

anything will be positive-Tourist info centre-INDIGENOUS ART SPACE-unique space for events in goods shed-Tourists-parks Indigenous groups meeting place in goods shed-HISTORY ROOM-coffee shop-art gallery-CENTRAL HUB for town-showcase local history-museum-restored engines-tours- daytrips on rails to Cuballing or Wagin-Narrogin 'Activity passport'-truck stop-rest rooms-reinvent the 'Refresh'-GET PM076 BACK-brewery-restaurant-give visitors a reason to stay another day or night-heritage centre-FUTURE PROOF-represent railway history-essence of our town- train trips on Hotham Valley train-gardens-GATEWAY to NARROGIN-resting place for travelers-private business- skills and training centre-GROUND LEVEL ACCESS FROM TOWN- weekly mixed markets-historical site-PM076 restored in goods shed- link road visibility opportunities-escape room carriage: puzzles change every 6 months-move DCVC to the goods shed-restored as "Heart of Narrogin"-promote area-information centre-shift railway line so access town-railway museum-vision of the past-Westrail bus bay-maintain railway history-bring back passenger trains-RAIL TRAIL-businesses-partnerships with other rail/train groups-points of interest-shopping centre-ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE-community public functions-available to community-CRITICAL: level crossing-YOUTH CENTRE-coffee shop-weekend markets on the platforms-PM706 in Goods shed

## Adaptive Reuse Strategy

# NARROGIN RAILWAY STATION & GOODS SHED

*“The Heart of the Town”*



Prepared  
for

**Shire of Narrogin**

by

HERITAGE INTELLIGENCE (WA)

*Laura Gray*

April 2021

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is no doubt that the Shire of Narrogin and the community have an appetite for the restoration and reactivation of the Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed. The Shire of Narrogin has made a considerable financial commitment, and the community has demonstrated their enthusiastic support revealing how passionate and important their memories of the railways are to them.

The issue of access across the railway lines has no simple or inexpensive answer, other than it is critical to provide universal access to the railway station from the town centre and even more so for a future TransWA coach stop at the station.

The development of the east end of Mackie Park and future of the Horden Hotel will play a significant role in providing a visual and physical link to the railway station and goods shed, from the main business section of town.

The direct association with the Dryandra Country Visitors' Centre (DCVC) is important but locating the DCVC in the railway station would impact accessibility to and from town. It would be preferable for the DCVC to facilitate the interaction with whatever happens at the railway station, so the attractions of the Dryandra Woodlands and the natural environment remains separate but complementary to the railway identity.

This report seeks to highlight a number of issues and opportunities. The outcome of community consultations supports many of the concepts presented in this report. However, ideas and suggestions from the community for commercial activities located at the station such as a café and/or restaurant, while attractive, potentially impact on town businesses. The activation of the railway station and goods shed is an opportunity to add to what Narrogin already offers without impacting existing businesses.

The railway station venue presents an opportunity to continue the Noongar story from Gnarojin Park into the contemporary period with art, cultural artifacts and interpretation as an introduction to Narrogin's indigenous history supplemented by a brief history of the town's development and the railway history.

A simple and practical concept is to reinstate the integrity of the railway station as a hub of arrivals and departures. The vision encompasses a short comfort stop, a TransWA coach station, the bike trail end and beginning with quality ablutions and storage, and an opportunity to experience an informative and immersive stroll through the Narrogin Railway Station - "The Heart of the Town". The following recommendations summarise the report;

### **Recommendations:**

- 1 Accept and understand the accolade of the Narrogin Railway Station's entry onto the Register of Heritage Places and the statutory implications and requirements of that listing.
- 2 Ensure that the cultural heritage significance of the State Registered Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed is respected and all works and development are in line with the recommendations of the Conservation Management Strategy 2020 and necessary approvals from the Department of Planning Lands and Heritage (DPLH) to uphold and enhance the heritage significance.



- 3 Refer to the Conservation Management Strategy 2020 for guidance for any conservation work, development or interventions to the buildings. The levels of significance identify degrees of intervention but guidance and DPLH approval is still required.
- 4 Undertake the conservation works and service installations at the railway station as stage 1 priority and the goods shed conservation works as stage 2.
- 5 Identify relevant funding opportunities for various elements of the reactivation including various State and Federal agencies. (e.g. from Lotterywest, Royalties for Regions, Arts and Tourism).
- 6 Accept the community's connections with the Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed and continue to engage and value the benefits of their contributions.
- 7 Recognise and utilise the value of the community. The railway buildings engender considerable connections and pride with history and heritage. The retention and reactivation of those buildings impacts on community well-being, sense of place and social sustainability.
- 8 Avoid businesses initiatives or activities at the railway station and goods shed competing with existing business in the town.
- 9 Recognise that restoration and re-activation of railway stations and other decommissioned railway infrastructure is a challenging opportunity. Identify why others have not succeeded. Take lessons from their lack of success to inform decisions regarding the development of the Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed. Be inspired by those who have succeeded.
- 10 Progress discussions and applications to facilitate an at-grade pedestrian crossing (Ped-Xing) to link the west and east across the railway line to provide universal access to the railway station from the town centre.
- 11 Retain and upgrade safety requirements of the existing pedestrian overpass to prevent slipping and tripping on the ramps and steps particularly.
- 12 Reiterate the importance of continuing to negotiate for an at level universal pedestrian crossing. Consider ideas for a shuttle service between the CBD and the east of the railway station should the at level universal pedestrian crossing not be achieved.
- 13 Take opportunities to partner with relevant agencies and develop a link to the Gnarojin Park where the stories and sites of the significant Noongar history are shared. The railway station venue presents an opportunity to continue the Noongar story into the contemporary period with art, cultural artifacts and interpretation as an introduction to Narrogin's indigenous history and supplemented by a brief history of the town's development and the railway history.
- 14 Tourism is a critical element for the success of the re-activated railway station. Explore opportunities to partner and promote the Narrogin Railway Station complementary with Dryandra Country Visitor Centre promotion.

- 15 Engage a consultant to undertake an interpretive plan and associated signage for the entire railway precinct.
- 16 Develop and establish lookout positions on the pedestrian overpass with interpretive maps showing the railway layout in north and south directions.
- 17 Review the need for clear directional signage for access to the railway station from the Railway Institute building, the CBD and the ramp entry on Fairfield Street, onto the pedestrian overpass.
- 18 Explore with the relevant agencies, the benefits and detriments in relocating the TransWA coach terminal to the railway station. The railway station was the place of arrivals and departures and the same function of the coach terminal is relevant to the place.
- 19 Liaise and partner with relevant organisations and agencies to establish a beginning and end of a journey hub for cyclists and trekkers.
- 20 Action the ablution fit-out for universal access, including a shower, in the existing ablution building at the south end of the station platform.
- 21 Explore the potential for installation of Electric Vehicle Fast Chargers at a convenient area of the carpark in Pioneer Drive to access the facilities of the railway station.
- 22 Undertake every effort to return PM706 to Narrogin Railway Station to restore and display in the goods shed.
- 23 Explore opportunities to relocate the signal box back to Narrogin to reinstate its part of the history and a landmark on Pioneer Drive.
- 24 Consider engaging appropriate conservation expertise to establish recording, storing and referencing regimes for the archival records to be relocated and archived at the railway station.
- 25 Provide ongoing support for the construction of a scale model of the town for display in the railway station.
- 26 Explore the opportunities for sensory (model room) and virtual reality (chairs) experiences to engage the experiential tourists and provide a point of difference associated with the Narrogin railways.
- 27 Investigate lighting options for uplighting the station building, lighting the pedestrian overpass and establishing projected railway images (active and passive) on the outside walls of the goods shed.
- 28 Consider opportunities and partnerships with arts organisations including Arts Narrogin and FORM to facilitate and promote public art and arts and cultural events, and the concept of developing a “rail trail” associated with the Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed to promote the overall railway experience in Western Australia.
- 29 Work with the Noongar community with regard to contemporary stories, art and interpretation at the railway station connecting to their history associated with Gnarojin Park.

- 30** Not consider developing the railway goods shed for youth spaces, in preference to identified locations to accommodate the recommendations in the Youth Engagement, Strategy and Development Plan-Draft 2019/2020.
- 31** Develop partnerships with agencies to deliver services to activate the goods shed.
- 32** Explore opportunities to provide spaces in the goods shed for machinery and restoration, Men's Shed activities and mentoring programs for youth and not-so-young in skills and trades.
- 33** Not consider developing a gaming area in the railway goods shed in preference to identified locations to accommodate youth activities.
- 34** Explore the formation of "Friends of the Railways" community organisation to provide support for activities at the railway station and personalised country hospitality.
- 35** Initiate a commemorative display to celebrate the achievements of the original "The Friends of the Railways".
- 36** Develop relationships with Rail Heritage WA and other rail organisations to share information, opportunities and promotion.
- 37** Be alert and informed of opportunities that external operators provide to the Narrogin Railway experiences.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed are significant remaining elements of the broader Narrogin railway station group that comprises the buildings and the sites of the various facilities and functions associated with the major railway junction of the Great Southern region, established in 1889 at Narrogin.

The railway station and goods shed are in need of revitalisation and reconnection with the Narrogin community.

The railway station has not been used since 1978 when the last passenger trains traveled through the region. Until that time Narrogin was the railway centre of the entire Great Southern Region. The railway station building suffered neglect and vandalism before the Friends of the Railways was formed in 1994 and lobbied successfully, to retain and restore the railway station. The goods shed has continued with various storage functions, but with minimal maintenance over the years. The pedestrian overpass was replaced in 1964, the Signal Box was established in 1962, then decommissioned in 1994 and relocated to Pinjarra in 2003.

The understanding of this vibrant community place diminished to a vacant and disconnected reminder of what it used to be. The Shire of Narrogin recognised the demise and initiated a range of funding opportunities, that facilitated a Conservation Management Strategy to guide the future conservation, and the Adaptive Reuse Strategy to outline opportunities to re-invigorate the buildings with functions to benefit the communities of Narrogin (town and district) and build on Narrogin's pride and identity.

An important part of the development of this report to provide recommendations in consideration of the heritage significance and future opportunities was to engage with the community to inform and be informed.

### 1.1 The site

The rail reserve at Narrogin from the Public Transport Authority (PTA) system showing:



- The Rail Reserve coloured green
- The Rail Reserve bordered thick red
- The current Shire station lease dotted in red

## 2.0 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The railway station and goods shed are recognised as being of State significance, by virtue of entry onto the Heritage Council's Register of Heritage Places and listed as a Grade A place in the Heritage List of the Shire of Narrogin's Local Heritage Survey (2019).

