

Heritage Impact Statement: Ballarat Platform 2 Partial Remediation
(Dismantle and Rebuild) Works MPM25P-06-17



Up end Platform 2, Ballarat Railway Station 2025.



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Heritage Impact Statement

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Address: 140 Lydiard St North Ballarat Central and 202 Lydiard St Nth and Nolan St Soldiers Hill and Scott Parade and 60 Corbett St Ballarat East and 75 Humffray St North Bakery Hill, Ballarat City

VHR: **H0902**

HV Pre-Application: **P41754**

HV Permit Application:

Submission Date: 8/12/25

Submitted by Greg Deftereos Heritage Advisor

Conservation Management Plan: Ballarat Railway Station Conservation Management Plan Allom Lovell and Associates 2002 (Lovell Chen)¹

V/Line

¹ An updated Conservation Management Plan for this precinct is currently being prepared by Lovell Chen 2025-26 but so far has not been released.

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Executive Summary

This Heritage Impact Statement outlines the potential heritage impacts of proposed minor platform remediation at the Up end of Platform 2 Ballarat Station. The proposed works are the result of rolling stock movements through the diverging route of Points 35DW into the Independent Siding Track are currently striking the end of the Up end of Platform 2 at Ballarat Station. A Kingsley Group Engineering Design Report identified that the conflict arises from a non-compliant platform offset, which prevents the Independent Siding Track from being operational. The report finds recommends that to resolve the resolve this issue and restore safe functionality of the siding by the remediation or rebuilding of a minor 20m end section of Platform 2.

This HIS finds that the proposed work's impact to both heritage item/values and heritage fabric will be minor. All existing heritage fabric (basalt coping stones and blocks and original brick) will be re-utilized in the rebuilding of this section of platform. The alternatives, include grinding back the coping stone, causing significant impact to the item, or doing nothing which will mean continuing significant impact damage to the coping stone and possible cancellation of certain services for safety concerns.

The project cost is c. \$400,000.

1.0 Item Context – H0902

Ballarat Railway Station is an operating major transport hub for Victoria located approximately 119km NW of Southern Cross Station, Melbourne. The station comprises two single-face platforms with three broad gauge tracks running in an east-west orientation. Platform 1, located on the station's southern side serves Track 1, while Platform 2, on the northern side, serves Track 3. Both platforms are c. 250m in length. At the Up end of the station, crossover points 35UW/DW connect Tracks 2 and 3, enabling trains utilize Platform 2.

The Up end is not used by regular V/Line services with the 6-car VL train stop mark located c.60m from the start of the platform. However, Steam Rail Victoria runs trains up to 300m and boards from the direct Up end of the platform.

Platform 2 is of masonry brick and bluestone construction, comprising of bluestone coping, with brick and bluestone blocks for the platform face. The trackside platform consists of bluestone coping (depth ~ 170mm), two courses of brick (depth ~ 150mm) and three large bluestone blocks (depth ~ 350mm). There is no coping overhang for the first 4-5m of platform, however past this point overhang is present extending some c.40-90mm.

The width of the platform at platform's end is c.2500mm from coping edge to rear platform fence line. This tapers out to c. 2700mm about 5m in.

The rear platform consists of bluestone coping with a brick wall. The depth of the rear wall extends down c.1400mm from the top of the coping.

The end of the platform is an in-situ concrete wall, with steel rail/bollards embedded into the concrete (as appears was common practice historically) where the end of the platform fence is located. Refer Kinglsey Group (2025:6) for detailed platform clearances.



Fig.1. Up end of Platform 2 to be rebuilt.



Fig.2. Up end of Platform 2 looking east.



Fig.3. Up end of Platform 2 to be rebuilt.



Fig.4. Up end of Platform 2 to be rebuilt.



Fig.5. Rear of Platform 2 to be rebuilt.



Fig.5. Rear of Platform 2 to be rebuilt.



Fig.6. Up end of Platform 2 with strike scars.



Fig.7. Up end of Platform 2 showing carriage interface.

