



CHANDLER HIGHWAY UPGRADE

NEW LIFE FOR AN OLD BRIDGE

The Chandler Highway Upgrade is converting the original 128-year-old heritage bridge into a walking and cycling path.

New life for a local landmark

We respect the bridge's historical significance and will be undertaking refurbishment works, to ensure its heritage value is maintained and can be used for many years to come.

Once the refurbishment works are complete the heritage bridge will:

- Become a shared walking and cycling path.
- Link to the Anniversary and Main Yarra trails.
- Include seating and rest areas.
- Feature interpretive signage with historic imagery, telling the story and evolution of the bridge.



Refurbishment works

To restore the bridge to its original condition we will remove what is currently covering it, including graffiti and paint.

As part of this work, experts in heritage refurbishment will remove lead paint from the lattice truss structure.

Above: Chandler Highway bridge c1957

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We will then paint the wrought iron trusses in their original colour, repair damaged mortar and complete any necessary repairs to the stonework and brickwork.

Refurbishment works are expected to be complete in late 2019.

History of the bridge

The original Chandler Highway bridge was built by contractors Graham & Wadick as part of the Outer Circle Railway in 1889-90.

The bridge was part of a grand plan to develop new eastern suburbs and provide a rail bypass between Gippsland and Melbourne's livestock saleyards and Spencer Street goods yards.

It is one of only four lattice truss bridges built in the state of Victoria.

As a young engineer aged in his early twenties, John Monash was the supervising engineer for the contractors on the railway works.

Sections of the railway line closed after just two years of operation due to mismanagement and the effects of the 1890s economic depression. For approximately 30 years following its closure the bridge was used only by pedestrians.

In the late 1920's, it was redesigned as a road bridge and named after prominent businessman Alfred Edward Chandler, Minister for Public Works (1928-1929). The bridge served as an important north-south vehicle crossing for 89 years.

Heritage listing

In 2016 we applied for the bridge to be State Heritage listed to formally recognise its structural significance and importance to the community. On 30 June 2016, the bridge was added to the Victorian Heritage Register.

Respecting the past

To preserve the rich history and culture of the heritage bridge, we'll:

- Install rail tracks into the new heritage bridge, highlighting its original use as part of part of the Outer Circle Railway. Text will be scribed onto these rail tracks from Dacre Smyth's 1979 poem about the bridge and the words from the original petition to build the Outer Circle Railway in the 1880s.
- Add signage along the length of the bridge, which will trace the key events of the bridge's history in chronological order.
- Install glass panels under seating areas, allowing you to look at the key structural features on the underside of the bridge.

Above: Dacre Smyth, Chandler Highway Bridge, 1979

Source: Dacre Smyth, Bridges of the Yarra: a book of paintings poetry and prose, 1979

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