

# LEONGATHA

# Railway Site Transformation

## MASTER PLAN REPORT December 2017



# Introduction

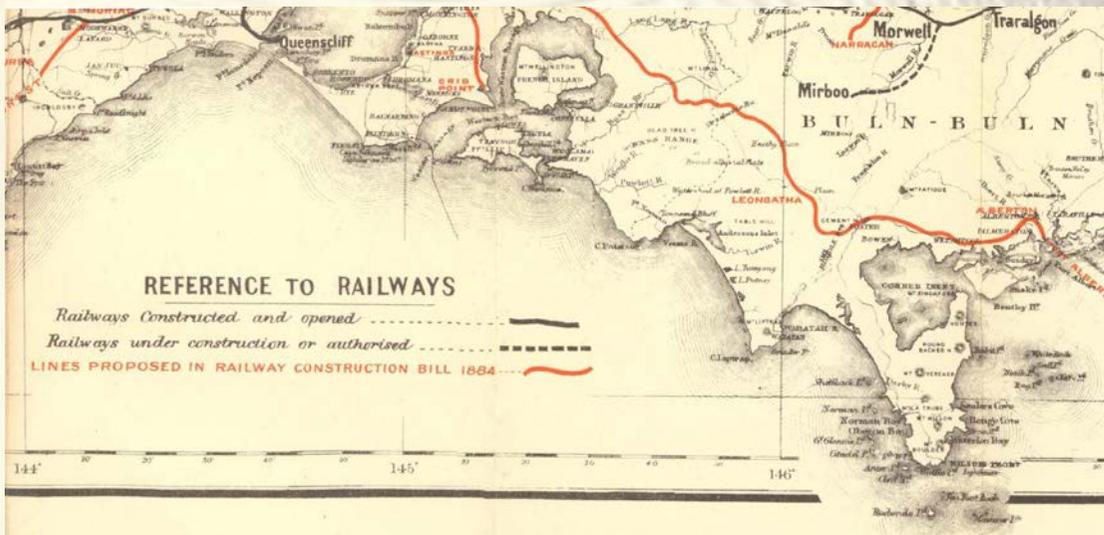
## Project Background

Since passenger rail ceased to Leongatha in the 1990s, the community has been concerned with the state of the Leongatha railway yards. Up until recently the South Gippsland Tourist Railway leased the site and provided occasional services between Nyora and Leongatha.

## Project Aim

The Leongatha Railway Site Transformation project seeks to improve the Leongatha railway yard and station area for the benefit of the community.

The first stage of the Leongatha Railway Site Transformation project is to prepare a Master Plan for the Leongatha railway station area. The preparation of a Master Plan is required to confirm the desired future for the site and secure funding for implementation.



Map from Victorian Railways Tourist's Guide, 1885 (Joseph Pickersgill)  
Ordinary Meeting of Council No. 419 - 20 December 2017



# LEONGATHA

# Context

## Location

Located approximately 130km or 1.5 hours south-east of Melbourne, Leongatha is the Shire's largest town with about 5,700 people (2016 ERP, .id consulting). The town has the advantage of being located on the most direct route from Melbourne to Wilsons Promontory, one of Victoria's major tourist destinations. The town is South Gippsland's most important retailing centre.

While the Leongatha railway site is located in the centre of town, it is somewhat hidden behind Bair Street (one of the main streets) in a linear cutting (see **Map 1**).

## Land Status

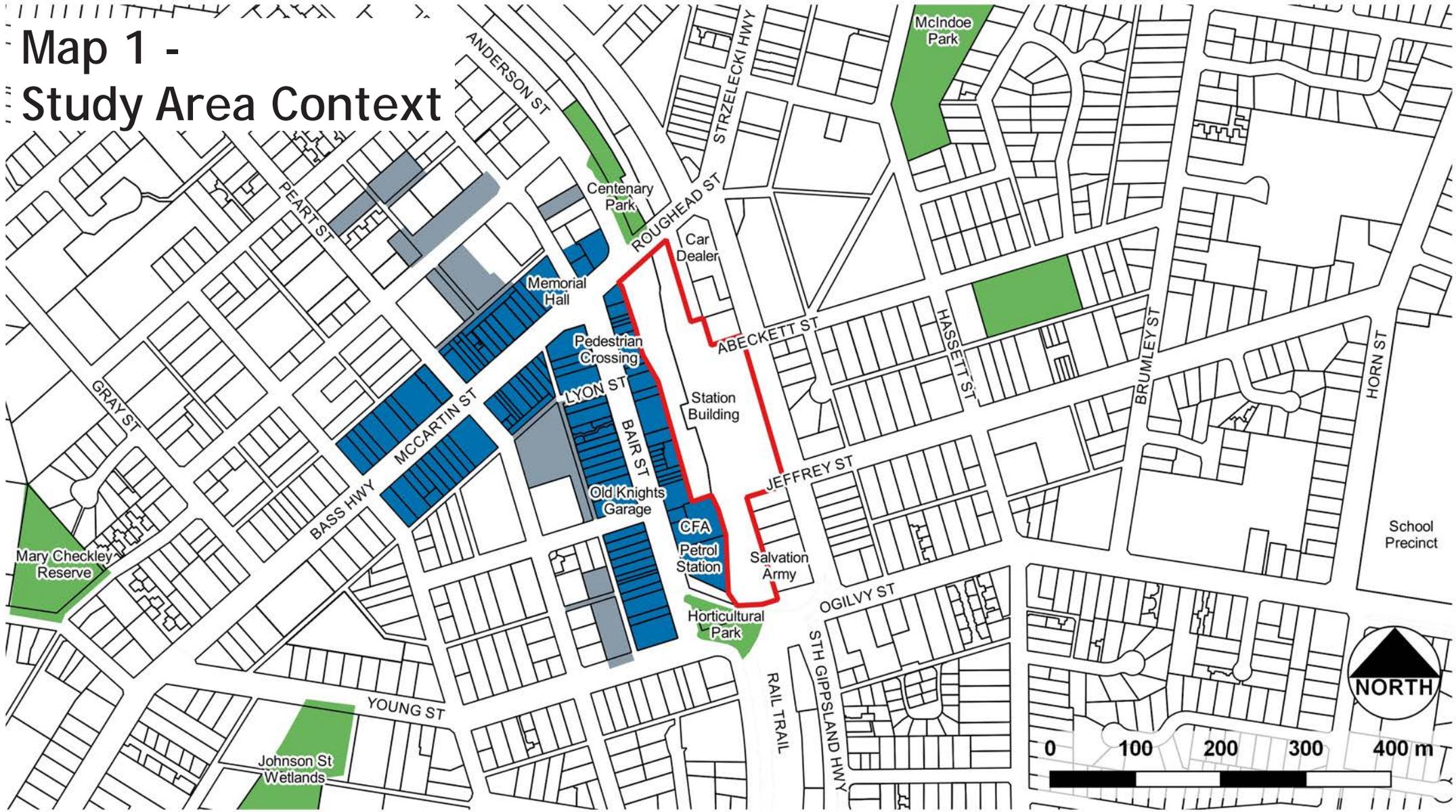
While the railway corridor to Leongatha will remain open for future rail services, the Victorian Government currently has no plans for their return. Given this, Council has the opportunity to take over the lease of the railway land and to improve the Leongatha railway site and its surrounds. The project involves Council working closely with VicTrack who are the land managers on behalf of the Crown.

## Other Council Projects

The Leongatha Railway Site Transformation project complements other work that Council is currently undertaking in the area including:

- Town entrance upgrades along Anderson St, Leongatha – construction underway
- Streetscape works along and in the vicinity of Bair St, Leongatha (one of the two main streets) – detailed design underway
- Extension to the Great Southern Rail Trail to Korumburra from Horticultural Park, Leongatha (next to the Leongatha railway site) – project planning underway

# Map 1 - Study Area Context



## Legend

- Study Area
- Main Streets
- Car Park
- Property Boundaries
- Parkland

# Process

The Master Plan process comprised three key stages:



## Stage 1 - Idea Development

The first stage of the project involved reviewing background information and asking the community for their involvement and ideas for the site. More information about this stage, particularly the consultation process, is set out in the Ideas Engagement Report (September 2017).

