

Bryce  
Raworth  
CONSERVATION | HERITAGE

# Heritage Impact Statement

Mentone Railway Station  
Integrated Development Opportunity Site

12 June 2026

246 Albert Road  
South Melbourne VIC 3205  
+61 3 9525 4299  
[admin@bryceraworth.com.au](mailto:admin@bryceraworth.com.au)

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## 1.0 Introduction

This assessment of heritage impacts has been prepared at the request of Hallmarc. It concerns the proposed multi-storey residential development extending partway into the registered land associated with the Mentone Railway Station (H2099).

This report reviews the context of the subject site and its relationship to the registered station buildings. It then comments on the proposed development and whether it is contextually appropriate, and acceptable in terms of its impact upon the character and significance of the registered place.

By way of background, the subject site is one of a number of parcels of surplus railway land identified by the State government as an Integrated Development Opportunity (IDO). These sites are designated for transit-oriented development—such as mixed-use commercial buildings and residential housing—to generate revenue that reinvests in public transport.

## 2.0 Methodology

This heritage impact statement has been prepared with regard to *the Burra Charter* and its guidelines, as amended in 2013, and in general accordance with *Heritage Victoria Guidelines for Preparing Heritage Impact Statements* (June 2021).

## 3.0 Sources of Information

The analysis below draws upon a site inspection and a review of the Victorian Heritage Register documentation for the Mentone Railway Station. Reference is also made to the following documents:

- *Heritage Victoria Policy Reasonable or economic use* (June 2021)
- *Principles for considering change to places in the Victorian Heritage Register* (December 2022)
- *Mentone Railway Station Integrated Development Opportunity Site November 2025* (an incorporated document to the Kingston Planning Scheme)
- *Cheltenham and Mentone IDO Masterplan* (Hansen Partnership, January 2026)

Historical information is sourced from the *Kingston Thematic Environmental History* and the Kingston local history collection online (<https://localhistory.kingston.vic.gov.au>).

This report has been prepared by Martin Turnor and Sally Beaton and is intended to be read in conjunction with the drawings and other documentation prepared by Malcolm Elliot Architects and submitted with respect to this application.

## 4.0 History

Mentone Railway Station was originally known as Balcombe Road when it opened in 1881 as part of an extension of a single track spur line from Caulfield to Mordialloc. The opening of the railway line attracted speculative land speculators to the area, including Sir Matthew Davies who was largely responsible for the creation of the Mentone Township Estate of 1883 (named after the Mediterranean resort town of Menton). The estate provided over 300 residential allotments on land generally bound by Balcombe Road to the north, Moorabbin Road to the east and Beach Road to the west. The railway station was renamed Mentone in 1884.

The station played a key role in transporting punters and racehorses to the Mentone Racecourse, which was established in 1888 about half a mile from the township. In the early years, before motor horse floats, the racehorses were off loaded from trains via separate gates on the 'down' side and then were walked to the track.

The first Mentone railway station had a single platform and a basic shed-like ticket office. Duplication of the railway in 1888-1889 led to construction of a second 'down side' platform, In 1913, the main 'upside' station building was destroyed by fire. The station was rebuilt 1913-14 providing a handsome weatherboard building.

The Balcombe Road level crossing was removed in 2019-2020 with the railway line lowered in a trench and an entirely new station constructed further to the south. The main 1913-14 station building was retained in-situ whilst the smaller downside platform building was relocated a little further south of its original position. The station buildings were restored and the railway line bridged over, creating a landscaped public plaza with a strong focus on the interpretation of the history of the place.



Figure 1 *Mentone Railway Station, c1910.*  
Source: *Mordialloc & District Historical Society.*



Figure 2 A 1928 oblique aerial of Mentone Railway Station, facing north.  
Source: Kingston Collection.