The Statement of Significance from the Conservation Management Strategy (2020) is as follows;

Narrogin Railway Station (1907++) and goods shed (1922), a face brick and iron station building and corrugated iron clad goods shed respectively, including the pedestrian overpass (1964), has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

It is important to the community for the identifiable and significant railway environment that represents what remains of the central junction of the Great Southern Railway network, that informs of its intrinsic historic value to the community;

As an important landmark element in the Narrogin townscape it forms a visual (and physical) link between the business district of the town on the west, the creek that is integral to Gnarojin Park, and, the east side of the town;

As the major junction on the Great Southern railway system, Narrogin Railway Station played an important role in the development of the railway infrastructure of Western Australia, and as the centre of Western Australian Government Railway's maintenance and administration operations for almost eighty years, it made a considerable contribution to the development of the town and district;

Narrogin Railway Station has close associations with generations and descendants of the railway staff, the passengers, and the staff of 'Refresh' which was a popular social venue;

The social importance of the railway station is immeasurable with the gatherings on the platforms for passenger train arrivals and departures at all hours of the day and night; the war time departures, boarding schools and other events, and socialising at the 'Refresh' at the station;

It has made lifelong contributions to the community's sense of place with generations of reminiscences that evoke the memories and nostalgia of events, of arrivals and departures, farewells and celebrations, or working or being in a family of a worker;

The value to the community was clearly demonstrated with the formation of a 'Friends of the [Narrogin] Railways Committee' in 1994 to successfully lobby for its retention; and,

Narrogin Railway Station demonstrates the principal characteristics of a railway station that has continued to develop from its construction in 1907 representing the importance of rail transportation in the development of Narrogin and district.

### 2.1 Conservation Management Strategy

A critical element to the conservation of a place is first to understand the place, and respond appropriately with respect, with minimal impact to the significance of the place, in consideration of the importance of viability for the future. The Conservation Management Strategy 2020 has been developed to substantiate the significance of the place and provide conservation policies

and recommendations for conservation works that will guide the adaptive re-use process and long-term future of the railway station and goods shed.

*Critical to the future of any place, and particularly a heritage place, is a viable use that has minimal impact on the significance of that place.*

## **2.2 Impact on Heritage Values**

*The Conservation Management Strategy 2020 provides guidance with regard to levels of significance and degree of conservation and development intervention.*

### Primary significance

These areas are extremely important in terms of the place and should be conserved if the place is to retain its meaning and significance.

- The railway precinct area defined by the PTA lease and the Registered curtilage
- Relationship between the elements on site
- Setting and vistas (to and from all elements on site)
- The original form, scale, layout and materials of each building and element
- The railway station built form and materials including the platform and separate ablutions
- Railway station's face brick work and bullnose corners
- Wire and plaster ceiling in the Refresh room
- Relay/battery room fixtures
- Goods shed, loading ramp and open context
- Goods shed: corrugated iron cladding, loading bays, internal timber structure, platform, line through, weighbridge, remains of gantry equipment.
- Signal lever insitu
- Semaphore signal tops

### Secondary significance

Elements of secondary significance are elements of the original fabric of the place that have generally undergone considerable change or alteration.

- Pedestrian overpass
- Rail fence on Fairway Street

### Little or no significance

These elements neither contribute to, nor detract from, the significance of the place.

- Addition at south end of station building
- Partitioned office space in goods shed

### Intrusive

Intrusive elements include items that, in their present form, have an adverse affect upon the significance of the place and removal should be encouraged.

- Flat roof shelter at north end of railway station platform

- Doors, stairs, plumbing elements on west wall of the goods shed
- Concrete 'bath' element in goods shed

Some conservation works, installing services, and any proposed developments to the railway station and/or goods shed require approval from Department of Planning Lands and Heritage (DPLH) due to the State significance of the place. A Heritage Impact Statement is a mechanism to assist in that endeavor.

**Recommendation 1**

Accept and understand the accolade of the Narrogin Railway Station's entry onto the Register of Heritage Places and the statutory implications and requirements of that listing.

**Recommendation 2**

Ensure that the cultural heritage significance of the State Registered Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed is respected and all works and development are in line with the recommendations of the Conservation Management Strategy 2020 and necessary approvals from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) to uphold and enhance the heritage significance.

**Recommendation 3**

Refer to the Conservation Management Strategy 2020 for guidance for any conservation work, development or interventions to the buildings. The levels of significance identify degrees of intervention but guidance and DPLH approval is still required.

**Recommendation 4**

Undertake the conservation and works and service installations at the railway station as a stage 1 priority and the goods shed conservation works as stage 2.

**Recommendation 5**

Identify relevant funding opportunities for various elements of the reactivation including various State and Federal agencies. (e.g. from Lotterywest, Royalties for Regions, Arts and Tourism).



### **3.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

A community consultation strategy was developed and a program of events was implemented with considerable success. The intention of the community consultation was to inform of the conservation planning process and engage with the community for their memories, railway associations, and their views about future opportunities for the railway station and goods shed.

A survey form was prepared and made available on the Shire of Narrogin's Facebook and Lost Narrogin, and at the Shire and at all the events.

A plethora of information and ideas of what could or should happen was garnered from the process.

#### **3.1 Contacts and program**

Contact details of interested individuals and key organisations were provided and contacted by email and/or phone in the first instance with follow up information, and recontacting as the engagement progressed. Consultations were held through Open Houses, site tours, presentations and one on one discussions. The consultation techniques and formats are outlined below:

17, 20 July 'Open houses' offered by the Shire of Narrogin

22 July

Met the Shire staff; tour of the site

Met with Arts Narrogin, and Morrie Russell (model maker)

Dryandra Country Visitors Centre (DCVC) meeting

Chamber of Commerce event: Business After Hours

23 July

Two community presentations and station tours

4 August

Two community presentations and tours

Met with Uffe Geysner (Friends of the Railway)

Met with Max Werner (Community member)

Met with Mrs Evelyn White (Friends of the Railway)

Presented to the Shire's Townscape Advisory Committee

11 August

Presented to KEEDAC

One community presentation and station tour

Met with Coral Mahony- (Community member)

Met John Warburton, Shire's Operations Manager on site regarding proposed works to station

Elected Members briefing

1 September

Met with FORM team to discuss arts events and project opportunities.

#### **3.2 Survey results**

Over 50 responses were received. Hereunder are the responses regarding the proposed adaptive re-use. With one exception (anonymous suggested a bulldozer) the survey responses were positive for the activation of the railway station and goods shed.

*Tourist info centre-indigenous art space-unique space for events in goods shed-anything*

*will be positive!-tourists-parks - groups meeting place in goods shed-history room- coffee shop-art gallery-central hub for town- showcase local history-museum-restored engines-tours- daytrips on rails to Cuballing or Wagin-Narrogin 'activity passport'-truck stop-rest rooms-reinvent the 'refresh'-get PM076 back!-brewery-restaurant-give visitors a reason to stay another day or night-heritage centre-future proof-represent railway history-essence of our town- train trips on Hotham Valley train-gardens-gateway to Narrogin-resting place for travelers-private business- skills and training centre- ground level access from town-weekly mixed markets-historical site-PM076 restored in goods shed- link road visibility opportunities- escape room carriage: puzzles change every six months-move DCVC to the goods shed-restored as "Heart of Narrogin"-promote area-information centre-shift railway line so access town-railway museum-vision of the past-Westrail bus bay-maintain railway history-bring back passenger trains-rail trail-businesses-partnerships with other rail/train groups-points of interest-shopping centre-anything is possible-community public functions-available to community-critical: level crossing-youth centre-coffee shop-weekend markets on the platforms-PM706 in goods shed*

***The community engagement demonstrated significant and often poignant memories and associations with the railway station, and almost without exception responses were positive and enthusiastic regarding future opportunities.***

### **3.3 Community Impact**

***It is important that the existing town and district businesses are not impacted in a negative way by competitive commercial operations under the Shire's sphere of control.***

***The intention is to value add to existing business, image, tourist destination and opportunities.***

The Shire of Narrogin's Townscape Study Review 2016 states:

*As a general guiding philosophy, the Shire and community should recognize that the town centre has a key role in the economic and social fabric of the community, and endeavour to consistently make decisions which focus resources and activity into the core. Wherever possible, new businesses and enterprises should be encouraged to establish their operations in the CBD.<sup>1</sup>*

The issue of access to the Ped-Xing between Mackie Park/Fairway Drive corner and the east side of the railway line is critical to that intent.

*Gnarogin Park as a whole is an asset to the town, with its artworks and brookside path. Continuing to enhance it with planting, interpretation and strengthened connections across the rail line is strongly recommended. The more that it is used and activated, the more it will be 'owned' by the community, respected and cared for....<sup>2</sup>*

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1 Shire of Narrogin Townscape Study Review, 2016. p.8

2 Shire of Narrogin. Townscape Study Review, 2016. p.32

**Recommendation 6**

Accept the community's connections with the Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed and continue to engage and value the benefits of their contributions.

**Recommendation 7**

Recognise and utilise the value of the community. The railway buildings engender considerable connections and pride with history and heritage. The retention and reactivation of those buildings impacts on community well-being, sense of place and social sustainability.

**Recommendation 8**

Avoid businesses initiatives or activities at the railway station and goods shed competing with existing business in the town.

#### 4.0 ADAPTIVE RE-USE

*The concept of adaptive reuse of heritage buildings to a large extent, depends on the sense of place and value in a local community. Heritage invests local communities with a powerful reason to look after their local environment and lead more sustainable lifestyles as they have a powerful connection to their physical environment through visual amenity and the intrigue and uniqueness offered by heritage buildings and streetscapes. People feel a stronger sense of connection with their local surroundings through heritage, which is quite different to the mentality associated with new building stock, in that it can be, replicated anywhere and therefore lends no specific connection to the local environment.*

***Heritage buildings are cultural icons and their preservation impacts on community well-being, sense of place and therefore social sustainability.***<sup>3</sup>

##### **Recommendation 9**

Recognise that restoration and re-activation of railway stations and other decommissioned railway infrastructure is a challenging opportunity. Identify why others have not succeeded. Take lessons from their lack of success to inform decisions regarding the development of Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed. Be inspired by those who have succeeded.

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3 P. A. Bullen, P.E.D. Love, (2011), "Adaptive reuse of heritage buildings", Structural Survey, Vol. 29 Issue 5. pp. 411–421.

## 5.0 ACCESS

The closest pedestrian access to the railway station from the town centre of Narrogin is across the pedestrian overpass and down a set of stairs. A vast expanse of graveled area north of the goods shed and specifically the operational railway lines prevent direct at-grade (ground level) universal pedestrian access between the town centre and the railway station.

The town's visitor centre, the DCVC is located on the corner of Fairway and Park Street, a short direct distance from the goods shed on the west side of the railway line, and the railway station on the east side of the railway line which is only accessible by the pedestrian overpass.

The overpass is not compliant with universal access requirements for the ramped grades at the north (west side) and east ramps, and certainly not the steps to the platform.

***Universal access to the railway station is limited to vehicle access on Pioneer Drive where the parking area on the east side of the railway station is positioned for pedestrian access at an accessible ramp onto the north end of the railway station platform.***

Although there are two existing pedestrian crossings between the town centre and the east side of town, the closest to the railway station is the Egerton/Doney Street crossing. It is accessed off Federal Street a reasonable walking distance from the DCVC.

