

National Trust of Australia



NATIONAL TRUST

Australian Capital Territory  
1<sup>ST</sup> Floor North Building  
Corner London Circuit & Civic Square  
Canberra City ACT 2601  
PO Box 1144 Civic Square 2608

## MEDIA RELEASE

ABN 50 797 949 955  
Phone 02 6230 0533  
Fax 02 6230 0544  
Email [info@act.nationaltrust.org.au](mailto:info@act.nationaltrust.org.au)  
Web [www.act.nationaltrust.org.au](http://www.act.nationaltrust.org.au)

**Date: 5 December 2007 For Immediate Release**

### **National Trust supports community consultation on Tharwa Bridge**

The ACT National Trust welcomes the decision by the ACT Government to consult the community over the future of the 112- year old Tharwa Bridge (*Canberra Times* 5-12-07) but is slightly puzzled why they are taking this step now.

National Trust Heritage Officer, Dr Peter Dowling, said the bridge has been Classified by the National Trust since September 1980 and heritage listed by the ACT Government since February 1996. Under the heritage legislation the ACT Government has a legal obligation to conserve it as one of the ACT's heritage assets. This should have been the direction taken by the ACT Government rather than considering building a new bridge as a replacement.

In fact, the Specific Requirements of the heritage listing for the bridge states:  
'The four-span Allan truss section of the bridge is to be conserved, with the retention of the construction details and as much existing fabric as is feasible. Tharwa bridge **shall continue** to be used as a bridge crossing for vehicular traffic, and **shall remain** the only such crossing at Tharwa, subject to it meeting the safety requirements of the relevant authorities.'

That to us is a pretty clear statement of responsibility. We have received expert advice from engineers that the present bridge can be restored to meet the road safety requirements with a carrying load of 44 tonnes which would allow tourist coaches and semi-trailers to cross.

Nevertheless, the Trust is supportive of the decision by Chief Minister Stanhope to put the heritage issues involved with retaining the Tharwa bridge to the ACT public. The Trust will be canvassing its members on the same issue.

---

**For further information contact**

**Dr Peter Dowling on**

**(02) 6230 0533 or 0417 233 194**