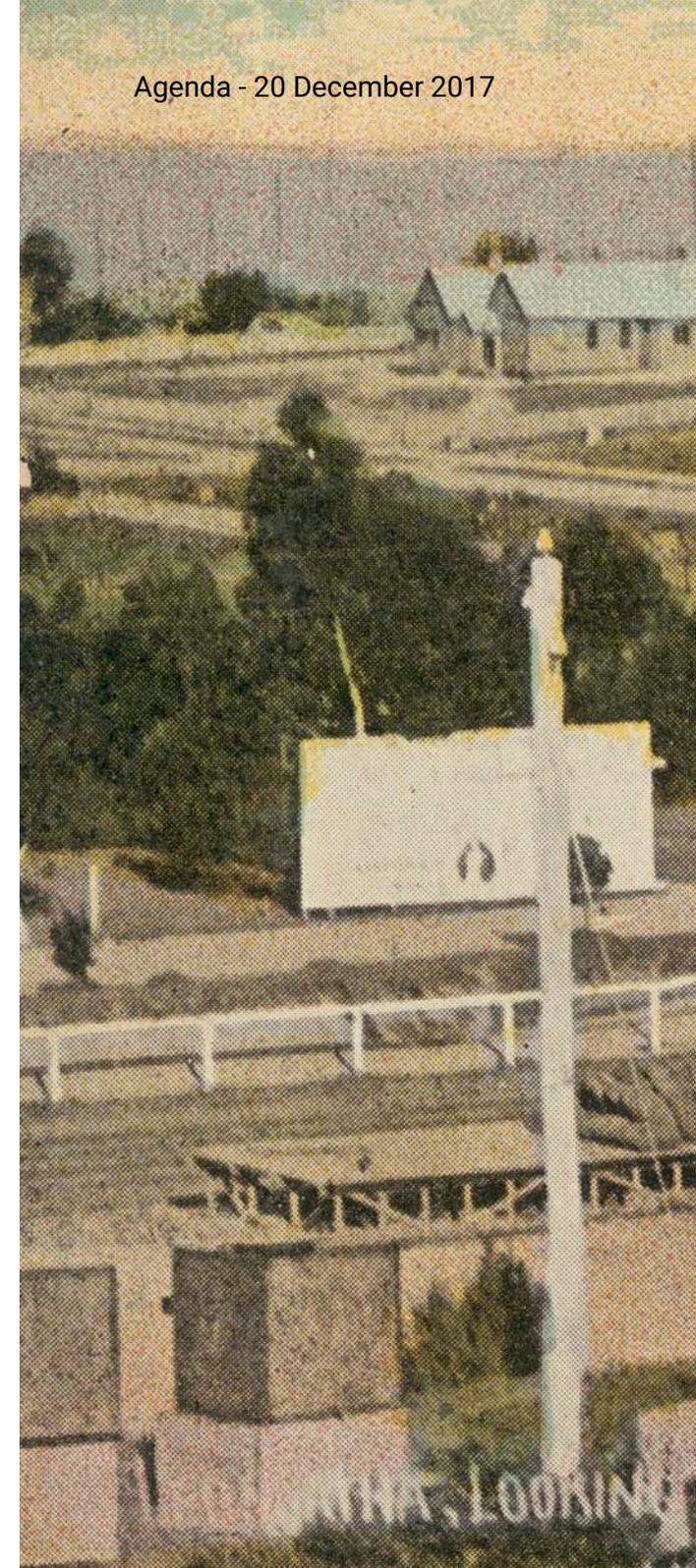
## Stage 2 - Draft Master Plan

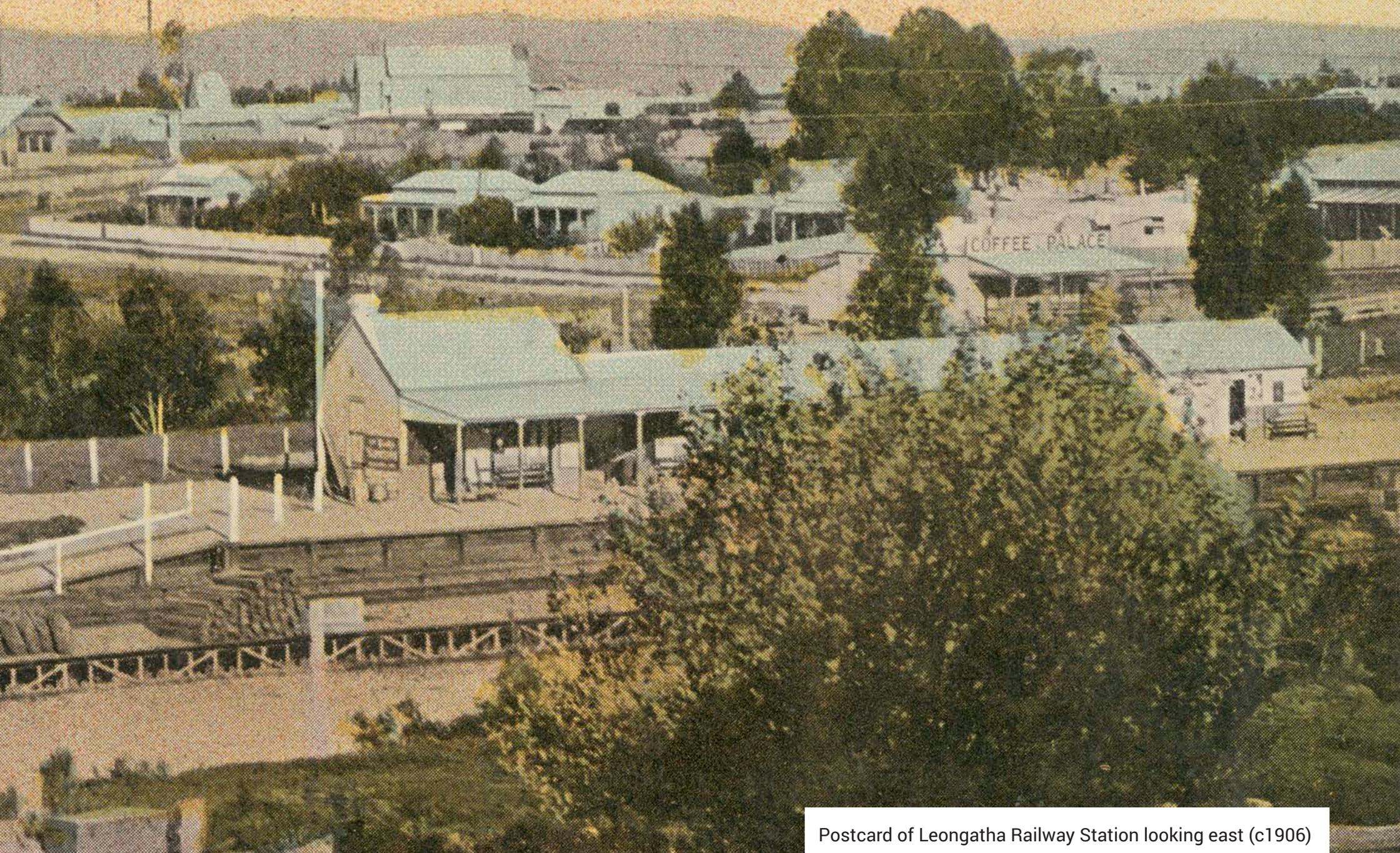
The second stage of the project focused on the development of the Draft Master Plan drawing from ideas received from the community that responds to the site's constraints and opportunities. It also involved asking the community for feedback on the Draft Master Plan. More information about this stage, particularly the consultation process, is set out in the Draft Master Plan Engagement Report (November 2017).

## Stage 3 - Final Master Plan

The third stage of the Master Plan process involved the preparation of an environmental assessment and the Final Master Plan. The environmental assessment considered levels of contamination and recommended how this should be addressed to accommodate the proposed use and development at the site.

The Final Master Plan is comprised of different elements as described in this report and shown at **Appendix A**.



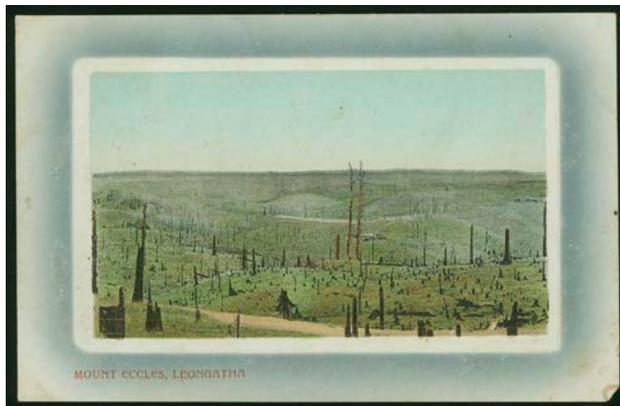


Postcard of Leongatha Railway Station looking east (c1906)

# History

The Leongatha railway station and yards were the hub around which the economy and society of Leongatha and District evolved. Prior to the official opening of the Great Southern Railway in 1892, Leongatha was a pioneer society. Links to the outside world were primitive, for much of the year the unsealed roads were impassable and movement along the narrow bridle paths was slow. It was difficult to sell agricultural produce and bring in any items necessary for development.

Leongatha was first settled in 1888 and sited at the place where the proposed Great Southern railway would cross the Coast road from Morwell to Inverloch. Leongatha owes its very location to the Great Southern railway. A township was surveyed at what is now Leongatha North and called Koorooman. This township was located on a ridge but was never developed, as the terrain was too



Historic postcard showing clearing of the land around Leongatha for settlement

steep to enable a railway to be built. Therefore a new town was surveyed at the present site of Leongatha where a railway could be constructed.

The railway was constructed between Dandenong and Leongatha between 1887 and 1891 and was officially opened in 1892. This meant that produce such as milk, onions and livestock could be sold and transported to markets and goods of all types could come in. Pioneers had chance to buy better food, clothes and household items. They could travel to Melbourne in 5 hours and 15 minutes. This compared to a rail and horse journey via Morwell and Mirboo North of 12 to 13 hours. The world opened up and so did the district.

The railways yards were used mainly for shunting passenger carriages, goods wagons and livestock trucks. There was a crane in the yards for unloading agricultural machinery, building materials and other heavy items. Wool, potatoes, onions, milk products, fertilizer and furniture were loaded and unloaded by hand using sack trollies and bag hooks. The onions and potatoes had to be weighed on a weighbridge before loading onto the rail wagon. There was also a gauge to measure load height and width to make sure the load would fit under bridges and into tunnels.

There was a goods shed and a superphosphate shed and later bulk superphosphate bins. Fuel came in by rail in bulk and was pumped to overhead tanks near the road bridge over the railway.

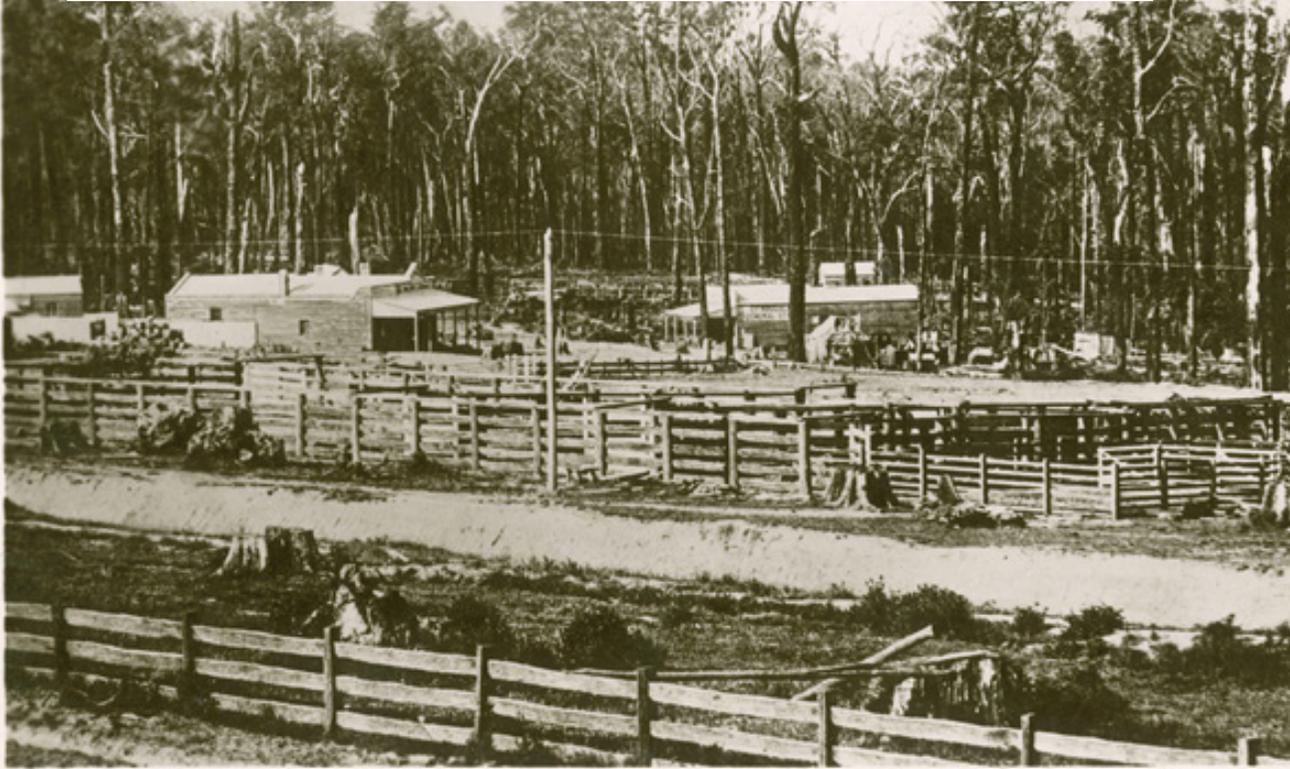
Over the years road transport took over from rail transport and use of the railway and railway yards declined. After 100 years of operation, passenger services to Leongatha ceased on July 24 1993. Freight and Goods services continued until the line was formally closed in 1994, bringing to an end a remarkable chapter in Victoria's transport history

