



MEDIA RELEASE

ISSUED: Friday 5 June 2020 (*for immediate release*)

Launch of The Friends of the Barwon River Ovoid Sewer Aqueduct

The Friends of Barwon River Ovoid Sewer Aqueduct has been formed in response to Barwon Water's plans to demolish four spans of this unique heritage structure.

The Friends believe the aqueduct is of extremely high cultural and heritage significance and is one of the finest early-reinforced concrete constructions still extant in Australia.

The 756 metre-long structure dramatically spans the Barwon River floodplain from Breakwater to Marshall, and is outstanding for its aesthetic and engineering qualities.

The aqueduct's footbridge formed an important social link in allowing local people to cross the river by foot, bicycle or on horseback – to go to work, school, play sport, or visit friends.

Built in 1913-16, the 14-span reinforced concrete aqueduct was designed by Stone and Siddeley, who were inspired by the celebrated Firth of Forth bridge in Scotland.

Coincidentally, Stone and Siddeley also designed Geelong's unique Bow Truss Woolstore using the same techniques. Sadly, that building was controversially demolished in the 1980s.

In response to Barwon Water's proposal, the Friends believe there are engineering solutions to provide safe public access under and around the aqueduct, without any demolition.

The Friends encourage interested members of the public to join them to 'Save the iconic aqueduct', by visiting: <https://friendsofbarwonriverovoidseweraqueduct.org>

The Friends also urge the public to lodge their own submission to Heritage Victoria to conserve the entire aqueduct. The submission deadline is **Friday 19 June** (more details on the Friends' website).

The aims of the Friends of Barwon River Ovoid Sewer Aqueduct are to:

1. Advocate for conservation of the Barwon River Ovoid Sewer Aqueduct in its entirety.
2. Provide information to the public about the aqueduct's significance to encourage broad support for the structure's entire retention and preservation.
3. Suggest alternative options for the aqueduct's management and provision for safety, to negate the need for demolition.
4. Explore options and advocate for the future use of the aqueduct and its surrounds.

WEBSITE: <https://friendsofbarwonriverovoidseweraqueduct.org>

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