

## Heritage Citation

### Richmond Bridge

#### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	Road Reserve Wynnum Road, Tingalpa, Queensland 4173
<b>Type of place</b>	Bridge
<b>Period</b>	Postwar 1945-1960
<b>Geolocation</b>	-27.471131 153.107255
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 November 2012 Date of Citation — August 2011
<b>Construction</b>	Structure
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic

Richmond Bridge was constructed between 1955 and 1957 as a replacement for an older timber bridge, nicknamed the 'Death Trap Bridge'. After many years of community anxiety about the safety of the bridge the Brisbane City Council began construction of a new reinforced concrete bridge. Richmond Bridge is a fine example of a post-war civic infrastructure project undertaken by the Brisbane City Council to improve the road corridor from Cannon Hill through to the Moreton Bay area on Wynnum Road.

#### History

In the late nineteenth century the suburb of Cannon Hill was a rural outpost, with large farms and limited transportation into and out of the area. With the coming of the railway line to Cleveland in 1889, Cannon Hill became more accessible and suburban development escalated with increased land subdivision and sale. However, it was after 1913 that Cannon Hill's development intensified due to the construction of the Swift Company Meatworks beside the river. Many of the employees moved to Cannon Hill and as a result a small village community developed. By 1915 the Cannon Hill State School had been built, a reflection of the area's population increase. By the interwar period Cannon Hill had a cluster of stores and a Post Office as well as

several churches.

As early as the late nineteenth century there had been a timber bridge over Bulimba Creek on the border of Cannon Hill and Tingalpa. This bridge was important as it necessitated a transport corridor out to the Moreton Bay suburbs. By the 1920s it became apparent that it was no longer safe. The population of the district had increased and major industries had been established, all contributing to the intensification of the bridge's use and with this came increased danger. In 1927 this danger was acknowledged by the Greater Brisbane City Council that made attempts to improve the safety of the bridge by proposing the installation of Road Lighthouses at both approaches to the bridge. However, by 1935 the original timber bridge was deemed unrepairable and was replaced with a new iron bridge designed by the Works Department, "The new iron bridge across Bulimba Creek, to replace the old Richmond Bridge, has been completed... The length is 152ft. The cost was £1,500"<sup>1</sup>. This new bridge served the community for several decades.

The post-war period heralded major population increases in the Cannon Hill and Tingalpa districts. Industry was also expanded and the use of the Richmond Bridge further intensified. All traffic along Wynnum Road had to travel over Richmond Bridge. By the 1950s the bridge had, once again, become increasingly dangerous for motorists. The Department of Works had monitored the structural safety of the bridge and by 1952 reported that due to the heavy use of the bridge it had become unstable and it would be necessary to limit the volume of traffic travelling over at any one time. The Brisbane City Council Minutes record "This bridge is narrow and as a consequence warning signs are erected at each approach which limit traffic passing over the bridge to the one direction"<sup>2</sup>. The Department of Works recommended a new bridge to be constructed and in the interim certain restrictions would need to be implemented:

- That the maximum gross weight of vehicles...be limited to 9 tons;
- That only one vehicle of a maximum gross weight greater than five tons be permitted the bridge at the one time;
- That the speed limit of all vehicles using the bridge be limited to 5 miles per hour...
- That the co-operation of the Police Department be sought in imposing these restrictions and that authority be granted for the erection of the necessary signs<sup>3</sup>

The locals nicknamed the bridge 'the Death Trap Bridge' as it had been the scene of many serious motor accidents throughout this period.

In November 1954 work began on the construction of a new bridge across Bulimba Creek. The estimated cost of the bridge was £30, 000. *The Courier Mail* reported that the "City Council Works committee chairman... said that the workmen yesterday began sinking piers for the five-span 152ft-long concrete bridge. It would be 29ft wide, including a 5ft footpath, and would carry outbound traffic. The existing bridge would continue to be used to carry inbound traffic, but it would eventually be replaced"<sup>4</sup>. The Brisbane City Council Minutes from 1955-56 record the foundation work for the bridge as being completed. The bridge had been completed by 1957 and opened to traffic, it was described in the *Brisbane City Council Minutes* as

a five-span reinforced concrete bridge totalling 150 feet in length and at the opening of the financial year all foundation work had been completed together with the abutments and piers, and a 90-foot length of deck. During this year the deck was completed and the handrails placed in position, following which the lengthy approach works were constructed. The bridge was opened to traffic in March, 1957<sup>5</sup>.

Once completed, Richmond Bridge not only served a utilitarian purpose but also made an aesthetic contribution to Wynnum Road as it crossed Bulimba Creek. The plastered concrete abutments, the symmetrical painted steel handrails and posts across the bridge and the high arches below the road added a sense of permanency, safety

and beauty to the once precarious crossing.

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## 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:

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#### Historical

##### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as a reinforced concrete bridge constructed between 1955-57 Richmond Bridge demonstrates the post-war need for reliable and safe infrastructure to meet the needs of the area's growing population and intensification of industry.

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#### Representative

##### CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as a well designed reinforced concrete bridge constructed between 1955-57 it is demonstrative of the Brisbane City Council's post-war infrastructure building program.

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#### Aesthetic

##### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as a finely crafted local landmark over Bulimba Creek that contributes to the visual amenity of Wynnum Road at the border of Cannon Hill and Tingalpa.

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## References

1. *The Courier Mail*, Friday 17 May 1935, p12
2. Brisbane City Council Minutes, 1952-53, p522
3. Brisbane City Council Minutes, 1952-53, p522 & p523
4. *The Courier Mail*, Tuesday 16 November 1954, p16
5. Brisbane City Council Minutes, 1956-57, p26
6. University of Queensland, 'Queensland Places: Cannon Hill'
7. Cannon Hill School of Arts: 75th Anniversary 1923-1998, Cannon Hill Community Association, 1998
8. Brisbane City Council Building Cards
9. Brisbane City Council Minutes, 1927, p135
10. *The Brisbane Courier*, Wednesday 9 March 1927, p7
11. *The Courier Mail*, Friday 17 May, 1935

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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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