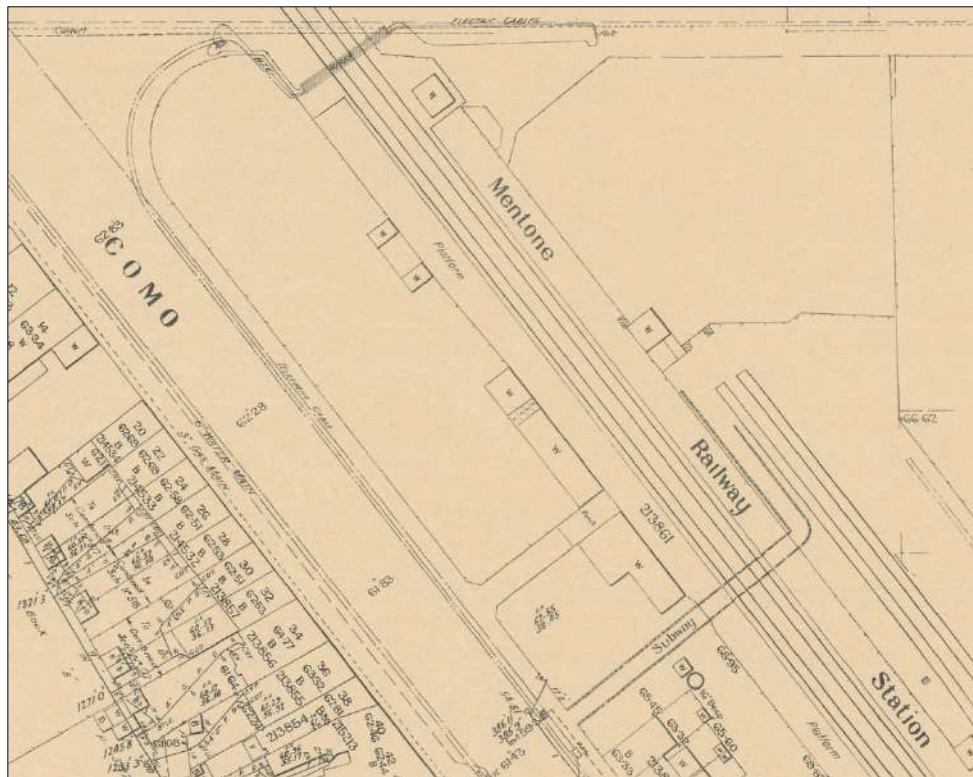


Figure 3 1940 MMBW plan of Mentone Station and its environs.  
Source: State Library of Victoria.



*Figure 4* Oblique aerial view looking north-east towards Mentone Railway Station, 1988. The subject site (indicated by the red arrow) was then in use as a station carpark.  
*Source: Kingston Collection.*



*Figure 5* View looking south east from the Balcombe Road level crossing, 2010. The subject site is visible to the left of the image.  
*Source: Google Street View.*



Figure 6 *Excavation works for the level crossing removal occurring alongside the main station building, 2020.*

Source: [www.bigbuild.com.au](http://www.bigbuild.com.au)

## 5.0 Description

The subject site is a broadly triangular shaped parcel of land located on the south side of Balcombe Road, east of the Frankston railway line. The site was used as an at-grade carpark associated with the Mentone Railway Station for several decades but is now fenced off. The western boundary of the site is runs alongside the public plaza that was constructed over the railway line as part of the level crossing removal. The plaza has a contemporary landscape character with overhead lighting suspended from a row of red coloured steel structures interpretative of the gantries that originally spanned the railway track. Marking embedded in the paving traces out the original alignment of the railway tracks.

The historic Mentone Railway Station buildings are located to the south of the subject site. They have been restored with cantilevered steel-framed platform verandahs reinstated. The design of the main upside platform building is characteristic of the Edwardian period, having prominent half-timbered gable ends and roughcast render to the upper portion of the walls with weatherboard cladding below. The smaller downside platform building has a late-Victorian architectural character. It weatherboard walls and a hipped corrugated galvanised steel roof with bracketed eaves. The gardens to the west side of the station have been re-landscaped but with the significant Canary Island palms and Norfolk Island pines retained.

Opposite the site, on the north side of Balcombe Road, is a four storey apartment building with ground floor retail tenancies, erected c2012. A second four-storey apartment building was constructed on the west side of the railway line 2016-17.



Figure 7 Aerial photograph of Mentone Railway Station and its environs.



Figure 8 View south west from the northern side of Balcombe Road toward the subject site and Mentone Railway Station.



Figure 9 View south east toward the subject site. The Mentone Railway Station downside platform building is to the right of the image.



Figure 10 View south east along the plaza towards the station buildings.



Figure 11 View facing north east toward the subject site from the heritage buildings.



Figure 12 View north east along the plaza over the railway line. The subject site is to the right of image with four storey development in the background.