*Information courtesy of Leongatha and District Historical Society (2016)*



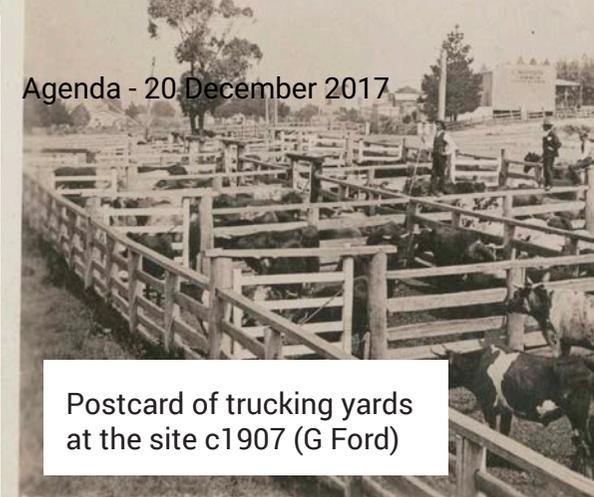
Very early photograph of Canal No. 49 at Bair St dated 1893 (John Henry Harvey, J H Harvey Collection)

View of early Leongatha looking North East from the Railway Crossing in 1889  
(Centre for Gippsland Studies Images - Source Federation University)



EARLY LEONGATHA, 1889.

Postcard of trucking yards at the site c1907 (G Ford)



Trucking Yards. Leongatha 101



Postcard of the Leongatha Post Office looking north across the railway line (1910)

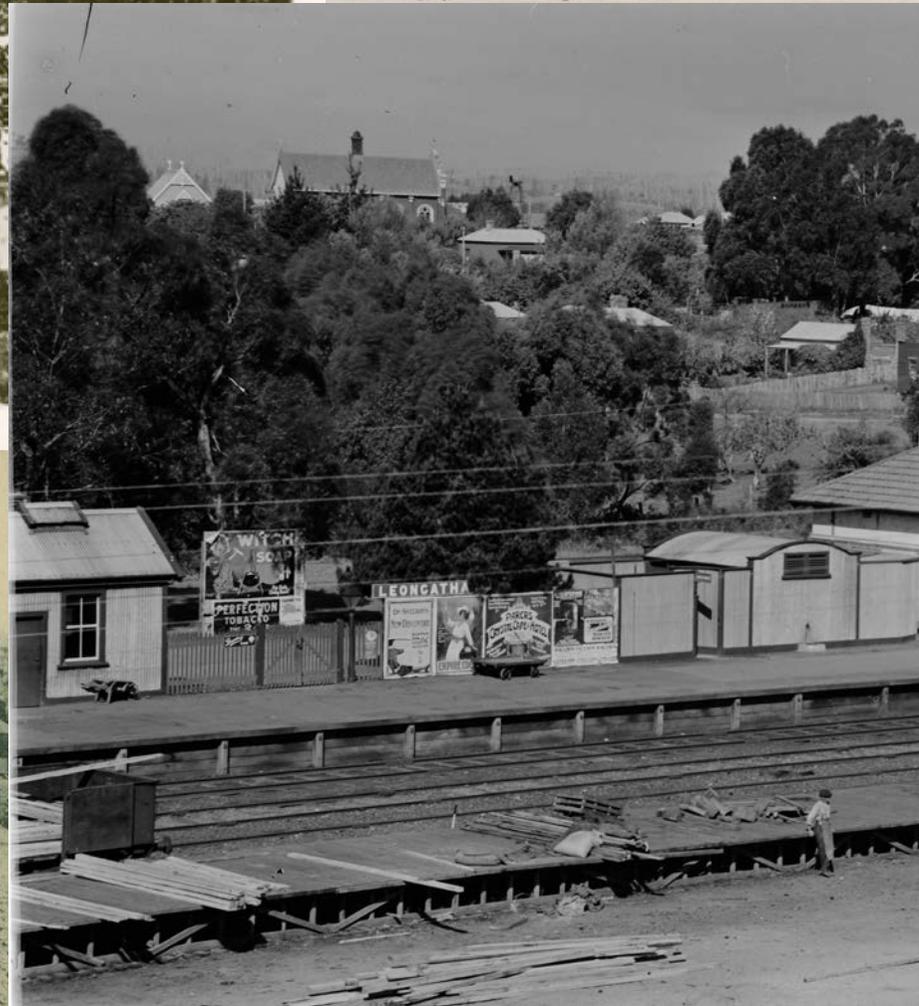


Photo of the Railway Station, Leongatha in 1917  
(John Henry Harvey - J H Harvey Collection)



Leongatha Railway Station c1920-1954 (Rose Series P.2906, Rose Stereograph Collection)

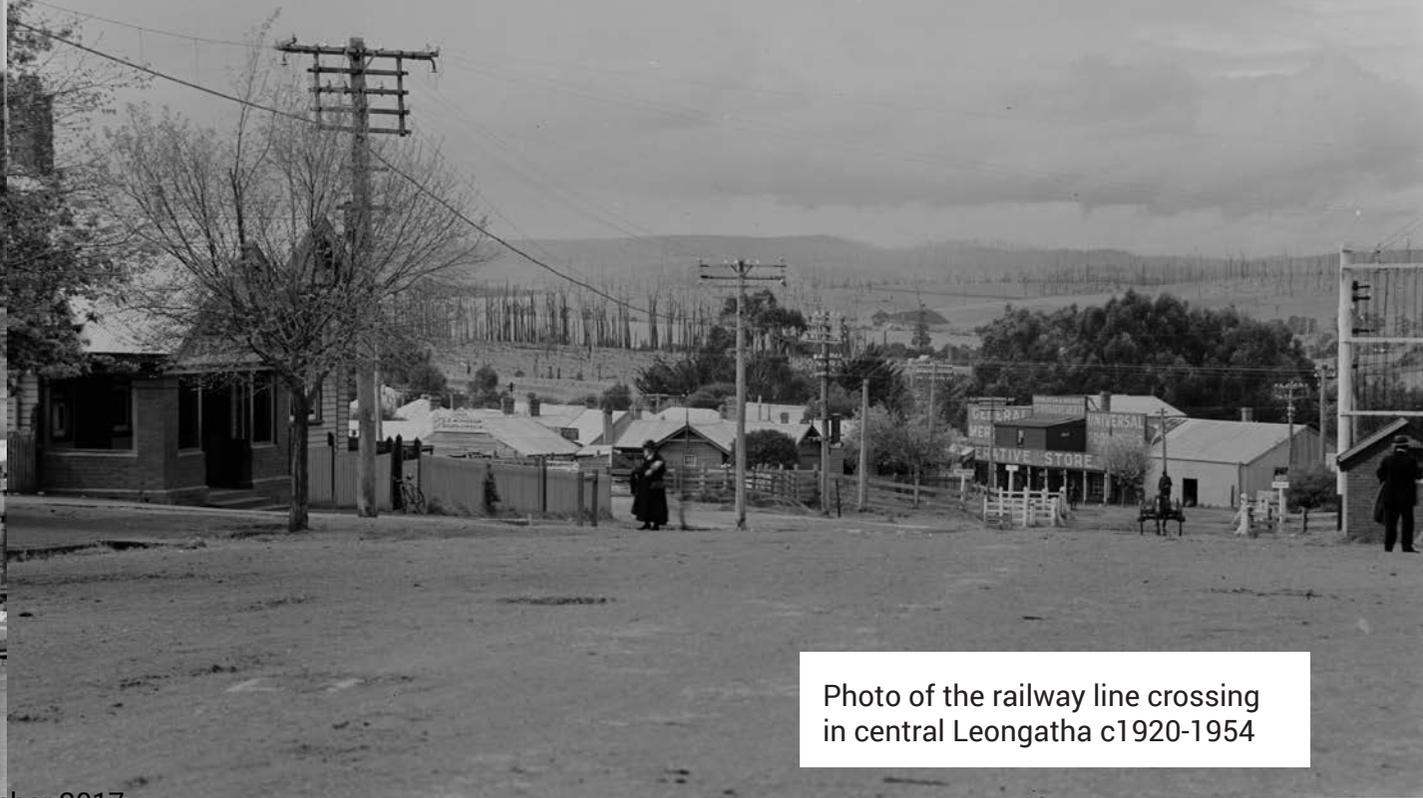


Photo of the railway line crossing  
in central Leongatha c1920-1954

# Existing Conditions

The Leongatha railway site is currently available to the public, although access to the existing buildings is restricted. The site's main use is for open space, VLine bus services and car parking.



Palms lining Apex Park along Roughead St



VLine bus stop area

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## Existing Land Use

Existing uses at the site:

- Public access is available for the grounds which provide informal open space;
- Existing buildings are vacant and generally inaccessible to the public (locked) although their use can be arranged with VicTrack (as occurred for the project's Ideas Fair in April 2017);
- Car parking areas are used regularly;
- Small park area fronting Roughead Street (Strzelecki Highway) provides open space;
- VLine bus stop with shelter used regularly for transport to and from Melbourne, Yarram; and
- Area between platform and back of shops temporarily being used as a gravel store.

While there is public access available to the site, there are a number of obstacles and hazards at the site that by their nature restrict use (e.g. broken glass along railway tracks, covers removed from pits, overgrown vegetation).

## Existing Development

### *Open Space*

Apex Park is the only formal open space provided on the site. It is a grassed area with three sets of seating lined by hedges. It can be accessed from Roughead Street and the surrounding car parking area. The park area is leased and maintained by Council.

Informal open space is provided along Long Street. There are a couple of paths in this area set amongst the shade of a mix of eucalypts and exotic trees.

