on the main river-channel section.

The Wannon River Bridge is situated amidst some of the most picturesque grazing land in the Western District, where the broad flood plains of the Wannon and Glenelg Rivers merge to form one gigantic flood plain. The lengthy old bridge curving across the flood plain just outside Casterton is readily accessible to the public, and contributes much to the local scenery as well as providing a convenient viewing platform from which to observe the Wannon River valley and the sprawling tree-dotted grasslands of the far Western District of Victoria.

Hermes Number 154988

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/>