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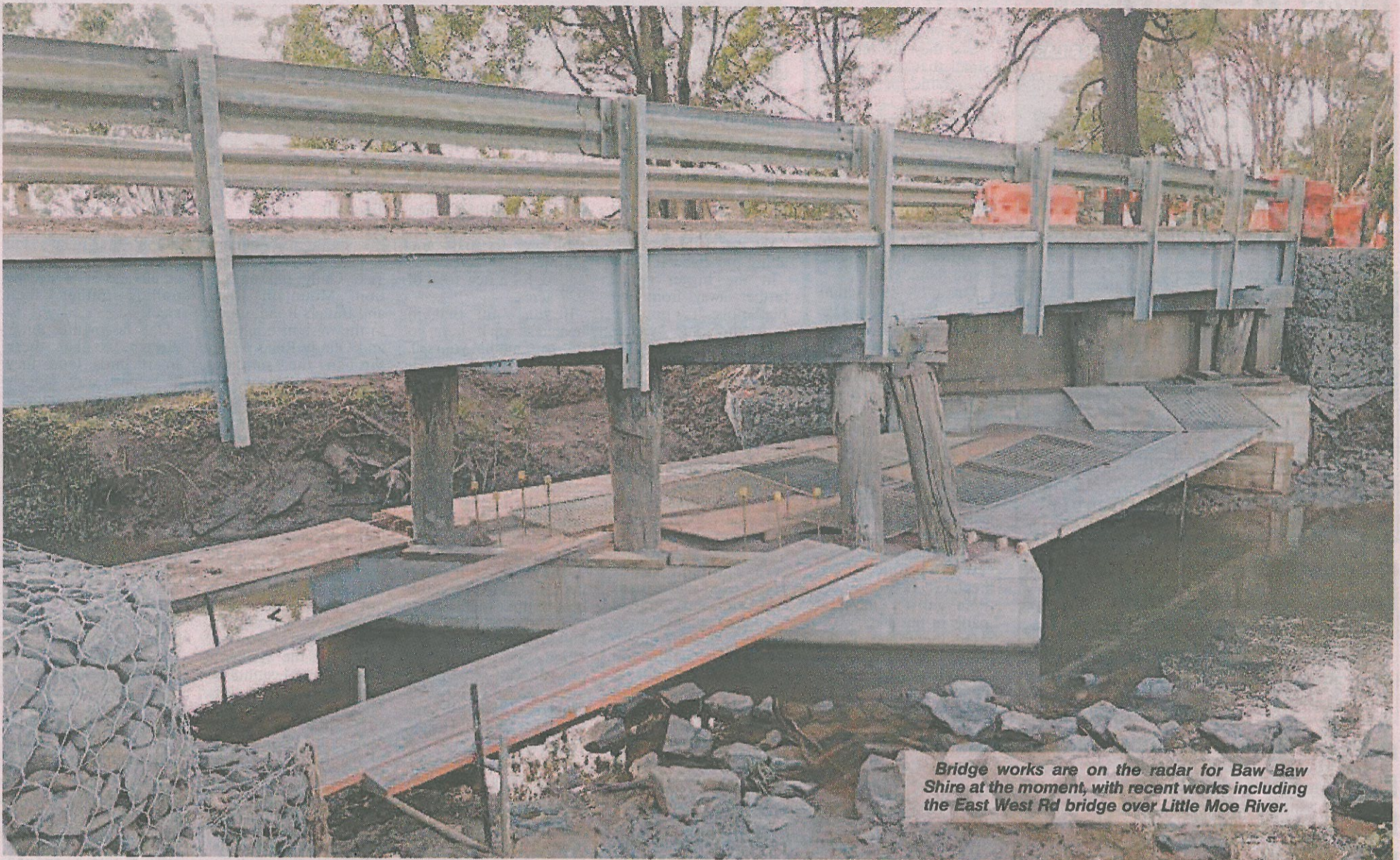
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Bridge works are on the radar for Baw Baw Shire at the moment, with recent works including the East West Rd bridge over Little Moe River.

Bridging repair gaps

by Yvette Brand

Major bridge repair projects are high on the agenda around Baw Baw Shire at the moment.