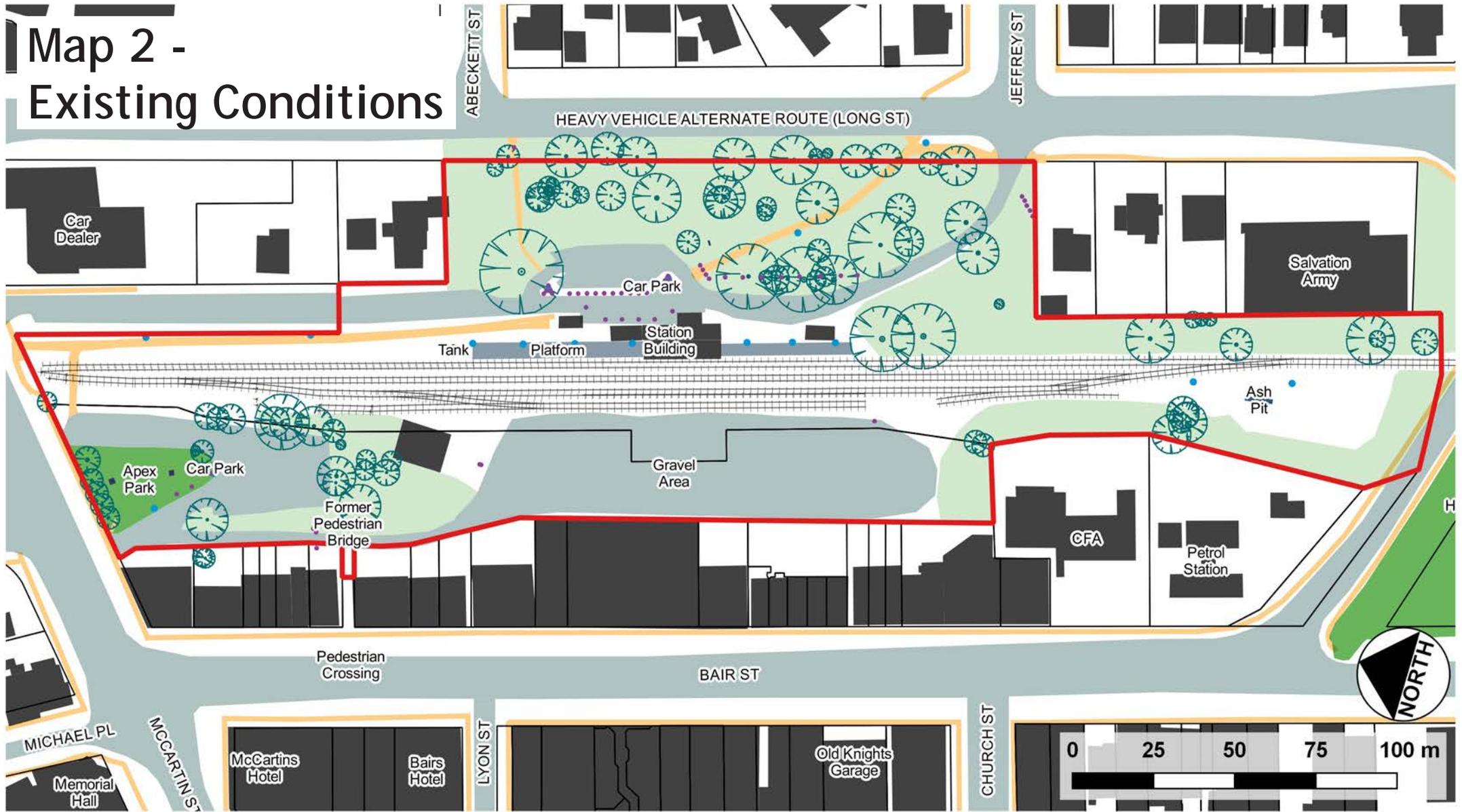


Apex Park



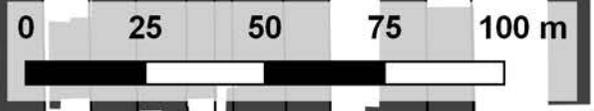
Informal open space along Long St

# Map 2 - Existing Conditions



### Legend

- Study Area
- Property Boundaries
- Building Footprints
- Paths
- Road / Car Park / Gravel Area
- Formal Open Space
- Informal Open Space
- Railway Line
- Tree
- Bollard
- Light Pole
- Seat
- Ash Pit



**Vegetation**

The Canary Island Palms that line this park along the road frontage provide a dramatic and striking entrance to the town when approached from Melbourne. It is believed that they were planted c.1925 at the time that Apex Park was originally established. Apex Park is grassed and lined by hedges and flower beds maintained by Council.

Most of the other vegetation at the site, including most the trees along Long Street, has established since the early 1950s. This vegetation was recently reviewed as part of the Shire's identification of significant trees. No specific trees at the site were considered significant for inclusion in the Shire's significant tree register. That is not to say that existing vegetation at the site is not important and worthy of retention.

Vegetation at the site has provided an important context for buildings and activities at the site. The canopy of the trees along Long St provide a leafy backdrop that can be seen from surrounding areas in the town. The vegetation at the site also provides habitat for local wildlife.

Other vegetation at the site includes the garden beds that line Bennett Lane and the grassed area of the station platform edged with flower beds. There are areas, particularly on the banks at the southern end of the site, where vegetation is overgrown and contains weeds.

**Parking**

There are two formal, sealed car parking areas at the site. One surrounding Apex Park and the other opposite the VLine bus stop.

There is a cleared area just off the Jeffrey Street entrance which is used informally for Salvation Army's parking overflow.



VLine bus stop car park area



Car park adjacent to Apex Park

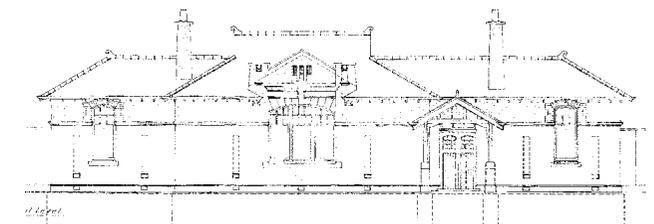
**Buildings & Infrastructure**

Construction of the station building commenced in 1910. It was the second permanent brick station on the South Eastern Line, after the much larger Korumburra station complex which was constructed three years earlier. The brick building replaced the timber station buildings erected when the railway line was first opened in 1890.

The main station building comprises three of the original rooms (refer to figure opposite):

1. Booking, telegraph and parcels office;
2. General waiting room; and
3. Ladies waiting room (separated by the booking hall).

The corrugated iron wing contains toilets which adjoin the main brick building.



Section from original station building plans



Main station building with waiting rooms

The station building is single storey brick building in Federation Queen Anne-style with a terra cotta tile roof. The building has a projecting gable porch supported on splayed chamfered posts with brick pedestals. The building has battened half hip ends with terra cotta finials. There is a decorative parapet projecting above the main segmental window of the office building. The building's finish is roughcast for the upper body above a string mould to the brick walls. Its chimneys are tapered roughcast with flat caps and pots.

The building retains many of its original features such as the quoined and chamfered brickwork to the main body of the walls and the pressed metal ceiling to the office.

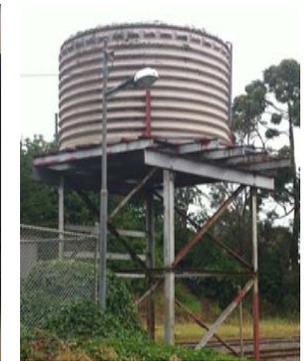
The station platform has a cantilevered steel canopy with a scalloped valance, which extends for the length of the building.

Other buildings on the site include a shed at one end of the platform, a water tank at the other end of the platform and a large open shed in the centre of the site.

Most of the railway track, pits and signals remain at the site though some signals have been damaged. The turntable is no longer on the site though the ash pit remain but have been filled in. Other infrastructure at the site include seating, light poles and bollards.



Toilet entrance



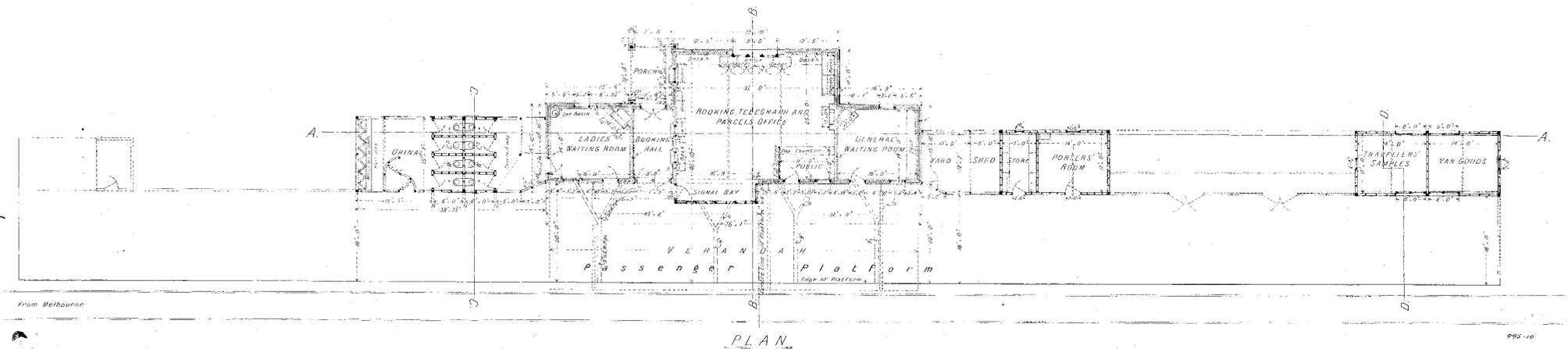
Water tank



Station verandah and shed at the end of the platform



Large shed



Floorplan for station building complex from original station building plans  
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Attachment 4.1.1

Existing Access

The site has good access to Leongatha's main streets (Bair and McCartin Streets) with access from the Strzelecki, South Gippsland and Bass Highways from Melbourne, Inverloch and Yarram (refer to **Map 1** and numbers 1-3 on **Map 3**). There are two points of vehicle access into the site (numbers 4 and 5 on **Map 3**). The site can be exited via Bennett Lane (number 6 on **Map 3**) but not entered (entry is possible on Bennett Lane up to approximately the Crown land / site boundary).

There are five formal pedestrian access points to the site (numbers 6-10 and 12 on **Map 3**). There is informal access possible from other points along Long Street, from the rear of Bair and Long Street properties and also from under the Bair Street bridge (number 11 on **Map 3**).



Access to the site along Bennett Lane

Adjacent Use & Development

The site is located along the railway corridor. The southern end connects to Horticultural Park, also the start of the Great Southern Rail Trail. The northern end of the site abuts the Strzelecki Highway (Roughead Street) where the railway tracks were recently removed as part of the Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route works. On the opposite side of the road is Centenary Park.

The eastern side of the site abuts and is located opposite housing, as well as a car dealership and the Salvation Army. Most of this interface is characterised by high, impermeable fences.

On the western side, the site interfaces with the back of Bair Street properties (mostly shops as well as the CFA and a petrol station).