Figure 13 The west elevation of the main/upside platform building.



Figure 14 The downside platform building.



Figure 15 View west toward Mentone Railway Station with the subject site in the background to the left of the upside platform building.



Figure 16 View north east towards the Mentone Railway Station gardens with modern four storey development in the background.

## 6.0 Heritage Listings

### *Heritage Victoria*

Mentone Railway Station is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H2099). The eastern part of the subject site extends into the extent of registration for a depth of approximately 9 metres.

The extent of registration for Mentone Railway Station is described as:

1. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 2099 held by the Executive Director, bounded by the western edge of the railway reserve and Balcombe Road, and a curtilage of 10 metres to the east and south of Platform P2. The eastern part of the reserve which is at present (2006) a car park but which once contained a yard for horses brought to and from Mentone Racecourse by train is not included
2. All of the structures marked as follows on Diagram 2099
  - B1 Upside Platform Building
  - B2 Downside Platform Building
  - P1 Upside Platform
  - P2 Downside Platform
3. All of the trees marked as follows on Diagram 2099:
  - T1 Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*)
  - T2 Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*)
  - T3 Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*)
  - T4 Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*)
  - T5 Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*)

With the above being said, it is important to note the portion of 79 Balcombe Road within the extent of registration does not contain any structures associated with the Mentone Railway Station, but has historically provided car parking and a storage area to support the railway station.

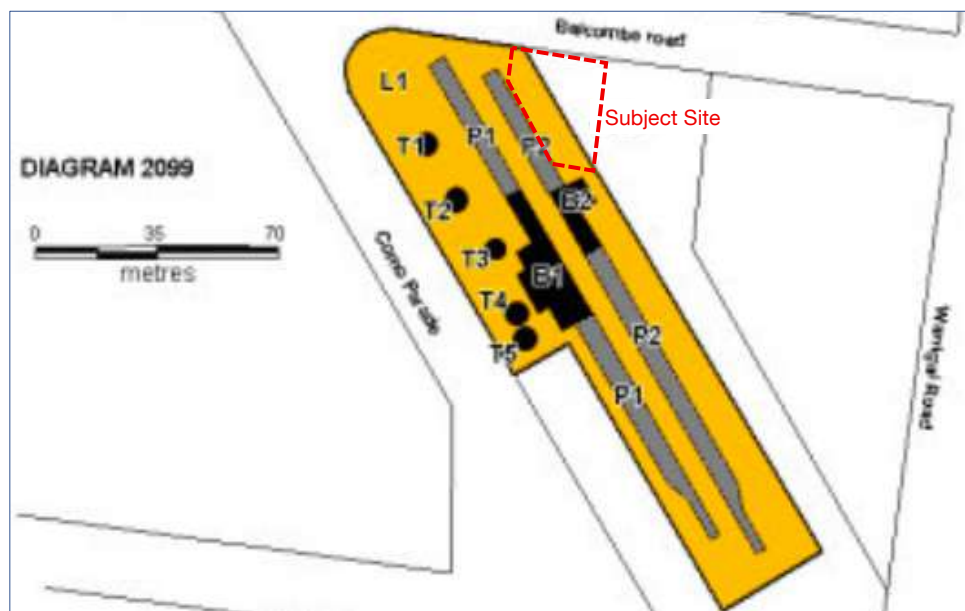


Figure 17 Plan showing the extent of registration. The subject site is highlighted red, with the north east corner of the subject site identified as being within the registered curtilage.

*City of Kingston*

Most of the development site is not subject to a Heritage Overlay. The Mentone Railway Station and its associated curtilage are listed as HO106 on the Heritage Overlay Schedule to the Kingston Planning Scheme. It is nonetheless recognised that the Responsible Authority with regard to heritage matters within the extent of registration is Heritage Victoria, and the City of Kingston will have a role as a referral body.

