

**Heritage Item #**

|                                   |                                    |  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| MI Reference: 28<br>HCWA No: 3549 | Place Name: Poole Street<br>Bridge | Other Name/s: West<br>Northam Footbridge |
|                                   |                                    | Date of Review: October<br>2021          |



|   |  |
|---|--|
| Address: Poole Street (spanning over<br>Avon River), Northam  | Lot No:<br>Property Key:<br>Plan Diagram:<br>Vol Folio:<br>Assess No: In front of A15190 |
| Locality: Northam   | GPS:   |
| Current Use: Former Bridge  | Original Use(s): Bridge  |
| <b>HERITAGE LISTINGS</b>  |  |
| Listings: State Register of Heritage Places (1996)<br>Statewide Large Timber Structures Survey (1998)<br>Classified National Trust (1995)   |  |
| <b>CONSTRUCTION</b>   |  |
| Date of Construction: 1917  |  |
| Architect / Builder: P.V. O'Brien (Engineer)  |  |
| Architectural Style:  |  |
| <b>PHYSICAL EVIDENCE</b>  |  |
| <p>Description:</p> <p>Poole Street Bridge is located at the northern end of Poole Street to the west of the Northam town centre. The footbridge crosses the Avon River and is approximately 150m long and 2m wide.</p> <p>The structure consists of large timber piers supporting a system of timber bearers, joists and planks. The piers have diagonal cross bracing that is connected by large iron bolts. The walkway is enclosed by a rounded steel balustrade with a wire mesh infill. The bridge is in poor condition with several failed bearers to the southern end. Many timber planks have collapsed causing the bridge to be unusable. A Keep Out sign is located at each end.</p> <p>Commemorative plaques and additional historical information are located at the southern end of the Bridge. The bridge is located along the Dorntj Koorliny 'Walking Together' Track, which is a loop trail around Northam.</p> |  |

|  |
|--|
| <p>The bridge is at the eastern most end of the 70km long multi use 'Kep Track' from Mundaring Weir to Northam. In its inception the Track was designed to continue across the bridge and terminate at the old Northam Railway Station; however, lack of funding has prevented this from happening.</p>  |
| <p>Condition: Poor</p>   |
| <p><b>HISTORICAL</b></p>   |
| <p>Notes:</p> <p>The bridge was associated with the development of the Goldfields Water Supply (G.W.S.) Scheme and is representative of wooden bridges built by the PWD in the early twentieth century. It was built to carry the G.W.S. pipeline and to provide a footbridge for the townspeople of Northam. It was the only major river crossing bridge built for the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme, and is a rare example in Western Australia of a structure designed to be both a pipeline bridge and a footbridge, although it is no longer used for either.</p> <p>The bridge linked two sides of the river, providing easy access to the Northam Railway Station, West Northam, and the nearby shops, hotel, houses and the railway workshop. In summer, Northam children used the bridge for access to Burlong Pool, and in the 1950s the bridge was well used by the many European migrants who temporarily settled at the Holden Migrant Camp.</p> <p>The pipeline was shifted in 1958 to a new bridge in Burn Street. As of September 2021, the bridge is not in use and closed off to the public due to poor condition.</p>  |
| <p>Theme: Community Services and Utilities</p>   |
| <p>Associations: Water Corporation</p>   |
| <p>Heritage Assessment or Conservation Plan:</p>   |
| <p>Public Access: No</p>   |
| <p><b>SIGNIFICANCE</b></p>   |
| <p>Level of Integrity: High</p>  |
| <p>Level of Authenticity: High</p>   |
| <p>Statement of Significance:</p> <p>Poole Street Bridge is of cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The place, in its tranquil setting of the Avon River at a point where the river is in a relatively natural state, has landmark value. The style of timber construction, its regularity and uniformity of timber piers and the line of its footway, is juxtaposed against the natural state of the river. The strong contrast between industrial structure and natural setting contributes to the landmark quality of the place.</li> <li>• The place is closely associated with the development of the Goldfields Water supply pipeline from Perth to Kalgoorlie in the first decades of the century.</li> <li>• The place is representative of the construction of the pipeline through Northam at a time when the town was experiencing growth to the east, and the consolidation of its importance as a major rural centre. It is associated with the growth in prosperity of the town and district of Northam.</li> <li>• The place is valued by the community as a visible reminder of the decades of use by the population of West Northam during Northam's period of growth in the first quarter of the century, and by many workers and children, including migrants stationed at the Holden Camp, in the 1950s.</li> <li>• The place is a rare structure in Western Australia. It is the only bridge built for the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme at a major river crossing which serves as both pipeline bridge and footbridge.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Level of Significance: Exceptional</p>  |
| <p>Heritage Category: 1</p>  |

Additional Photographs



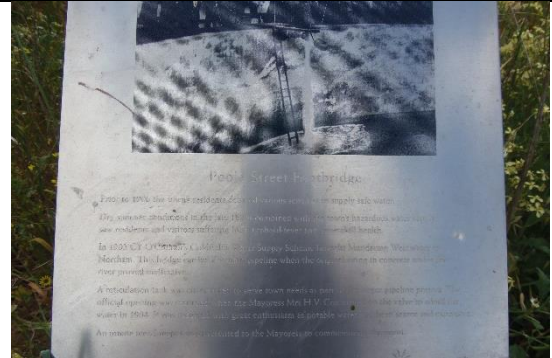
View from South end  
Source: Municipal Heritage Inventory  
2012



South end  
Source: Stephen Carrick Architects  
October 2021



Damage to timber pillars  
Source: Stephen Carrick Architects  
October 2021



Historical plaque  
Source: Stephen Carrick Architects  
October 2021