Vehicle access to car park from Roughead St

These properties include steeply sloped land created when the original railway cutting was made. The slopes generally appear untidy, often consisting of overgrown vegetation and weeds.



Western interface with private property



Eastern interface with housing (high fence)

# Map 3 - Site Access



## Legend

- Study Area
- Road / Car Park / Gravel Area
- Main street
- Paths
- Highway Vehicle Access to & from Town
- ↔ Vehicle Access to Site
- Formal Pedestrian Access to Site
- - - - - → Informal Pedestrian Access to Site & Access from End of Rail Trail

# Land Tenure

## Ownership

The Leongatha railway site is Crown land vested in VicTrack, an organisation owned by the Victorian government.

## Leases

From 2003 to 2015 the South Gippsland Tourist Railway provided train services between Nyora and Leongatha. The group leased the majority of the site for this purpose. This lease has since been ceased as the group has disbanded.

Council leases two different parts of the site as shown on **Map 4**:

- Apex Park for beautification purposes
- Long Street frontage for beautification purposes

Council is currently working with VicTrack to take over lease of the railway corridor between Nyora and Leongatha, including the Leongatha railway site and station buildings.

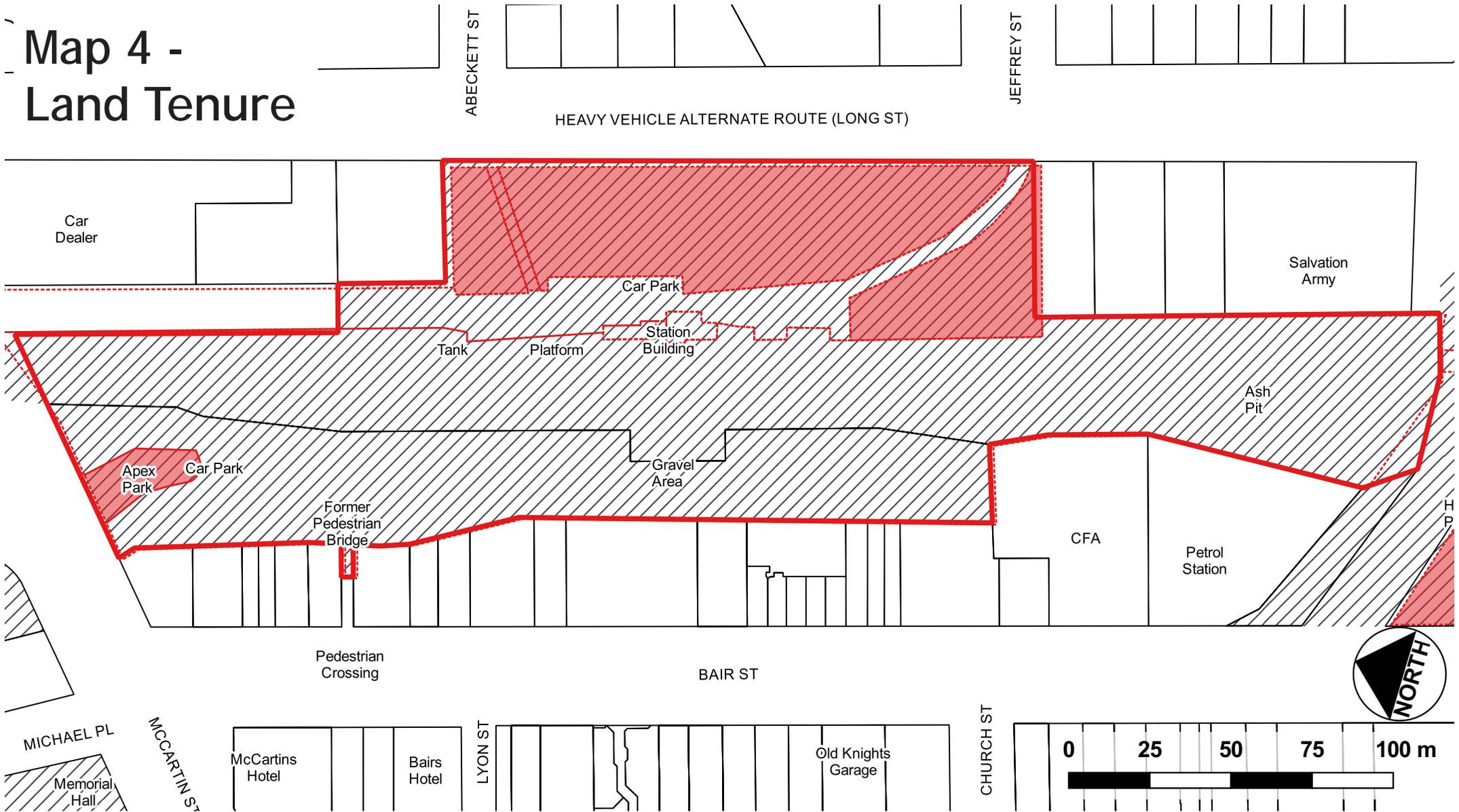
# Contamination

In 2004 and 2006, environmental assessment work was prepared to investigate the environmental conditions of parts of the site. This work identified some levels of contamination at the site.

This work is being reviewed to:

- Update outdated information
- Assess areas that have not previously been assessed
- Determine any remediation works that may be required to implement the Final Master Plan

# Map 4 - Land Tenure



- Legend**
- Study Area
  - Land Leased by Council
  - VicTrack Land not Leased
  - Property Boundaries
  - Crown Land
- Ordinary Meeting of Council No. 419 - 20 December 2017

# Planning Controls

The South Gippsland Planning Scheme sets out the planning policy and controls for the site.

## Planning Zones

The site is zoned for public use, reflecting its public ownership as described in more detail in **Figure 1**. The planning zones that apply to the site and the surrounding area are shown on **Map 5**.

To the west, the site abuts land zoned Commercial 1 along Bair Street.

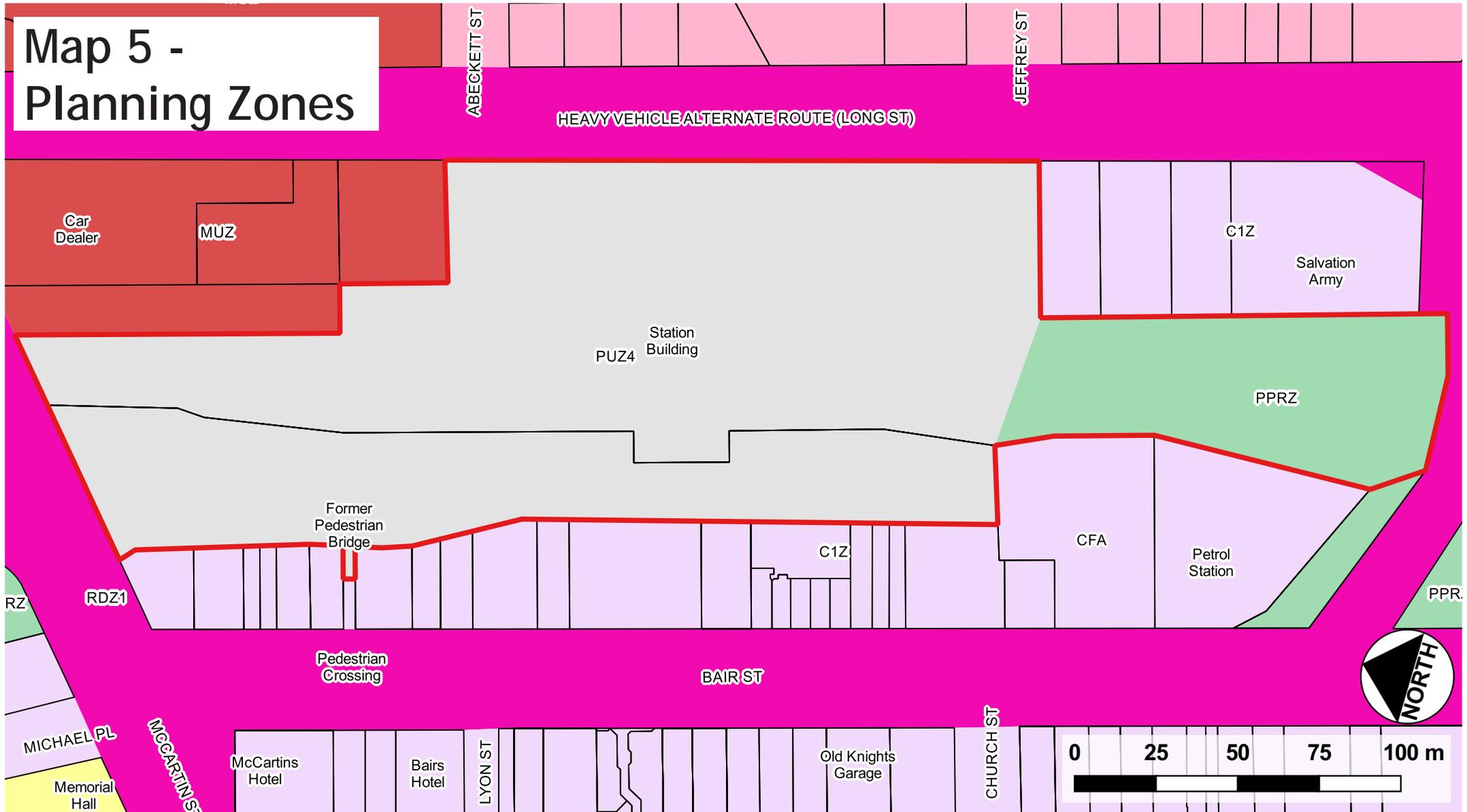
To the east, the site abuts a car dealership and adjacent railway houses on Long Street which are zoned Mixed Use. The other railway houses abutting the site and the Salvation Army on Long Street are zoned Commercial 1. The site also interfaces with residential development on the opposite side of Long St.

The roads surrounding the site are zoned Road Zone Category 1 which is typically used for highways and arterial roads. Since the construction of the Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route, Bair Street is no longer used or considered a highway, but it will be some time before the road's zoning reflects this.

Figure 1. Planning Zones applying to the site

Zone	Zone Purpose	Type	Type Purpose	Application
Public Use Zone (PUZ)	Recognise public land use for public utility and community services and facilities  Provide for associated uses that are consistent with the intent of the public land reservation or purpose	PUZ4	Transport	Applies to most of the site, apart from the southern portion  This zoning reflects the aim to retain the railway corridor from Nyora to Leongatha for public transport in the long-term
Public Park & Recreation Zone (PPRZ)	Recognise areas for public recreation and open space  Protect and conserve areas of significance where appropriate  Provide for commercial uses where appropriate	N/A	N/A	Applies to the southern portion of the site behind the CFA, petrol station, Salvation Army and southern most Long Street railway houses

# Map 5 - Planning Zones



## Legend

- Study Area
- Property Boundaries
- General Residential Zone (GRZ1)
- Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)
- Public Use Zone - Local Government (PUZ6)
- Public Use Zone - Transport (PUZ4)
- Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)
- Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)
- Road Zone - Category 1 (RDZ1)

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## Planning Overlays

The site is affected by the Heritage Overlay (two significant sites) and the Parking Overlay as shown in **Map 6** and described in more detail in **Figure 2**.

