

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name	Clifton Bridge	File No
Address	Darebin Creek ALPHINGTON (off) Separation Street ALPHINGTON	Grading 2008 Local
Date		
Building Type	Foot Bridge	
Assessment by		Extent of Overlay Refer recommendations



Condition

Heritage Status	VHR - HI - PS Yes		
Designer / Architect	No information held	Architectural Style	Late Twentieth Century (c.1960- c.2000)
Maker / Builder	No information held		

Integrity

High

History and Historical Context

Thematic context

Theme: 5. Building suburban Darebin Sub-theme: 5.5 Creating public landscapes

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Contextual history of Darebin Parklands

The Darebin Parklands, along with the adjoining Rockbeare Park on the eastern side of the Darebin Creek (in the City of Banyule), forms a park that has considerable significance to the communities of both Darebin and Banyule for its natural and cultural values.

Darebin Parkland had been John Sharp Adams' farm Rockleigh in the 1880s and 90s, and remnant fruit trees from his orchard still exist. From 1906 Adams worked a large bluestone quarry on the property. The quarry was taken over by Albion Quarries Ltd in 1957 and by the time of its closure in 1965, 600 million tonnes of rock had been removed. In 1966 the quarry site was leased by Northcote Council to become the Alphington tip. The hole was filled by 1975 (www.dcmc.org.au/parklands/history). Meanwhile, land to the north of the tip continued to be used as for agriculture and grazing.

After the tip closed in 1975 local residents campaigned for the land to be made into a park. Northcote Council purchased the site and revegetation works were undertaken by park rangers and local residents to restore the natural bushland. The Rockbeare Conservation Group, formed in 1973, carried out weeding and other restoration works in the area. This volunteer organisation is now known as the Darebin Parklands Association. Darebin Parklands is regarded as a pioneer of urban land reclamation and revegetation (RPCG).

History of Clifton Bridge

The Clifton Bridge is an example of the dedication and hard work of local volunteers from both sides of the Darebin Creek. Before the bridge was built in 1979, the volunteers from the east side, including school students, had to wade across the creek to work on the Alphington side of the Park (Course).

The bridge was designed by Sidney Clifton, a senior lecturer in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Melbourne. The rather unusual concrete design was approved by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works before construction of the bridge commenced. Heidelberg and Northcote Councils shared the cost of the materials (Course).

Members of the Darebin Parklands Association assisted Clifton with the construction of the wooden formwork at his home. The formwork was put in place across the creek on a winter's afternoon in 1979, and, as it was getting dark, the concrete was poured by the light of kerosene lamps and torches (Course).

Hundreds of people came to the opening of the bridge. The ribbon was cut by the Federal Minister Brian Howe on behalf of the Darebin side, and Bruce Skeggs, the Member for Ivanhoe for the Banyule community (Course).

The bridge was the only footbridge along the Darebin Creek between the Darebin Parklands and Northland Shopping Centre, until two wooden bridges were built as part of rehabilitation works along the creek. These bridges were vandalised, but the little 'home made' Clifton bridge has never had problems with vandalism (Course).

Secondary sources

Course, Sue, 'Information about the Clifton Bridge, Darebin Parklands'

Rockbeare Park Conservation Group (RPCG), 'Darebin Parklands: a study of a land reclamation and conservation project at Ivanhoe and Alphington, Victoria', 1981

www.dcmc.org.au/parklands/history.

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

No information held

Description

Physical Description 1

The Clifton Bridge is a small single arch pedestrian bridge constructed of concrete poured in-situ. It has a simple wrought iron pipe rail. It spans between natural rock outcrops situated in a bend of the Darebin Creek between Darebin Parklands and Rockbeare Park.

Physical Condition

Good

Conservation Policy

Objectives

To conserve the fabric that contributes to the significance of the bridge as constructed in 1979.

Policy Basis

The Clifton Bridge is in good condition and is intact. The emphasis of the policy is therefore upon encouraging and supporting on-going maintenance and repair and to avoid the need to undertake major catch-up or remedial work.

Guidelines (General)

In order to conserve the heritage significance of this place, it policy to:

-Conserve the fabric of the bridge and in particular to:

Encourage the accurate restoration or reconstruction of missing or modified elements on the basis of available evidence.

- Encourage the removal of non-significant or intrusive elements, particularly where this would assist in revealing or interpreting the significance of the place.

-Encourage a contextual approach to additions or alterations that is complementary in form, scale and materials to the elements of primary significance, but is clearly contemporary in design.

-Discourage the demolition of the bridge except where it can be demonstrated that:

- The bridge is structurally unsound and cannot feasibly be repaired without undertaking significant alterations that would diminish the integrity of the bridge, and

- The proposed replacement building embodies design excellence that is complementary in form, scale and materials to the elements of primary significance, but is clearly contemporary in approach.

