

Victorian Heritage Database Report
RAILWAY VIADUCT



Location:

OVER MOORABOOL RIVER, MOORABOOL AND BATESFORD, GREATER GEELONG CITY, GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H1105

Listing Authority: VHR

Heritage Overlay Number: HO36

Statement of Significance:

What is significant?

The 396 m long railway line viaduct over the Moorabool River was completed in 1862. It featured nine massive bluestone piers up to 34 metres in height, massive bluestone abutments, and ten deck type warren truss spans of 36.9 metres. Intermediate steel trestles were introduced in 1918, when the original metal trusses were replaced with metal steel girders. A new concrete deck was installed in 1983. With the addition of the third rail, the bridge currently carries the National standard gauge track.

How is it significant?

The Railway Viaduct is of architectural, historic, and scientific significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Railway Viaduct over the Moorabool River demonstrates a technical accomplishment in the history of bridge construction during the 19th century. At the time of its erection it was regarded as the greatest engineering feat in Australasia, being the largest early metal truss bridge in Australia, until the construction of the Hawkesbury River Bridge in 1889. The viaduct demonstrates the sequence of usage over time by the alteration of the structure and the introduction of intermediate trestle piers in 1918, to accommodate progressively larger locomotives that travelled over the bridge.

The Viaduct is architecturally significant as an extraordinary example of a large metal railway bridge. It remained the longest in Victoria until 1875 when the Echuca girder bridge was built and is currently the second longest in the state, after the 869.9m railway bridge at Stratford over the Avon River (1887). The viaduct's original deck-type warren trusses were an example of design by the international engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, who was also responsible for designing the Great Western Railway, from Bristol to London. The replacement metal girders are also of significant size for their age.

The Railway Viaduct demonstrates an important historical association with the important expansion of the rail network in the 1860s between Geelong and Ballarat, which became Victoria's first main trunk line. The 1918 modifications to the structure, instigated by Professor WC Kernot, Professor of Engineering, University of Melbourne, were designed by A Goudy, an engineer with Victorian Railways, and fabricated by Dorman, Long and Co. Ltd.

Heritage Study / Consultant	
Construction Date Range	1858 - 1862
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	GREATER GEELONG CITY, GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	1921
Property number	

This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online