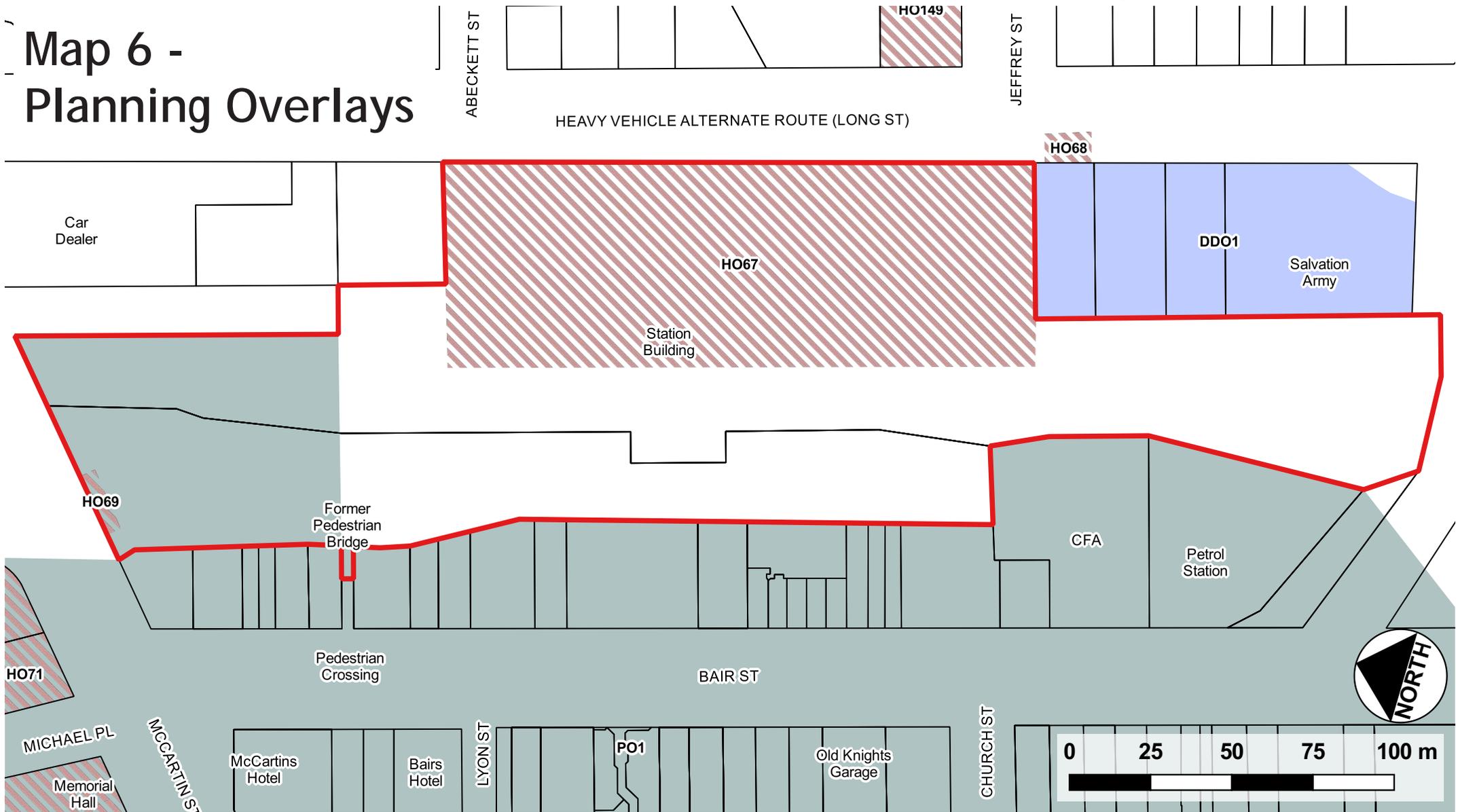
Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 1 (DDO1) applies to land abutting the site. It seeks to ensure that the town approach for Leongatha is attractive and distinctive.

Other nearby heritage protected features include the Leongatha Strzelecki Memorial (HO68), and the Leongatha Post and Telegraph Office (HO71) which is also a Commonwealth heritage place.

Figure 2. Planning Overlays applying to the site

Overlay	Overlay Purpose	Schedule	Application
Heritage Overlay	Conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance	HO67 Leongatha Railway Station	Applies to a large area of the site fronting Long St
	Conserve and enhance the elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places		External paint, internal alteration and tree controls apply and prohibited uses may be permitted
Heritage Overlay	Ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places	HO69 Canary Island Palms (Phoenix Canaiensis)	Citation identifies the railway station complex as of local historic and aesthetic significance and includes station building (constructed 1910) and platform, goods shed (since removed), staff buildings and associated track work
	Conserve specifically identified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if this will demonstrably assist with the conservation of the heritage place's significance		The citation recommends maintaining and conserving significant buildings and site context so that the function of the station is still able to be interpreted through its buildings, trackwork and other infrastructure
Parking Overlay	Facilitate appropriate provision of car parking spaces in an area	PO1 Leongatha Central Business District	Applies to Canary Island Palm row in Apex Park facing Roughead St
	Identify areas and uses where local car parking rates apply		Tree controls apply
Parking Overlay	Identify areas where financial contributions are to be made for the provision of shared car parking		Citation identifies the row as being of local historic and aesthetic significance, planted c.1925
			The citation recommends conserving and maintaining the palms and site context with a suggestion to remove adjoining powerlines
Parking Overlay			Applies to Apex Park area - likely be a mapping error / anomaly because of existing parking spaces on part of it and therefore would have been assessed as being part of the available parking area within the Leongatha CBD Parking Strategy (2013)
			Overlay specifies Column B parking rates under Clause 52.06-5 (reduces the number/ratio required) and requires payment of a cash in-lieu contribution for the waiver of five or more car spaces on a sliding scale basis - its application to part of this land should be immaterial to any future public use or leisure and recreation

# Map 6 - Planning Overlays



## Legend

- Study Area
- Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 1 (DDO1)
- Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO)
- Property Boundaries
- Heritage Overlay (HO)
- Parking Overlay (PO1)

# Public Engagement

Changes to the Leongatha railway site affect the Leongatha community, broader region and visitors to the area. There are also a number of key stakeholders that have interest in and responsibility for the site and surrounds including VicTrack, Public Transport Victoria and VicRoads.

The public were engaged throughout the project, namely through:

- First round of consultation - Ideas Engagement (April - May 2017)
- Second round of consultation - Draft Master Plan Engagement (September - October 2017)
- Project Reference Group - advertised publicly and comprised of community members, community group representatives and ward Councillors who nominated to be part of the group
- Leongatha Secondary College Global Classrooms (Broadening Horizons) class

Our promise to the public throughout the project was to keep them informed, listen to and acknowledge their concerns, aspirations and provide feedback on how the public input influenced decisions.

Engagement reports were prepared for both rounds of consultation which provide the details of the ideas and feedback received and how the Project Reference Group and Leongatha Secondary College were involved.

Given the prominence of the site and its neglect over many years, there was substantial interest in the project. The Ideas Fair at the start of the project was well attended and hundreds of ideas for the site were received. These ideas formed the basis of the Draft Master Plan. The Draft Master Plan was generally well supported with minor changes made to prepare the Final Master Plan.

The Ideas Engagement Report (September 2017) explains how the Draft Master Plan was developed using the ideas received from the public.

The Draft Master Plan Engagement Report (November 2017) explains how the Final Master Plan was prepared in response to community feedback.



Ideas Fair held at the Leongatha Railway Station Building in April 2017

# Implementation

The Final Master Plan is available at **Appendix A** and its elements are described in further detail on the following pages.

It is likely that there will be opportunities to prepare the detailed designs for and construct some elements of the plan before others. Progressing the plans will also involve taking over the lease of the railway site. Council is currently working with VicTrack to achieve this.

The implementation of the plans is expected to involve a variety of different Council teams and will be subject to funding.

## Key Priorities

Key priorities at the site (likely only to be possible once the Council's lease is formalised) are to:

- Clean up the site;
- Extend the Great Southern Rail Trail into the site;
- Upgrade the station building for use; and
- Construct the footbridge.

## Recommendations

The following actions are recommended to implement the Final Master Plan:

- Clean up the site (Parks & Gardens).
- Prior to the construction of the traffic education facility, beautify this area (Parks & Gardens).
- Continue to progress discussions and arrangements with VicTrack to lease the

full site and establish land tenure that provides for the implementation of the Master Plan (Property Team).

- Seek to establish activity at the station building as soon as possible to discourage vandalism and encourage activation of the area. Council is investigating short-medium term use of the building as an arts and music hub (Community Strengthening Team).
- Establish an architectural competition to design the rail trail extension bridge (Community Strengthening Team & Engineering).
- Prepare a functional design for the bridges (Engineering) which considers whether additional parking can be incorporated under the rail trail extension bridge.
- Prepare detailed designs for inter-related elements of the Master Plan according to available funding (Engineering) with regard to:
  - Preparing designs for both bridges that can be constructed separately so that lack of funding for the highway bridge does not delay construction of the footbridge.
  - Seeking input from the Bike Education Coordinator for Gippsland, the Rotary Club and local schools when preparing detailed designs for the traffic education area.
  - Seeking input from Sports Victoria when planning the exercise circuit and

identifying the exercise equipment.

- Investigate and pursue funding opportunities to implement the Master Plan (Grants Team).
- Review access arrangements with a view to avoiding future conflict (specifically about long-standing private access that is not subject to lease / licence) (Property Team).
- Run a competition regarding the park's name (Community Strengthening Team).
- Improve signage to the site advertising key facilities namely the playground, long vehicle parking, access to town and the rail trail (refer to **Map 7**) (Economic Development & Engineering Teams).
- At full development of the Master Plan, investigate establishing a right hand turn lane for vehicles heading south along Long Street into the site (Engineering Team).
- Consider removing the Parking Overlay from the site in the future as part of a General Planning Scheme Amendment (Strategic Planning Team).
- In the next Planning Scheme Amendment, encourage properties along Bair Street to improve their interface with the railway site as part of any redevelopment (i.e. by providing a frontage at the rear of the site as well as on the main street, by creating additional public access points between Bair Street and the railway site) (Strategic Planning Team).

