

SUMMARY OF STATE HERITAGE PLACE

REGISTER ENTRY

**Entry in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the
*Heritage Places Act 1993***

NAME: Murray Bridge Transport Precinct PLACE NO.: 26373

**ADDRESS: Murray Bridge, SA 5253,
Place bordered by: Wharf Road, East Terrace, Bridge Street,
Railway Terrace, Mannum Road, Hume Reserve Road and the
Southern Riverbank; Including the Murray Bridge Road Bridge and
Murray Bridge Railway Bridge (bridges extend to Long Flat Road).**

Designated as a site of Archaeological Significance

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, including five already listed State Heritage Places: Murray Bridge Road Bridge (SHP: 10287), Murray Bridge Railway Bridge [Metal Truss] (SHP: 13826), Murray Bridge Wharf & Hand Crane (SHP: 13828), Murray Bridge Railway Station & Refreshment Rooms (SHP: 13820), Round House (former Murray Bridge Works Superintendent House) (SHP: 13577), is significant for its role in the development of river and rail transport in the colony of South Australia. The River Murray was an important economic artery for South Australia, and Murray Bridge played a special role as the site of the first road crossing point, as well as the location of an important early wharf used to export goods to the Victorian goldfields.

In the 1880s the original Murray Bridge was converted for use by rail, and the overland railway route from Adelaide to Melbourne was opened. The railway station, depot and associated buildings and structures that were developed between the important rail-route and the wharf demonstrate a rare juxtaposition of rail and river transport.

The Murray Bridge Transport Precinct also demonstrates some of the upgrades and efficiency measures instigated by the South Australian Railways under the leadership of William Alfred Webb (c1925). At that time, a second rail bridge was constructed to support larger gauge trains, and the transport depot was expanded. Webb's

resignation from the South Australian Railways in 1930 marked the beginning of a slow decline, which saw the removal of some services and parts of the depot to Taillem Bend, and eventually the closure of the station in the late 1970s. This decline mirrored the changing priorities for transport and travel during the mid-twentieth century.

RELEVANT CRITERIA (under section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*)

(a) it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.

The Murray Bridge Transport Precinct demonstrates important aspects of the pattern and evolution of the South Australian railways at a place where it interacted with River Murray trade. The Murray Bridge was the first bridge crossing of the River Murray in South Australia; constructed between 1874 and 1879, it was quickly repurposed in 1885 by the South Australian Railways to be used as a crucial crossing for the overland route to Melbourne. The depot and wharf quickly developed around the new bridge and became an important transport precinct for South Australia where goods and passengers on river-boats could be quickly transferred to rail.

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct also shows the way in which William Alfred Webb instituted reforms and efficiencies throughout the SAR c1925. Webb's vision for the railways required larger locomotives which required the construction of a sturdier bridge across the River Murray as well as rationalisations of dilapidated depot infrastructure; the refreshment rooms and various buildings were upgraded, while other structures were dismantled and reused at Taillem Bend. After the resignation of Webb in 1930 the SAR slowly lost prominence in South Australia and operations at Murray Bridge were gradually reduced until the late 1970's which mirrored the changing priorities for transport and travel during the mid to late twentieth century.

(b) it has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.

The Murray Bridge Transport Precinct is a rare example of a railway station and depot complex that operated alongside a River Murray wharf, combining river and rail transport. The place includes elements that are rare for railway depots such as significant earthworks including cuttings, tunnels and dual bridges that relate specifically to the choosing of the Murray Bridge site as the location.

(c) it may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the state's history, including its natural history.

The Murray Bridge Transport Precinct has long been associated with rail and river trade, demonstrating continuous occupation from the 1870's. As expected of a site of this nature and size, there are a number of features, both tangible and intangible, that could be considered to be of State Heritage significance.

With regard to less tangible heritage, this site was the first railway complex in South Australia to have an archaeological assessment. The assessment found that the site is likely to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's rail and river-trade history. Generally sites identified as likely to yield

potentially significant archaeological deposits include locations where buildings or structures have been demolished or removed. However, there are also other sites that are of technological significance and are wholly or partially intact and/or may benefit from archaeological investigation. These places vary from sites of minor utility buildings through to major buildings and human-made features such as the original cutting and the turntable. Other potential sites for archaeological investigations include the vicinity of the reserve adjacent to the wharf that relate to the historic (1870's) wharf sheds, and the location of the later River Murray Shipping Company sheds & slipway.

STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESIGNATION (section 14(7)(b) of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*)

Historical research and physical survey indicate that the Murray Bridge Transport Precinct has many areas of archaeological potential. These areas mostly relate to places where buildings have been removed or demolished, some relate to sites of technological significance and others relate to excavations such as the railway cuttings and spur lines. Generally the archaeological sites can be expected to provide technological information or data on construction materials, practices and designs.

Archaeological sites identified as having high archaeological potential include:

- Site of removed Old Cottage (Detail Plan ref: 33)
- Pumping Station footings and earthworks (Detail Plan ref: 36)
- The site of the removed locomotive workshops (Detail Plan ref: 32)

Archaeological sites identified as having moderate archaeological potential include:

- Site of removed Depot and Motor Sheds (Detail Plan ref: 34)
- Site of removed Cubicles (Detail Plan ref: 35)
- Original cutting (Detail Plan ref: 10)
- Site of removed goods shed (Detail Plan ref: 37)
- Sites of other removed buildings in wharf precinct (Detail Plan ref: 38)
- Site of South Australian Railways Institute (now relocated, Detail Plan ref: 39).

SITE PLAN

PLACE NO: 26373

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct

Murray Bridge, SA, 5253

Place bordered by: Wharf Road, East Terrace, Bridge Street, Railway Terrace, Mannum Road, Hume Reserve Road and the Southern Riverbank; Including the Murray Bridge Road Bridge and Murray Bridge Railway Bridge (bridges extend to Long Flat Road).

