
Former Sandridge (Falls) Rail Bridge



B5620 Sandridge Rail Bridge

Location

SOUTHBANK VIC 3006 - Property No B5620

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0994

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 20, 2008

The former Sandridge (Falls) railway bridge is the third successive bridge at this location to carry the rail link from Port Melbourne and St Kilda. The first bridge was built in 1854 as part of the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay company's line between Melbourne and Sandridge and carried Australia's first passenger train across the river. This structure was replaced in 1858 by a timber trestle bridge carrying two lines of rail traffic. The present bridge and the southbank viaduct were designed by the Victorian Railways Department and the contract let in January 1886 to David Munro & Co who were also responsible for the construction of Queens and Princes Bridges. The four lines were opened for traffic in June 1888.

The bridge is similar in design to Queens bridge in that hollow iron columns filled with concrete support the steel plate girders and cross girders. The columns are set parallel to the stream flow in groups of three with each group or pier having an ornamental cast iron pediment standing above the top flanges of the girders. The five spans, each of about 128 feet, are supported by riveted iron arches between the piers. The balustrades are constructed of 1/2" sheet iron. On either side of the river the steel girders are supported by bluestone and brick buttresses and on the south side the structure is continued as a brickwork viaduct.

The diagonal alignment of the bridge and consequent oblique angle of its arched braces to its axis provides an unusually unfettered view of the structure from the river bank and thus adds to the overall image of functional railways engineering.

The former Sandridge (Falls) railway bridge is important as a major (and possibly the earliest) example of the use of steel bridge girders on the Victorian railway system and as an example of the work of David Munro, a notable engineer, contractor and speculator. Together the bridge and the viaduct are a reminder of the critical part this railway played in the development of Melbourne as a great 19th century commercial city and of its role as a gateway to the State for thousands of post-war migrants.

Classified: 27/05/1985

Hermes Number 64261

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/>