2.0 Project Overview

The Ballarat Station Pit and Siding Yard Renewal Project (2023) involved renewing all the tracks in the Station Pit and the Up-end yard. As part of the upgrade, the old secant turnouts were replaced with tangential turnouts on concrete bearers to improve long-term track performance. One of the key tasks was removing an old 1 in 8.7 secant turnout at the Up end of Platform 2. Its toe (the start of the turnout) used to sit about 4 metres inside the platform. To allow trains to travel at 40 km/h, the project proposed installing 1 in 9 tangential turnouts, which are larger and need more space. To fit the new turnouts, the toe of Points 35DW had to be moved further into the platform—about 9 metres inside the Platform 2 extent. Although the straight (through) route of Points 35DW meets the required platform clearance, the diverging route does not. This is because trains using the diverging path experience a greater centre-throw (sideways movement) as they go through the turnout and into the Independent Siding track. Because of this increased centre-throw, trains on the diverging route have been striking the Up end of Platform 2 when accessing the Independent Siding.

2.1 Track Geometry

At the Up end of Platform 2, Track 3 follows the track geometry set by Points 35DW. In railway terms, track geometry refers to the physical layout of the track—its straight sections, curves, radii, and any applied cant (tilt). For the through route, the track geometry is a simple straight (tangent) section. For the diverging route, the geometry includes a tight 250-metre radius curve as trains move away from the main line. Once past the toe of Points 35DW, Track 3 shifts into a broader 700-metre radius horizontal curve, which matches the curvature of Platform 2. This provides a smoother alignment as the track continues through the platform area. Importantly, there is no cant (no inward tilt of the rails to help trains through curves) applied to Track 3 as it passes the platform.

3.0 Proposal

Fourteen meters of platform will be impacted. Six meters from the platform up end will be full reconstructed and narrowed some 20cm to achieve compliance clearance. A further 8m will have the bluestone coping reset 15cm back into the asphalt.



Fig.8. Platform 2 proposed works.

3.1 Partial Platform 2 Reconstruction

It is proposed that 6m of the Up end of the platform will be fully reconstructed making it slightly narrower.

3.2 Platform 2 Coping Realignment

A further 8m will have minor works where the bluestone coping on just the track side of the platform will be reset 15cm further into the platform to increase the coping distance from the track. The coping stones will be repositioned up to 15cm further from the track to achieve horizontal platform clearances within compliance maintenance tolerances. This will involve removing the existing asphalt

For detailed design please refer Design Drawings and Design Report provided with submission.

3.3 Platform 2 Heritage Protection Plan

- A full Heritage Completion Plan will be issued on the outcome of the permit. Engagement of contractor with previous heritage reconstruction works experience will be verified at that stage.
- Each block/brick to be marked on back with unique identifier/position details in non-permanent medium.
- Heritage materials to be stored in secure site safe in Ballarat Station holding facility until required.