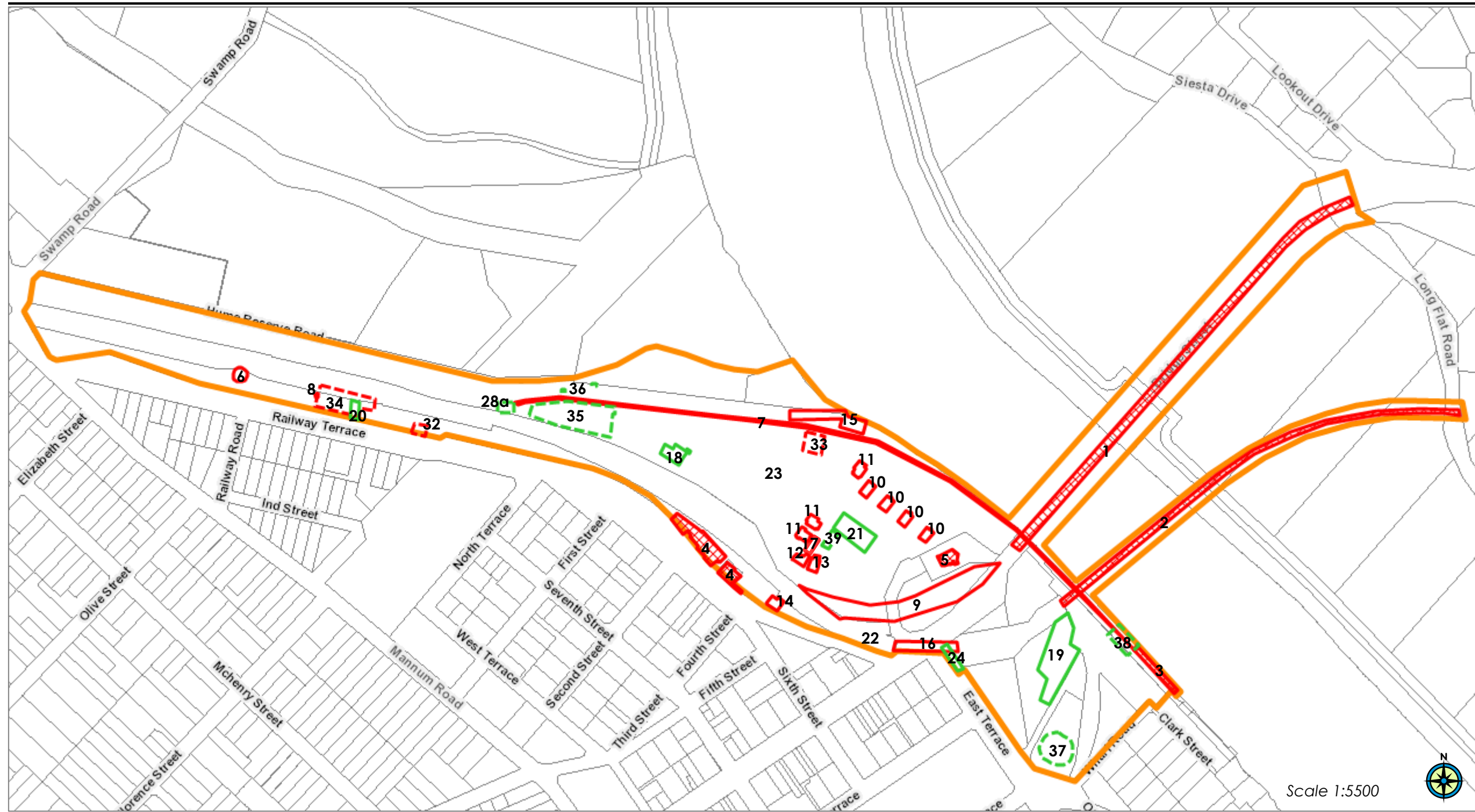


Murray Bridge Transport Precinct Site Plan

N↑

— The boundary of Murray Bridge Transport Precinct (SHP: 26373)

DETAIL PLAN – Plan indicating significant components and archaeological sites at Murray Bridge Transport Precinct



- Individually listed State Heritage Places within place:**
1. Murray Bridge Road Bridge (SHP: 10287)
 2. Murray Bridge Railway Bridge [Metal Truss] (SHP: 13826)
 3. Murray Bridge Wharf & Hand Crane (SHP: 13828)
 4. Murray Bridge Railway Station & Refreshment Rooms (SHP: 13820)
 5. Round House (former Murray Bridge Works Superintendent House) (SHP: 13577)
- Components of High Significance**
6. Edge Moor Iron Co. of Delaware USA turntable 1883
 7. Railway spur line adjacent to riverbank
 8. Water Column
 9. Original railway cutting including broad gauge tracks (also a component of high archaeological significance)
 10. Four (4) stone railway cottages, 1910
 11. Three (3) concrete railway cottages
 12. Timber signalman's cottage, c1883 including annexes
 13. Timber railway office buildings including annexes
 14. Station Masters (Foreman's) residence
 15. River Murray Shipping Company Shed and Slipway
 16. Rail Tunnel under Bridge Street
- Components of Medium Significance**
17. Timber South Australian Railways Institute
 18. Stone railway (loco) barracks, 1910
 19. Former goods yard, town wharf including remaining walls and infrastructure
 20. Loading ramp
 21. South Australian Railways tennis courts
 22. Pepper Trees adjacent to the 1879 cutting
 23. Historic exotic vegetation
 24. Row of four (4) Canary Island Palm trees on cnr East Terrace/Bridge Street
 25. Remnant native vegetation and regeneration
- Archaeological Sites of High Significance**
32. Site of removed Old Cottage
 33. Pumping Station footings and earthworks
 34. The site of the removed locomotive workshops
- Archaeological Sites of Medium Significance**
35. Site of removed Depot and Motor Sheds
 36. Site of removed Cubicles
 37. Sites of other removed buildings in wharf precinct
 38. Site of removed goods shed
 39. Original site of moved SAR Institute

MURRAY BRIDGE TRANSPORT PRECINCT

Place No.: 26373

A site plan of Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, generally indicating important features and elements of the place.

- The boundary of Murray Bridge Transport Precinct (SHP: 26373) is shown in orange
- ▨ State Heritage Places (SHP: 10287, 13826, 13828, 13820, 13577) are shown in red with diagonal hatching
- ▭ Components of High Significance are outlined in red — and with a dashed line if an archaeological site
- ▭ Components of medium significance are outlined in green — and with a dashed line if an archaeological site

Note: Components of low significance are not represented on this plan

COMMENTARY ON THE LISTING

Description and notes with respect to a place entered in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the *Heritage Places Act 1993*

Physical Description

Located alongside the River Murray, the Murray Bridge Transport Precinct is a significant landscape combining railway and wharf structures and facilities. Although somewhat degraded by the removal of some sheds and buildings to Taillem Bend, the site retains many significant original features, including the two bridges that span the River Murray, and original bridge-master's 'Round House' cottage (1874). The site also includes remnant buildings, plant and elements of the wharf, including elements that link the river and railways, such as the wharf cutting and sidings that lead to the site of railway operations nearer Hume Reserve.

