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## Bolinda Creek Railway Viaduct



B3033 Bolinda Creek Railway Viaduct



B3033 Bolinda Railway Viaduct 2011



B3033 Bolinda Railway Viaduct deck 2011



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### Location

Melbourne-Lancefield Road (adjacent) 3km north, CLARKEFIELD VIC 3430 - Property No B3033

### Municipality

MACEDON RANGES SHIRE

### Level of significance

State

### Heritage Listing

National Trust

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 2, 2005

The Bolinda Creek (or Emu Creek) Railway Viaduct is scientifically, historically and aesthetically significant. Constructed for the Lancefield Junction (Clarkfield)-Lancefield Railway during late 1880 and early 1881, the Bolinda Creek Railway Viaduct with its fourteen spans each of standard Victorian Railways fifteen-feet design and its sixty-four metres deck length, ranks as a medium-size timber railway bridge. However, it is notable for its unusually high timber piers, which rank it among the tallest surviving Victorian timber-beam railway bridges. The viaduct has a strong claim to recognition as a rare historical artifact. Having been built for a stretch of railway constructed during late 1880 and early 1881, this bridge ranks as our second-oldest surviving timber railway bridge, second in age only to the Latrobe River floodplain bridge near Rosedale which was built in 1877 for the Oakleigh-Sale Railway. This construction date places it in the pioneering phase of timber railway-bridge construction in Victoria, before the main era of timber railway-bridge construction associated with the so-called 'Octopus Acts' of the mid-1880s.

The Lancefield Junction-Lancefield Railway, on which the Bolinda Creek Viaduct was the major engineering feature, has a very unusual place in Victorian Railways history. This route was singled out for preferential treatment, ahead of many other railway proposals under parliamentary consideration circa 1880 and was the subject of its own special and very controversial Act of Parliament. The project's direct connection with several eminent Victorian politicians and some-time Premiers of this State, in itself makes this railway historically remarkable. The names of Alexander Graham Berry, Alfred Deakin and Sir Brian O'Loughlen were all closely associated with the coming to fruition of the Lancefield Railway project.

This tall timber railway viaduct is the last significant relic of, and a striking symbol of, a construction project which inaugurated a new era of 'cheap' railway construction, utilizing timber bridges as a standard means of crossing streams and valley. The Lancefield Railway's average cost of 3,880 pounds per mile of permanent way was by far the lowest of any Victorian Railways line built to that time, contrasting markedly with a price of 6,372 pounds per mile for the Karlsruhe-Daylesford branch line constructed not long previously.

Because of its spectacular siting at the crossing of a deep valley set amidst rolling farmland, which necessitated unusually tall timber piers, the Bolinda Creek Bridge is the most visually impressive survivor of Victoria's very few timber railway bridges that date from prior to 1884, when Duncan Gillies' 'Octopus Acts' were promulgated. It is situated near the Melbourne-Lancefield Road, within easy reach of Melbourne.

Classified: 18/04/1968

Upgraded: 10/11/1998

Hermes Number 65932

Property Number

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*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/>*