The Shire's Public Art Strategy & Masterplan 2019 reiterates the importance of walkability:

*The railway line and Gnarojin Park are two important north/south conduits of the town and divide the western and eastern housing precincts. Walkability was a key value identified in H&H Architect's 2016 Townscape Study Review. Improving connectivity within the town by strengthening east/west pedestrian routes will enhance the walkability value of the town site and provide meaningful opportunities for public art placement within Gnarojin Park and in areas adjacent to the railway line.<sup>4</sup>*

*Commissioning a curated series of works with the intent to improve connectivity between Gnarojin Park and the CBD. These curated works will introduce visitors to the town, create way finding across the town..... artworks to navigate spaces at night especially within Gnarojin Park and for the overpass.<sup>5</sup>*

***Linking the town centre and the railway station at ground level is a significant factor in re-activating the railway station.***

***Directional and interpretative signage will be critical to promoting and facilitating maximum access to the railway station from the west/town centre side of the railway lines.***

### 5.1 Pedestrian access (Ped-Xing)

The west to east crossing to access the railway station from the town centre exists via the pedestrian overpass. It is a logical entry that can be identified from the primary junction in the town centre where the Town Hall is located.

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4 Shire of Narrogin. Public Art Strategy & Masterplan 2019. Artsource. p.27.

5 Shire of Narrogin. Public Art Strategy & Masterplan 2019. Artsource. p.15.

*The pedestrian overpass is an experience that very few railway stations still have retained, and is an important element in the railway context that contributes to the town's identity.*

*A Ped-Xing at the north end of the existing ramp entry in Fairway Street is a likely location to establish an at-grade universal access to the railway station from the CBD.*

Although the most obvious location for a Ped-Xing is direct from the east end of Park Street in the proximity of the DCVC in the Railway Institute building, that presents a significant problem with the platform one metre higher than ground level at that point.

The more viable option for a Ped-Xing would be in the vicinity of the existing ramp entry, near the juncture of Fairway Street (east) and Mackie Park. That location would provide a number of advantages:

- Located close to the west ramp entry of the pedestrian overpass it will provide options for access via the Ped-Xing (universal access) or the pedestrian overpass that is a landmark and an exceptional viewing platform for pedestrians to appreciate the extent of the original railway operations through well placed interpretive panels describing the various views and their respective histories.
- *It is in close proximity to the site of the original railway station, forming an historic connection between the railway station (on the east) and the Horden Hotel and opportunities associated with the future Dome.*
- The Ped-Xing would connect directly to the north end of the existing railway station platform where the ramp leads directly south to the railway station.
- *The east end of the Ped-Xing would also align with a universal access from the carpark on the east side of the railway station on Pioneer Drive opposite Gnarojin Park.*
- The existing 1950s heritage building in Mackie Park is touted for demolition. Despite the loss of the building, it would open the site up for identifying and interpreting the railway heritage and that direct link to the railway station, and further connect the Horden Hotel/Dome development to the railway station (and goods shed) physically and visually.
- The existing driveway and car parking area along the east side of the Horden Hotel, Mackie Park and Fairway Street would need some rationalisation and beautification. Part of it could be redeveloped as an extension of Mackie Park on the site of the original railway station (c.1896 -1907) with a railway themed recreation area, adjacent to alfresco opportunities at the Horden Hotel.

## **5.2 Ped-Xing process**

*An at-grade railway crossing (Ped-Xing) between the corner of Mackie Park and Fairway Street (west) and the north end of the railway station platform (east) will provide a universal access (suitable for bicycles, wheelchairs and electric wheelchairs) between the town centre and the railway station.*

Public Transport Authority (PTA) provided the following information regarding Ped-Xings.

Examples include;

Mt Barker Station Maze (an older style pedestrian maze)

Morawa Station Maze (more modern smaller pedestrian maze)

The application process is as follows:

- PTA will refer any application to its Third Party
- PTA Third Party Access will then liaise with Arc Infrastructure (the rail freight operators) on the matter; Arc Infrastructure will then agree (and provide the terms and conditions for the construction of any Ped-Xing) or reject the proposal entirely.
- If Arc Infrastructure agrees to the Ped-Xing over the rail, there will be a requirement for a zig-zag possibly of the type at Morawa.
- Either Arc Infrastructure or PTA agree to grant a license to occupy to enable a walkway from the goods shed across to the station.
- The Shire of Narrogin would require a Community Purpose License for the access track from the goods shed across to the station. That License would be between Arc and the Shire or PTA and the Shire.<sup>6</sup>

Due to the existing pedestrian overpass, it is questionable whether PTA or Arc Infrastructure would agree to two Ped-Xings at Narrogin, or would agree to pay for (or contribute towards) any work associated with the proposed Ped-Xing. The costs regarding the construction and materials will be fairly standard but the unknown cost is the Safety Requirements that Arc Infrastructure will demand.<sup>7</sup>

PTA further advised that the Ped-Xing with active protection (automatic gates etc) could cost \$700,000 to \$1million, although it is not likely that active protection would be required and therefore the cost would be considerably less. The State level crossing policy does not permit new crossings unless grade separated (footbridge or underpass). At this location the pedestrian overpass offers the grade separation and therefore a new at grade crossing would not be considered given it would introduce a new risk to the rail reserve.<sup>8</sup>

The installation of a new DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant footbridge would be the alternative to a compliant railway line crossing, removing the existing one.<sup>9</sup>

***It is not an option to remove the existing pedestrian overpass.***

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6 Information provided by email (requested) Jim Mullins Senior Property Manager (PTA), Burgess Rawson. 6 September 2020.

7 Information provided by email (requested) Jim Mullins Senior Property Manager (PTA), Burgess Rawson. 6 September 2020.

8 Information provided by email (at request of J Mullins) Shelley Brindal Corridor & Heritage Coordinator, Infrastructure Planning & Land Services (PTA) 6 September 2020.

9 Information provided by email (at request of J Mullins) Shelley Brindal Corridor & Heritage Coordinator, Infrastructure Planning & Land Services (PTA) 6 September 2020.



### 5.3 Vehicular access

The goods shed is easily accessed by vehicle, with extensive areas for RV and even trucks to turn and park within the goods shed area, in close proximity to the DCVC located in the Railway Institute building.

However, to access the railway station by vehicle from the DCVC connections are north on Federal Street to the railway crossing at the Kipling Street roundabout and then south on Pioneer Drive. Alternatively, south from the Railway Institute building in Fairway Street, across the railway line at Herald Street and north into Pioneer Drive.

The Shire of Narrogin has established an extensive carparking and pull-over area along the east side of the railway station (west side of Pioneer Drive) that provides for cars, 4WDs, travelling vehicles and RVs.

*Given the close proximity of Narrogin Park, safe pedestrian access to the railway station, across the road, from the east side of Pioneer Drive needs to be considered.*

*The carparking project facilitates opportunities for a rest and recuperation stop at the Railway station.*

### 5.4 Shuttle train

An at-grade crossing is the priority for universal access between the railway station and the CBD. However, should the at-grade crossing not be achieved, a small shuttle bus/trains with universal access could be considered to run on a regular link between the Railway Institute building and the east side of the railway station. It could be a mini train or a small van with a train image on its sides to identify its association with the railway station.

The shuttle idea could be expanded to a town tour as many less than active tourists would struggle with the gradient of Fortune Street and could potentially miss viewing that significant historic and appealing street as well as Memorial Park and its pavilion.

#### **Recommendation 10**

Progress discussions and applications to facilitate an at-grade pedestrian crossing (Ped-Xing) to link the west and east across the railway line to provide universal access to the railway station from the town centre.

#### **Recommendation 11**

Retain and upgrade safety requirements of the existing pedestrian overpass to prevent slipping and tripping on the ramps and steps particularly.

#### **Recommendation 12**

Reiterate the importance of continuing to negotiate for an at level universal pedestrian crossing. Consider ideas for a shuttle service between the CBD and the east of the railway station should the at-grade universal pedestrian crossing not be achieved.

## 6.0 TOURISM

The Narrogin Tourism Strategy 2019 identifies a number of issues pertinent to the retention, conservation and re-use opportunities for the railway station and goods shed.

The Narrogin Tourism Strategy 2019 recommends the Shire develop a 'Strategic Tourism Vision-Destination Narrogin' that clearly articulates what can be achieved:

*"Meet expectations with sustainable tourism experiences that provide a compelling reason to visit and stay (longer) in Narrogin."*<sup>10</sup>

The Tourism Strategy's proposed branding supports a vision for experiencing Narrogin, loving the country life and being surprised by Narrogin's rich social history, heritage and its natural attractions.

### **EXPERIENCE NARROGIN**

*love the (country) life*

*Share stories/discover history/explore nature*<sup>11</sup>

The Tourism Strategy states:

*Narrogin has an opportunity to take a more niche focused approach to building awareness by better communicating interesting aspects of Narrogin's nature, culture and heritage to past and potential visitors with a demonstrated interest.*<sup>12</sup>

A number of proposed strategies in the Tourism Strategy focus on the natural environment, however Strategy 4 encourages the Shire to "Identify and develop tourist experiences that cater to specific interests".<sup>13</sup>

The railway station and its history can be identified as of particular interest to the Narrogin community and tourists.

***Gnarrogin Park has always been significant to the town's Aboriginal history and story telling. The future development of the Park recognises and interprets that significance. There is an obvious link from the interpretation of stories of the beginnings, to contemporary life and culture.***

***This interpretation could be located opposite Gnarrogin Park in the railway station building.***

Several of the market trends identified in the Shire's Tourism Strategy are considered highly relevant to Narrogin's railway history (railway station and goods shed) and include:

- ***Gen X and Y and even Baby Boomers have an increased interest in outdoor recreation, eco-tourism and special interest tourism - individualism drives a need for unique experiences and rural tourism with its diversity of offerings, can satisfy this need.***
- ***There is increased interest in history; rural areas are often caches of heritage left by settlers who moved outwards from the first settlements, be it buildings, or old railway towns in the case of Narrogin.***

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10 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.65. 2019.

11 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.65. 2019.

12 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.42. 2019.

13 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.85. 2019.

- ***There appears an increasing desire for authentic experiences including interaction with local people - Rural tourism is REAL (Rewarding, Enriches the spirit, provides Adventure and Learning), authenticity is believed to be found in genuine country experiences and lifestyles.***<sup>14</sup>

A changing social demographic and economic environment has resulted in demands for many requirements including quality and convenience, but also an increase in active, wellness and nature-based holidays as well as the arts, culture and history. Experiential activities inform and engage to evoke emotional feelings, nostalgic memories and historical information.

*What is clear from the research cited above is that contemporary Australians, across all age groups, have become what Tourism Australia defines as 'Experience Seekers'.*<sup>15</sup>

***The broad target market for tourism resides with 'Experience Seekers' especially those whose interests are aligned with heritage and cultural learning, nature-based tourism and educational-experiential travel.***<sup>16</sup>

*Experiential Travel - More sophisticated consumers, with higher levels of education and awareness as discussed above; want their travel to deliver new and interesting "experiences"; rather than simply sights and facts. They want to explore the unique, the exotic and the unexpected; places and experiences that evoke emotion and inspire exploration and engagement.*<sup>17</sup>

***The "Attractions and Things to do"***<sup>18</sup> ***in Narrogin is devoid of any historical or cultural places, activities or events. (except the Agricultural Show)***

Highlighted commentary in the report:

*"It is difficult for new tours and activities to prove viable in small country towns, this highlights the need to ensure existing activities and experience can be fully leveraged to enhance the visitor experience. There are currently no tours listed, and options for providing interpretation and a local perspective are highly important."*<sup>19</sup>

Highlighted commentary in the report:

*"The response we want from each site/attraction is that so the visitor feels they've spent their time in a worthwhile way and connected with the culture and people of Narrogin and that this experience has been enjoyable, stimulating, interactive and fun, If we get this right their "word of mouth" stories spread back home will spread the same consistent, enticing and unique impressions of the region among their peers".*

*Develop new experiences and attractions to increase the length of stay and add to the appeal mix.*<sup>20</sup>

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14 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.29. 2019

15 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.32. 2019.