# Final Master Plan

Elements of the Final Master Plan (the numbers correspond to elements shown on the plan):

- 1 Rail trail extension** - Great Southern Rail Trail extended from current start at Horticultural Park into the site connecting to the station building and to Roughead Street (Strzelecki Highway). This is likely to be constructed of asphalt for longevity. Equine riders will be required to dismount at either end of the railway site to avoid conflicts with other users when travelling through the site.
- 2 Footbridge connecting site to Bair Street** - Continuous accessible path from the laneway off the main street, Bair Street (next to Toy Shop as per previous footbridge) via a bridge. The footbridge will be designed like a big cow that people can walk through. It will be an art installation visible from a distance on the approach from Melbourne and will act as a tourism attraction. The bridge will incorporate a look-out and as well as information about the town's history. An entranceway (see illustration opposite) will be established at the end of the laneway along Bair Street to direct people to the site. The bridge will connect to the rail trail, adjacent playground and Apex Park car park.
- 3 Rail trail extension bridge** - Continuous accessible path over Roughead Street (Strzelecki Highway) for equines, bicycles and pedestrians to extend the rail trail towards Korumburra. The bridge will connect to the proposed Bair Street footbridge and designed so that the Bair Street portion can be built as

funds are available. The design of the bridge will be important given its prominent location, its required height and its visual impact on the town. A design competition should be established to encourage the design of an attractive landmark structure that benefits the town. The alignment of the bridge will ensure that the return of rail to the region is not disadvantaged. It is likely that power will need to be undergrounded as part of this work.

- 4 Performance & open space area** - Use of station platform as a stage for performances with a grassed area for seating which could also be used for recreation (e.g. kicking a football, picnicking) or events (e.g. markets) when performances are not on. Restricted vehicle access (for trucks up to 12.5m) provided from Strzelecki Highway to the area



Illustration showing how the entrance to the Leongatha railway site via the laneway on Bair Street and footbridge could look

will provide for event set-up and rear of shop access. Infrastructure for events such as lighting poles which accommodate sound and lighting equipment, an extension to the verandah for performances and anchor points for market stalls will be considered in the detailed design for this area. Trees (e.g. *magnolia grandiflora*) are also proposed to screen the back of Bair Street properties.

- 5 Playground & covered BBQ area** - A distinctive playground to attract people passing through Leongatha to stop in town. It will be designed to cater for a range of abilities, surrounded by a low fence and preferably incorporate a large slide. Next to the playground a covered BBQ area is proposed. The playground and BBQ shelter will replace the existing play equipment and proposed shelter at nearby Horticultural Park. This area will have easy access to town via the Bair Street footbridge and to car parking at the adjacent Apex Park car park. Access will be provided by continuous accessible paths and ramps. Seating will be provided in this area. This seating will be able to be used for sheltered (undercover) viewing of any events in the adjacent performance space.
- 6 Traffic education area** - A pedestrian and bicycle education facility for children to develop the skills they need to safety travel as pedestrians and cyclists on roads and paths. This area includes a shelter and seating. Consultation with local schools will continue

as the detailed design of this facility is prepared.

**7 Exercise stations** - A series of exercise equipment between Centenary Park and Horticultural Park along pathways. This could be established as a circuit. It is intended that this equipment will encourage physical activity by a wide range of demographics. Sport and Recreation Victoria will be consulted in the detailed design of these stations.

**8 Additional car parking** - At least fifty additional all day car parking spaces will be provided at the site. The Apex Park and VLine bus parking areas are proposed to be extended. A formalised car parking area is also proposed just off Long Street. Dedicated long vehicle parking is proposed along Bennett Lane to cater for caravans and vehicles with trailers. Additional car parking spaces may also be established along Bennett Lane depending on the rail trail extension bridge design. The configuration of parking spaces will be determined during the detailed design.

**9 New access (steps)** - Steps are proposed from Bair Street / Koonwarra Road bridge to the site. The feasibility of a ramp will be re-considered during the detailed design but is unlikely to be proposed as it would need to be a length of over 60 metres and new and improved accessible paths are proposed from Bair Street and Long Street into the site.

**10 Use of the station building** - While improvements to the site are being established, Council proposes to use the station building as an arts and music hub. This will include space for storing musical equipment and seating for events.

When assessing future tenants and proposed activities in the building, use the following guiding principles:

- Provides an activity that complements the other use and development proposed for the site (e.g. snacks, hot drinks, bike hire, tourist information).
- Contributes to activity at the site, particularly at times retail is quiet in the town (i.e. opening hours on Saturday afternoon and Sundays).

**11 Restricted vehicle access** - Restricted access for events such as markets and for deliveries to the rear of properties provided for vehicles (up to a 12.5m truck).

#### Facilities -



A new self-contained toilet will be provided at the VLine bus stop in the short term with the option of upgrading the existing toilet block for public use and / or establishing a new toilet block at the site in the longer term.



A water fountain with water bottle refill and dog tap is proposed at a central location, within close access of the VLine bus stop, the rail trail, playground and open space area.



Bicycle parking is proposed at a key location where bike riders can park for events, to use the playground and BBQ area and to access to town on foot via the Bair Street footbridge.



Covered bicycle and mobility scooter parking and storage is proposed in combination with a bicycle repair kit ('fixit' station) at this location. Bicycles and trikes will be able to be stored in lockers (e.g. secure, self-serve Parkiteer cages). The form of parking will be determined as part of the detailed design in discussion with South Gippsland Specialist School.



Signage is proposed at the site to assist pedestrians and rail trail users with directions to nearby services and facilities. Signage is also proposed at the entries to Leongatha and into the site from Long Street to encourage passing traffic to stop at the site (refer to **Map 7**). The proposed signage will integrate with existing Great Southern Rail Trail signage and

# Final Master Plan (cont.)

## Facilities (cont.) -

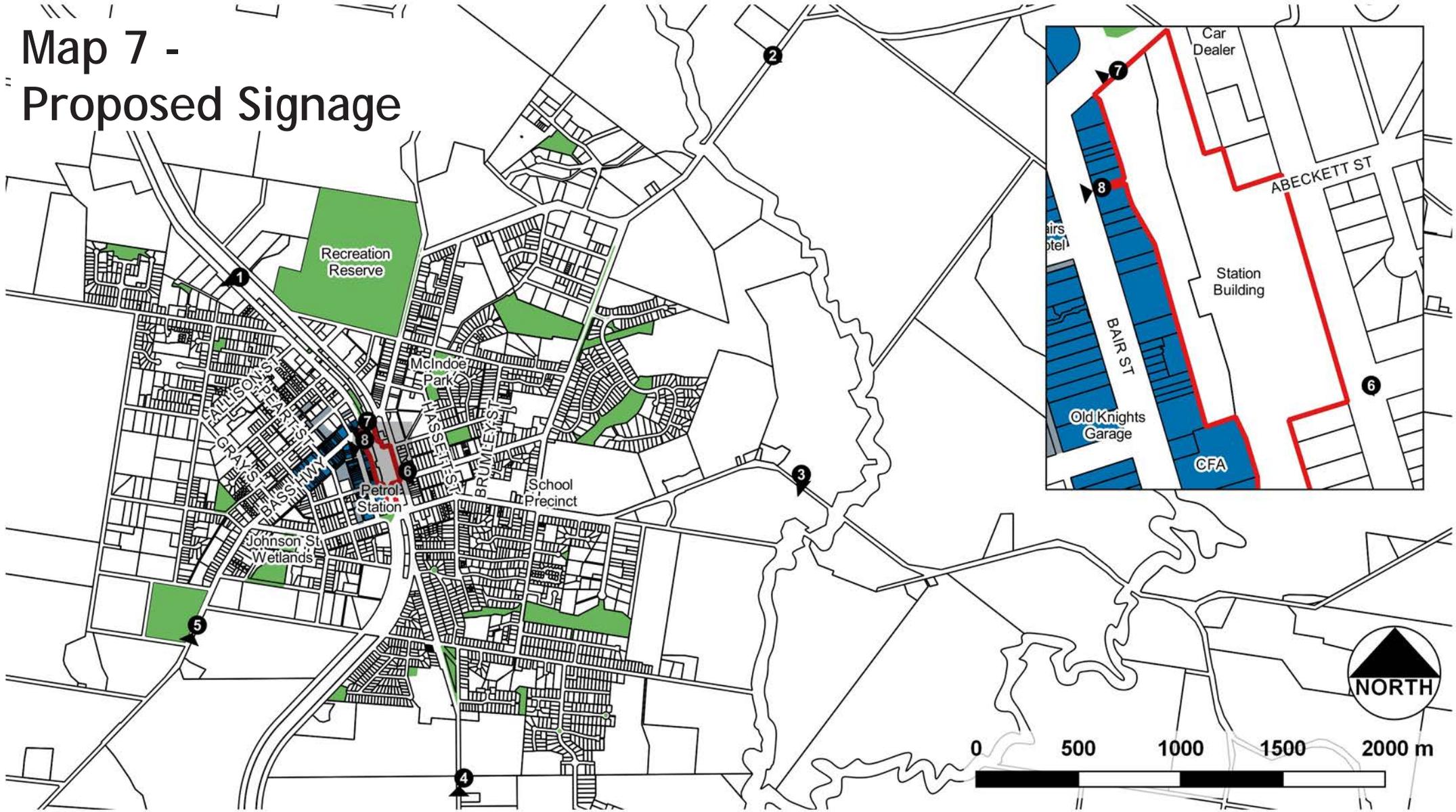
wayfinding signage to be installed in central Leongatha as part of the upgrades to Bair Street.

## Other proposals -

The following proposals will be explored further as part of the detailed design, with 3-6 considered as funding opportunities are available:

1. Additional planting and seating is proposed to be integrated into the redevelopment of each area. As the pine or other trees reach the end of their life and become dangerous, they will be replaced with native plantings. Plants (especially weeds) at the site's southern end will be cleared to improve visibility. Some other vegetation will need to be removed to construct the proposed bridges and parking but this will be minimised where possible.
2. Lighting is proposed to improve visibility and perceptions of safety throughout the site. Where possible, energy efficient lighting and renewable energy will be used.
3. There is an opportunity for the site to become a solar energy pilot site. Solar panels could be installed on the roof of the BBQ shelter.
4. Electric charging facilities could be provided for vehicles, mobility scooters and electric bicycles (e.g. located at the parking areas).
5. Any opportunities for an art installation (such as a large mural) to beautify the back of Bair Street properties could be investigated. This will involve consultation with affected commercial land owners and tenants.
6. Historical information provided throughout the site in consultation with the Historical Society.

# Map 7 - Proposed Signage



## Legend

- ▶ Proposed New or Adjusted Signage

# Costing

It is expected that achieving the upgrades at the Leongatha railway site will rely on a variety of funding sources and cost several million dollars (est. \$4 mill). The full implementation of the plan will depend on attracting external funding sources such as from State government, Federal government and philanthropic organisations.

The detailed design will provide costings for improvements to the site. Some initial indicative costings have been developed at this stage which are shown opposite.