The original Murray Bridge (1879) includes a cutting that links the bridge to the extant railway platform. This line has been superseded by the modern (1925) railway bridge and associated tunnel under Bridge Street. The modern railway track also runs west of the bridge to the site of the historic depot that includes the Edge Moor Iron Co. of Delaware USA turntable as well as the foundations of sheds that have reportedly been removed to Taillem Bend. To the west of the bridges, upon the cliff-top remain several workers cottages & amenities that date from c1880 to the time of the South Australian Rail Institute (c1920).

An important part of the site's integrity are the wharf cutting connections under the bridges to the wharf crane and elements of Sturt Reserve; and the panoramic views of the river-facing cottages, round house and bridges from the northern-most riverbank.

Components

The ***individually listed State Heritage Places*** that are identified as components of the place are defined and summarised below.

1. Murray Bridge Road Bridge (SHP: 10287)
2. Murray Bridge Railway Bridge [Metal Truss] (SHP: 13826)
3. Murray Bridge Wharf & Hand Crane (SHP: 13828)
4. Murray Bridge Railway Station & Refreshment Rooms (SHP: 13820)

5. Round House (former Murray Bridge Works Superintendent House) (SHP: 13577)

*The components identified as having **high significance** in the context of the Place are defined and summarised below.*

6. Edge Moor Iron Co. of Delaware USA turntable 1883
7. Railway spur line adjacent to riverbank
8. Water Column
9. Original railway cutting including broad gauge tracks
10. Four (4) stone railway cottages, 1910
11. Three (3) concrete railway cottages
12. Timber signalman's cottage, c1883 including annexes
13. Timber railway office buildings including annexes
14. Station Masters (Foreman's) residence
15. River Murray Shipping Company Shed and Slipway
16. Rail Tunnel under Bridge Street

*The components identified as having **medium significance** in the context of the Place are defined and summarised below.*

17. Timber South Australian Railways Institute
18. Stone railway (loco) barracks, 1910
19. Former goods yard, town wharf including remaining walls and infrastructure
20. Loading ramp
21. South Australian Railways tennis courts
22. Pepper Trees adjacent to the 1879 cutting
23. Historic exotic vegetation
24. Row of four (4) Canary Island Palm trees on cnr East Terrace/Bridge Street
25. Remnant native vegetation and regeneration

*The components identified as having **low significance** in the context of the Place are defined and summarised below. These are not included in the Detail Plan.*

26. Centralised Train Control building, 1967
27. Access bridge over original cutting
28. Broad gauge tracks and layout
29. Fences constructed of rails (c1880)
30. Tomato shed
31. Pillbox
32. Historic Advertising Hoarding Boards

History of the Place

Murray River Trade & First Bridge

The rise of the Murray River as a trading route began as an entrepreneurial response to the gold-rushes in Victoria. South Australian flour millers discovered that the Murray

River was the most efficient route for trade between the gold fields. The Murray River proved to be an important economic artery bringing export products to and from South Australian ports (wheat and wool) – however the benefits were not immediately felt in the vicinity of the Murray Bridge with most trade occurring between Mannum and Goolwa.

Prior to the construction of the Murray Bridge, the only reliable way to cross the Murray River was via the two punts operating at Wellington. 1864 saw the creation of a Parliamentary Committee that was tasked with determining the type and best location for a bridge to span the Murray River. The determinations of this Committee were longer than expected due to politicians competing to have the bridge built in their electorate. Five designs were requested from engineers in London in 1865 and a year later the bridge was being manufactured with the first sections arriving in South Australia in 1867 without knowing the final destination. By 1872 the bridge site had been selected at a location between Thompson's and Edwards Crossings and the resulting construction would take the next six years. Early in the bridge's construction the 1874 bridge-keeper's cottage was constructed on the western bank overlooking the bridge (Round House, SHP: 13577). As the bridge neared completion an 1878 Bill was passed that authorised the construction of the Adelaide to Melbourne Railway Line – this line would utilise the Murray Bridge and in 1885 a cutting through the cliffs was completed and rails laid upon the bridge to accommodate this. The Adelaide to Melbourne line was formally opened on May 1886.