16 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.31. 2019.

17 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.31. 2019.

18 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.40. 2019.

19 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.39. 2019

20 Narrogin Tourism Strategy Brighthouse. p.45. 2019

## 6.1 Dryandra Country Visitors Centre (DCVC)

The DCVC is located in the former Railway Institute building on the northeast corner of Park and Fairway Streets directly west of the goods shed. It is easily accessible for tourists and caravanners with an RV dump point at the south end of the goods shed area.

Relocation of the DCVC to the railway station, predominantly for staffing reasons, was proposed during a community consultation.

*However, the DCVC is already on the edge of the CBD. It is considered that moving the DCVC to a less accessible position and vacating another railway building (the former Railway Institute) would be counter-productive.*

If the DCVC was on the east of the railway line, it would attract more clientele on the Pioneer Drive side (east). That would not be conducive to getting tourists and visitors back to the CBD on the west side of the railway line.

The name of the visitor centre includes reference to “Dryandra Country”. This is, however, not immediately synonymous with Narrogin or the railway station.

*The railway station and goods shed are specific to Narrogin’s railway history and definitely identified as such and should not to be confused with Dryandra.*

### **Recommendation 13**

Take opportunities to partner with relevant agencies and develop a link to Gnarojin Park where the stories and sites of significant Noongar history are shared. The railway station venue presents an opportunity to continue the Noongar story from Gnarojin Park into the contemporary period with art, cultural artifacts and interpretation as an introduction to Narrogin’s indigenous history and supplemented by a brief history of the town’s development and the railway history.

### **Recommendation 14**

Tourism is a critical element for the success of the re-activated railway station. Explore opportunities to partner and promote the Narrogin Railway Station complementary with Dryandra Country Visitor Centre promotion.

## 7.0 INTERPRETATION & SIGNAGE

*Interpretation is a communication link between a place and its visitors. Whatever the link is it creates for the visitor an intellectual and emotional connection to a place.*

*It creates feelings about a place, prompts ideas and reveals meanings.*<sup>21</sup>

The potential to further interpret and promote the heritage of the place is a prime opportunity to enrich the experience of a visit to the place.

*Interpretation of the entire railway yard is important in creating an understanding of the scale and significance of the place.*

An informative interpretive map on the railway fence in Fairway Street would serve to inform of the railway layout. Similarly, a view from the Mackie Park area, and the east side, would be engaging and informative. A lookout on the pedestrian overpass with interpretive photos illustrating the views in different directions informing of the hey-day of the railway junction would add to the understanding of Narrogin's rail history.

Signage is critical to wayfinding. It is imperative that it is consistent throughout with specific themes such as railway defined.

*Signage will be critical to connecting the railway station to the town centre.*

### **Recommendation 15**

Engage a consultant to undertake an interpretive plan and associated signage for the entire railway precinct.

### **Recommendation 16**

Develop and establish lookout positions on the pedestrian overpass with interpretive maps showing the railway layout in north and south directions.

### **Recommendation 17**

Review the need for clear directional signage for access to the railway station from the Railway Institute building, the CBD, and the ramp entry on Fairfield Street, onto the pedestrian overpass.

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<sup>21</sup> An extract from Golden Pipeline Interpretation Plan for National Trust of Australia (WA). 2001.

## 8.0 ACTIVATING THE RAILWAY STATION (HUB)

Encouraging tourists, visitors and locals to come to the railway station and goods shed for regular or special events, or to utilize as a rest stop when passing through will create and encourage more energy and enthusiasm for the place and its activities and amenities.

*The railway station was always the place of arrivals and departures.*

*The concept is to establish a 30-minute stop over and transport hub. Introducing activities that can value add to the activation brings authentic functions such as the arrivals and departures, back to the place.*

### 8.1 Relocating the TransWA Coach Stop

*Relocating the TransWA Coach stop to this area would provide visitors with a more welcoming atmosphere and better amenities than can be provided by the stop outside of the town's Police Station.*

TransWA Coach stop will be as close as it gets to the arrivals and departures of the passenger train experience, with parking both sides of the railway lines, and with the pedestrian overpass and future Ped-Xing, it's a very convenient location.

### 8.2 Trails and bikes

The Shire of Narrogin Walk Trails Master Plan 2019 found that:

*The trails/pathways of Gnarojin Park, and the parkland area itself, are a fabulous asset and are located right on the town's eastern doorstep. The park is only a short walk over the railway footbridge from the Dryandra Country Visitor Centre.<sup>22</sup>*

*Gnarojin Park, located a short stroll from the Dryandra Country Visitors Centre, has the potential for becoming one of Narrogin's most visited sites. It already has several trail/paths, including the Narrogin Recreation Trail (a loop trail encompassing both sides of Narrogin Brook), the Centenary Pathway and the Noongar Dreaming Pathway.<sup>23</sup>*

The Shire has recently completed work on the CBD's Narrogin Heritage Walk Trail which takes users past a range of historic sites throughout the town, each with an interesting story.

The Walk Trails Master Plan encourages the Shire to capitalise on its rail potential and states:

*It is crucial that the suite of trails reflect the quintessential character of the area – its natural assets, its Aboriginal history, its pioneers, its heritage and culture, the traditional farming practices and new agricultural enterprises.<sup>24</sup>*

### 8.3 Amenity

*The close proximity of Gnarojin Park to the railway station provides opportunities to provide amenity and build on the Narrogin story.*

The railway station is positioned to provide amenity as a start and end point for a rail trail, such

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22 *Trails Master Plan. Transplan Pty Ltd Planning and Design 2019. p.32*

23 *Trails Master Plan. Transplan Pty Ltd Planning and Design 2019. p.53*

24 *Trails Master Plan. Transplan Pty Ltd Planning and Design 2019. p.32*

as being considered between Narrogin to Williams and others. Bike racks and storage area for trail users and other facilities required for their convenience could be installed at the site.

*The existing ablution block will be restored, and contemporary universal access fit out with a shower installed for the use of the bikers and trekkers. The ablution facility is integral to 30-minute stop over hub concept and for the use of the bikers and trekkers.*

Baby changing space and comfortable chairs for mums and babies or just a resting area for older people, similar to the CWA rest rooms of yester-year, could be provided.

*The former ladies waiting room, can still be a waiting room with the adjacent toilet.*

#### **8.4 Electric vehicle charging station**

The Shire is considering the installation of Electric Vehicle Fast Chargers. Early adoption of a DC fast charger may give Narrogin an edge over towns along Albany Highway where there are only slower speed chargers such as in Williams. It is noted that there is a less public slow speed wall charger installed at Narrogin Motel.

Installation of a charger in the existing space in the goods shed area, opposite the Railway Institute building would be a convenient site for visitors, to walk 50 metres north and access the pedestrian overpass to the railway station (or the Ped -Xing). Alternatively, if the charger was located on the east side (Pioneer Drive) it would provide direct access to the railway station and the ablutions, and the pedestrian overpass to the town centre.

*As the world transitions to electric vehicles, Narrogin can capitalise on tourism opportunities by providing Electric Vehicle Fast Chargers.*

With charging times of around 30 minutes, the driver and occupants of the vehicle have time to enjoy the railway station experiences and take more time to cross the line to the town centre. Unlike a fuel station, the charging facilities are cleaner and less obtrusive.

#### **Recommendation 18**

Explore with the relevant agencies, the benefits and detriments in relocating the TransWA coach terminal to the railway station. The railway station was the place of arrivals and departures and the same function of the coach terminal is relevant to the place.

#### **Recommendation 19**

Liase and partner with relevant organisations and agencies to establish a beginning/end of a journey hub for cyclists and trekkers.

#### **Recommendation 20**

Action the ablution fit-out for universal access, including a shower, in the existing ablution building at the south end of the station platform.

#### **Recommendation 21**

Explore the potential for installation of Electric Vehicle Fast Chargers at a convenient area of the carpark in Pioneer Drive to access the facilities of the railway station.



## 9.0 ATTRACTORS/ACTIVITIES

### *What railway station does not have trains?*

#### 9.1 PM 706 steam train



PM 706 is an integral part of Narrogin's railway history that has significant associations for many members of the community. It is understood that negotiations are underway with an intention to relocate PM 706 to the goods shed at Narrogin Railway Station.

The in-shed railway line already exists in the goods shed. Although the east wall requires restoration, an element of that will include a clear (glazing or similar) section of wall to view PM706 from the railway station platform.

***PM 706 is a critical element of the activated Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed.***

#### 9.2 Existing diesel train

There is currently a rusted diesel engine on remnant railway lines on the east side of the station. It would not take much to make it safe and a little more respectable to retain insitu. Even as it currently presents it gives a clue of how this could be achieved. It needs to be safe with the engine areas inaccessible to the public

#### 9.3 Signal box

The signal box was located north of the station building on the east side from 1962 until 2003 when it was relocated to the Pinjarra Railway yards. It remains in Pinjarra where it is unused and neglected. The signal box is a particular special design to facilitate relocation as required. Very few remain in Western Australia.

The signal box would be something of a landmark, located in approximately the original position, on the east side of the railway lines, north of the station, not within the railway yard, opposite the Horden

Hotel (Dome). Minimal restoration and attention to safety access would be required to provide for access to the top-level of the signal cabin where the signal levers are located. Tourists could experience views across to the town centre and up and down the railway corridor from the top-level of the signal box. Signage and lighting would enhance the landmark opportunities on Pioneer Drive.

*The signal box relocated in Narrogin would reinstate part of Narrogin's railway history, provide opportunities for an informative activity, lookout, and opportunities for landmark signage in Pioneer Drive, much like the railway water tower and tank in Merredin (below).*



Narrogin's signal box at Pinjarra



Water tower and tank in Merredin

#### 9.4 Carriages (cars)

Carriages on the remnant railway line along the south end of the east side of the railway station and at the south end of the goods shed, and even as part of recreational areas associated with the railway theme, can introduce a sense of the vibrancy and relevance to the railway yard and its interpretation.



##### 9.4.1 Lease spaces for Artisans

Carriages and defined spaces within the goods shed at the loading bays, in relatively ***small spaces could be available for artisans to 'lease'*** on the basis of working at their skill/art for the benefit of being accessible to the public to view the works in progress.

There could be associated exhibition space for each artist in the goods shed in carriages along the east platform.

*Railway carriages can provide a range of functions from contributing to the railway station ambience to providing cabin areas for artisans to work and display or provide specific cabins for interpretation or public art murals.*

## 9.5 History

### 9.5.1 Railway memorabilia

There is considerable railway memorabilia, documents and research material that can be archived, and displayed as part of the history presentation of the railway. Members of The Friends of the Railways, the Evenis family and others have offered their valued collections for a formal process to further enhance the understanding of Narrogin's railway history.

Integral to the documents and memorabilia is the 1944 railway precinct plan that the Shire of Narrogin has recently had restored and framed. It would take pride of place in the Narrogin railway story presented at the restored railway station.