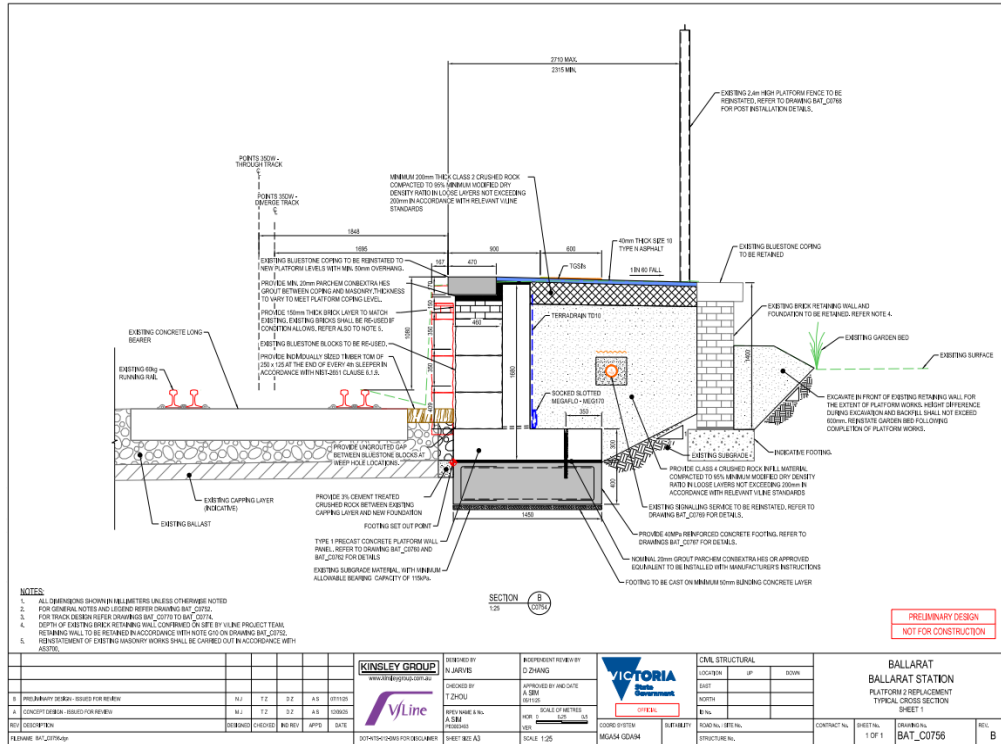


Fig.9. Remediation Design Platform 2.

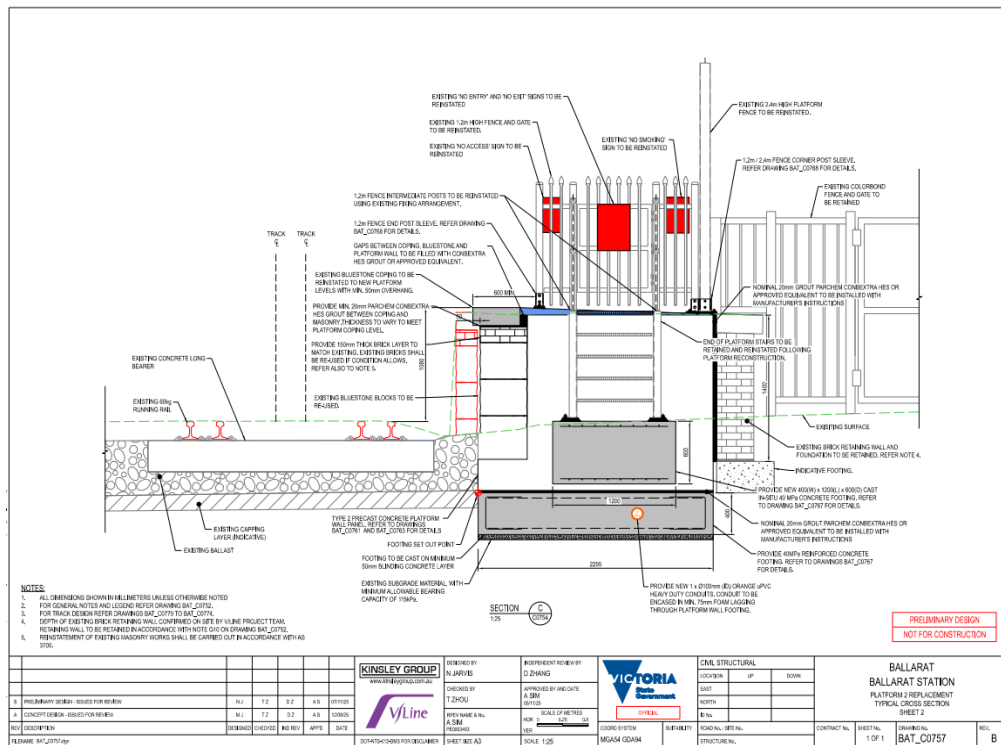


Fig.10. Remediation Design Platform 2.

4.0 Statutory Registers

The item is entered on the State Heritage Register under 'Ballarat Railway Complex' H0902 under the provisions of the Heritage Act 2017 (Vic). The item is also entered on the Heritage Overlay (HO59) of the City of Ballarat Planning Scheme under the provisions of the Planning and Environment Act 1998 (Vic). However, in these instances, the development on site is regulated by the provisions of the Victorian Heritage Act 2017 as the place is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR).



Fig. 11. VHR H0902



Fig.12. Works Area in reference to Ballarat Station



Fig.13. Works Area in relation to VHR curtilage.