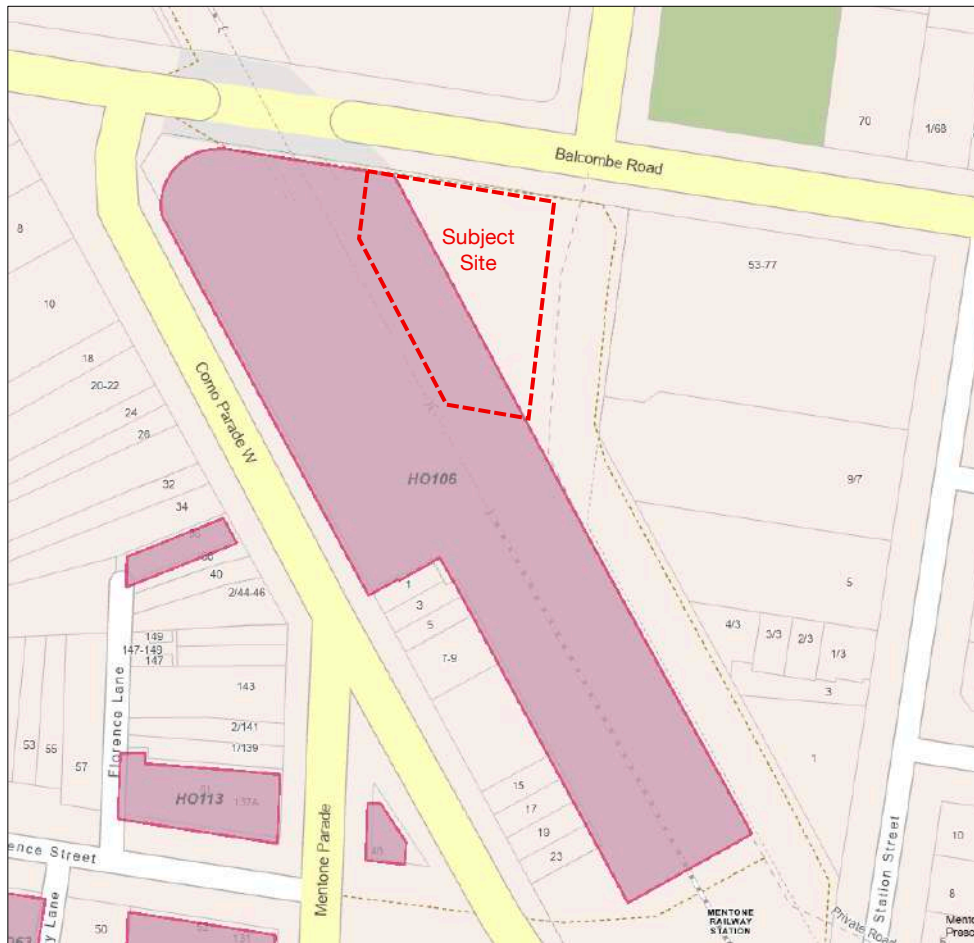


Figure 18 Map showing the Heritage Overlay curtilage for Mentone Railway Station (HO106) corresponding to the extent of registration.

## 7.0 Significance

The statement of significance for this place is as follows:

*What is significant?*

*Mentone Railway Station, on the Frankston Railway Line, was known as Balcombe Road when it opened in 1881 as part of the extension from Caulfield to Mordialloc of what was then the Sandringham Line. The extant station buildings and plantings were constructed in 1913-14 after the original station buildings were destroyed by fire.*

*The complex consists of two bluestone and red brick platforms, a timber station building on each of the platforms, an underpass, gardens on the railway reserve on the western side of the station and the carpark on the eastern side. Constructed in the upgrade of extant station facilities in 1913-14, both station buildings are single storey timber structures with cantilevered platform verandahs constructed in what Ward and Connelly (1982) describe in their survey of Victorian railway architecture as the Gisborne Style. Cladding on the buildings is weatherboard, with roughcast render above door height and half timbered gables on the larger and more decorative upside platform buildings. The roofs and verandahs are corrugated iron sheet, and the verandahs are faced with a ripple iron valance. Although largely intact, some alterations have occurred. A roof has been replaced with a new hip roof, as well as the removal of a wing on the south end.*

*The Gardens have undergone some modification but still contain a number of plantings dating to the second decade of the 1900s including three mature Canary Island Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) and two Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*). Various objects of local historical significance have been relocated to the Park including the commemorative Garryowen Horse Trough relocated from the local showgrounds in the 1990s.*

*With Davies' Coffee Palace (1887), Mentone Station and the associated gardens are a considered component of the town plan in Sir Matthew Davies concept for a seaside 'resort' close to Melbourne at Mentone. In their comprehensive State wide comparative study, Ward and Connelly (1982) consider Ripponlea Railway Station (H1588) and the Mentone Railway Station and Gardens, to be outstanding examples of an Edwardian timber railway station with an associated public garden in the railway reserve.*