*Displaying historical elements contributes to the understanding, authenticity, sense of place and historical significance of the Narrogin Railway Station.*

*Proper recording, indexing, archiving, storing and displaying the history of the Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed is critical to the long-term conservation of those documents and elements.*

### 9.5.2 History Archives

Narrogin's historical records are currently in a less than satisfactory situation. They need to be organised and stored in appropriate conditions.

*The railway station building (addition at the south end) is a secure location that could be temperature controlled, with a compactus installed and historical records referenced and stored for access as required.*

*A significant issue is who or what organisation has the volunteer capacity to not only establish the facility but maintain it in an ongoing situation.*

Historical research is a popular activity for many people and particularly those who are older and retired, many of whom are also travelers keen to research families and former associations.

## 9.6 Town and railway station scale model

The Shire is working with a local resident who is constructing *a 'working' scale model of the Narrogin town site including the railway station. It is proposed to exhibit the model at the railway station.* Other models will also be displayed in the goods shed.

## 9.7 Virtual reality

Virtual reality (VR) refers to a computer-generated simulation in which a person can interact within an artificial three-dimensional environment using electronic devices, such as special goggles with a screen or gloves fitted with sensors. There are three main types of virtual reality used today to transform the world around us, including non-immersive, semi-immersive, and fully-immersive simulations.

*The haptic (vibration) sensations also add so much presence, it really makes you feel like you're there, in the experience. People will soon work, play and interact with one another in VR as part of everyday life.<sup>25</sup>*



Roto VR.

***Virtual reality is a communication platform that can provide memorable railway experiences at Narrogin Railway Station.***

A series of three VR chairs could provide three different experiences: an engine driver on the track; a passenger rattling along passing stations and trains; and, on the station with the noise and excitement of passenger and freight trains.

Narrogin already has the Courthouse Museum and DCVC so the railway station needs to rise to the challenge of something different. The VR experience would provide that point of difference.

***Narrogin Railway station needs to present a point of difference with authentic relevance to the railway history and experience.***

The Bull Creek Aviation Heritage Museum recently installed a VR attraction to experience flying a bomber in World War Two, and flight simulators.<sup>26</sup>

***Inquiries to Bull Creek Aviation Heritage Museum may provide opportunities for local VR connections.***

### **9.8 Sensory stimulus**

***Sights sounds and smells of the railway station as an experience at the touch of a button or some other trigger mechanism associated with the scale model trains.***

### **9.9 Lighting & dynamic projection**

The Shire's Public Art Strategy & Masterplan 2019 presents various ideas and themes for public art including using projection. The Gnarojin Park Master Plan recommends that;

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25 Elliott Myers, Founder of Roto VR.

26 *The West Australian*. "Spirit soars with aviation history". 5 November 2020.



*“bridges be given uniform colour for visual connection” and “led strip lighting to bridge”.*<sup>27</sup>

Lighting and projection has been a huge attractor in so many ways in recent times. In Perth, the Council Chambers have various light patterns projected over it; Kings Park lit-up the street trees for a commemorative period of time, the Fields of Lights at Albany and Uluru have mesmerised tourists by the tens of thousands. At the Bridgetown Blues Festival in 2019, the walls of the Shire building in the town centre were used as a canvas for projecting images of engaging scenes of the town’s history.

The Public Art Strategy & Masterplan’s recommendations include:

*Screen projections: An annual projection event that tells stories about Narrogin’s history and its people. This event would provide opportunities and invite participation from local artists, art enthusiasts, tourists and students to participate in a programmed event....*<sup>28</sup>



In Wongan Hills the railway water tower lit-up in hot pink is an eye-catching attraction.

Sculptures and cut-out metal elements have become ubiquitous in the rural landscape. Arguably they no longer attract the attention of the average baby-boomer visitor/tourist.

Different images; static, dynamic, changing attract attention. Images that include the community, so they are encouraged to come and view them similar to school plays and events when parents attend to see their children perform. The local schools could be the developers of the images, including all aspects of the community. The landmark signal box could be part of the ‘canvas’.

***Lighting along the west and east frontages of the railway station and across the pedestrian overpass; projected images (dynamic and static) on the sides of the goods shed; and on the relocated signal box will provide new and different aspects of Narrogin’s history and experiences.***

### **9.10 Railway themed public space**

A safe fenced railway themed playground would provide for the younger generation. Ideas of large-scale trains have been touted. Some safe interactive elements could be included - for

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27 Gnarojin Park Masterplan. Enlocus Landscape Architects. 2019. pp. 32, 34.

28 Public Art Strategy & Masterplan 2019. Artsource. Stage 2 recommendations p. 25: There are some exciting examples of iconic projections created for festivals around the world including from the roof of the Sydney Opera House and the Yagan Square screen in Perth’s CBD.

example: push-pull contraptions (kalamazoos) and signal levers.

***Seating, railway signal levers, stylised/simplified semaphores, elements with moving (safe) parts. Railway carriages included in the area for the adults to relax while supervising their children.***

The Shire could consider modified carriages, with one side removed to open the carriage up and allow visitors to get a sense of the railway environment. The carriages could be located at the east end of Mackie Park at the site of the original railway station and the 1950's building (after its demolished). Opportunities for alfresco dining associated with the proposed Dome include integration with the railway themed park, and views to the railway station and precinct.

### **9.11 Markets**

A number of the community responses suggested Farmers' Markets at the goods shed. The Tourism Strategy also suggests Farmers' Markets.

The Gnarojin Community Garden is a popular destination for fresh produce. The Gnarojin Community Garden Committee experience is that there is not an adequate number of suppliers of fresh produce in the district to support the concept of a large Farmers' Market to attract a significant number of visitors.

There is an abundance of weekend markets in the Perth metropolitan area and surrounding hills districts and in regional areas mostly in the southwest.

***A market in Narrogin would need to provide a specialist point of difference of a quality standard and reliable suppliers to ensure a vibrant and regular event to attract and engage an audience.***

Monthly markets on a regular time and day and entertainment such as a cowboy crooner on some hay bales or some bootscooters could set the country ambience for such an event.

***The goods shed does have the potential to provide an excellent venue for a market with the series of loading bays on the west wall providing access for trucks or trailers to back up to the bays.***

**Recommendation 22**

Undertake every effort to return PM706 to Narrogin Railway Station to restore and display in the goods shed.

**Recommendation 23**

Explore opportunities to relocate the signal box back to Narrogin to reinstate its part of the history and a landmark on Pioneer Drive.

**Recommendation 24**

Consider engaging appropriate conservation expertise to establish recording, storing and referencing regimes for the archival records to be relocated and archived at the railway station.

**Recommendation 25**

Provide ongoing support for the construction of a scale model of the town for display in the railway station.

**Recommendation 26**

Explore the opportunities for sensory (model room) and virtual reality (chairs) experiences to engage the experiential tourists and provide a point of difference associated with the railways.

**Recommendation 27**

Investigate lighting options for uplighting the station building, lighting the pedestrian overpass and establishing projected railway images (active and passive) on the outside walls of the goods shed.



## 10.0 ART AND CULTURE

### 10.1 Arts Narrogin

Arts Narrogin Incorporated is a not-for-profit association that supports and promotes art, culture and entertainment in Narrogin and the Dryandra Country region.

Arts Narrogin Vision

*We see arts and culture as an integral component in a vibrant, empowered, connected and strong community.*

Arts Narrogin purpose:

*To connect creatives, audiences and the community by promoting, initiating and supporting projects and activities that stimulate and strengthen artistic and cultural life in the Narrogin region.*

Arts Narrogin aims to enliven the lifestyle in the region by –

- Presenting live performances – including musical and theatrical productions
- Hosting the annual Flickerfest short movie festival and other film shows
- Arranging community and youth workshops
- Mounting art exhibitions at the NEXIS gallery
- Offering display space for members’ work
- Sourcing funds for and project managing community projects
- Promoting its own and other organisations’ events
- Providing professional development opportunities for volunteers
- Working with organisations such as Regional Arts WA, CircuitWest and GalleriesWest to lobby all levels of government for greater support of culture and the arts
- Using social and mainstream media to promote Narrogin and the region to the general public, both metro and regional.<sup>29</sup>

***Arts Narrogin have a respected established position in the culture and arts sector in Narrogin and the region, as the peak arts organisation.***

***There may be future opportunities for Arts Narrogin to engage with the railway station and goods shed.***

### 10.2 Cross Cultural Engagement

#### 10.2.1 Gnarojin Park

The significance of Gnarojin Park to the Noongar community, and for the broader Narrogin community and visitors is considerable. It is a powerful and emotional place that presents opportunities to garner a greater understanding of the local Noongar people’s history and culture.

*Gnarogin Park, located a short stroll from the Dryandra Country Visitors Centre, has the potential for becoming one of Narrogin's most visited sites. It already has several trails/paths, including the Narrogin Recreation Trail (a loop trail encompassing both sides of Narrogin Brook), the Centenary Pathway and the Noongar Dreaming Pathway.<sup>30</sup>*

***There is an opportunity that Gnarogin Park's Noongar Dreaming Path with its currently public artwork along with upgraded trails and interpretative signage can become an integral part of the railway station experience. The paths would be part of the wayfinding infrastructure leading, to the railway station where the journey continues with art, artifacts and other displays telling stories of both historical and contemporary times.***

As the Townscape Study Review 2016 argued:

*Gnarogin Park as a whole is an asset to the town, with its artworks and brookside path. Continuing to enhance it with planting, interpretation and strengthened connections across the rail line is strongly recommended. The more that it is used and activated, the more it will be 'owned' by the community, respected and cared for.<sup>31</sup>*

#### 10.2.2 Bilya Koort Boodja Centre for Nyoongar Culture and Environmental Knowledge

Northam has recently established an outstanding Aboriginal cultural centre. The Bilya Koort Boodja Centre for Nyoongar Culture and Environmental Knowledge is located in the Shire of Northam on the foreshore of the Avon River in Northam's CBD. It offers:

*an interactive educational experience that recognises the rich Aboriginal and environmental presence and will protect, celebrate and share the culture of the Nyoongar people and highlight the knowledge of the land's traditional custodians.*

***It would not be an intention, or appropriate to replicate or compete with that cultural experience, but Northam's initiative offers inspiration for the Shire to work with its local Noongar community to identify similar opportunities.***

### **10.3 Public Art**

The Public Art Strategy & Masterplan identifies a number of potential sites that offer opportunities for public art, including the following that reference the railway station and goods shed;

- *The railway overpass provides an opportunity to scan the town at a significant height and presents interesting vistas. It provides different points of view to look down on to public artwork along Narrogin Brook, over the roof tops of the railway line and goods shed and the horizons beyond. Roof tops are possible additional sites for murals as well as the underside of the overpass which could provide an*

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30 Shire of Narrogin's Walk Trails Master Plan p.53.

31 Townscape Study Review, 2016. p.32.

*opportunity for an exciting light artwork or annual light festival (either permanent or temporary).*

- *The railway buildings, siding and the nearby goods shed present exciting opportunities for space activation through public art. The Shire owned goods shed is located in close proximity to the Dryandra Country Visitors Centre and is a potential central location for a maker's space, crafts centre or market. Opportunities for public art may also arise at the time of any maintenance work or upgrades.<sup>32</sup>*

***Public Art associated with the railway station and goods shed needs to be relevant to the railway context, history and vision of the community.***

#### **10.4 FORM**

FORM is an independent non-profit organisation based in Perth. Its business is building creative capacity through projects, programs and people, and through culture, visual arts, learning and community engagement in WA.

