

Spring Creek Bridge closure

Update for Beechworth community

Update #6 – October 2025

Spring Creek Bridge, Beechworth Historic Park – Engineering Investigations and Next Steps

Spring Creek Bridge is part of the Gorge Scenic Drive in Beechworth Historic Park and has been closed to all visitors since October 2022, following a significant storm and flood event which eroded material behind the northwest wing wall. This damage has de-stabilised the structure, making it unsafe for use.

Initial investigations into potential repair of the wingwall unearthed further structural damage to the structural elements of the bridge due to the age, as well as historic (1930s) material and construction methods used to build it.

Specialist engineers recently undertook a Level 3 bridge inspection (a comprehensive assessment that involves analysis of a bridge's structure and materials) to understand the condition of the bridge. The engineering report has now confirmed that due to the age of the bridge, deterioration of its substructure, and the weight of the road pavement, it is unsuitable for use either by pedestrians or vehicles in accordance with AS5100 bridge standards.

These factors are placing critical strain on the bridge, impacting its load bearing capacity and increasing its risk of failure. As a result, engineers have concluded the bridge cannot be repaired to a standard that would meet AS 5100 requirements.

However, it is important that works to repair the wingwall damage to protect the bridge are completed. This will help preserve heritage features of the bridge abutment.

Current and future activities at the site

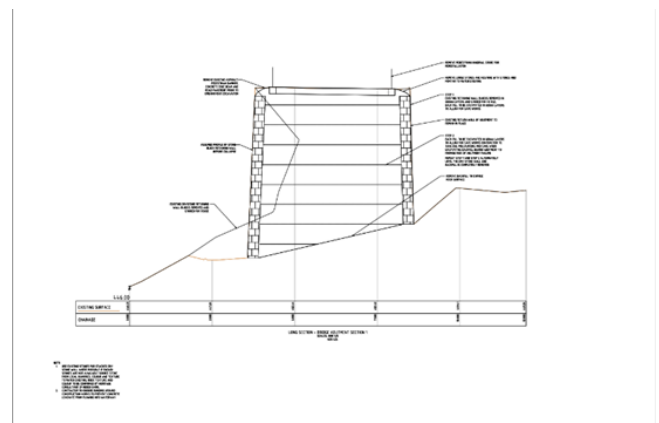
Parks Victoria will soon be undertaking tree works around the site to reduce the impact of the vegetation on the bridge structure. These works will also occur along the approach roads to maintain safe pedestrian access and allow safe movement of machinery to undertake works.

Parks Victoria is also selecting a contractor to improve drainage at the site. These works will help to mitigate further damage to the historical bridge abutments and drystone wall by redirecting surface water. This work is planned for completion by the end of December 2025.



Above: Underside of bridge, showing bridge defects of rust pitting of the girder, water ingress into the bridge structure and exposed and rusted reinforcement bars in the decking.

Design of the northwest wingwall is complete, and the process to engage a contractor to do the repair work has commenced. The start date will depend on contractor availability and weather conditions but will likely commence in late 2025 or early 2026.



Above: Scope of works to remediate wing wall damage.

A surveyor is currently undertaking a Scan Point Cloud survey to document the heritage design and components of the existing Spring Creek Bridge to ensure that there is a detailed GIS spatial record of the bridge to add to historical records.



Above: An example of Dot Point Cloud GIS survey – this one is Masters Homestead Gunbower National Park

Why can't we build a Bailey Bridge over the top of the current structure?

Parks Victoria is aware of the Beechworth community's suggestion of a Bailey bridge. Parks Victoria has sought professional engineering advice to determine suitability of a Bailey bridge as a temporary solution. The professional advice is due to the length of the bridge (14.5m) and the need to extend the bridge past the bridge abutments, that this style of temporary bridge is not suitable.

Community safety reminder while the bridge remains closed

Once the wingwall have been repaired, the Spring Creek Bridge will remain closed due to the safety of the ageing bridge itself.

The current condition of the bridge cannot safely support any traffic, including pedestrians, and the current long-term closure is necessary for safety reasons.

Pedestrians and cyclists can still walk or ride to Spring Creek Bridge, from the Powder Magazine at the northern end of Gorge Road or from Newtown Falls. Visitors must return the way they came in.

Will there be a new bridge?

Parks Victoria has commenced concept design work for a new bridge. As part of the design work, consideration will be given to incorporating components of the old bridge where feasible and cost effective. This work will produce concept designs for a pedestrian only bridge and a combined pedestrian and vehicle bridge.

Parks Victoria will invite the community to have their say on the bridge concepts, with several community workshops planned for early next year. The final concept designs can inform potential future funding opportunities.

Parks Victoria will continue to keep the community updated.