Warrnambool City Council

Railway Station Precinct Master Plan

Final Report

February 2010

Prepared by CPG for Warrnambool City Council


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ENTRY

Contents

1 Introduction

The Warrnambool Railway Station Precinct Master Plan has been prepared by CPG Australia (formerly Coomes Consulting Group), for the City of Warrnambool.

The masterplan applies to the railway precinct which is defined to include the Warrnambool Railway Station and the immediate area of influence, including the Railway Station and Goods Shed, the Tenix land to the west, Council owned freehold land south of the line, the immediate Merri Street road network, the pedestrian and bicycle network, including the connections to the foreshore and Lake Pertobe, adjoining public open space, public and TAFE parking areas, pedestrian crossings and the bus interchange.

The study area is illustrated in Figure 1. Figure 1 identifies key zones addressed by the masterplan including threshold land uses (to the north of Merri Street) as they form part of an area of influence for the station.

The aim of the masterplan as defined by Council is as follows:

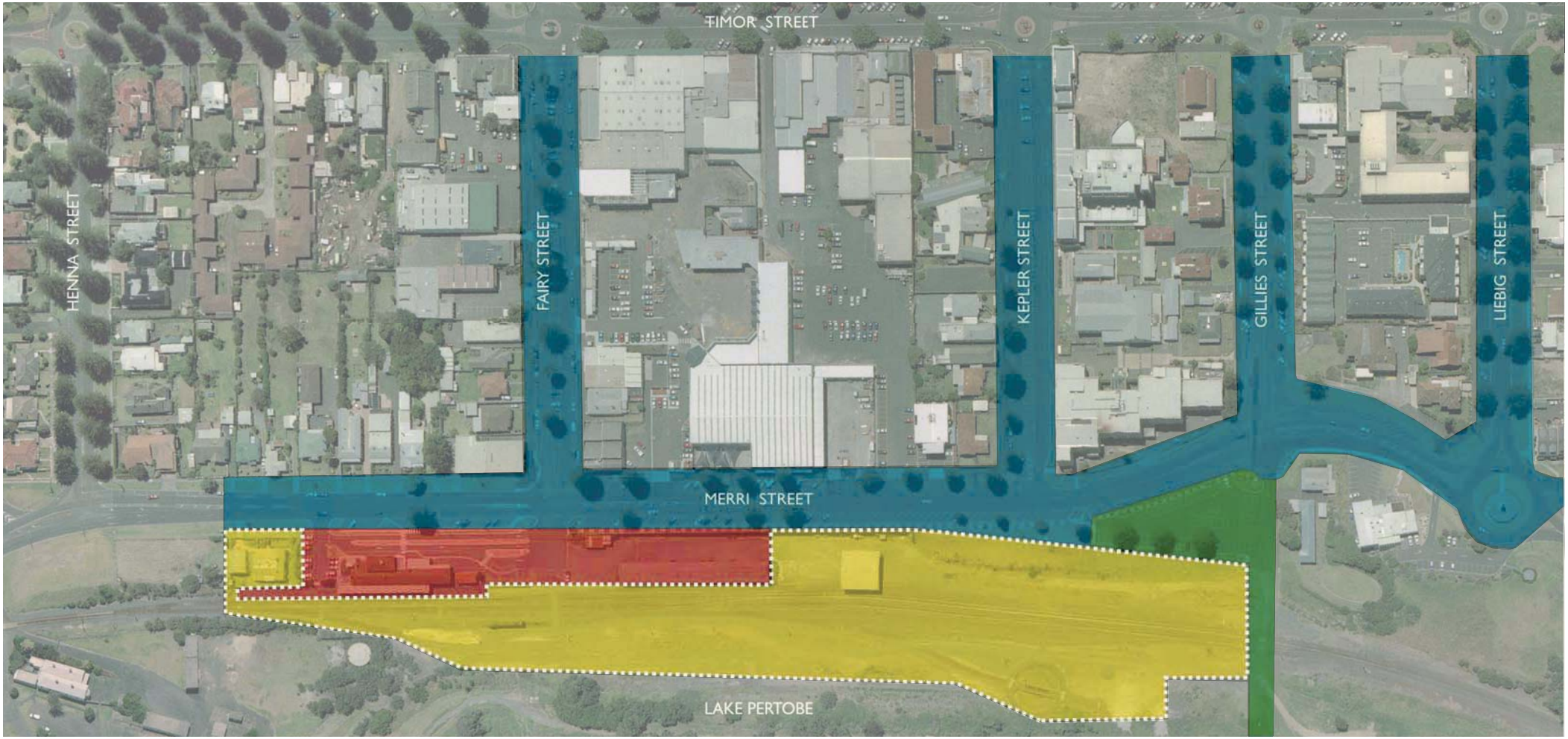
The Warrnambool Railway Station Master Plan provides a vision for renewal. The plan sets the priorities and hierarchy of decision-making and creates a singular direction for all agencies involved in future changes to the station and its surrounds. The plan will ensure that the future amenities and services of patrons are of the highest standards, reinforcing the importance of public transport in our community and to act as a lever for economic investment. The station precinct will be a gateway to the Southwest and a public space that the city can be proud of.

The masterplan is a working document for decision making and orderly management of the initiatives and actions to be undertaken by Council and other State Government agencies as well as to embark upon seeding and searching private sector interest, investment and partnership.

The masterplan has been prepared in collaboration with the following key stakeholders:

- City of Warrnambool
- VicTrack
- VLine
- Transport Connections
- Community

Figure 1 > Key Zones within the Study Area

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2 Station History

The Warrnambool Heritage Gap Study, prepared for Council by Heritage Matters Pty Ltd, defined a series of heritage precincts in Warrnambool which included the railway station (Precinct 25: Railway). The Statement of Significance for Precinct 25 is replicated below.

Precinct 25: Statement of Significance
What is significant?

The Railway Precinct extends for most of the southern side of Merri Street from Gilles Street to Henna Street. It includes the 1892 Railway Station building and its associated works, the 1925 Goods Shed which replaced the original shed burnt down that year, and a substantial retaining wall along Merri Street. It also includes the former Station Master's residence…Much of the land has been used for tramway works in the 1880's, and the second gas works residences and offices. A branch line to the Breakwater and also completed in 1890, new shunting yards and goods sheds superseded the old municipal tramway. Other land was taken over from the local salt water bathing establishment.