Through a robust collaborative partnership between FORM, the Shire and Arts Narrogin the railway station space could be developed for arts and cultural activities, educational, workshops and artist in residence programs.

It could become a significant cultural centre appealing to regional, interregional and interstate markets and into the future an international market (post Covid).

***The power of a collaborative partnership by considering the connections/common vision/intent of a partnership.***

#### **10.5 Public art: railway examples**

##### **10.5.1 Mundaring railway park**

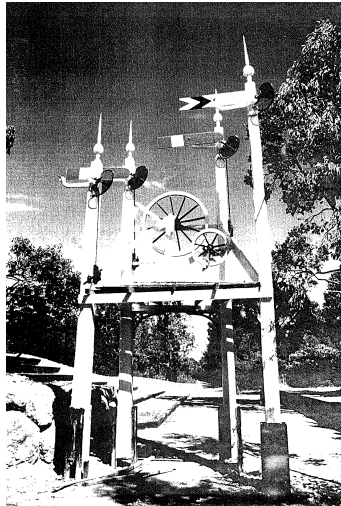
In the late 1980s the Town of Narrogin's Community Arts Officer at that time reported on a community arts project being developed at the railway station site in Mundaring, that was relevant to the context and the community.

Artist Alan Clark was contracted for the public art project. The original idea came from the Mundaring community who envisaged open days at the artist's studio with children and the general public viewing the work in progress and being involved with the artistic process. Unfortunately, the required funding was insufficient, and the project vision was drastically altered to fit the constraints. The resulting scaled-down kinetic sculpture of railway signal posts was the centre-piece when the park that opened in 1990.<sup>33</sup>

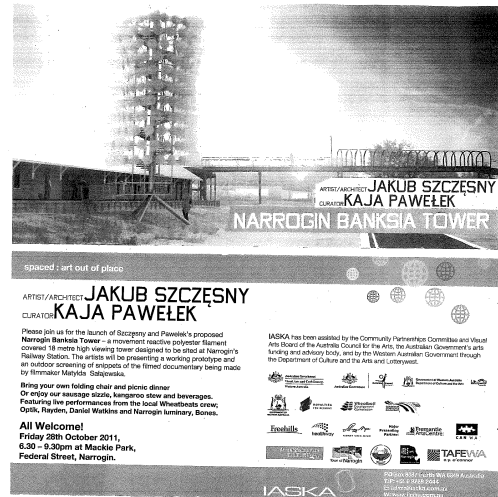
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32 Public Art Strategy & Masterplan 2019. Artsource. p.15.

33 Community Arts Report. M Silverman. 1990.



Mundaring Kinetic Sculpture



Proposed Banksia Tower

### 10.5.2 The Proposed Banksia Tower Narrogin

This art proposal did not eventuate.

***Any public art associated with the railway station and goods shed must have a railway connection or inspiration in some way and does not obscure views of the railway station in particular along Pioneer Drive or from the town centre.***

### 10.5.3 Silo trails

Silo trails are the attraction of the time, providing an impetus and destinations for viewing and appreciation of silo art and the small regional towns fortunate to be in the program. It is a slow burn opportunity that showcases the Wheatbelt and Great Southern regions' grain industry.

***The silo trail facilitated visitation to the regional towns and areas on the journeys. The development of a rail trail featuring railway stations and other railway infrastructure around the Wheatbelt and Great Southern regions could achieve an even greater level of visitation with the existing and future activation of railway places. The opportunity would be for Narrogin Railway Station to re-assert its major junction status and celebrate its points of difference.***

#### **Recommendation 28**

Consider opportunities and partnerships with arts organisations including Arts Narrogin and FORM to facilitate and promote public art and arts and cultural events, and the concept of developing a "rail trail" associated with the Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed to promote the overall railway experience in Western Australia.

#### **Recommendation 29**

Work with the Noongar community with regard to contemporary stories, art and interpretation at the railway station, connecting to their history associated with Gnarojin Park.

## 11.0 COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

### 11.1 Youth

Narrogin High School and several youth organisations were contacted during the consultative process. KEEDAC responded and supported a space for the youth in the recognition of the issue of youth unemployment everywhere.

Less advantaged youth could have the opportunity to engage in online games, streaming, movies, and social media, art, cooking, life and leadership skills.

***Providing a safe, convenient “chill” space that provides structured and non-structured activities and informal and formal support to engage young people is an opportunity that could be facilitated by relevant agencies at the goods shed.***

*Most young people have positive things to do other than sports and school sponsored events and activities, however a significant minority (25%) don't.<sup>34</sup>*

***The Shire of Narrogin and the YMCA have drafted a very thorough and informative youth development plan (Youth Engagement, Strategy and Development Plan DRAFT 2020) with relevant surveys and a range of recommendations some of which could be facilitated at the goods shed.***

### 11.2 KEEDAC

KEEDAC raised some opportunities to provide spaces for various community activities including the potential for a “men’s business” group.

***A men’s group could have a meeting space in the goods shed for social interaction and arts and craft activities “Men’s business”.***

***Specific programs could be developed for mentoring and skills and trades.***

### 11.3 Interest groups

Volunteering is a dying art seemingly only practiced by the mature community members.

***An essential element of maintaining the enthusiasm and inspiration to restore and re-activate the railway station and goods shed will be community drive and determination.***

In 1994 the Friends of the Railways saved the railway station from an almost certain demise. Whatever the function of the station and goods shed, staff and/or volunteers will be required.

***It seems an opportune time to reinstate a “Friends of the Railways” organisation to provide support for the ongoing activities at the railway station and to bring the country hospitality, community pride, passion and nostalgia to the experiences offered at the railway station and good shed.***

### 11.4 The Friends of the Railways

***The Railway Station would not be the subject of restoration and reactivation if it wasn't for the Friends of the Railways and the four members who developed the submission to***

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34 Youth Engagement, Strategy and Development Plan DRAFT. The Shire of Narrogin and YMCA WA. 2020.

*save the building: Tim Burgess, Morrie White, Uffe Geysner and Bob Duddington.*

The document they tabled to save the railway station was entitled “**The Heart of the Town.**” The options they proposed to activate the railway station and goods shed in 1994 included: Westrail bus bay and ticketing, waiting room and rest area, arts and crafts, static display, administration centre for Friends of the Railways, weekend markets, tourist Information centre, return of the PM706 for restoration in the goods shed, and a pedestrian crossing.

*Within any proposed activity it would be most respectful to record, display, commemorate and celebrate the achievements of The Friends of the Railways.*

### **11.5 Men’s groups**

The Restoration Group and Narrogin’s Men’s Shed have their own venues for meetings and activities. There may be opportunities for some interaction in the future.

#### **Recommendation 30**

Not consider developing the railway goods shed for youth spaces, in preference to identified locations to accommodate the recommendations in the Youth Engagement, Strategy and Development Plan-Draft 2019/2020.

#### **Recommendation 31**

Develop partnerships with agencies to deliver services/programs to activate the goods shed.

#### **Recommendation 32**

Explore opportunities to provide spaces in the goods shed for machinery and restoration, Men’s Shed activities and mentoring programs for the youth and not-so-young, in skills and trades.

#### **Recommendation 33**

Not consider developing a gaming area in the railway goods shed in preference to identified locations to accommodate youth activities.

#### **Recommendation 34**

Explore the formation of “Friends of the Railways” community organisation to provide support for activities at the railway station and personalised country hospitality.

#### **Recommendation 35**

Initiate a commemorative display to celebrate the achievements of the original “The Friends of the Railways”.

## 12.0 OTHER RAILWAY FACILITIES

There are several organisations associated with railway history, and, the restoration and preservation of engines and rolling stock, that have synergies with Narrogin Railway Station.

### 12.1 Rail Heritage WA

The Western Australian branch of the Australian Railway Historical Society established and operate the Western Australian Railway Transport Museum. They rely entirely on volunteers for their operations that include; archives, museum, restoration of engines and rolling stock, research and publications, events, and, lobbying for the preservation and restoration of railway history and trains. Their members have interests in every aspect of railways and operations. and Western Australian Railway Model makers is also based at Rail Heritage WA in Bassendean. The Museum showcases WA's rail heritage with artifacts, model layouts and climb-aboard engines and cars.

#### 12.1.1 Southwest Rail and Heritage Centre (Boyanup)

Southwest Rail and Heritage Centre is a major partner of Rail Heritage WA. They operate a museum and are currently restoring a steam locomotive.

### 12.2 Wheatbelt Heritage Rail Discovery Centre (Minnivale Heritage Rail)

The plan in 2010 was to establish a railway museum and railway excursion between Wyalkatchem, Dowerin and Goomalling from an unused railway shed at Minnivale.

The plan stalled for some time while the Shire of Dowerin secured rail operator and infrastructure operator accreditation. The project attracted State Government funding and in-kind donations from companies like BHP and Brookfield Pty Ltd up to \$6 million.<sup>35</sup> A diesel engine was donated by PTA. A work for the dole project (work camp for teenagers at risk) saw a team of six participants learn a range of skills to develop the facility and qualify with a Department of Training and Workforce Development "Railway Infrastructure Certificate" The facility displays carriages, diesel engines and memorabilia but to date no excursions have taken place.

### 12.3 Railway station examples

Vacant and re-purposed railway stations dot the entire regional landscape of the Wheatbelt and Great Southern with few success stories, and fewer ongoing viable outcomes.

With the exception of Northam and Boulder, railway lines still operate through the railway stations listed below. All listed below are on the Register of Heritage Places.

Most of the post 1960s railway stations are vacant, although Moora's station is the Visitors Centre.

'Owned' includes those under management orders.

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35 ABC News: *Heritage railway steams ahead in WA's wheatbelt after years of delay*. 14 March 2016.





Northam Railway station-owned by Shire of Northam, Heritage Forum run the railway museum.



Northam goods shed – partially demolished with removal of asbestos roof.



Merredin - owned by Shire of Merredin, the Historical Society run the railway museum.



Mount Barker - owned by Shire of Plantagenet. Visitors Centre.





Beverley - owned by Shire of Beverley. The arts community run the Platform Theatre, art gallery and Artist in Residence program. The Artist's residence is the original two-storey Stationmaster's residence that is integral to the station building. This has been a community success. The arts have expanded with murals throughout the town, particularly the main street. The point of difference is the Platform Theatre.



Wyalkatchem - owned by Shire of Wyalkatchem. Some rooms are rented by a vet and another business, but the station is mostly vacant. It is on the opposite side of the railway lines from the goods shed and the 1933 grain storage that is an Agricultural Museum. There is no connection between the railway station and the museum in the main street.



Gingin - National Trust owned leased by the Shire of Gingin. Café established in 2020.



Boulder City Station was originally the centre of the Loopline Railway that was later a tourist experience with an operational steam train, that has since ceased, and it is currently a museum. New railway sheds provide a venue for skills training for young people working on restoring trains and carriages. The entire operation at Boulder City Station is slowly winding down. The original 1890s goods shed is deteriorating and management is pushing for its demolition.

