

Building:	Victoria Bridge and Tramwire Supports	Significance:	A
Address:	Victoria Street, Yarra River, Richmond	Melway Map Ref:	2D H2
Building Type:	Road Bridge	Construction Date:	1884, 1916
Architect:	Bridge: L H Chase; Tramwire Supports: Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust and J H Fraser	Builder:	Unknown



Intactness:		Condition:	
G[] F[x] P[]		G[x] F[] P[]	
Existing Heritage Listings:		Recommended Heritage Listings:	
Victorian Heritage Register	[]	Victorian Heritage Register	[x]
Register of the National Estate	[]	Register of the National Estate	[x]
National Trust	[]	Heritage Overlay Controls	[x]

History

The proposal for a bridge over the Yarra River at the end of Victoria Street was first raised by local residents in 1879. The Victoria Street Bridge Committee was formed, comprising residents of Hawthorn Kew, Collingwood and Richmond, in order to raise the necessary funds to pay a percentage of the total costs. The following year it was agreed that a bridge be built with Government and Council assistance, and a competition was held for its design. The competition was won by two university students, L H Chase and J H Fraser, who worked for the Public Works Department. Despite objections from professionals to awarding first prize to students, the design of the bridge was approved and construction completed by March 1884, at a cost of £10,000. The bridge was formally opened by the Mayor of Richmond, Mr John Adam, at a grand opening ceremony. A steam roller was driven over the bridge to demonstrate its structural stability, carrying several council members, before it was opened to public traffic.

In 1916, the privately operated Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust extended their existing electric tram network to include a line across the River to Cotham Road, Kew. At this time, two ornamental tram wire structures were erected on the Victoria Bridge.¹

Description

The Victoria Bridge is a concrete and iron road bridge which links Victoria Street in the City of Yarra in the west with Barkers Road in the City of Boroondara to the east. The bridge structure comprises a series of pairs of circular hollow section columns, cross-braced with iron members, which support diagonally-trussed iron girders. The reinforced concrete roadway is not original, and carries four lanes of traffic, double tramlines and has a footpath on each side. The balustrading comprises simple vertical iron latticed panels between universal columns. The metal handrail is a curved C-section.

The two 1916 ornamental tram wire supports are simple steel structures with supports on either side of the roadway. The curved brackets are embellished with steel scrollwork.

Comparative Examples

Wallen Road Bridge, Yarra River, Hawthorn

Ornamental Tramwire Supports, Hawthorn Bridge

Ornamental Tramwire Supports, Dandenong Road, Prahran

Ornamental Tramwire Supports, Victoria Parade, Fitzroy / Collingwood

Significance

The Victoria Street Bridge is of local historical significance. Constructed in 1884, the bridge is one of the few 19th century bridges remaining in the metropolitan area. Construction of the bridge is associated with the rapid growth of the suburb during the boom period, facilitating further development across the Yarra to the east. Although altered, the design of the bridge is of interest, being the winning competition entry of two university students.

The ornamental tram wire supports, added in 1916, are of State historical significance. The supports are rare survivors of the early development of the electrical tram network, constructed prior to the amalgamation of the privately operated companies into the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board.

1 All information for this history has been taken from National Trust File No. 1599.