5.0 Significance

The following Statement of Significance is derived from the Victorian Heritage Database²

5.1 What is significant?

The Ballarat Station Complex is of historical, architectural, social and technological significance at State level.

5.2 How is it significant?

Its historical significance arises from considerations of the following factors:

- *Together with the Sandhurst (Bendigo) line, the Geelong-Ballarat railway was the first of the colonial government's main trunk lines, opened in 1862, and built to the best British standards of construction. These standards were never to be repeated. Most of the present complex dates from this period. Ballarat is the largest complex to have been built at this time.*
- *The Government's decision to build one of its first trunk lines to Ballarat recalls the great importance of a Ballarat and East Ballarat as an economic centre in the colony and the largest mining centre of the world famous Victorian central goldfields. The entire complex is expressive of this decision arising from Ballarat's economic importance.*
- *The railway acted as a catalyst for the development and redevelopment of Lydiard Street North throughout the nineteenth century. Given Lydiard Street North's national importance as*

² <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/344>

a thoroughfare founded on wealth produced through gold mining activity, as indeed the important economic social and political role Ballarat played in the State's development because of this gold-based wealth the station complex plays a crucial role in the interpretation of the fabric of this street.

- *Ballarat Station was the colony's busiest non-metropolitan station for a period during the nineteenth century, its pre-eminence only being surpassed at different times by Echuca and Geelong. The entire complex is expressive of this fact.*

The construction and development of the Ballarat station site recalls the roles of the following senior offices of the Victorian Railways Department: George Darbyshire, Engineer-in-Chief (1856-1860). Thomas Higginbotham, Engineer-in-Chief (1860-1878). Patrick Brady, Senior Architectural and Mechanical Draughtsman (1857-1867 and possibly later). These men are likely to have had responsibility for the development of the complex during the first decade. George W Sims, Chief Draughtsman (c. 1878- ?) had responsibility for the 1888 additions as well as the signal boxes (buildings only). JW Hardy, Chief Architect of the Way and Works Branch (1908-1918) had responsibility for the additions to "A" Box, based closely on a design developed under Sims. With the exception of Hardy, whose involvement was minor, the Ballarat complex was a major example of the work of these senior officers.

5.3 Why is it significant?

The architectural significance of the complex is borne out by the following information:

- *Together with Maryborough, Albury (NSW), Port Pirie (SA) and Brisbane Central (Qld), Ballarat is the only nineteenth century station built at the national level to have a prominent clock tower.*
- *Together with Geelong and Normanton (Qld), Ballarat is the only surviving nineteenth century station building now retaining a substantial and imposing train hall. It is representative of others, now demolished including Adelaide, Port Adelaide and Brisbane Central.*
- *The train hall and clock tower symbolise Ballarat's importance as a provincial city and simultaneously recalls the status of rail travel in the Victorian age.*
- *In Victoria, Ballarat compares in size with Geelong and Bendigo and in layout to the extent that it has an approach road surrounded by passenger and freight handling buildings. Given the destruction of Bendigo by fire and the pending demolition of the Geelong goods shed, Ballarat's intact state will be unique in this respect, recalling the planning principles of early British terminal stations.*
- *The Goods Shed compares closely with Ballarat East and to a lesser extent with Little River, Riddells Creek, Malmsbury and Kyneton. It is the largest bluestone goods shed in Victoria.*
- *The former Engine Shed compares with Bendigo and Echuca but is the only example of this 1860s design to be erected in bluestone.*
- *The Carrier's Office recalls other timber offices in Ballarat, now demolished, and offers insights into nineteenth century freight handling methods. It is unique at the State level at least for its flamboyant design.*

The social significance of the complex arises not only from its use as a point of arrival and departure on journeys undertaken prior to and following the advent of the motor car but also from the nature of the trips. Ballarat Station was used by race patrons for five racecourses in the district and special trains were run at holiday times to Burrumbeet Park and to the Lal Lal Falls. Special timetables applied during recognised holiday periods and the station was for a period the focus for local passenger services to Skipton, Waubra, Buninyong and Daylesford. Its existence gave rise to the construction for the "Provincial" Hotel, Reids Coffee Palace and "Victoria House," and it was approximately three quarters of a century a transfer point for rail and tramway passengers.

