



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

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STATE HERITAGE LISTING FOR GLEBE ISLAND BRIDGE

Heritage Minister Robyn Parker today announced that Sydney's 110 year old Glebe Island Bridge has been placed on the State Heritage List as one of the earliest examples of an electric-powered swing bridge in the world.

Ms Parker said it is one of only two operable examples of this type of bridge remaining in NSW, the other being Pyrmont Bridge which was listed on the State Heritage Register in 2002.

"Both these bridges were designed by Percy Allen, who was appointed Engineer-in-Chief for bridge design in 1896," Ms Parker said.

"At both Pyrmont and Glebe, Allen designed an electrically-operated swing bridge – the earliest use of electrical power for this purpose in the world.

"The bridges were considered great feats of engineering for the period and deservedly drew international attention and acclaim."

"Glebe Island Bridge has been an important item of infrastructure in the history of Sydney for more than 90 years."

"The history of this crossing, going back to 1892, is closely associated with the economic and social development of Sydney at the beginning of the last century."

Chair of the Heritage Council of NSW, Professor Lawrence Neild, said the bridge was part of the 'five bridges' route from the city to the northern and western suburbs.

"In the mid-1800s, Sydney was a mix of commerce, retail, residences, manufacturing and factories, with the botanic gardens and Domain to the east, port activities to the west and north and roads at its southern border leading to the inner western suburbs via Parramatta Road," Professor Neild said.

"By mid-century, it had become clear that a shorter route out of the city was available, across Johnstons Bay to Glebe Island and on to Annandale.

"The first Glebe Island Bridge was a private toll-bridge completed in 1862, however after 30 years, the bridge was in need of extensive repairs and the Public Works Department began planning a replacement bridge.

"Glebe Island Bridge was opened in 1903 and operated from that year until 1995, when it was decommissioned with the opening of the Anzac Bridge."

Inclusion on the State Heritage Register ensures that the future management or development of listed sites is supported with advice from the state's leading heritage organisation, the Heritage Council of NSW.