Development of the Wharf & Railway Station

The railway depot was originally planned for a 14-acre site at Bridgeport, but it was later decided to locate it closer to the bridge to facilitate the loading and unloading of goods from paddle steamers. In 1884 the area that would later become the Town of Murray Bridge was surveyed and named Mobilong. In the following year, construction began on the railway complex, and by 1886 it contained wharves, goods shed, and railway station, while the original Bridgeport site was used for engine running sheds, turntables, coal stages, locomotives and goods sidings. This flurry of construction meant that by 1886 the complex included a second class passenger station, station masters residence, four cottages for locomotive men, running shed, coal stage, 50 foot turntable, weighbridge, two water cranes, 25 000 gallon tank, 6" water main laid to running shed, pumping engine, sixteen foot windmill, home and distant signals, signals and gates, signal cabins on either side of the bridge and refreshment rooms.

Murray Bridge soon became one of the river's major ports, with strong trade from nearby Mannum and alterations and extension of the site continued through 1887-88 with additional accommodation and a machine shop for the locomotive department built. Later in 1892 a 30cwt portable steam crane was installed - at the same time alterations were made to the wharf and sidings. 1897 saw the introduction of the first post and telegraph office and structures were relocated from Naracoorte and Mount Barker, to be re-erected at Murray Bridge as the resident engineer's office.

WA Webb & the Second Bridge

Trade on the Murray River could be arguably considered to have begun to decline from 1878 when the government installed a railway line from Morgan to Goolwa and much of the inter-colonial trade had been diverted to rail. However in 1920 the newly appointed Commissioner of Railways, William Alfred Webb authorised an expensive and extensive upgrade of the Murray Bridge Transport Precinct that included additional sidings, additions to the station/refreshment rooms and four new houses that included a new residence for an electrical fitter.

In 1923 a new railway bridge was announced as the original bridge was found to shudder under the weight of the new, larger trains that Webb had introduced to improve efficiency. This bridge was fabricated by Perry Engineering Co. in Osborne and transported to site. The bridge was completed in 1925 under the supervision of Robert Chapman of NSW Railways and required a 70m tunnel to be cut under Bridge Street.

Beginning of the End

After the construction of the second bridge, operations began to be moved to Taillem Bend as it was found that the Murray bridge railway site, nestled between the riverbanks, cliffs and township, could not expand to fulfil requirements. 300 staff and the locomotive running sheds were relocated to Taillem Bend, yet Murray Bridge still retained some importance as an administrative hub.

Despite dwindling traffic the refreshment rooms were remodelled in 1936, and the passenger platform was extended in 1967 at which time the main line was also re-aligned to accommodate the length of the Melbourne Express. However Murray Bridge never regained its significant role, and served as little more than an overland stop for the remainder of its operation. In 1979, the new Swanport Bridge (road) superseded the original Murray Bridge, allowing traffic to bypass the town. In 1983, control of the station's signals and points was moved to a remote panel in the Adelaide control centre.

During its time as a functioning railway and wharf complex, the Murray Bridge Transport Precinct helped shape the development of South Australia.

References

Austral Archaeology & Bell, P 2011, *Archaeological Assessment of the Murray Bridge Transport Precinct*, Prepared for the Heritage Policy Unit (HPU), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

Bruce Harry & Associates 1994, *Round House Conservation Policy*, Prepared for the Rural Council of Murray Bridge

Donovan & Associates 1992, *Railway Heritage of South Australia*, Report commissioned by the National Trust of South Australia (NTSA)

Laurence, S 2009, *Murray Bridge Railway Precinct*, Heritage Branch File Note, File No: 13949A/26286

National Trust of South Australia 2011, *Murray Bridge Transport Precinct*, Nomination for the South Australian Heritage Register

RailSA 2012, *Murray Bridge Railway Precinct*, Nomination for the South Australian Heritage Register

Summary Authors

Simon Carter & Anna Pope of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) – State Heritage Unit.

SITE DETAILS

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct Murray Bridge, SA 5253

PLACE NO: 26373

Place bordered by: Wharf Road, East Terrace, Bridge Street, Railway Terrace, Mannum Road, Hume Reserve Road and the Southern Riverbank; Includes the Murray Bridge Road Bridge and Murray Bridge Railway Bridge (bridges extend to Long Flat Road).