The technological significance of the complex hinges on the survival of bull head rail in the former carriage shed, the evidence of the removed locomotive traversers in the engine shed, and the signal boxes. The bull head rail, secured to the sleepers with wooden keys, was superseded by 1873 and recalls traditional British railway practice and the comparatively small locomotives, in use at that time.

The signal boxes recall late nineteenth century safe working practices. Today, Ballarat retains the largest surviving interlocked installation in the state. The Winters block telegraph instruments are now rare, and the sector gates similarly depleted, comparing only with Ballarat East, Ballarat C & D, Kyneton in country areas. The modified type 6 frame in Ballarat "B" Box is unique at the State level and compares with type 6 frames elsewhere. They were once commonplace.

The Signal Gantries postdate construction of the 1888 additions. They compare with the gantries which existed at Bendigo and Flinders Street Station, now demolished, and have significance as the largest surviving installations of its type to be fitted exclusively with somersault signals. They form an essential component in the interpretation of the role of "B" Box, but they did not exist for the first fifty years in the life of the early station buildings.

6.0 Significance Criteria H0902

Table 1.

Significance Criteria	Criteria Response: Low – Moderate – Notable.
<i>Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's Cultural History</i>	Notable: The Government's decision to build one of its first trunk lines to Ballarat recalls the significance of Ballarat (and East Ballarat) as an economic centre in the colony and the largest mining centre of the world renowned Victorian central goldfields. The entire complex is expressive of this preference for allocation of resources arising from Ballarat's economic importance.
<i>Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history</i>	Notable: The Geelong-Ballarat railway was the first of the colonial government's main trunk lines, opened in 1862, built to the highest British engineering standards. These standards were never to be repeated.
<i>Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history</i>	Notable: Ballarat Railway Precinct is of high importance as being a unique expression of the wealth generated by the 19thc Victorian Gold Rush.

<i>Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects – representativeness</i>	Notable: Ballarat Railway Station is reputedly one of only three remaining 19th-century "great train halls" in Australia and a key symbol of Ballarat's gold rush prosperity. Ballarat 1864 is counted among Sydney's Central Station 1906 and Flinders Street Station 1910.
<i>Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics</i>	Notable: Aesthetically, Ballarat Railway precinct exhibits extravagant characteristics of 19 th century Victorian architectural styles, in this instance Italianate style with Gothic features.
<i>Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period</i>	Notable: Ballarat Railway precinct exhibits extravagant characteristics of 19th century Victorian architectural styles, in this instance Victorian Gothic a common trope characteristic of Victorian era stylistic aesthetic syntheses. The Platform is an important but minor element of this aspect in construction, remaining and reflecting the Victorian era's signature utilitarian aspect in design and aesthetic. The basalt coping stones are however important elements in this feature as is the masonry. The platform itself and its trajectory are not significant.
<i>Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.</i>	Notable: The Ballarat Railway precinct has immense civic importance to the local community and Victoria as a whole.
<i>Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.</i>	Notable: Major association with the pioneering 19thc Victorian Railways Department. George Darbyshire, Engineer-in-Chief (1856-1860). Thomas Higginbotham, Engineer-in-Chief (1860-1878). Patrick Brady, Senior Architectural and Mechanical Draughtsman (1857-1867 and possibly later). George W Sims, Chief Draughtsman (c. 1878) had responsibility for the 1888 additions as well as the signal boxes (buildings only). JW Hardy, Chief Architect of the Way and Works Branch (1908-1918) had responsibility for the additions to "A" Box, based closely on a design developed under Sims.

7.0 Ballarat Station Platform 1 and 2.

The station platforms and train hall were built as part of the initial phase of construction in 1862³,

Three lines of rails traverse the way between the two platforms, each platform comprises flooring over 250 feet long by 36 feet wide,⁴

When it first opened the railway line terminated at Ballarat West, ending with heavy wooden buffers and an earthen embankment at the western end of the platforms adjacent to Lydiard Street.⁵ (These were removed when extension lines were constructed heading north in the early 1870s.)

The original platforms have all been elevated by approximately thirty centimetres, or two courses of red brick, and extended to both the east and west of the train hall. Generally, along the length of the train hall, the platform sides are bluestone, with two or more courses of brickwork above, topped by bluestone coping. The platforms are surfaced with asphalt.

