

Area: Geraldton	Place Number: 333	Category: 2
Assessment Date: 06/11/1996	Last Revision Date: 10/03/2010	
HCWA Number: 13726	Asset ID: MCH126738	

PLACE DETAILS

Name:	Fmr Railway Bridge, Chapman River
Other Names:	NorthWest Coastal Hwy (adjacent to)
Type of Place:	Bridge
Address:	NorthWest Coastal Hwy (adjacent to)
Suburb:	Spalding

LOCATION

Map Reference: 16.21	GPS Northing: 6819818.00	GPS Easting: 268536.000
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Photo Description:

2/06/2007
Rod Milne
Old Railway Bridge over Chapman River.

SITE DETAILS

Lot No.:		Assess No.:	
Reserv No.:	17001	Vol/Fol:	
Dia/Plan:			

USE OF PLACE

Original Use:	Railway Bridge	Occupied:	Not Occupied
Current Use:	Footbridge		
Ownership:			
Public Access:	Yes		

DESCRIPTION

Walls:	(Pylons) Concrete	Roof:	(Deck) Timber
Condition:	Good	Integrity:	
Original fabric:			
Modifications:			

This narrow bridge is set high above the Chapman River on tall concrete piers. The bridge has three steel truss girders with a timber deck. To each corner there is a capped concrete abutment, and the midstream piers are also concrete. The bridge has a steel mesh fence balustrade and is currently open to pedestrian traffic. The remnants of the original timber railway bridge are visible immediately to the west of this bridge, downstream of this structure, with the current North West Coastal Highway bridge just upstream. In July-August 2010 a concrete decking was poured over the timber deck.

HISTORY

Construction Date:	1922	Source:	WAGR Commissioners Report
Architect:	Unknown		
Builder:	Unknown		

Opened in 1879, the first railway bridge over the Chapman River formed part of the first Government railway in the State and provided for direct access between the Northampton Mineral Field and the port of Geraldton. The first bridge was replaced by the existing bridge in 1922. Although the date 1917 is cast into the steel supports, the WA Commissioners Report advises that the structure was not commenced until February 1920 and completed in March 1922. (National Trust of WA

MidWest Branch, Chapman River Regional Park Heritage Study, 1993, Section 4.2)

Constance Norris describes the railway bridge as having: "two tiny places either side for those foolish enough to be on it when a train was coming." (Norris, C., Memories of Champion Bay or Old Geraldton, Soroptimist International of Geraldton, 1989, p29) Those 'tiny places' were in fact refuges used by the railway fitters working on the line and also from time to time unlawfully by local residents and fishermen. The railway line was closed in April 1957, prior to which this bridge carried trains bound for Northampton, Ajana and Yuna. In the last months of the line's operation, three trains a week rumbled over the bridge on the way to Yuna, as well as two a week to Ajana and another only going as far as Northampton. In those last days of operation this steel bridge carried diesel locomotives (from 1955) as well as traditional steam engines. The railway bridge was retained after the line closed in 1957 and is currently used as a footbridge.

HISTORIC THEMES

HCWA:	202 Rail and light rail transport
AHC:	3.8.6 Building and maintaining railways

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although not the original railway bridge, this bridge has historic significance being having been built in the 1920s and having formed an important part of the Geraldton - Northampton - Ajana rail line. This bridge is now used as a pedestrian river crossing over a deep ravine of the Chapman River and has social significance given that it provides access to Spalding Park on the south bank of the river. Further this bridge is a good view point to observe the remains of the original railway bridge.

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

Management Category:	2
Level of Significance:	CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE: Very important to the heritage of the locality.
Management Recommendation:	Conservation of the place is highly recommended. Any proposed change should not unduly impact on the heritage values of the place and should retain significant fabric wherever feasible.

OTHER LISTINGS

No other listings

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

National Trust of WA MidWest Branch, "Chapman River Regional Park Heritage Study", 1993.

Norris, C., "Memories of Champion Bay or Old Geraldton", Soroptimist International of Geraldton, 1989.

GLLSPC - Chapman Road.

WAGR Commissioners Reports.

"Rails to Ajana", ARHS Bulletin.

"The Yuna Branch", ARHS Bulletin.

OTHER PHOTOS



Photo Description:

6/11/1996

Suba & Grundy

Looking north along footbridge.