The first official train arrived early in 1890. Its arrival marked a transformation in transportation, both for goods and people. It brought an end to coach travel and provided easier, faster and cheaper travel. It opened up access to metropolitan markets for exported local produce and facilitated imports.

The Railway Station building has been altered and modernised and is in fair condition. It is suffering from poor repairs to the failing mortar. The Good Shed, now largely redundant, has been modified by the enclosure of sections of the platforms. It is in poor condition. The former Station Master's residence has been altered at the rear and modernised and is in very good condition. The second Gas Works manager's residence, now redundant, has been altered and its integrity compromised and is in fair condition.

How is it significant?

The Railway Precinct is of historical and architectural significance to the City of Warrnambool.

Why is it significant?

The Railway Precinct is of historical significance as the representation of a transport revolution which transformed passenger traffic and the import and export of goods and produce. It also marked the immediate conclusion of coach travel and the eventual decline of coastal shipping. It was not superseded itself until are the Second World War and the dramatic rise of automotive transport after the Second World War. It is of architectural significance for is mix of industrial and residential buildings and especially for the Railway Station building and its associated works.


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3 Railway Precinct Analysis

3.1 Context

Warrnambool is the main centre for an extensive regional catchment and is a popular destination for many tourists and other travellers, as well as providing a servicing function for those travelling through the region to other destinations. For these people the railway station is often the 'front door' of the city centre, providing for up to 600 passenger journeys per day .

Warrnambool railway station is located at the southwest corner of the city centre. The Station fronts Merri St opposite detached dwellings on the north side of the street. The station buildings command a substantial site, at the interface between the city and the coast. Its heritage building stock embodies cultural significance but also untapped social and economic potential as a contribution to community life, tourism development and economic opportunity.

At present the link between the railway station and the 'heart' of the city centre is poor both visually and functionally. This results in visitors having difficulty understanding which direction to head in once leaving the station building. The area surrounding the station also has little visual charm to complement the amenity of Warrnambool's seafront location. It lacks both attractive streetscape elements and land uses which could capitalise on and encourage pedestrian access.

The following section of the report details the findings of the site analysis undertaken for the railway precinct.

3.2 Planning framework

The Railway Precinct is zoned as follows:

- Station site – Public Use Zone 4;
- Merri Street frontage – Residential 1 Zone near Henna Street, Business 1 Zone east of Henna Street;
- Southwest TAFE – Public Use Zone 3.

The following Heritage Overlays apply to the site:

- Schedule 221 to the Heritage Overlay – this is an interim control only and is subject to review following the preparation of a Heritage assessment of the site.
- Schedule 127 to the Heritage Overlay – this applies to the goods shed, wall, water tower and house.

Council Strategies

A series of planning documents have been prepared by Council that provide strategic direction or objectives for the railway precinct. These include:

- Warrnambool City Centre Urban Design Analysis, 2009, Warrnambool City Council;
- Warrnambool Heritage Gap Study – Stage Three (a) Precincts, Heritage Masters Pty Ltd;
- Warrnambool City Centre – Urban Design Framework, Volume One & Two, (2001), David Lock Associates & EDAW;
- Warrnambool City Centre Structure Plan, Stage 1, (2008), Collie Planning;
- Warrnambool City Centre – Background Paper, (October 2008), Renaissance Planning Pty Ltd;
- Warrnambool City Centre Structure Plan, (2008), Renaissance Planning Pty Ltd;
- The City of Warrnambool Urban Conservation Study Part One, (1983), Andrew Ward in association with Auty Wilson & Herriot Pty Ltd.

The key issues to emerge from the above documents are summarised in Table 1.

VicTrack Documents

In addition to the above documents, an interim heritage report has been prepared for VicTrack to assess the condition of the goods shed and amenities block located within the railway yard (December 2008). This report was commissioned because VicTrack were seeking to expand parking on the site and sought to demolish the disused goods shed and amenities building to accommodate this outcome. The goods shed is currently covered by a Heritage Overlay (HO127) and requires classification by a heritage architect before demolition could be approved.

The recommendations of this report have specific relevance to the masterplanning process in terms of the future layout and development opportunities on the site. The recommendations are as follows:

- The goods shed was assessed to be in poor – good condition and should be retained subject to a number of modifications to the building;
- The goods shed is the only remaining N20 goods shed in the region.
- Adaptive re-use of the goods shed as part of a tourist or community facility is recommended.
- The extension of the platform to the good shed is also recommended.
- The amenities block was assessed to be in poor condition and recommended to be demolished and the site used for car parking.

Despite the above recommendations, VicTrack remain uncertain about the need to retain the goods shed given its current condition and modifications undertaken to the building to date. At present, the shed remains unused and locked up behind a cyclone fence.

Table 1 > Existing Strategic Directions

Way-finding	Legibility from / to the station has been identified as being poor. Opportunities to improve way-finding through the introduction of a paving concept with coloured footpath section and sculpture icons have previously been recommended.
Car parking	Issues with access to long term parking in the area has affected the ability of commuters to park close to the station (or in designated railway parking). Opportunities to provide additional car parking to service the station, TAFE and surrounding commercial areas have been proposed on the station site and surrounding sites (i.e. decked car park west of Kepler St).
Station facilities	It was identified that the station has inadequate waiting areas with limited supporting commuter facilities. Improvements to this were recommended.
Bus stop	Lack of shelter over bus bays was identified as an issue for commuters. This may have been rectified in part through the recent provision of new bus stops.
Bus routes	Creation of a common bus loop for the City's bus services was recommended. As part of this it was recommended that the station become the main interchange for buses.
Circulation	There is a lack of legibility of circulation for bus, car and pedestrian movements. It is recommended that this be addressed for improved for movement and safety reasons.
Built form integration	The lack of development and poor urban design outcomes along Merri Street, north of the station, limit activation and interaction with the station.

