

# Exceeding community expectations

The Lennox Bridge Portals project is an award-winning example of how close cooperation between a local council with skilled design specialists and an innovative construction contractor can deliver community facilities that exceed expectations.

The project involved the design and construction of two cycleway/footpath portals through the sandstone arch abutments of the State Heritage-listed Lennox Bridge over the Parramatta River. A clever and historically sympathetic design combined with innovative, sensitive and adaptive construction methods resulted in an outstanding outcome for the community and historians alike.

Abergeldie Complex Infrastructure Pty Ltd was engaged by the former Parramatta City Council to construct the portals, and to manage the associated restoration and preservation works on the 177-year-old structure. Restoration included the replacement of a concrete balustrade with solid sandstone, reflecting the original design for the bridge. The sandstone facings of the entire bridge were also cleaned and repointed.

The portals were constructed using cut-and-cover techniques down through the existing structures from the bridge deck surface. Excavations revealed some



unexpected archaeological finds of significant historical value. The design and construction methodologies were adjusted to avoid disturbing larger artefacts, while maintaining the stability of the open-cut excavations, and to incorporate informative displays in the fit-out of the tunnel interiors.

Three separate historical structures were uncovered during the excavation works. Timber bridge members were authoritatively identified as the remains of the oldest known bridge in Australia, The Gaol Bridge, which was completed in 1804.

Abergeldie worked in close cooperation with council and designers Hill Thalys to develop innovative strategies to allow the project to proceed with accelerated momentum for completion on time, prior to New Year's Eve celebrations on the banks of the river.

'Abergeldie is very proud to have been involved in a project of such historical significance to the

Parramatta community and to Australian engineering. We are honoured to have been recognised by peers of industry organisations for our role in the construction of the Lennox Bridge Portals project,' says Abergeldie Complex Infrastructure CEO Greg Taylor.

Awards received by the Lennox Bridge Portals project include those for urban design and also for heritage architecture at the 2016 NSW Architecture Awards; a National Civil Contractors Federation Award for construction excellence and NSW Workplace Health Safety Project of Distinction award; and best design and/or construction of a local government/public works project from the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) at its 2016 Engineering Excellence Awards. The project was also a contending finalist in the 2016 Heritage Awards and in the 2016 Banksia Sustainability Awards for 'Mindful Movement'. ■