The platforms have gone through significant modification since with brick being used to raise all platforms and in particular to lengthen the southern platform. With regards to Platform 2, red brick was used to raise and level off the western (down end) end of the platform from an original gentle incline platform ramp – to facilitate accessibility. The original bluestone masonry continues to the eastern end of Platform 2 (where works are proposed). Substantial red brick additions to lengthen the platform to its current corresponding length (c. 40m each side) is evident on either side of the original southern platform, Platform 1, on each side beginning just outside the train hall arch. This is likely dates back to the 1877 tender awarded to W. Lee for platform extension works which is also probably associated with the evident platform raising⁶. East of the train hall, the Platform 2 hosts a nineteenth century iron-framed awning, supported by a series of fourteen cast iron columns, with curved top brackets. *The Ballarat Railway Station Conservation Management Plan* (2002:41) finds that the buildings and elements are relatively well preserved, with the train hall being largely intact in form and fabric to the 1880s addition of the south station buildings and with regards to the platforms,

Although their levels have been raised slightly, the platforms generally retain their nineteenth century form and character.

³ Allom Lovel and Associates 2002 p.39

⁴ Allom Lovel and Associates 2002 p.39

⁵ Allom Lovel and Associates 2002 p.39

⁶ Allom Lovel and Associates 2002 p.40



Fig. 14. 'A down train stands at the platform circa 1910'⁷ Photo taken from Ballarat B box. Original platform dimensions visible including ramp on west end of Platform 2.

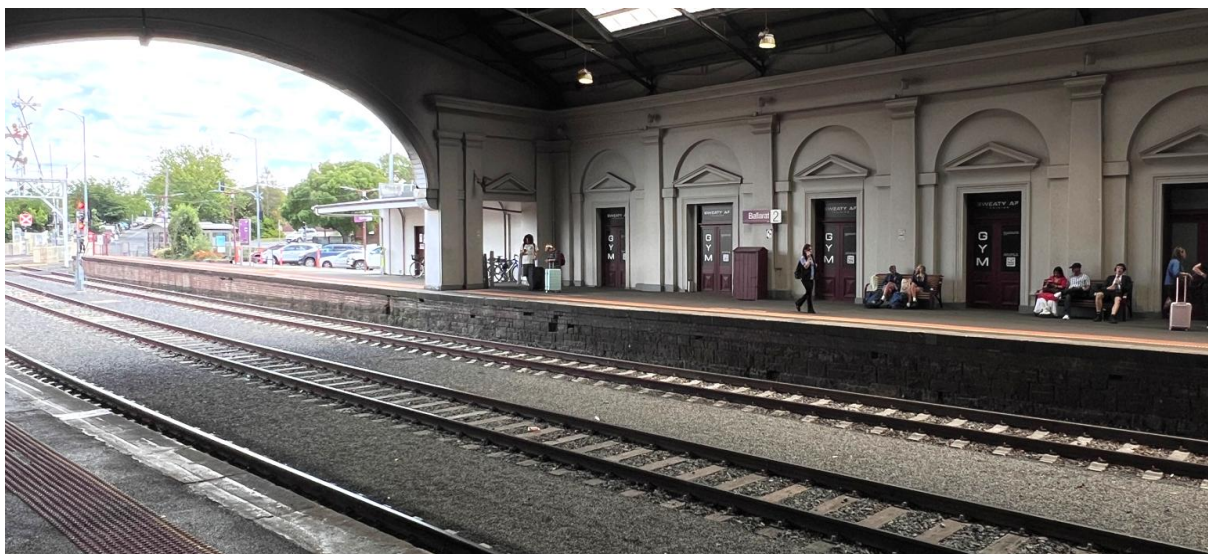


Fig. 15. Platform 2 western end showing later brick addition to original bluestone platform ramp.

⁷ <https://www.victorianrailways.net/photogallery/westsou/ballarat/ballarat.html>.



Fig.16. Platform 2 Up end to be rebuilt/realigned.



Fig. 17. The original station platform has been raised in height, as evidenced by the added courses of brickwork in the side walls visible in this image. (BRS CMP 2002:38).