*How is it Significant?*

*The Mentone Railway Station and Gardens is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria*

*Why is it Significant?*

*Although the station buildings and plantings date to the second decade of the 20th century, the Mentone Railway Station and Gardens is of historical significance for its association with the development of Melbourne's suburbs during the land boom of the 1880s, and in particular the notable land boom developer, Sir Matthew Davies. The arrival of the railway in 1881 was critical to the development of the resort town of Mentone, which became associated with bayside recreation and horse racing.*

*Mentone Railway Station and Gardens is of architectural significance as an intact example of an Edwardian timber complex with associated public garden in the railway reserve. Together with Ripponlea Railway Station (H1588), Mentone Railway Station is an outstanding example of a metropolitan railway station constructed in the Gisborne Style. The Gardens are well maintained and are comparable with Footscray Station (H1563) and Ripponlea Station (H1588). The two Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) appear to be an unusual planting in Melbourne's Railway Reserves.*

*At the local level, the Mentone Railway Station Gardens are of social significance as the centre of regular local community activities and events.*

## 8.0 Proposed Development

The proposal is for the subject site to be redeveloped with a six-storey apartment building with retail use and carparking to the ground floor. The development adopts a contemporary architectural expression with a material palette drawn from the historic Mentone Railway Station buildings and their urban context.

The ground floor is expressed as a face brick podium with large openings for new retail space interfacing with the heritage plaza siting over the railway line. Upper levels are constructed from precast concrete panels with combination of ribbed and smooth finishes and grey and red hued colour tones.

The west façade is articulated by chamfered corners and large indent/void at the centre. The north west corner addressing Balcombe Road is picked out in red concrete panels with a curved profile at ground floor level referencing the curved steel framing to the historic platform verandahs. The north and east elevation are articulated by recessed balconies with balustrades picked out in red and beige colours in contrast to the grey concrete used for the main body of the walls.

## 9.0 Heritage Impacts

### *Heritage Act*

Applications for works to places on the Victorian Heritage Register are considered within the broad ambit of considerations under the *Heritage Act 2017*, which seek to conserve the significance of place, whilst also support their sustainability and taking into account economic impacts. Inter alia, the *Heritage Act* provides the following directions regarding the matters to be considered in the determination of permit applications:

#### *101 Determination of permit applications*

*(1) After considering an application the Executive Director may—*

*(a) approve the application and—*

*(i) issue the permit for the proposed works or activities; or*

*(ii) issue the permit for some of the proposed works or activities specified in the application; or*

*(b) refuse the application.*

*(2) In determining whether to approve an application for a permit, the Executive Director must consider the following—*

*(a) the extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the registered place or registered object;*

*(b) the extent to which the application, if refused, would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place or registered object;*

*(c) any submissions made under section 95 or 100;*

*[...]*

*(f) any matters relating to the protection and conservation of the registered place or registered object that the Executive Director considers relevant.*

*(3) In determining whether to approve an application for a permit, the Executive Director may consider—*

*(a) the extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of any adjacent or neighbouring property that is—*

*(i) included in the Heritage Register; or*

*(ii) subject to a heritage requirement or control in the relevant planning scheme; or*

*(b) any other relevant matter.*

The above considerations include the extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the registered place, being the Mentone Railway Station. While the proposed development will clearly bring about a change to the built form character of the station environs, it is not a change that adversely affect the cultural heritage significance of the place.

The place is included on the register on the basis of its architectural significance as an intact example of an Edwardian era timber railway station with associated public garden in the railway reserve. Historical significance arises from place's association with the development of Melbourne suburbs during the land boom of the 1880s and for its critical role in the inception of Mentone. The proposed development does not erase historical associations. Interpretative displays in the station environs that explain the history of the place are retained. Accepting that the place is no longer intact, it will continue to be understood a former Edwardian era railway station with associated gardens that are left untouched by the proposal.