*There are very few examples of successful long-term community and/or tourist activation or viability of decommissioned railway stations (and good sheds) in Western Australia.*

#### **12.4 Collie Rail Heritage Precinct**

The Collie Rail Heritage Group manage the four gable Collie goods shed that houses vintage rolling stock, a café and a model railway. Collie's railway station was demolished in the 1970s and a new one built in 2004. The pedestrian overpass has been restored. The only remaining example of a railway roundhouse in the State is in Collie at a separate location and under different ownership.

#### **12.5 Claremont Goods Shed**

The Claremont Goods shed is located in the "Claremont on the Park" development, it is immediately adjacent to the operational Perth-Fremantle railway line with the Claremont Station directly opposite side over the railway line. The historic timber overpass links across the railway line and directly to Bay View Terrace, the main street of the high-end Claremont shopping precinct.

The restored c.1890s goods shed opened in 2016. A number of entities lay claim to its "restored, revamped, and repurposed" outcome including FORM, LandCorp, WA Development, Cooper & Oxley builders, and Cox Howlett & Bailey Woodland Architects. The project cost was quoted at \$1 million with considerable 'donated' contributions towards the fit-out.

In 2017 the Claremont Goods shed received the Heritage Award at the WA Architecture Awards and the Community Investment Partnerships Award at the State Arts and Culture Partnership Honours.

The Claremont Goods Shed is touted as Perth's newest hub for culture and community. It is FORM's space for exhibitions, installations and commissions; for artist and thinker residencies; for community activity and exchange is it a favourite place to enjoy a coffee, and it delivers creative energy and buzz year-round for the people of Claremont and well beyond.



### 12.6 Midland Railway Workshops

The Midland and Districts Historical Society conduct regular walks through the extensive Midland Railway Workshops precinct that evidences considerable interpretation, artifacts and buildings that represent the essence of Midland's workforce from the later nineteenth century.

#### **Recommendation 36**

Develop relationships with Rail Heritage WA and other rail organisations to share information, opportunities and promotion.



## 13.0 EXTERNAL OPERATORS

### 13.1 Dome

Dome is a recognisable institution in Western Australia, renowned for the impressive and successful heritage locations such as the recent Katanning Mill, the former Shamrock Hotel in Northam, now the Farmers Home Hotel and Dome, and the former Nurses Quarters in Port Hedland, all of which are State registered places. The Horden Hotel is in the hands of Dome and planned for conservation and conversion to a Dome. There is no proposed time for that to take place, but it will surely enhance the status of Narrogin.

*Dome cafes also now form part of boutique hotel sites being developed by the group. Owner and Managing Director **Nigel Oakey said, like many of his cafes, the hotels are based on story-telling and bringing back some of the original excitement and character to the community.***<sup>36</sup>

Horden Hotel is integral to the railway station with the original railway station being located near the southeast corner of the site.

***There are opportunities provided by railway links between the Northam, and Katanning sites with Narrogin between in the centre linking those destinations.***

### 13.2 Railway Experiences

#### 13.2.1 Hotham Valley Railway

Hotham Valley Railway is a not for profit organisation demonstrates the opportunities for the operation of a tourist railway.

#### 13.2.2 Pemberton Tramway Company

Pemberton Tramway Company operates a tourist railway from Lyall to Pemberton in Western Australia. Trams run from the old WAGR railway station at Pemberton to Northcliffe.

#### 13.2.3 Great Southern Discovery Day

In 2001, the Great Southern Discovery Day was launched in Narrogin with a return day return rail service from Perth via Northam, York, Beverley, Brookton, Pingelly, Popanyinning, Narrogin, Wagin and Katanning, on route to Albany.<sup>37</sup> No further information is available.

#### 13.2.4 Blues Train

The iconic Blues Train runs a railway and music experience most Friday and Saturday nights throughout the year on the Bellarine railway at Queenscliffe (south of Geelong). The experience comprises, a buffet dinner prior to departing the station. Of the 200 participants at \$100 a head, there are 50 people in each of the four carriages with a blues music act. A roll out bar provides for the purchase of alcohol, and a security guard on

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36 [The West Australian](#) 20 June 2019. Dome is where the heart of WA's Story is.

37 [The Narrogin Observer](#). *Tourist rail link a boom for Narrogin*. 11 April 2001.

each carriage ensures no inappropriate behaviour. The train makes three station stops at which time the bar rolls out, the station toilets are utilised, and passengers from carriage A go to carriage B and so on. Accommodation packages benefit the local community.

#### 13.2.5 Junee Roundhouse Rail Museum

Junee in the Riverina area of New South Wales is where the Junee Roundhouse Rail Museum is located. The roundhouse comprises 42 bays, and is run by an operational railway company that provides a range of rail experiences including the “Rhythm and Rail” shuttles and an annual Railway Festival.

#### 13.2.6 Murder on the Narrogin Express

Other rail opportunities include regular murder mysteries. Two women in Williams ran Murder Mystery experiences at the Quindanning Tavern a few years ago.

***Narrogin Railway was the major junction of the Great Southern Railway. There are opportunities for journeys along some of those routes, including the strategic Dome connection between Northam and Katanning.***

#### **Recommendation 37**

Be alert and informed of opportunities that external operators to provide to the Narrogin Railway experiences.

## 14.0 SUMMARY

The Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed is well placed to be reactivated under the direction of the Shire of Narrogin, with community support. Research shows that re-use and activation of railway buildings and infrastructure does not often achieve viable or successful outcomes.

Narrogin has an important group of railway buildings different (and therefore more significant) to all other railway groups in regional Western Australia.

The railway station, goods shed and a main point of difference is the pedestrian overpass.

If the signal box is returned to its original site, Narrogin would be the only regional railway group with a signal box of that design.

Add that to the existing significance of the group including the pedestrian overpass and not forgetting the Railway Institute building where the DCVC is located, and there is really something to call a 'point of difference'.

Add to that the journey hub that reinstates the arrival and departure nature of the railway station, the VR and dynamic projections and lighting, and the PM706 in pride of place in the goods shed; The Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed will be re-activated as 'The Heart of the Town'.

Narrogin has the opportunity to develop a destination hub with universal access facilities at the railway station and support that with the presentation of contemporary Aboriginal culture, railway history and research availability, immersive railway experiences (VR) and dynamic projections, and space to celebrate the PM 706 in the goods shed with areas for partnerships providing programs and mentoring programs.

The location of the station building east of the railway line is problematic for universal access requirements. The relocation of the TransWA coach stop to the railway station will give further substantiation for a Ped-Xing to the Hub. All efforts should be made for an affordable Ped-Xing to link the west and the east, whilst also celebrating the pedestrian overpass.

The pedestrian overpass is a landmark and a lookout that can enhance visitor experiences. The landmark signal box on the east side, and the railway themed park at the east end of Mackie Park will engage with the Horden Hotel; the future Dome and celebrate the site of the original railway station. External opportunities of partnerships, funding and sponsorships associated with art and culture, public art, and railway connections and activities, are realistic and achievable.

## 15.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the recommendations in a timely and transparent manner will ensure continued community involvement and support for the future of the Narrogin Railway Station and Goods Shed. The following actions are recommended in a relatively logical order that often runs parallel in process.

- Maintain engagement with the community throughout the project
- Establish a community body (Steering committee) to work with the Shire of Narrogin to steer the project.
- Complete the Pioneer Drive carpark project including provision for universal access onto the north end ramp of the railway platform.
- Submit the development application to Department of Planning Lands and Heritage (DPLH) for approval to undertake the conservation works as recommended in Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) 2020.
- Submit a works proposal and Heritage Impact Statement to DPLH for approval to undertake the works to fit-out the railway station and ablutions.
- Undertake DPLH approved conservation works to the railway station building and platform as recommended in Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) 2020.
- Undertake DPLH approved works to fit-out the universal access ablutions in the existing building at the south end of the railway platform and upgrade, reconnect and/or install new services to the railway station building.

Meanwhile:

- Continue negotiations and relevant action for the return PM 706 to Narrogin.
- Encourage relationships with local groups and business.
- Encourage relationships with railway organisations including Rail Heritage WA, Wheatbelt Heritage Centre, Boyanup Rail Centre, Hotham Valley Railway.
- Pursue opportunities for the affordable installation of a Ped-Xing.
- Pursue funding opportunities including through FORM, Royalties for Regions, Tourism WA and Lotterywest.
- Establish/maintain a conversation with Nigel Oakley with regard to mutual benefits and opportunities associated with the Horden Hotel and the proposed Dome facility.
- Determine a direction for the Mackie Park, with regard to the existing heritage building's future demise, and the opportunities to link with the railway station and goods shed revitalisation.
- Initiate contacts to develop the contemporary Indigenous concept, Narrogin history, railway history and the Tribute to Friends of Railways interpretive and display materials and design.
- Undertake the design of the displays and layouts of the contemporary Indigenous,

Narrogin history, railway history and the Tribute to Friends of Railways interpretive and display materials and design in consultations with the relevant agencies/bodies and the Steering committee.

- Engage conservator experience to guide the appropriate processes to record acquisitions (existing and donated for the re-use of the railway station), catalogue and store documents and memorabilia and develop appropriate displays and interpretation.
- Develop the interpretive material with relevant acknowledgements for the displays.
- Develop the projection concepts for dynamic and static images on the east wall of the goods shed.
- Investigate and assess Virtual Reality equipment.
- Develop clear signage to advise of railway station access from the Railway Institute building where the DCVC is located, and the ramp entry (to the pedestrian overpass) in Fairway Street to direct pedestrians and vehicles to the railway station, including the universal access at the Pioneer Drive carpark.
- Negotiate to relocate the signal box from Pinjarra to the vicinity of its original location.

Conservation works to railway station and platform completed:

- Install the fit-out of the station building in response to the design and layout as approved by the Steering committee and DPLH.
- Introduce the interpretive and other material into the fit-outs of the separate areas.
- Install necessary support structure and facilities for the scale model to be located in the former refreshment room.
- Install the Virtual Reality equipment.
- Clean out the south end building for the historical archives.
  - Install airconditioning to provide archival conditions
  - Prepare for installation of storage shelving
  - Establish a team of volunteers to relocated archive material from the Egerton Street location to the railway station facility
- Undertake all finishing touches to the station platform, ablutions and displays.
- Install monitor cameras in the display area and model room connecting back to the counter/entry.
- Plan an open day for the community to experience the first stage of the revitalisation (with plans for the park, and goods shed yet to come...)
- Develop a team of volunteers for rosters to “man” the facility. Maximum two people at a time - one at the entry (monitor station) and one to patrol.
- Set limited hours (e.g.10am-3pm) to provide for long-term viability of volunteers.
- Train the volunteers and value them.



- Advertise the “Railway Station” on the east side and ends of the Signal box in its original location on the west side of Pioneer Drive.
- Sort out the hiccups after opening and amend procedures and/or layout as may be necessary.

Railway Station up and running:

- Develop the Mackie Park site as an important introduction to the railway history and access (even without a Ped-Xing) to the railway station.