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Demolition of part of the bridge may be allowed when it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the responsible authority that its demolition or removal will not adversely affect the significance of the place and, as appropriate:

- It will assist in the long term conservation or maintenance of the place, or
- It will upgrade the bridge to meet contemporary standards such as safety or universal access.

Guidelines (Specific)

None specified.

Review of significance and policy

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this citation is accurate, it is possible that more detailed investigation may reveal further information about the significance of the place. For example, in most cases an internal inspection was not made of buildings at the time of initial assessment. In the time since the place was first assessed it is also possible that the condition of buildings or trees may have changed.

The information contained in this citation should therefore be reviewed at the time that it is proposed to make changes to the property. This would likely require a more detailed assessment of any significant or contributory element that is affected by any proposed buildings or works. Once this more detailed assessment has been made, a review of the significance of the place and the conservation policy should be carried out by Council's Heritage Adviser or an appropriately qualified professional.

Comparative Analysis

The Clifton Bridge may be compared with other environmental or civic improvement projects initiated by the community in Darebin that date back to the early twentieth century that were a source of community pride and reflected the cultural attitudes of the time. In the early to mid-twentieth century the majority of these projects focussed upon civic improvement and 'civilising' the landscape. These include such projects as the landscaping of the entrance to Northcote along High Street, and the landscaping of St George's Road. After World War Two the focus shifted toward rehabilitating and restoring the natural environment and much of the works involved restoring natural bushland and removing weed infestation. The Clifton Bridge is notable as a rare example of built structure associated with these works.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Clifton Bridge is an example of the dedication and hard work of local volunteers from both sides of the Darebin Creek. Before the bridge was built in 1979, the volunteers from the east side, including school students, had to wade across the creek to work on the Alphington side of the Park. The bridge was designed by Sidney Clifton, a senior lecturer in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Melbourne. The rather unusual concrete design was approved by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works before construction of the bridge commenced. Heidelberg and Northcote Councils shared the cost of the materials. Members of the Darebin Parklands Association assisted Clifton with the construction of the wooden formwork at his home. The formwork was put in place across the creek on a winter's afternoon in 1979, and, as it was getting dark, the concrete was poured by the light of kerosene lamps and torches. Hundreds of people came to the opening of the bridge. The ribbon was cut by the Federal Minister Brian Howe on behalf of the Darebin side, and Bruce Skeggs, the Member for Ivanhoe for the Banyule community. The bridge was the only

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

footbridge along the Darebin Creek between the Darebin Parklands and Northland Shopping Centre, until two wooden bridges were built as part of rehabilitation works along the creek.

How is it significant?

The Clifton Bridge in Darebin Parklands is of local historic and social significance to Darebin City.

Why is it significant?

Historically, the Clifton Bridge is significant as a place that has important associations with the work of volunteer groups to rehabilitate the Darebin Creek and its environs in the latter part of the twentieth century. It is significant for its associations with the Darebin Parklands Association, a group that has played an important role in improving the environment of the Darebin Creek and its environs. The Clifton Bridge is socially significant as a place that has important symbolic and cultural associations as a building that was built as a result of community initiative and with community involvement in its planning and construction. (AHC criteria A.4, G.1, H.1)

Levels of significance

The following levels of significance apply to this place:

Primary: The bridge to the extent of its 1979 fabric

Secondary: Setting

Limited/Not significant: None specified

Assessment Against Criteria

Historic

RNE Criterion A.4

Importance for association with events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, State, region or community.

The Clifton Bridge is considered to meet Criterion A.4 as it has important associations with the work of volunteer groups to rehabilitate the Darebin Creek and its environs in the latter part of the twentieth century.

RNE Criterion H.1

Importance for close associations with individuals or organizations whose activities have been significant within the history of the nation, State, or region.

The Clifton Bridge is considered to meet Criterion H.1 as a place that is associated with the Darebin Parklands Association, a group that has played an important role in improving the environment of the Darebin Creek and its environs.

Social

RNE Criterion G.1

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Importance as a place highly valued by a community for reasons of religious, spiritual, symbolic, cultural, educational, or social associations.

The Clifton Bridge is considered to meet Criterion H.1 as a place that has important symbolic and cultural associations as a building that was built as a result of community initiative and with community involvement in its planning and construction.

Recommendations 2008

External Paint Controls

No

Internal Alteration Controls

No

Tree Controls

No

Fences & Outbuildings

Yes

Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted

No

Incorporated Plan

None Specified

Aboriginal Heritage Place

No

Other Recommendations

It is recommended that the Clifton Bridge be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the Darebin Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown below. The extent of registration is bridge and surrounding land to a minimum extent of 2m.

References