FORMER NAME:	None
DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:	<p>A significant landscape that demonstrates elements of river and rail trade from the 1850's. The site includes elements such as railway station, railway depot elements and associated railway workers cottages, River Murray wharf with rail links and significant rail cuttings. The site also includes two bridges spanning the River Murray associated with both rail and river trade.</p> <p>Note: place boundary includes five (5) existing State Heritage Places: Murray Bridge Road Bridge (SHP: 10287), Murray Bridge Railway Bridge [Metal Truss] (SHP: 13826), Murray Bridge Wharf & Hand Crane (SHP: 13828), Murray Bridge Railway Station & Refreshment Rooms (SHP: 13820), Round House (former Murray Bridge Works Superintendent House) (SHP: 13577)</p>
DATE OF COMPLETION:	C1850-C1970
STATE HERITAGE STATUS	Confirmed in the SA Heritage Register 16 March 2016
LOCAL HERITAGE STATUS	<p>Majority of site contained within boundaries of: Local Heritage Place 14218 Rural Council of Murray Bridge</p>
CURRENT USE:	<p>Description: Railway Reserve Dates: 1967-ongoing</p>
PREVIOUS USE(S):	<p>Description: Railway Station, Wharf, Railway Depot Dates: From c1850</p>

SITE DETAILS (Cont.)

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct
Murray Bridge, SA 5253

PLACE NO: 26373

Place bordered by: Wharf Road, East Terrace, Bridge Street, Railway Terrace, Mannum Road, Hume Reserve Road and the Southern Riverbank; Includes the Murray Bridge Road Bridge and Murray Bridge Railway Bridge (bridges extend to Long Flat Road).

ARCHITECT:	Name: Dates:	Various N/A
BUILDER:	Name: Dates:	Various; South Australian Railways N/A
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:	Description:	Rural City of Murray Bridge
LOCATION:	Unit No.: Street No.: Street Name:	N/A N/A Place Bordered by: Wharf Road, East Terrace, Bridge Street, Railway Terrace, Mannum Road, Hume Reserve Road and Southern Riverbank, including the Murray Bridge and River Murray Rail Bridge (the listings for the bridges extend to Long Flat Road).
	Town/Suburb: Post Code:	MURRAY BRIDGE 5253

LAND DESCRIPTION:

Area: Murray Bridge

Hundred: Mobilong

Certificates of Title:

CR5684/861 F5000 A2
 CT5222/299 D33894 A1
 CT5222/300 D33894 A2
 CT5222/301 D33894 A3
 CT5844/386 D33894 A4
 CR6105/16 D33894 A8
 CR6105/16 D33894 A9
 CT5930/431 D48596 Q2
 CT5930/431 D48596 Q3
 CT5875/108 D48596 Q5
 CT5875/108 D48596 Q6
 CT6040/94 D60359 A50
 CT6040/95 D60359 A51

CT6040/94 D60359 A52
 CT6040/94 D60359 A53
 CT6040/95 D60359 A54
 CT6040/95 D60359 A55
 CT6013/733 D73114 A11
 CT5419/291 D29008 A500
 CT5931/785 D29008 A502
 CT6035/705 D78436 A104
 CT5978/217 H750200 S56
 CT6035/705 H750200 S405
 CT6012/933 H750200 S557
 CR6105/14 H750200 S582
 CR5750/65 H750200 S700

CR6105/15 H750200 S709
 CR5754/295 H170700 S1002
 CR5754/295 H170700 S1003
 CT5799/805 F167553 A738
 CT6121/286 F5788 A1

Part Bridge Street Road Reserve within boundary

Part East Terrace Road Reserve within boundary

PHOTOS

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct

PLACE NO: 26373



The Murray Bridge (SHP: 10287)
Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, Murray Bridge



Murray Bridge Railway Bridge [Metal Truss] (SHP: 13826)
Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, Murray Bridge

PHOTOS

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct

PLACE NO: 26373



Murray Bridge Wharf & Hand Crane (SHP: 13828)
Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, Murray Bridge



Murray Bridge Railway Station (SHP: 13820)
Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, Murray Bridge

PHOTOS

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct

PLACE NO: 26373



Round House (former Murray Bridge Works Superintendent House) (SHP: 13577)
Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, Murray Bridge



Edge Moor Iron Co. of Delaware USA turntable
Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, Murray Bridge

PHOTOS

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct

PLACE NO: 26373



Stone railway cottages 1910

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, Murray Bridge



Water Column (standpipe)

Murray Bridge Transport Precinct, Murray Bridge