## Construction Phase 1

State Government has already committed to upgrading the bus interchange at the site.

Funding has been requested from Regional Development Victoria as part of the Bair Street upgrades to fund the other elements of construction phase 1.

## Construction Phase 2

Many of the elements of Phase 2 are likely to be funded separately. Funding for several of the elements in Phase 2 may be requested as part of Council's future funding bid to extend the Great Southern Rail Trail towards Korumburra. Exactly how and what may be funded when will be dependent on funding opportunities available at the time and, in the case of grants, the specific program details.

Figure 3. Indicative Costs by Item

Item	Indicative Cost (\$K)
<b>Analysis &amp; Design</b>	
Environmental assessment	Funded
Detailed design	50
Lighting design	15
<b>Site Preparation</b>	
Preliminaries	50
Site remediation	400*
<b>Construction - Phase 1</b>	
VLine bus upgrade including toilet	Funded**
Footbridge connecting site to Bair Street (cost of cow design work not included)	300
Ramp from bridge	50
Open space & landscaping	100
Covered BBQ area	75
Additional car parking	400
<b>Construction - Phase 2</b>	
Rail trail extension	100
Station building refurbishment	TBD***
Footbridge cow cladding	TBD
Rail trail extension bridge	1,000

Item	Indicative Cost (\$K)
Toilets (long-term)	250
Traffic education facility	200
Playground	100
Performance space	200
Exercise stations x4	60
Access (steps) from Bair Street bridge	50
Bicycle parking & lockers	5
Bicycle repair kit	10
Water refill station	5
Signage	10
Bike lockers	30
Lighting	200 (TBC)
<b>Total</b>	
Sub-total + 15% contingency + 2.5% design, admin & contract supervision	4,300

\*To be estimated with more accuracy as part of environmental assessment work

\*\*State Government have funding available for this and are undertaking these works

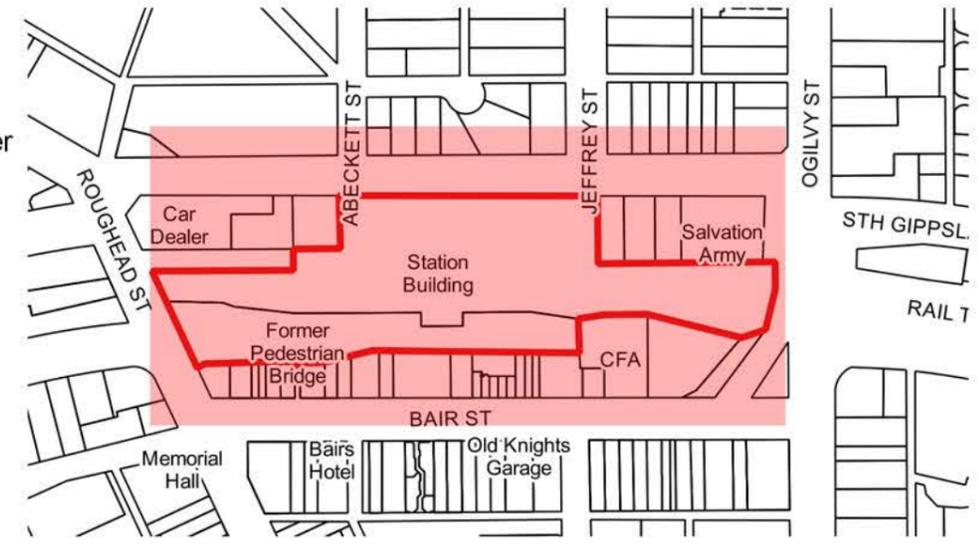
\*\*\*VicTrack have indicated they will do this before leasing

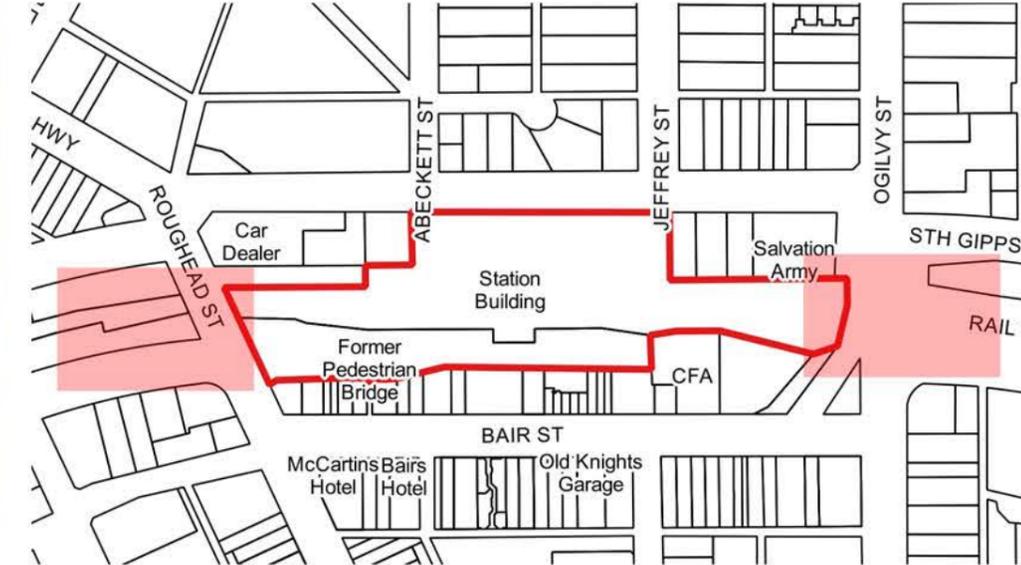
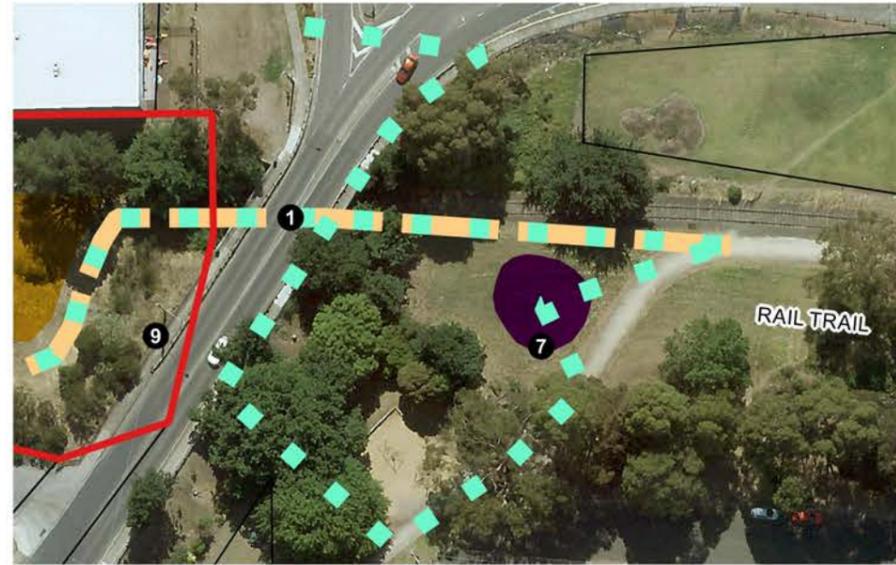
# Appendix A - Final Master Plan



**Legend**

- Study Area
- Existing Paths on Site to be Retained
- Proposed Bridge
- Proposed Ramp
- Proposed Rail Trail Extension
- Proposed Exercise Circuit
- Proposed Traffic Education Area
- Proposed Flexible Open Space Area with Platform as Stage for Events & Area Screened from the Back of Shops by Tree
- Proposed Playground & BBQ Area
- Proposed Extra Parking
- Proposed Exercise Station
- 🚲 Covered Mobility Scooter & Bike Storage
- 🚲 Bike Parking
- ✎ Signage
- ♂ ♀ Toilets
- Water Fountain

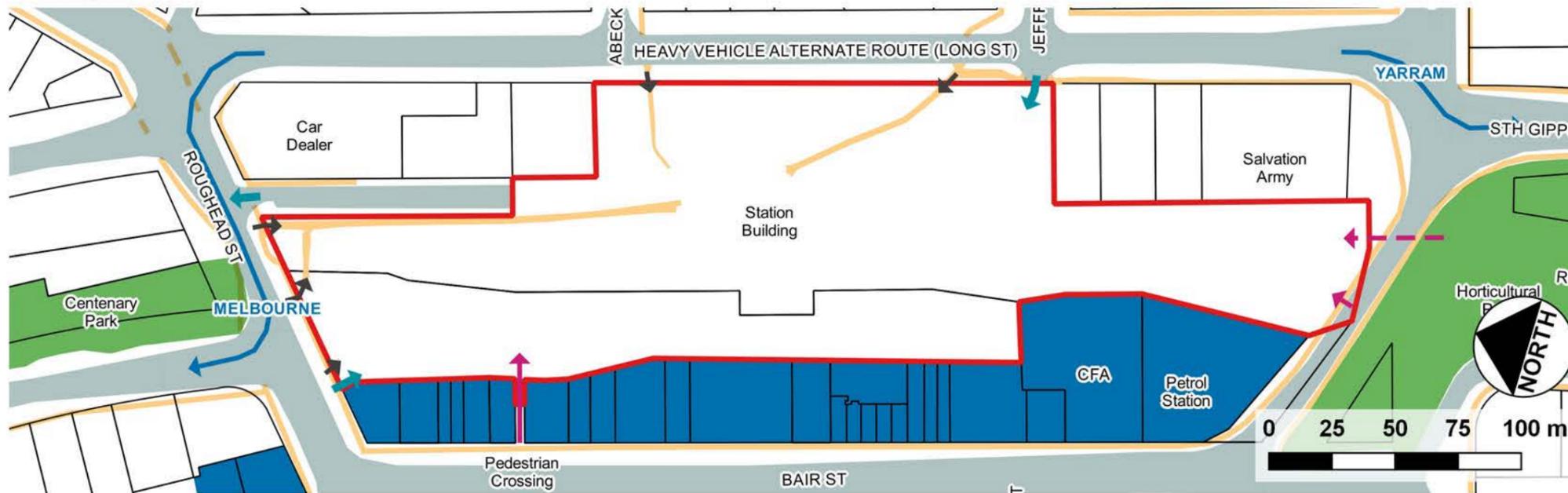




**Legend**

- Study Area
- Proposed Bridge
- Proposed Rail Trail Extension
- Proposed Exercise Circuit
- Proposed Exercise Station

**Proposed Access**



**Legend**

- Study Area
- Main street copy
- Road / Car Park / Gravel Area
- Paths
- Highway Access to & from Town
- Vehicle Access to Site
- Formal Pedestrian Access
- New Pedestrian Access
- New Pedestrian Access under Bridge (Extension of Great Southern Rail Trail)

# LEONGATHA

