Glenmaggie Truss Bridge over Glenmaggie Creek

B7097 Glenmaggie Truss Bridge

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Location

Licola Road, 13 km north of Heyfield,, GLENMAGGIE VIC 3858 - Property No B7097

Municipality

WELLINGTON SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 5, 2006

Completed in 1927, the Glenmaggie Truss Bridge is historically, aesthetically and socially significant at the State level. Eleven of its twelve spans have longitudinal timber decks on rolled steel joists that span concrete piers, while the eighty-feet main span follows a now historic and rare all-timber Howe-type truss pattern. Overall length is 175.6 metres. Built by the State Rivers authority, this timber-truss span is similar to C.R.B. eighty-feet Howe-type truss designs of the 1920s.

This lengthy bridge with its impressive steel-joist and timber superstructure capped off by a rare and historic timber-truss main-channel span, is Victoria's only surviving big State Rivers and Water Supply Commission bridge with a substantial timber component. Its origins lie in the Commission's irrigation-infrastructure plans after World War 1. By the late 1920s, the Maffra-Sale irrigation scheme became a major State development project to boost agricultural potential and increase export income. Systematic damming of the Macalister River's waters was the key to boosting intensive sugar beet and general agricultural production on fertile but relatively dry Gippsland soils.

As the reservoir's waters steadily rose and flooded the earlier Licola Road and associated bridges near old Glenmaggie township, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission in 1927 used a combination of concrete, steel and traditional timber-truss technology to bridge the artificially broadened valley of the Glenmaggie Creek. Australian builders of large rural bridges in the 1920s began to combine the use of concrete and steel support systems with traditional timber bridge superstructures. Steel joists came to replace earlier rivetted wrought-iron girders. The Glenmaggie Bridge is the earliest known surviving Victorian example of a large steel-joist and timber-topped road bridge, and is the only bridge of that type to incorporate a Howe-type timber-truss span, incorporating both old and new technologies of the late 1920s.

Although innovative welded-steel-truss bridges were being developed to span broad flood channels by the late 1920s, the Commission stuck with an old-fashioned eighty-feet Howe-type timber-truss span over the main channel. This is the only surviving timber-truss span to have been built by Victoria's State Rivers and Water Supply Commission and the bridge is now one of only five Victorian road bridges retaining this graceful and historic timber-truss component.

Situated on the upper reaches of the beautiful Glenmaggie Reservoir, this lengthy and attractive old bridge provides memorable views from many different perspectives, and stands out from a distance to approaching motorists on the Licola Road. Its single graceful timber-truss main span enhances the appearance of what would in any case be a beautiful and integral part of the reservoir scenery.

Socially, the Old Glenmaggie township site forms part of a highly favoured tourist-resort area, situated to the north of the populous Latrobe Valley. Large caravan parks are situated in the vicinity, and the memorable big bridge has long provided an important landmark to the many visitors who regularly return to camp and fish along the awe-inspiring Macalister River Valley.

Classified: 04/12/2000

Hermes Number   69993

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/