3.3 Site analysis

The analysis detailed below is illustrated graphically on Figure 2: Constraints & Opportunities Diagram. For ease of legibility, the text below is grouped under headings which are numbered CO1, CO2 etc. This numbering correlates with elements illustrated on the Figure 2. The analysis should be read together with Figure 2.

CO1: Harris Street Reserve

Harris Street Reserve is located to the west of the railway precinct. A key location for active recreation, this is the location of Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-Operative and the Warrnambool Soccer / Cricket Club. At present the land between the railway station precinct and this sporting precinct is owned by Tenix, creating a barrier to access for pedestrians and limiting integration with town.

CO2: Tenex Land

The Tenex land is currently utilised for industrial purposes. This is a large strategic site located adjacent to the station, recreation reserve and Lake Pertobe. In many ways, it represents a key development site with potential for mixed use residential and commercial development to fit the transit city model. The site may also be of use to VicTrack for operational purposes. Contamination issues on the site may limit future re-use of the site. The Tenex site currently prevents direct access from the residential precinct to the north (Henna Street) to Lake Pertobe, other than around the Harris Street Reserve.

CO3: Station / Merri Street Intersection

Pedestrian crossing detail does not exist at the western end of the station precinct connecting the residential zone (Henna Street) to the railway station forecourt / bus interchange. This creates issues for pedestrian access and safety.

CO4: Railway Precinct

The Railway precinct currently includes approximately 15 car spaces on site and 4 taxi bays. While all regional bus services terminate at the station, local bus services use the interchange at Koroit Street, limiting access via public transport between the city and the railway station.

Pedestrian circulation within the station forecourt tends to be problematic and is governed by the regional bus interchange. Entry to the platform is also via the station building and as a result is detached from main car parking areas, adding to the confusion.

In terms of usage, the Warrnambool Station is used by V/Line's three return passenger trains to Melbourne - Southern Cross on weekdays and Saturdays, with two return workings on Sundays. It is also a major connecting point for V/Line road coach services to Hamilton, Mount Gambier (SA), Portland, Port Fairy, Ballarat, a new thrice-weekly coach to Ararat via Halls Gap and on Sundays, one remaining return working to Geelong. There is also a five nights a week freight train conveying containers between Melbourne Freight Terminal and the West Vic siding just past Warrnambool.

CO5: Merri Street / Fairy Street Intersection

The intersection of Merri Street and Fairy Street, directly opposite the railway station appears to be difficult for pedestrians as it does not have a defined crossing. As many rail commuters park in Fairy Street (parking along the southern side of Merri Street is meter parking), this creates further pedestrian conflict at the intersection.

CO6: Commercial Interface

The commercial interface to the station along Merri Street is characterised largely by blank walls, creating an un-welcoming edge to the street. The lack of activation at this edge impacts on the character of this part of the street and the overall safety and surveillance of pedestrians walking to and from the station. Future development of these sites should be encouraged to have a commercial edge that fronts the street.

CO7: Car Park

The at-grade car park located to the west of Kepler Street is used by businesses and TAFE. It is understood that commuters also use this space. The provision of car parking for commuters needs to be addressed to ensure appropriate supply is available.

CO8: TAFE

South West TAFE is a key land use in the railway precinct. This site generates a significant demand for car parking, with overflow currently being accommodated on former railway land, south of Merri Street. Qualitative evidence suggests that additional car parking is required for TAFE users. Sharing of parking with the any plans for the station may be an option. It is understood that the TAFE is preparing plans to undertake re-development of part of the building on the corner of Merri Street / Gilles Street. Plans for the upper level re-development of Building F to include a new library have been mooted.

CO9: Merri Street / Kepler Street Intersection

The intersection of Merri Street and Kepler Street is a key pedestrian crossing for TAFE students/ staff using the carpark. A defined crossing to TAFE is provided. Potentially there is an opportunity to further connect this zone with the railway precinct via the small public space adjacent to the crossing.

CO10: Merri Street / Gilles Street Intersection

The intersection of Merri Street and Gilles Street is another key pedestrian crossing for TAFE students/staff using the carpark. Due to the grade separation at Cannon Hill this intersection can be difficult, creating a blind spot. There is no defined crossing to TAFE at this intersection, limiting effective way finding to the city centre.

CO11: Historic precinct

An historic precinct exists to the south-east of the railway station and consists of the curator's cottage of the old Baths and Cannon Hill memorial. The Warrnambool RSL is also located adjacent to Cannon Hill and the baths. There are opportunities to utilise this historic precinct as a connector with station and bus facilities.

CO12: Pedestrian Access to Lake Pertobe

At present the primary pedestrian access to Lake Pertobe from the railway station is via the active rail crossing at the end of Gilles Street. This access has limited signalling or safety provision and is therefore not DDA compliant. It is in the interests of pedestrian safety to either upgrade this access or provide an alternative. One option to encourage pedestrian access to Lake Pertobe could be the construction of a bridge above the railway corridor, achievable due to the existing grade separation.

CO13: Railway Infrastructure

A heritage listed freight shed exists east of the rail platform. Currently the railway land between this shed and the limestone retaining wall contains ballast stockpiles, an active turning bay for steam and heritage rail and general disused infrastructure. The lack of utilisation of this land with no public access creates an extensive barrier between the city centre, railway station and Lake Pertobe.

Figure 2 > Constraints and Opportunities Diagram

4 Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with community members and key stakeholders early in the masterplanning process. Three separate meetings were held whereby key issues and opportunities were discussed and initial concepts tabled. A summary of the issues raised in the consultation is contained in Table 2.