#### *Principles for Managing Change to Registered Places*

Heritage Victoria's principles for managing change to registered places emphasise the importance of understanding all elements of the place in the context of their setting including:

- *The historical, visual and physical connections between the place and its setting.*
- *The historical, visual and physical relationships between elements of the place including buildings and landscape features, and how they all work together.*
- *The significance of the spaces between buildings and landscape features*

The proposed development does not interfere with the historical, visual and physical relationship between the platform buildings and the station gardens. It has been designed to create a direct relationship to the registered station building and surrounding heritage sites. Open sightlines are maintained from Balcombe Road to the registered station buildings and beyond to the tower of the former Mentone Coffee Palace.

The principles for managing change to registered places also state that new built form should:

- *Be proportionate to other buildings and structures at a place. It should not dominate, challenge, disrupt or compete with the heritage elements.*
- *Reference the heritage elements of the place without replication or mimicry.*
- *Avoid highly contemporary design which is starkly different to the heritage elements.*
- *Avoid cantilevering or extending into airspace over the place.*

- *Reflect the State level significance of the place through the quality of the new design, materials and finishes.*
- *Avoid demolition of heritage elements.*
- *Avoid the need to dismantle and reconstruct heritage elements.*
- *Avoid structural interventions that may harm heritage elements.*

The greater part of the proposed development sits outside of the extent of registration. The registered land that is to be built upon is vacant and of no inherent significance. The heritage elements will not be demolished or dismantled and reconstructed, and harmful structural interventions are avoided.

The design references the historic station buildings without replication or mimicry. The curved 'bullnose' profile of the historic platform awnings are interpreted in the curved entry feature at the northwest corner façade, anchoring the development within its heritage context. The proposed materials and colour palette are drawn from the heritage buildings and their urban context. The face brick podium and warm red tones of the precast concrete façade elements compliment the cream and brown colour scheme of the station buildings and also reference the red-brick materiality of heritage buildings in the station environs. It is otherwise appropriate that the development adopts a contemporary architectural expression to differentiate it from the registered buildings. This is not a case of infill development in an homogenous historic environment.

The proposed development is substantially greater in scale than the historic station buildings but design strategies have been adopted to moderate its visual prominence. The podium level establishes a sympathetic scale relationship with the single-storey heritage buildings. Upper levels are designed with modulation and articulation to break up the mass of the building and minimise the visual bulk. This is achieved on the west façade by means of a large central indent or void, as well as upper level setbacks above the ground floor level.

It also needs to be recognised that the scale and massing of the proposed development has come about as a result of the subject site having been identified as an Integrated Development Opportunity (IDO) with the aim of developing surplus railway land and directing the funds back into public transport upgrades. The endorsed Masterplan for the Mentone IDO has the objective of realising the strategic importance of the site arising from its size and proximity to public transport. The proposal aligns with the principles of the Masterplan that development should respect the station's heritage buildings whilst also delivering a preferred maximum height of 6 storeys. In this instance heritage outcomes can reasonably be balanced against the net community benefit of increasing housing availability at a public transport hub.

#### *Economic or Reasonable Use Assessment*

In accordance with Section 101(2)(b) of the Heritage Act, The Executive Director must consider the extent to which the application, if refused, would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place or registered object.

When considering the matter of reasonable use, the Executive Director may consider (1) the historic, recent and current uses of the registered place or object, (2) other compatible uses of the registered place or object, (3) the context and setting within which the place or object is located, and (4) other relevant matters. The registered place no longer functions as a railway station and its setting has undergone substantial change as a result of the level crossing removal. The development scheme does not impact on the City of Kingston's proposal to use the main station building as a café/bar. It is more the case that the use of the registered building will be enhanced by further activation of the public open space along the railway corridor. Consideration also needs to be given to the impacts of a refusal of a permit on the ability to achieve the objectives of the Mentone IDO site.

## 10.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed multi-storey development will clearly bring about a change to the environs of the registered place, but it is not a change that will result in adverse or unacceptable heritage impacts. The greater part of the proposed development is outside of the extent of registration. The registered land that would be built upon is vacant and contains no fabric or landscape elements of significance. It also the case that substantial change has already occurred within the extent of registration as a result of the level crossing removal.

The proposal is responsive to the form, scale and materiality of the heritage buildings whilst also being consistent with broader strategic planning objectives to increase housing availability at public transport hubs. Positive impacts will also arise from activation of the open space along the railway corridor, creating opportunities for the increased community engagement with the registered station buildings.

Having regard for the above, the proposed development at Mentone Railway Station should be considered appropriate having regard for the identified significance of the registered place and the provisions of the *Heritage Act*.