



Patron:
His Excellency The Honourable
Sir Anand Satyanand, GNZM, QSO
Governor-General of New Zealand

12 January 2011

Tasman District Council
Private Bag 4
Nelson 7020

Salisbury Swing Bridge, Aorere Valley

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust was saddened to learn of the destruction by flooding of the Salisbury Swing Bridge, in the Aorere Valley.

This bridge is a registered historic place and has held heritage values for its role in the historic development of transport routes and associated pioneering activities. The bridge has a construction date on our record of 1902 although there is information to suggest a bridge was constructed in the 1880's.

Where an historic place has been completely damaged, so that very little of it remains, the historic material is gone and cannot be returned – only replaced. The NZHPT generally does not press for this to happen. In exceptional cases, where community esteem propels it, some buildings are reconstructed and the Rangiatea Church at Otaki is an example.

Here, with the swing bridge, although it was enjoyed by many people, and its loss is deeply regretted, the NZHPT takes no view on the merits of reconstruction.

The NZHPT does however make one recommendation – that the remaining tower be left standing as a reminder of the bridge. The tower pole that was in part reconstructed last year could be left in a way that is not likely to present a hazard of any sort and would be a reminder of both the historic place and the ravages of flooding.

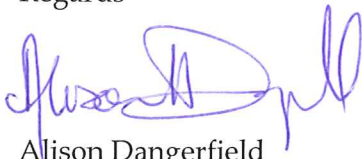
In the physical sense, the bridge comprised of modern in-ground anchors which are presumably still in place; replaced cables that have been mostly ripped away; tower posts (2 pairs) with one pair lost, and the other pair (including a new post) still standing; and suspending cables and walkway which have been completely lost.

The 'cleaning up' may or may not be a building consent matter. It will involve removal of material debris and possibly the removal of in-ground features. Either way, our regional archaeologist Kathryn Hurren advises that pre-emptive archaeological investigation will not be required.

Lastly, the NZHPT commends the Tasman District Council for recognising the heritage worth of the bridge and tackling the repairs and maintenance over the past 18 months. The loss of the bridge does not diminish the value of this work.

Should you have any queries, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards



Alison Dangerfield
Heritage Advisor for Architecture
Central Region