



Mangaotuku Truss Bridge

Strathmore Saddle

1905

Use: None, since 1970's

Materials: Tiber Truss bridge with 5 connected steel lower chord and rods

NZHPT Registered: Historic Places Category II

Legal Description: -

Historic Value: 2 out of 5

Architectural Value: 2 out of 4

Technical Value: 2 out of 2

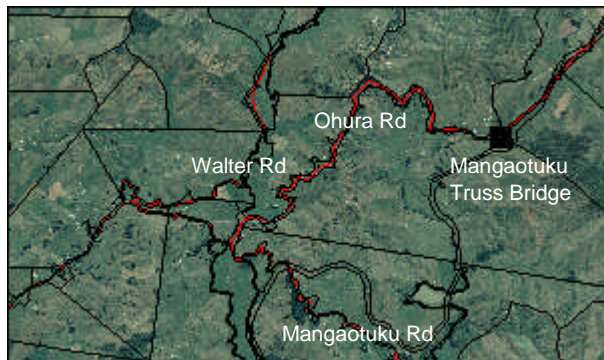
Symbolic Value: - out of 3

Rarity Value: 1 out of 2

Townscape Value: 1 out of 2

Group Value: - out of 2

Overall Heritage Value: 8 out of 20





This bridge was built around 1905. Although there are a number of truss bridges in Taranaki (predominantly of the Howe Truss design) this one is thought to be only one of two remaining Pratt Truss Bridges in the country.

In 1844, Thomas and Caleb Pratt patented their timber truss bridge in USA. What made it interesting was the fact that it was one of the first designs to consist of vertical timber compression members and iron diagonals in tension. It was a very strong method of construction, yet it was relatively simple. Due to these combining factors it became a popular design.

The Mangaotuku Truss Bridge is 37.5 metres long and was built by the contractor R. Hill. All early bridges were essential to opening up the countryside for development and were vital to New Zealand's progress. There was also an element of local pride when an area gained a new and improved bridge.

Due to the rarity of extant bridges of this design, the Mangaotuku Truss Bridge is an important testimony to early New Zealand bridge technology.

Bibliography:

- Thornton, Geoffrey:* 'Bridging the Gap: Early Bridges in New Zealand 1830-1939' [Reed Books, 2001]
- Thornton, Geoffrey:* Correspondence [2004-2005]
- Pukeariki Image Record: I.3.24 & I.3.25