Table 2 > Consultation Summary

Station facilities	The station is un-inviting and as such people don't spend much time there before travelling or collecting passengers.
	There is nowhere to buy something to eat or drink while you wait for the train.
	There is not enough seating in the waiting area.
	There are no lockers or bicycle facilities for commuters.
	A tourist information facility could be located in the station building.
	The goods shed should either be re-used or demolished. The sheds are covered by an interim heritage control however are not heritage listed.
	Options to extend the platform to the east were highly recommended.
Station operation	Train services will continue and are anticipated to increase in the future.
	Increasing freight activities are anticipated. A passing loop is required between Colac and Camperdown to enable freight trains to pass passenger trains.
Station design	Opportunities to move the platform / station closer to the Gilles Street end of the site should be explored.
	Opportunities to re-use the station building for tourist or commercial purposes (if the station moves eastward) should be explored.
	Stabling yards are required to be maintained for freight services and future stabling needs.
Train service	There are high passenger numbers on the 5.38am train to Melbourne and the 4.30pm train back to Warrnambool.
	Passenger numbers have increased over the past few years and service frequency is programmed to respond.
Bus service	The bus and train timetables do not match up and there is no bus service that connects to the first train in the morning.
	Provision of a bus turn around area is recommended.
	A commuter service into town would be good.
	The local bus service should have a second interchange at the station.
	There is nowhere to wait for regional bus services.
	Bring buses directly down Fairy street not Henna Street.

Traffic	Traffic calming along Merri Street is required.
	Conflict between car, bus and pedestrian movements is an issue.
	Speed of cars along Merri Street from the west is a concern, particularly because of the rise and limited visibility.
	Reduce speed limit to 50 km/h along Merri Street.
Car parking	There is not enough commuter car parking available. There are 15 spaces at the station. Demand for at least 80 spaces has been forecast by DoT.
	There is not enough general car parking available in the area. The un-metred car parking areas are heavily used.
	Decked car parking on the station site should be explored. Opportunities to deck behind the wall and in the cutting were considered to be feasible options.
	People park on residential nature strips when they are dropping off / picking up from the station and there is tension around this.
Pedestrian / Bicycle Access	Legibility and access from the station to the CBD is difficult.
	Entry to the station from Merri Street / Fairy Street is poor.
	Pedestrian / Cycle access to the SurfClub, Woollen Mill. Flagstaff Hill is good step in providing connections.
	Improve pedestrian access and rail crossing at Gilles Street to Lake Pertobe. Access is currently restricted but people are using it which is unsafe. Potential for pedestrian bridge in this location.
	Opportunity to use grade and build a pedestrian bridge connecting Fairy Street with the Lake environs.
	The bike lane doesn't link to the station.
	Lighting around the station, including Merri Street, is considered to be poor and surveillance in this area is limited.
Landscape	Planting vegetation to the south of the station might reduce the impact of wind on the platform.
	Opportunities to bring the wetland closer to the southern edge of the station, to improve amenity and manage drainage.


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5 The Masterplan

The masterplan takes a layered approach to introducing land use and design improvements for the railway precinct. Three layers of improvements are proposed – short, medium and long term. The masterplan elements are illustrated in Figures 3 - 6.

Each layer is considered a building block to the ultimate masterplan design. However, in saying that, each layer offers improvements that can be undertaken independent of a commitment to acting on recommendations in the subsequent stages.

5.1 Objectives

The masterplan is underpinned by the following objectives:

1. To ensure that the ongoing operational integrity of the station is not compromised;
2. To ensure that the experience of using and visiting the station is improved;
3. To ensure that the integration of the station with town is reinforced;
4. To ensure that commercial opportunities at the site are maximised.

These objectives require the competing demands of various stakeholders to be balanced in order for them to be achieved. Some of these objectives are weighted more heavily than others and will influence the programming of works to be undertaking within the precinct, particularly the station site itself. However, it is the combined achievement of these objectives that will deliver the greatest net benefit.

5.2 Implementation

The improvements recommended in the masterplan are responsive to issues around investment and funding, and timelines for approvals of major infrastructure work. It is recognised that some of the more significant proposals will require longer lead times to generate support and appropriate resources for implementation. Hence, the plan provides interim solutions to respond to issues in the short to medium term while these approvals are being secured. The interim measures will form part of the ultimate solution in most cases, ensuring overall efficiencies.

The masterplan also responds to the transition that occurs in the built environment, and will future-proof opportunities for land use and development in the long term.


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6 Short Term Strategies

6.1 Wayfinding

A series of wayfinding initiatives are identified as part of the short term proposals for the precinct. These initiatives will be implemented by Council.

These improvements have been proposed in response to our site analysis as well as the significant number of issues raised through consultation, about the poor visibility of the station and its poor integration, and legibility, with the CBD and historical area.

The way finding strategies are intended to meet the following objectives:

- To improve the experience of visitors;
- To improve legibility to the town centre, historic sites and foreshore;
- To create a safer environment with opportunities for passive surveillance;
- To introduce public art to create visual cues for pedestrians to key destinations;
- To soften the visual appearance created by the existing built environment.

The way-finding improvements are identified on Figure 3 and discussed below. Each way-finding strategy is labelled on Figure 3 with a reference which correlates with the text below.

WF1: Signage

Directional signage at a legible scale is required at the railway station forecourt and at key locations between the CBD, Southwest TAFE, Cannon Hill, Flagstaff Hill and Lake Pertobe. Signage materials should reflect the maritime precinct and have potential to inform historical qualities of Warrnambool.Signage should integrate with the lighting and public art strategy.

WF2: Lighting

Lighting along Merri Street should provide pedestrian compliant lux levels, promote passive surveillance and encourage re-development of commercial premises along Merri Street (to be compliant with requirements for outdoor dining and street trading).

Lighting structures should reflect themes and materials of the maritime precinct, and must not disrupt view lines south from the CBD across Lake Pertobe and Cannon Hill. Lighting of existing Aruacaria ssp is another opportunity to further enhance this precinct at night.

Note: Historically Warrnambool employed Lady Bay Lower lighthouse not only as a lighthouse (effective to 5 nautical miles); but also as an Obelisk connecting the township with the maritime precinct. This strategy should continue and activate key intersections along Merri Street including Fairy Street, Kepler Street, Gilles Street and Liebig Street.

WF3: Public Art and South West TAFE precinct

Public art within the southern portion of Kepler and Gillies Street should provide a point of reference between the CBD, Southwest TAFE, and the railway station, and reference historical employment and industry including whaling, milling etc. Given building setbacks and pedestrian corridors through Southwest TAFE, public art should also define locations of passive recreation and meeting nodes to further enhance passive surveillance.

