

H0952 Former Coburg Railway Line, Coburg and Brunswick, MELBOURNE

Permit Application P31649

Why is the Former Coburg Railway Line of heritage significance?

The Former Coburg Railway Line (previously known as the Upfield Line Railway Precinct) was included in the Victorian Heritage Register (**VHR**) in 1997 as an outstanding and complete surviving example of an integrated and functioning complex of nineteenth century railway infrastructure and technology within the metropolitan area.

On 28 November 2019, as a result of nomination by a member of the community, the Minister for Planning determined to amend the heritage registration. The amendment affirms the State significance of the place is associated with the nineteenth century development of the railway line. This is consistent with the recommendation of Heritage Victoria and the Heritage Council of Victoria.

The registration for the Former Coburg Railway Line does not include the twentieth century features, or places unrelated to the Line such as Gandolfo Gardens.

The Former Coburg Railway Line is historically significant as one of the most intact surviving examples of a nineteenth century railway line in Victoria. Its collection of nineteenth century buildings and infrastructure contributes to the understanding of Victoria's nineteenth century railway network and particularly its growth in the 1880s and 1890s. The nineteenth century structures associated with the Former Coburg Railway Line such as gates, gatekeepers' cabins, signals and signal boxes are now rare in Victoria and are evidence of activities and functions which are no longer common in Victoria. The Former Coburg Railway Line is architecturally significant as a notable example of a railway line established in the 1880s. It contains a large range of buildings and structures developed for railway purposes which individually and collectively demonstrate comparative integrity. The surviving structures are typical of a nineteenth century railway line and remain largely unchanged since their construction.

What was the permit application for?

On 23 August 2019 the Level Crossing Removal Project applied to Heritage Victoria for a permit under the *Heritage Act 2017* for site establishment, temporary and permanent works at Moreland Station Reserves as part of the Bell and Moreland Level Crossing Removal Project. The scope of works included tree removal, the relocation and conservation of the Moreland Road signal box and Signal 35, conservation works to Moreland Station Building, and reinstatement of landscape.

At the time of the application, the whole of the Upfield Railway Line including Gandolfo Gardens was covered by an Interim Protection Order (**IPO**) issued by Heritage Victoria. The IPO was removed with the Minister's determination on the registration matter (described above).

The permit application was advertised from 28 August 2019 to 11 September 2019, with 68 submissions received, including one petition with 139 signatories.

Why has the permit been approved?

The *Heritage Act 2017* requires the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria (**ED**) to consider various matters in determining a permit application including the extent that the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the place; the extent that refusal would affect the reasonable or economic use of the place; any submissions received; the extent that refusal would affect the ability for a statutory to carry out a statutory duty specified in the application; and any relevant matters relating to the protection and conservation of the place.

On 29 November 2019 the ED approved the permit application for proposed works within the amended registration only. This does not include any works within Gandolfo Gardens which are not included in the registration. The ED determined that the trees to be removed do not contribute to the setting of the Moreland Railway Station or the heritage significance of the Former Coburg Railway Line; and that the conservation and retention in-situ of the Moreland Road Station building, and the proposed conservation and reinstatement of the Moreland Road Signal Box and Signal 35 is a positive heritage outcome.

The proposed works outside of the extent of registration will be subject to approvals in accordance with the recent Planning Scheme Amendment C178more.



Area E
19. Moreland Station and platform
20. Signal 35
21. Moreland Road signal box

Figure 1. Victorian Heritage Register extent of Former Coburg Railway Line (H0952) at Moreland Railway Station marked in yellow.

What are the conditions of the permit?

The conditions of this permit have responded to many of the concerns of the submitters. The permit requires:

- A Tree Removal Plan and Tree Impact Assessment which includes seeks to retain trees to the greatest extent possible.
- An archival quality photographic record of the Moreland Station area.
- A costed dismantling, storage and reinstatement methodology for Moreland Road Signal Box and Signal 35, prepared by a conservation architect.

- Scoping and delivery of conservation works to Moreland Railway Station, Moreland Road Signal Box and Signal 35. The conservation works must seek to return the structures to their original appearance, including but not limited to the reinstatement of missing and removal of intrusive elements, materials and finishes such as reinstatement of original openings, slate roof, finials and chimney to the station building.
- Financial security to ensure the satisfactory delivery of the reinstatement and conservation works described above.
- Temporary and permanent heritage interpretation of the Former Coburg Railway Line.
- A final landscape plan including location, species and age/dimensions of new and reinstated trees and plantings, hard and soft landscaping, path networks, playground and location for the reinstated Moreland Road Signal Box and Signal 35.