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## Jeparit Bridge over the Wimmera River



B7067 Jeparit Bridge



B7067 Jeparit bridge deck



B7067 Jeparit bridge piers



B7067 Jeparit bridge abutment



B7067 Jeparit Bridge 2011



B7067 Jeparit bridge piers

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### Location

Adjacent to N side, Nhill-Jeparit Road,, JEPARIT VIC 3423 - Property No B7067

### Municipality

HINDMARSH SHIRE

### Level of significance

State

### Heritage Listing

National Trust

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 23, 2005

What is significant? The Jeparit Bridge was built in 1891, opened in 1892, and is one of Victoria's oldest surviving timber road bridges. The bridge has seven timber-beam spans 26 feet (7.9 metres) in length, with extremely rare

squared-timber strutted-corbel construction supporting timber stringers, and a total deck length of 182 feet (54.6 metres). The deck width is fifteen feet (4.5 metres) between heavy timber kerbs, The timber piers each consist of seven piles, including one raker pile on each side, driven deep into the river bed. Steel joists have been added below the deck.

How is it significant? The Jeparit Bridge is significant for historical, technical and aesthetic reasons at the State level.

Why is it significant? The Jeparit Bridge is historically significant as an artifact from the very earliest phase of agricultural settlement in the Mallee. The Jeparit Bridge made a major contribution to communication and agricultural development across north-western Victoria, in particular the growth of Jeparit township.

The Jeparit Bridge is technically significant as one of only two surviving examples of early strutted-corbel timber-bridge design (the other being Kirwan's Bridge, VHR 1886), and the only intact example to survive in Victoria. It was one of a number of 'strutted-stringer' bridges based on traditional British bridge patterns used in flood prone areas in Victoria until the severe economic depression of 1892-93 rendered their labour-intensive construction uneconomic; very few survive.

The Jeparit Bridge retains its structural integrity despite replacement of timbers at various times.

The Jeparit Bridge is aesthetically significant as an unusual and attractive feature enhancing a sparsely-timbered flat inland river landscape. Its striking silhouette comes from the massive squared-timber strutted corbels, and the prominent big raker piles on each side. The bridge crosses the Wimmera River just upstream from Lake Hindmarsh.

Classified: 03/07/2000

Other Names Wimmera River Bridge, Jeparit,

Hermes Number 68607

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Jeparit Bridge has seven timber-beam spans 26 feet (7.9 metres) in length, each with squared-timber 'strutted-corbel' construction supporting timber stringers. The deck width is fifteen feet (4.5 metres) between heavy timber kerbs, and the total deck length is 182 feet (54.6 metres).

The timber piers each consist of seven piles, including one raker pile on each side, driven deep into the river bed. The striking silhouette of the bridge comes from the massive squared-timber strutted corbels, and the prominent big raker piles on each side. The bridge remains essentially an early all-timber river bridge, despite the addition of steel joists below deck. Some original piles appear to have been replaced by squared piles, but the impressive timber corbels and struts remain intact.

### Context

Jeparit Bridge crosses the Wimmera River near Lake Hindmarsh, outside the town. The area is flat, sparsely treed and relatively empty.

### ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA:

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history. Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history

The Jeparit Bridge is a rare artifact from the very earliest phase of agricultural settlement in the Mallee

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history

The Jeparit Bridge made a major contribution to communication and agricultural development across north-western Victoria, in particular the growth of Jeparit township.

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects

The Jeparit Bridge is one of only two surviving examples of early strutted-corbel timber-bridge design (the other is Kirwan's Bridge, VHR 1886, of which little original remains), and the only intact example to survive in Victoria . It was one of a number of 'strutted-stringer' bridges based on traditional British bridge patterns used in flood prone areas in Victoria until the severe economic depression of 1892-93 rendered their labour-intensive construction uneconomic; very few survive.

Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

The Jeparit Bridge is an unusual and attractive feature enhancing a sparsely-timbered flat inland river landscape. Its striking silhouette comes from the massive squared-timber strutted corbels, and the prominent big raker piles on each side. The bridge crosses the Wimmera River just upstream from Lake Hindmarsh.

Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period

## **Intactness**

The basic strutted-corbel structure and timber piers are intact. The surviving big timber stringers have additional rolled steel joist support, the date of this modification is uncertain. The original transverse timber decking has long been covered by longitudinal decking for vehicles. Structural integrity has been maintained in replacement of timbers.

## **Usage/Former Usage**

road bridge - not in use

## **Physical Conditions**

dilapidated, not maintained by Hindmarsh Shire

*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/>*