WF4: Public Art and Lake Pertobe

Way-finding between the railway precinct and Lake Pertobe is limited, and opportunity to connect the many assets within Lake Pertobe Reserve (including Lake Pertobe Adventure Park) and beyond to Lady Bay, the Breakwater precinct and the foreshore promenade should be encouraged. To provide access to these areas the current at grade railway connection requires further investigation.

WF5: Public Art and Cannon Hill / Flagstaff Hill Precincts

Way-finding along Liebig Street is critical and should clearly define movement / access from Timor Street to Merri Street / Cannon Hill and on to the railway station. Public art should respond to the war memorials of the Cannon Hill precinct and correspond with the existing scale of memorial elements, whilst being legible along the southern extent of Liebig Street. The intersection of Liebig and Timor Street provides a major way-finding location to connect the CBD with the railway precinct. Pedestrian connections and way-finding to the Flagstaff Hill precinct should also be considered and encourage train access to tourist events such as Shipwrecked at Flagstaff Hill.

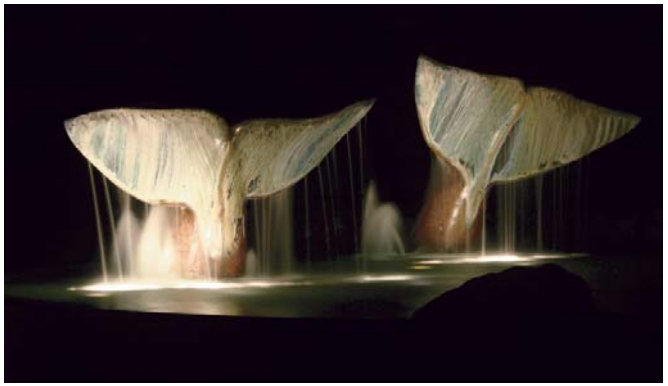


Figure 3 > Wayfinding – short term opportunities

6.2 Short Term: Railway Precinct

The short term improvements are focussed on commuter access and experience, and improvements in car parking and operational aspects, particularly bus movements. These improvements utilise existing land and do not require major infrastructure works to be undertaken, hence delivering minimal cost wins that will have significant impact on the operation and enjoyment of the station.

The short term improvements are intended to meet the following objectives:

- To improve movement and access in and around the site for buses, pedestrians and commuters.
- To improve the provision and access to commuter car parking.
- To provide for re-use of existing buildings and improve services available to commuters.

The short term improvements for the railway precinct are identified on Figure 4 and discussed below. Each short term improvement is labelled on Figure 4 with a reference which correlates with the text below.

ST1: Railway station car parking / 'kiss & ride'

The section of the existing car park at the western edge of the station site can be reconfigured to provide taxi bays, kiss and ride facilities, and short term car parking separated from the local bus services. Consideration of future car parking in the Tenex facility could be considered as part of this strategy, if this option becomes available.

ST2: Railway station forecourt

The railway station forecourt will be re-configured to ensure pedestrian access is detached from bus facilities, is DDA compliant and integrated with proposed facilities and platform extension (refer to ST4 & ST6). Bicycle and locker facilities will be provided to encourage diversity in tourism opportunities, and respond to needs of the current commuters.

ST3: Local bus service

In association with proposal ST2, the station forecourt will be reconfigured to provide a local bus interchange and alleviate many of the issues associated with the Koroit Street interchange. The local bus interchange will be configured to ensure pedestrian oriented linkages between Merri Street and regional bus zones are retained. Adequate space is available for this interchange in this location however detailed design of the bus bays and turning circles will be required.

ST4: Existing buildings

Subject to further heritage assessments, consideration of the retention and renovation of the existing goods shed to provide weather protection and architectural feature in conjunction with the platform extension (ST6) should be undertaken. The retention of this building is not necessary from an operational or design perspective, however its heritage value is still uncertain. If the heritage assessment determined the site could be demolished, then a new purpose built building would be encouraged in its place to deliver the preferred outcomes identified here.

ST5: Car parking

A key issue for the station is the provision of commuter car parking. The short term strategy proposed the creation of at grade carparking along the southern edge of the sandstone wall for train commuter parking. Car parking should be designed to accommodate the future development of a multi-deck car park in this location if required (and subject to medium term improvement MT2 not being pursued).

ST6: Platform extension

The eastward extension of the platform, to the west end of the Goods Shed, is an option that should be considered in the short term. Opportunities for ticketing at the eastern edge should be considered to further activate pedestrian movement. Ticketing should be located close to commuter car parking for ease of access. This proposal will allow re-development of existing station facilities in an integrated and highly accessible location. As a result of this proposal, the re-use of the current station building may need to be considered.