8.0 Ballarat Railway Station Conservation Management Plan (2002)



Site Plan showing hierarchy of significance within the station complex. (BRS CMP 2002:109). Platforms are considered of Primary Significance.

8.1 BRS CMP (2002) Framework

The Ballarat Railway Station Conservation Management Plan (2002) cites the significance of the Train Hall platforms under,

S.5.3.1 Buildings - 1862 Train Hall (aesthetic, historical and social significance) Exterior and interior: nineteenth century fabric generally, including platforms and 1877 footbridge⁸

Table 2. Assessment against BRS CMP (2002).

BRS CMP (2002) Framework	Response
Retain and conserve all significant fabric as identified in the CMP	All significant fabric will be retained and rebuilt as new.
Retain those built and spatial features and characteristics which distinguish the station as a significant nineteenth century rail complex.	There will be no impact to built or spatial features that distinguish the station as a significant nineteenth century rail complex.
Retain the built features and characteristics of the individually significant buildings and elements, including aspects of exterior form, fabric, structure and scale as well as interior planning, form and decoration.	There will be no discernible impact to built features, characteristics or fabric.

⁸ Allom Lovel and Associates 2002 p.106

Maintain and/or enhance the setting and railway aesthetic of the place.	All aesthetics and view characteristics will not be impacted.
Provide for adaptation and new works which are compatible with the above.	There will be no impact to this aspect.

9.0 Assessment of Heritage Impact – Heritage Act (2017) (Vic)

Information to support an assessment against sections 101(2) of the Heritage Act 2017.

Table 3. Assessment of Heritage Impact – Heritage Act 2017 (Vic).

Relevant Aspects of the Heritage Act (2017)	Response
s101(2)(a) <i>the extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the registered place or registered object;</i>	The impact of proposed works which involve the rebuilding/replication of the structure using and restoring all original elements will have negligible impact to the significance of the place and while impacting structure it will ultimately preserve heritage fabric. Once completed the result of the works will not be apparent or discernible. On the other hand if the permit was refused the coping stones of the platform would continue to be damaged until resolution such as cancellation of services. The ongoing damage to coping stones and platform would destabilize the item.
s101(2)(b) <i>the extent to which the application, if refused, would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place or registered object;</i>	On refusal, there is no alternative, (other than a request to grind the coping stone back....which was the original proposal. I advised that this would be a preferred course of action) and carriages will continue to strike the platform with all the danger and maintenance costs that entails until probable service cancellation.
s101(2)(d) <i>if the applicant is a public authority, the extent to which the application, if refused, would unreasonably detrimentally affect the ability of the public authority to perform a statutory duty specified in the application;</i>	The project is aimed to allow the Heritage item to be used safely as technology progresses. It is in V/Line's remit in managing Victoria's rail assets to provide safe and cost-efficient services. Non-support of this project would result in significant safety issues, ongoing maintenance and repair costs, ongoing damage to the heritage fabric of the platform, including possible cancellation of some services.
s101(2)(f) <i>any matters relating to the protection and conservation of the registered place or registered object that the Executive Director considers relevant</i>	Overall this project should be supported as it is minimally impactful, will not be discernible on completion, will preserve and protect heritage fabric (coping stones and heritage platform masonry) and allow the heritage item to continue its usefulness lifecycle with careful maintenance is a preferred form of preservation.

10.0 Conclusion

This HIS discusses the heritage values of Ballarat Railway Precinct Platform 2 H0902 and describes the proposed development works and assesses the potential impacts on the heritage significance of the place. The provisions of Victorian Heritage Act, Heritage Victoria Guidelines and pre-lodgement advice have been discussed, together with the VHR statement of significance, to assess the impacts of the proposed development. The heritage impact must be weighed up against the issue as a whole.

The impacts of the proposed works will affect the 'original' or existing aspect of Platform 2 but will not be discernible, and will ultimately preserve the item into the future. The platforms will retain their nineteenth century form and character. It is reasonably considered that impacts will be minimal negligible.

11.0 References

Conservation Management Plan:

Ballarat Railway Station Conservation Management Plan Allom Lovell and Associates 2002 (Lovell Chen)

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