Major repair and maintenance works improving the strength and safety of the East West Road Bridge, over the Little Moe River near Darnum also have been completed.

The biggest project set for this year is a \$1 million reconstruction of the Labertouche Rd bridge at Labertouche.

And works to the Shady Creek bridge in North Canal Rd, between Yarragon and Trafalgar also are due for completion.

The Labertouche Rd bridge is being reconstructed as part of the federal government's bridges renewal program.

The \$1 million project is being funded by the federal government and council, with \$500,000 coming from each authority.

The bridge was reduced to a single lane in

December last year after a structural assessment found it was no longer able to carry two way traffic.

The project will go to tender soon and construction of the new bridge is expected to be completed early next year.

The \$185,000 project for East West Rd was externally funded under the former Coalition state government's Country Roads and Bridges Program. This program is no longer being funded by the Andrews government.

The works, undertaken between May and June, included:

Installing concrete foundations to the existing timber piles supporting the bridge;

Reinforcing and strengthening the bridge with galvanised steel columns;

Cleaning and painting the existing steel beams and underneath the bridge;

Installing protective structures around the central bridge columns to prevent erosion;

and, and upgrading safety barriers to conform to Vic Roads standards.

Mayor Debbie Brown said the maintenance works had lengthened the life of the bridge, as well as enhancing its utility with increased load capacity, and most importantly improving safety for all bridge users.

"The upgrades to this bridge provide a safer crossing for the bridge users, and with a stronger and greater load-bearing capacity, the bridge will endure as a vital part of Darnum's transport infrastructure for many years to come.

"When council undertakes maintenance works to repair and preserve essential but ageing assets, like the East West Bridge project, we are successfully closing the gap in the asset renewal shortfall."

Cr Brown said the Country Roads and Bridges Program was important to rural areas like Baw Baw because of the vast network of

roads and bridges that require continual maintenance.

"Projects like this one demonstrate just how much State Government programs can assist rural council's and enable them to deliver stronger, safer, lasting infrastructure," she said.

The works were conducted in accordance with the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority permit conditions. This ensured all required environmental controls were in place throughout the project to protect the waterway and water quality.

North Canal Rd also has been closed to through traffic since June 15 for works on the bridge over Shady Creek.

Works being undertaken at the bridge include repairs to the bridge deck and replacement of bridge barriers and terminals.

The \$154,000 project was expected to be completed last week.

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Darnum's East West Road Bridge Sturdier than Ever

Published on 13 July 2015



In June 2015, Baw Baw Shire Council completed major repair and maintenance works to improve the strength and safety of the East West Road Bridge, over the Little Moe River near Darnum.

The \$185,000 project was externally funded under the State Government's Country Roads and Bridges Program with the primary aim of improving the condition of roads and bridges in rural Victoria.

The works were undertaken between May and June this year and involved:

- ▶ Installing concrete foundations to the existing timber piles supporting the bridge
- ▶ Reinforcing and strengthening the bridge with galvanised steel columns
- ▶ Cleaning and painting the existing steel beams and underneath the bridge
- ▶ Installing protective structures around the central bridge columns to prevent erosion
- ▶ Upgrading the safety barriers to conform to VicRoads standards.

The works were conducted in accordance with the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority permit conditions. This ensured all required environmental controls were in place throughout the project to protect the waterway and water quality.

Mayor Debbie Brown said the maintenance works have lengthened the life of the bridge, as well as enhancing its utility with increased load capacity, and most importantly improving safety for all bridge users.

“The upgrades to this bridge provide a safer crossing for the bridge users, and with a stronger and greater load-bearing capacity, the bridge will endure as a vital part of Darnum’s transport infrastructure for many years to come,” the Mayor said.

“When Council undertakes maintenance works to repair and preserve essential but ageing assets, like the East West Bridge project, we are successfully closing the gap in the asset renewal shortfall.”

The Mayor also made note of Council’s appreciation of the external funding provided under the Country Roads and Bridges Program.

“These programs are so important to rural areas like ours, with such a vast network of roads and bridges that require continual maintenance.

“Projects like this one demonstrate just how much State Government programs can assist rural Council’s and enable them to deliver stronger, safer, lasting infrastructure.”

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