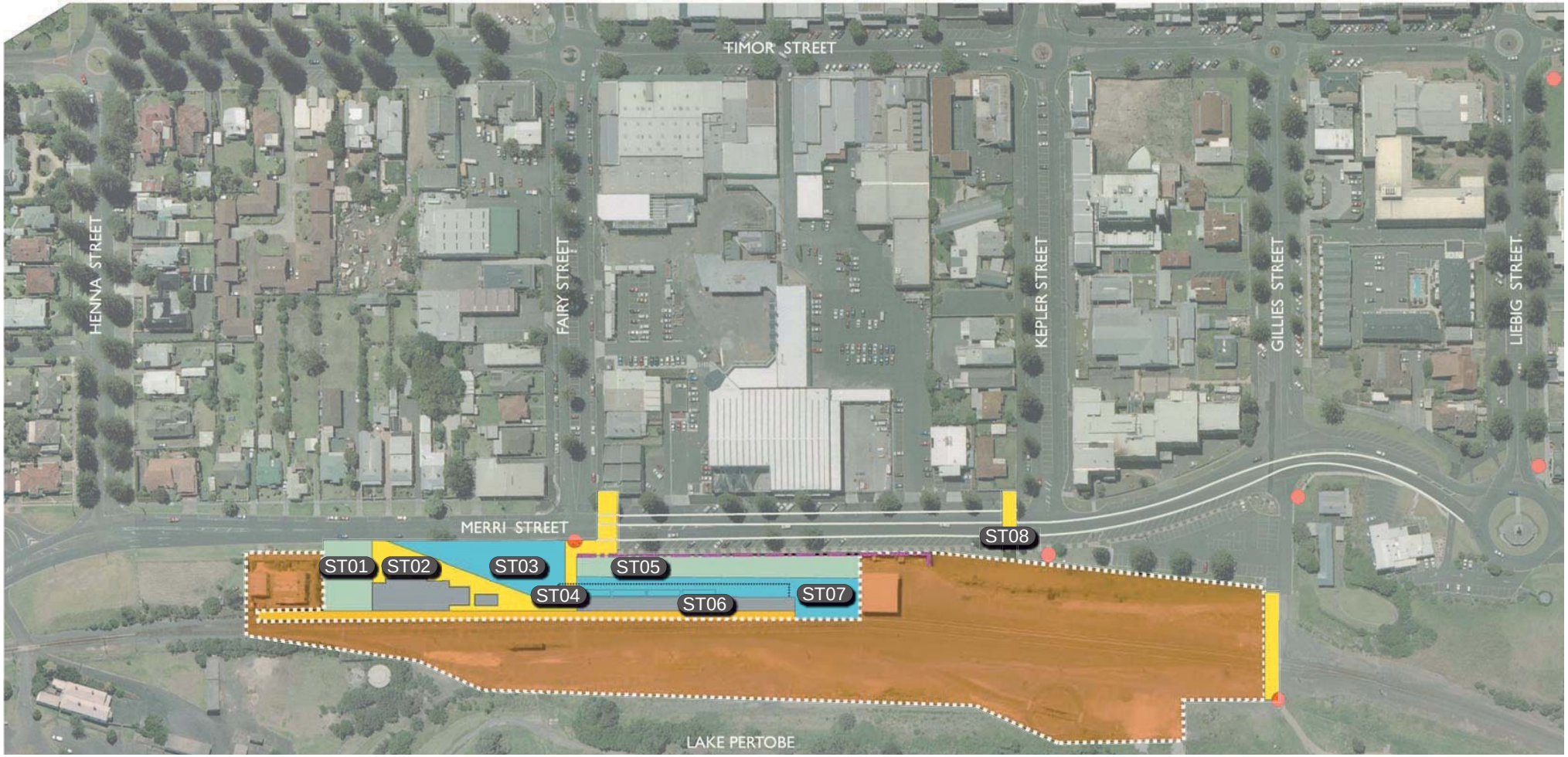
ST7: Regional bus services

Regional bus services will enter the railway precinct via the current entry and then travel east to a turning circle at the end of the (extended) platform. This will allow bus services to align with the platform extension, reduce bus congestion in the station forecourt, and enhance passive surveillance of the railway precinct south of the sandstone wall. The buses would wait in parallel bus lanes, with clear signage for different services.

ST8: Traffic controls

To improve the pedestrian environment, it is proposed that traffic control measures and signage be implemented in Merri Street. Reducing traffic speeds to 50km/h along Merri Street is recommended given the high pedestrian activity in this area.

Figure 4 > Short Term Opportunities plan



6.3 Medium Term: Railway Precinct

The medium term improvements build on those undertaken in the short term, and are focused on activation and integration elements. The aim of these improvements is to improve the way that the station is read with the surrounding land uses.

The medium term improvements are intended to meet the following objectives:

- To improve the overall external environment and amenity of the railway precinct.
- To build strong built form and visual connections with the station and the Merri Street commercial area.
- To improve the outlook from the station to Lake Pertobe.

The medium term improvements for the railway precinct are identified on Figure 5 and discussed below. Each medium term improvement is labelled on Figure 5 with a reference which correlates with the text below.

MT1: Constructed Wetland

A constructed wetland is proposed for consideration in the obsolete railway area to the south of the yard to treat stormwater from the CBD and railway precinct prior to discharge into Lake Pertobe. This option would only be considered subject to detailed assessments by VicTrack in terms of operational requirements for land; feasibility; and flora & fauna assessment (to ensure compatibility with station function). If this was deemed to be feadible, vegetation would be selected to maintain viewlines south, whilst encouraging bird migration and enhancing habitat connection. The wetland would also provide visual interest for commuters waiting on the station platform and may also provide some form of wind protection depending on vegetation.

MT2: Commercial re-development on Merri Street

The activation of Merri Street through commercial re-development along the north side of the street is encouraged in the medium term. Any recommendations from the City Centre Structure Plan should be read in conjunction with this proposal. In addition to built form improvements, streetscape works, lighting and defined pedestrian crossing / traffic calming to the railway precinct and mixed use development will further activate this area and add to its overall appeal. Commercial re-development at this edge will be important as a building block in part of a broader commercial proposal for Merri Street and the eastern end of the station which is documented in the long term strategies (LT3).

MT3: Car parking

To maximise the utilisation of space car parking is proposed along the southern edge of the existing sandstone wall for train commuter parking and to alleviate parking concerns at Southwest TAFE. Car parking is to be designed to accommodate future development of a multi-deck car park. The core aim of this car park is to provide for rail users however, there may be an option for this car park to be publicly available (on an interim basis) which should reduce the need for additional on street or at grade parking areas to be provided on and around Merri Street. The decking of this car park will be programmed as part of the long term improvements (LT3), which will provide the commercial feasibility for this infrastructure to be constructed.

