

Heritage Citation



Remnants of the second Breakfast Creek Bridge (South)

Key details

Addresses	Adjacent 194 Breakfast Creek Road, Newstead, Queensland 4006
Type of place	Bridge
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Geolocation	-27.441572 153.045089
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 October 2000 Date of Citation — December 2000
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (B) Rarity; (H) Historical association

The construction of the second Breakfast Creek Bridge during 1888-89, represented an important achievement for the local government authorities of the time, the Booroodabin Divisional Board and the Shire of Windsor. The

bridge, of which only the remnants remain, was an essential item of infrastructure to the district, providing not only road and tram transport with access, but also later essential services such as phone and power lines.

History

The second Breakfast Creek Bridge was erected during the period 1888/89 and remained in operation until the present bridge was opened in 1958. This second traffic bridge replaced an earlier bridge which had been erected in 1848 and was known as 'Bowen Bridge'. Prior to 'Bowen Bridge' there had been a foot bridge and then later a small punt used to cross the creek.

The second bridge was located approximately 80 to 100 metres upstream from the present Breakfast Creek bridge. The two local government bodies involved in the construction were the Shire of Windsor and the Booroodabin Divisional Board. Representatives from these bodies formed the Breakfast Creek Bridge Board.

The project was supervised by David J Longland, Chief Foreman of the Roads and Bridges Department.

However, right from the initial awarding of the contract to the successful tenders A Overend & Co (builder), the project encountered problems, one of which is reflected in the visible remnants of the bridge. The contract for the bridge was let in two sections: the first, for the supply of material (still visible in the locally quarried stone wall), and the second, for the erection of a bridge, which was fabricated outside of Australia. It was to be an iron bridge carried on masonry abutments and cast-iron piers.

The iron bridge was found to be too short and a bitter dispute erupted as the Bridge Board, the local government authorities, the Engineer for Bridges, the Minister for Works and the local contractors sought to resolve the issue. The fabrication of the bridge outside Australia became a matter of contention. It was argued that the fabrication contract should have been let to a local firm which would have been able to address the problem prior to or during fabrication. It became necessary to procure more funds to complete the bridge and this in turn intensified the disputation. At the time, the economy was entering a down turn after what has been termed the "building boom of the 1880s". The delay in building the bridge further exacerbated the situation. The dispute was eventually settled and the masonry abutments were extended to bridge the distance. The bridge was officially opened on 20 May 1889.

As the public meetings revealed, the bridge was an essential item of infrastructure in the districts which it served. Traffic, especially, was a major concern. Nowhere was this more evident than in the response to one of the proposed solutions to the problem raised by the bridge length, the realignment of the bridge. The response to this proposal, while tempered by inter-council rivalry, was clearly expressed at a public meeting in October 1888:

That this meeting protests against the gross injustice to the Albion district in the contemplated alteration in the line of direction of the bridge, inflicting as it will do serious and irreparable injury to Albion traffic (which is much the heavier and more important of the two) ...

It was then moved that a deputation ask the minister

to take the necessary steps to have the bridge completed without delay, at the same time realtering

the line of direction so as to do justice to both Albion and Hamilton districts.

Inter-council conflict did not cease with the completion of the bridge. During the period 1917 to 1919 there was substantial disagreement between Brisbane Municipal Council and the Hamilton Town Council about the future of the bridge. The latter wanted a new bridge erected because it was a main entrance to the area from Brisbane, while the former would only concede to pay for repairs. The conflict surrounding the bridge provides a clear example of the operating difficulties that occurred between various neighbouring Councils at this time.

The matter lingered on with numerous engineering inspections and denials of liability, with only the “absolutely necessary repairs” being carried out. The matter was eventually settled by the Home Secretary. The Brisbane Municipal Council proposed that £3000/0/0 be spent in repairs. However, the Hamilton Town Council, undoubtedly basing their decision on the fact that the repairs would be a stop-gap measure until a new bridge could be erected, would only concede to spending £2090/0/0 - this, the “Government Advisors considered sufficient”.

The bridge also provided the means by which essential services, such as phone and power lines, crossed the creek. The bridge crossed also to the point from which the trams embarked for Albion and Hamilton. Tram lines had been laid on the bridge in 1889 in anticipation of the line being extended to Hamilton.

By 1950 Council Minutes reveal concern about “the acute angle from which large vehicles were compelled to approach the bridge”. Following an accident it was claimed that there was “the need for some action on the part of the Council to rectify this serious state of affairs which represented a major defect in the City’s transport system”.

In 1953-4 a proposal to replace the Breakfast Creek Bridge was put forward at an estimated cost of £260,000. The new bridge was opened on 29 November 1958 by the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Alderman T. R. Groom.

In March 1998 remnant stone walls and buttresses from the bridge can be seen on both sides of Breakfast Creek. The southern remnants have been incorporated into the Breakfast Creek Wharf restaurant.

Description

The remnants on both the northern and southern banks of Breakfast creek are constructed of dressed rusticated porphyry. The base and projecting end piers are constructed of much larger blocks. The southern remnants have now been incorporated into a recent development and are not as visible as those on the northern bank.

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history as remnants of the development of the area during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Rarity

CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as an example of c19th municipal engineering.

Historical association

CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

as an a remnant of the municipal work of former Brisbane Shire prior to the amalgamation of the City of Brisbane in 1925.

References

1. Brisbane City Council Minutes 1909-56
2. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage Detail Plans
3. *The Brisbane Courier*. 13 July.1888; 6, 17, 19, 26 October. 1888; 1 November. 1888
4. Dept of Works Correspondence, 23 February 1961. Letter from Mr Brown Chief Engineer and Manager.
5. G. Greenwood and J. Lavery. *Brisbane 1859-1959: A History of Local Government*. Brisbane: BCC, 1959.
6. Queensland Women's Historical Association. *A Look Back in Time: A History of Bowen Hills - Newstead and 'The Creek'*. Breakfast Creek: QWHA, 1996.

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Note: This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

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