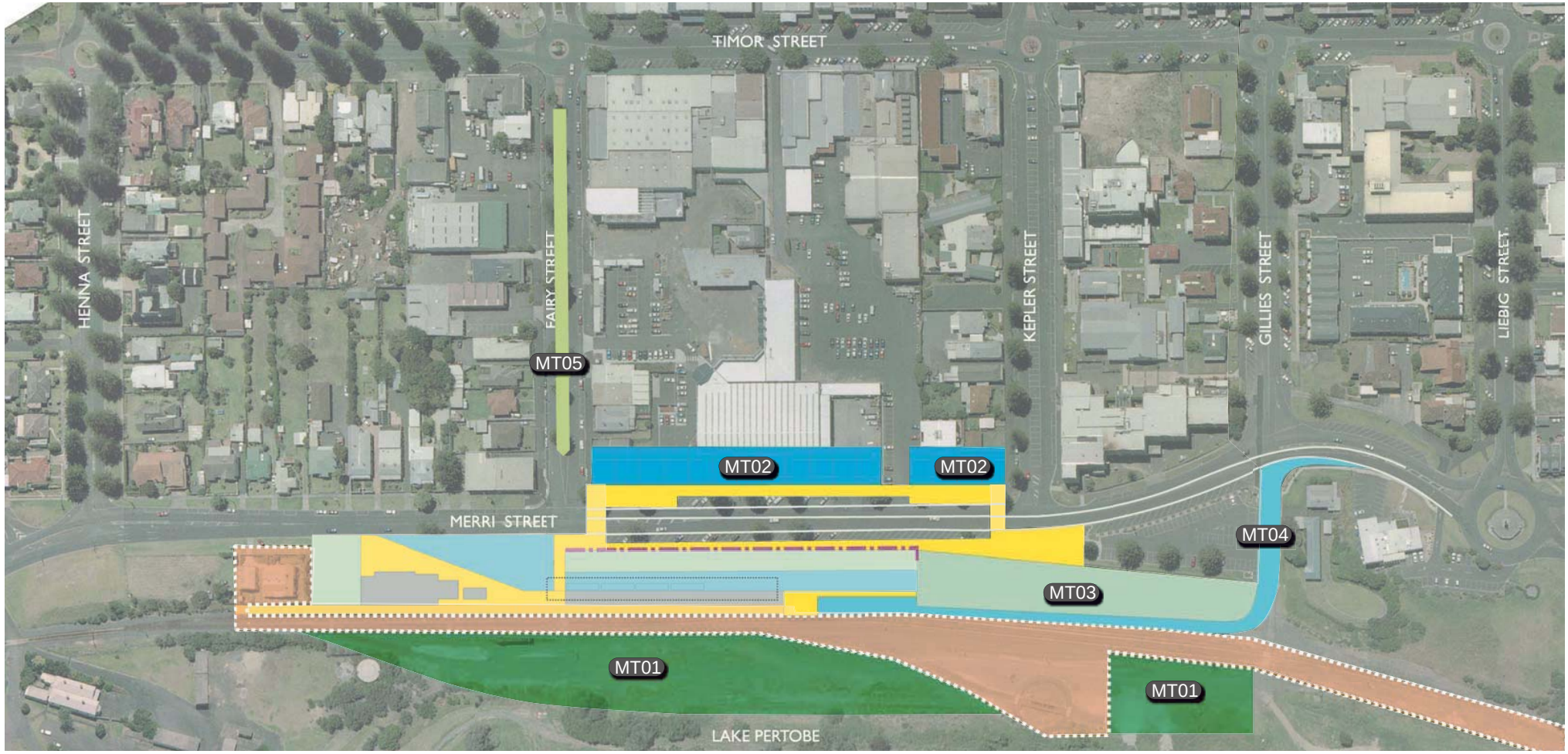
MT4: Regional bus service

This proposal builds on the improvement contained in ST7, where the regional bus interchange was reconfigured. In ST7 regional buses continued to enter the station site using their current point of access. MT4 proposes to re-direct regional buses into the eastern end of the site from Merri Street (or via Kepler Street as part of an alternative rout), to improve overall bus movement and configuration. Options for the re-routing of bus services will need to be explored further to determine the best route to enter the eastern edge of the site.

MT5: Fairy Street improvements

Vehicle movements from mid block car parking in Fairy Street appear inconvenient and potentially unsafe. Following further investigation by Council, it is proposed that the mid block spaces be removed and replaced with rain gardens as part of a Water Sensitive Urban Design (WUD) treatment for the street. The rain gardens would form part of the stormwater treatment chain which links into Lake Pertobe in the south.

Figure 5 > Medium Term Opportunities Plan



6.4 Long Term: Railway Precinct

The long term improvements are of a more commercial nature and are based on the feasibility of major building and infrastructure works being undertaken, to fully revitalise the station precinct. These improvements are capital intensive and will require full feasibility assessments. These improvements represent the ultimate outcome for the site.

The long term improvements are intended to meet the following objectives:

- To revitalise the railway precinct.
- To extend commercial activity to the railway precinct, creating visual and land use connections with the CBD.
- To maximise on the commercial potential of station land as a result of site grade and viewlines.

The long term improvements for the railway precinct are identified on Figure 6 and discussed below. Each medium term improvement is labelled on Figure 6 with a reference which correlates with the text below.

LT1: New Station Building

Building on proposals ST4 and ST6, a new station building would be constructed on the extended platform. This building would contain waiting areas, lockers, toilets, ticketing and tourist information. The building would be accessible from the east, as part of the long re-orientation of the site (see LT3).

LT2: Multi-level car parking under mixed use development

The key initiative to re-vitalise the station precinct is the commercial realisation of land at the north-east edge of the station site. (This proposal is to be read with the improvements proposed in LT3). It is proposed that the at grade car park proposed in MT3 be decked to accommodate a multi-level car park. The car park will be accessed via at an grade entrance at Merri Street. The significant change in grade from Merri Street to the station land, and the existing retention wall, will reduce the overall costs of construction of a decked car park. The feasibility of the decked car park will be driven by the realisation of a commercial outcome at street level. The car park would first ensure parking for rail users, then external car parking demand.

Given the sites access to the CBD, proximity to the historic area and foreshore environs, and view potential; the site would generate significant commercial interest. Opportunities for accommodation, cafes, restaurants and retail including a tourist information centre, that cater for rail based tourists and the broader market will be encouraged. Clear design and development guidelines would need to be established for this site to ensure a positive built form outcome is delivered.

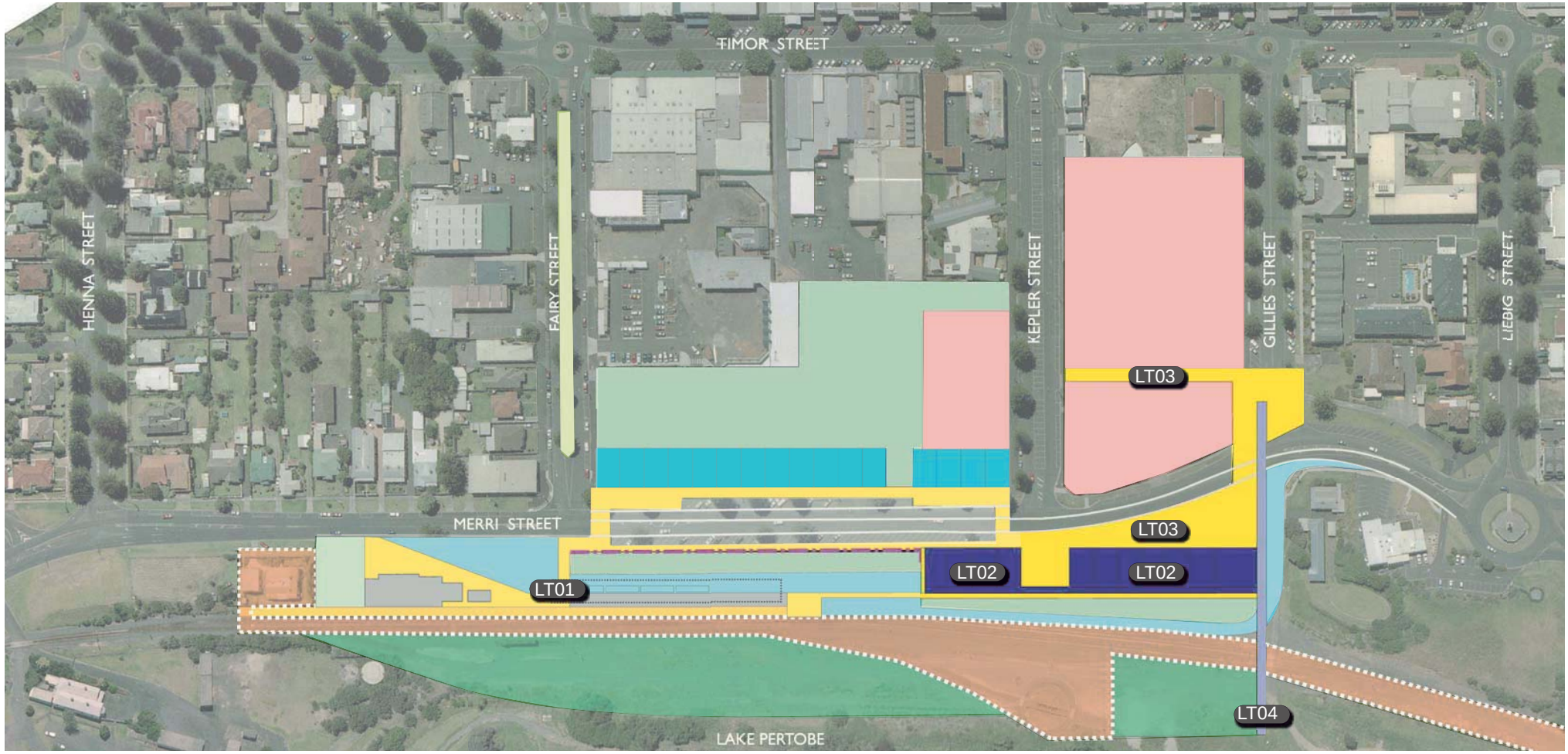
LT3: Merri Street pedestrian plaza

As part of the broader LT2 initiative, a pedestrian plaza is proposed at grade with Merri Street. The plaza will activate this section of Merri Street, strengthen connectivity to the CBD, provide traffic calming solutions, capitalise on views south and retain view lines from Gilles Street and Kepler Street. DDA compliant access to the station will be provided as part of this proposal. The plaza will become the 'front door' to the station precinct and will integrate the full set of proposals for the railway precinct.

LT4: Pedestrian Overpass

Utilising the change in grade, a pedestrian overpass is proposed at the southern extent of Gilles Street to provide a DDA access between the proposed plaza (LT3) at Southwest TAFE, the railway precinct and Lake Pertobe. This is a significant infrastructure proposal which is likely to occur in conjunction with, and not independent of, the commercial realisation of the eastern edge of the station site. Dependent on design constraints, the physical integration of the overpass with the TAFE site would be advantageous.

Figure 6 > Long Term Opportunities



7 Conclusion

The masterplan contains a series of improvements which if taken up will deliver a revitalised railway precinct with an improved public transport function, and an activated and aesthetically improved public realm.

There is no doubt that significant investment will be required to deliver the full range of programmed improvements. To illustrate this, Table 3 contains an indicative assessment of the key projects, the lead role for key stakeholders and the level of investment required to implement the recommendation.

This document will act as a tool to progress funding negotiations between the key stakeholders who together hold the key for unlocking the ultimate realisation of the masterplan. Discussions around key elements in the masterplan should commence in 2010 and feed into future budgetary considerations for the short – long term.


Warrnambool Station
Platform
Taxis
Coaches
FOR LEASE

8 Implementation

Table 3 > Implementation Inventory

	TIMELINE			RESPONSIBILITY				INVESTMENT REQUIREMENT		
	Short	Medium	Long	Vline	VicTrack	Council	Private	Low	Medium	High
Signage	■				■	■		■		
Lighting	■				■	■		■		
Public Art (Kepler & Gilles Street)	■					■			■	
Public Art (Gilles Street & Lake Pertobe)	■					■			■	
Public Art (Cannon Hill / Flagstaff Hill)	■					■			■	
Railway Station Parking / Kiss & Ride		■		■	■			■		
Railway Station Forecourt improvements		■		■	■					
New Local Bus Service		■				■			■	
Platform Extension		■		■	■					■
Goods Shed Assessment (potential re-use)		■			■				■	
At grade car parking (west end of station)		■			■				■	
Regional bus service waiting bays		■		■	■				■	
Traffic calming (Merri Street)		■				■		■		
New Station Building			■		■					■
Multi level car park (east end of station)			■		■		■			■
Commercial development (at grade with Merri Street)			■		■		■			■
Merri Street Pedestrian Plaza			■		■	■	■			■
Pedestrian Overpass			■			■				■

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