Attention to Goods Shed (stage 2)

- Submit the development application to Department of Planning Lands and Heritage (DPLH) for approval to undertake the conservation works as recommended in Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) 2020.
- Further development required on viable functions for the goods shed.
- DPLH submission with Heritage Impact Statement, for approval to undertake the works to fit-out the goods shed when the functions determined.
- The east wall and railway line are the priority in order to facilitate the installation of PM706.
- Install the fit-out and alterations to the good shed in response to the design and layout as approved by the Steering committee and DPLH.
  - Introduce the interpretive and other material in the fit-outs of the separate areas along the west side of the goods shed, ensuring adequate access and viewing of PM706.

## 16.0 EPILOGUE

A simple and practical concept is to reinstate the integrity of the railway station as a hub of arrivals and departures. The short comfort stop, the bus station, the trail end/beginning with quality ablutions and storage, and an opportunity to experience an informative and immersive stroll through the Narrogin Railway Station - "The Heart of the Town".

All Aboard! step inside, having just walked the trail at Gnarojin Park and learned about the significance of the local Aboriginal culture and history, this journey takes you onto the pedestrian overpass to the north end of the railway station to enter into the contemporary history and stories and art work of the local Aboriginal community.

Wending our way around the partition walls from the Aboriginal beginning, leads to a brief Narrogin History (go to the Courthouse Museum for the whole story). Take a seat on one of the three VR experiences.

Out onto the platform and then into the ambience for the railway experience (background sounds of trains whistling, shunting and crowds at the station) in the rail history section. Opportunities for recorded reminiscences (just short ones-the community survey revealed great memories and nostalgia) as you appreciate the memorabilia that is displayed in glass/perspex presentations. A highlight of this area is the insitu relay equipment, the huge framed 1944 railway yard plan, and the commemorative area celebrating The Friends of the Railways who were instrumental in saving the railway station in 1994.

Need a rest yet? The former ladies waiting room is the rest room where you can sit for a bit.

Then, look over to the goods shed. Is that the PM706 we see? Glazed panels along the side of the goods shed display the parked train. Dynamic projections add to the goods shed experience. You can go there soon, and then you can see PM706 up close.

But now its into the former "Refresh" (refreshment room) where a scale model of the town and railway yard in its hey-day (1960s) is on display with sounds and smells of the steam trains to enrich the experience. After you drag the kids away from there, along the platform, you pass the archive building where you can make an appointment to research the fully catalogued history of Narrogin and the railways. Check out the universally accessible brand new fit-out in the 'latrines' building at the south end of the platform.

So still got some time and ready to climb the stairs to the pedestrian overpass? Stop at the viewing platforms to view the now and then (interpretive panels) of the town and the railway yard. Then a pleasant walk down the ramp and along to the goods shed where the PM706 stands in all its glory along the east side of the shed. There are some models of various railway elements for your interest too.

If you're at the goods shed on the right day for the market, a cowboy crooner in the corner, and the artisans and artists may be there in their studios along the west side of the goods shed, so you can see them in action, painting, sculpting, glass blowing, silver-smithing, even the model maker and the machinery restorers may be demonstrating their skills and there is always the opportunity for a chat.

Heading over to Mackie Park, you can relax in a railway carriage while the kids explore the railway themed park that provides an outdoor family experience while enjoying Dome coffee (one day) and

looking over to the railway station and the signal box.

Refreshed and heading back to the station, you can go over the pedestrian overpass or across the newly installed Ped-Xing and have a look in the signal box. It's a great lookout after just a few more stairs.

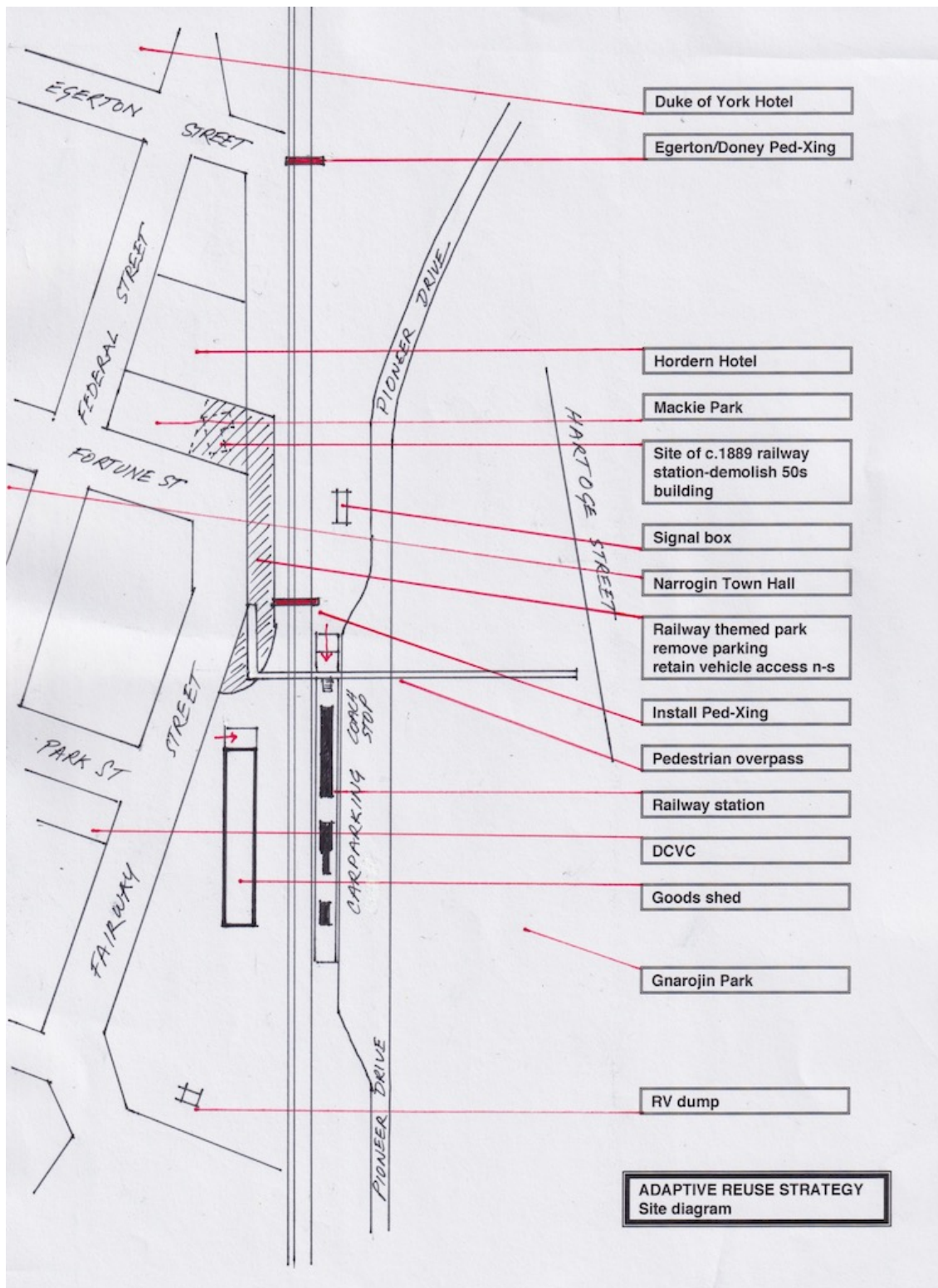
After all that you need to drive back into town for a meal in a restaurant or pub and stay for another day. But after dinner, on the way back to your accommodation drive down Pioneer Drive and see the signal box, and railway station lit up at night, and see the goods shed with dynamic projected images and the PM706 lit-up through the windows of the good shed.

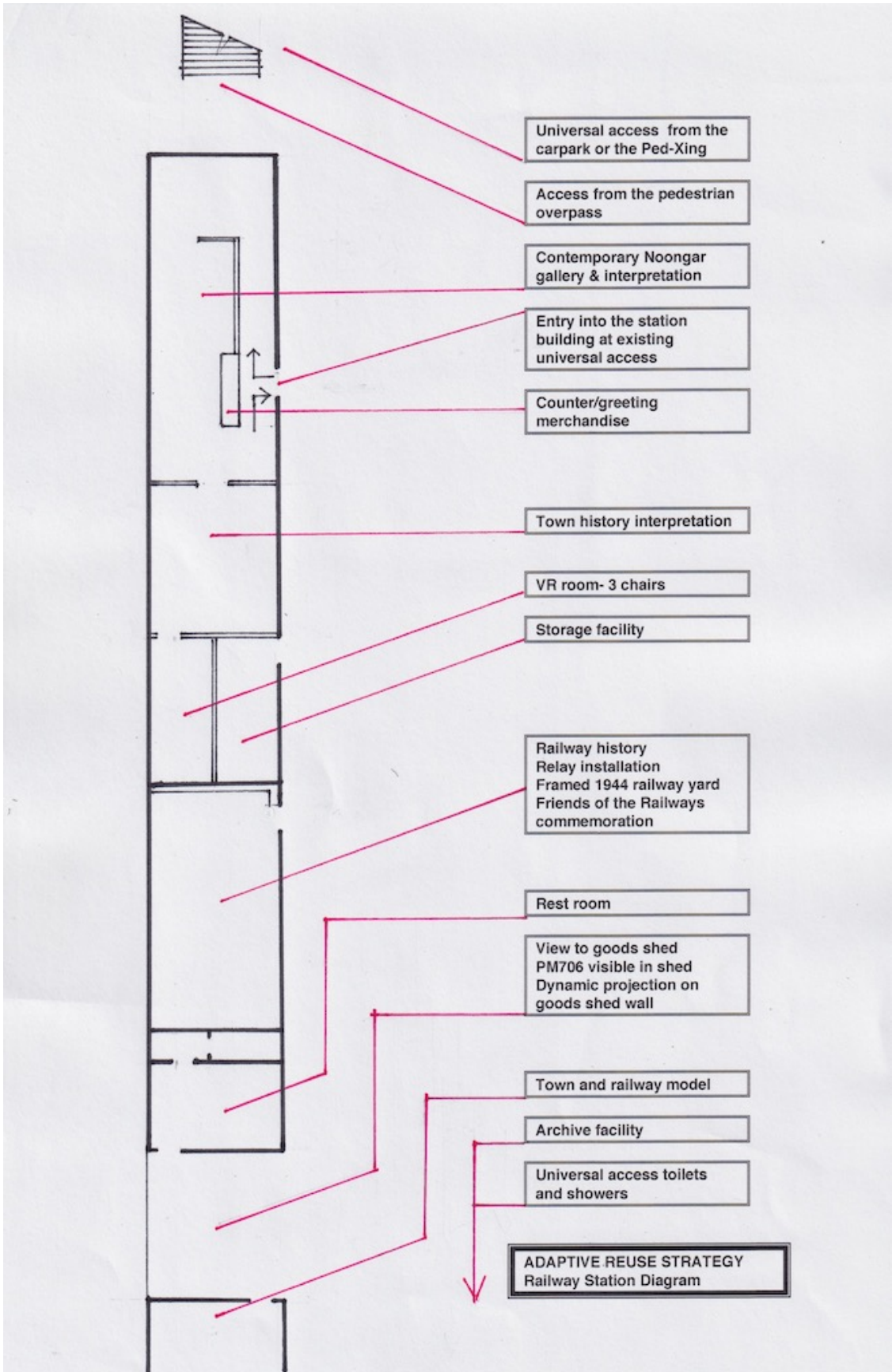
Another great experience in Narrogin's "Heart of the Town".

It's a vision-something to work towards.

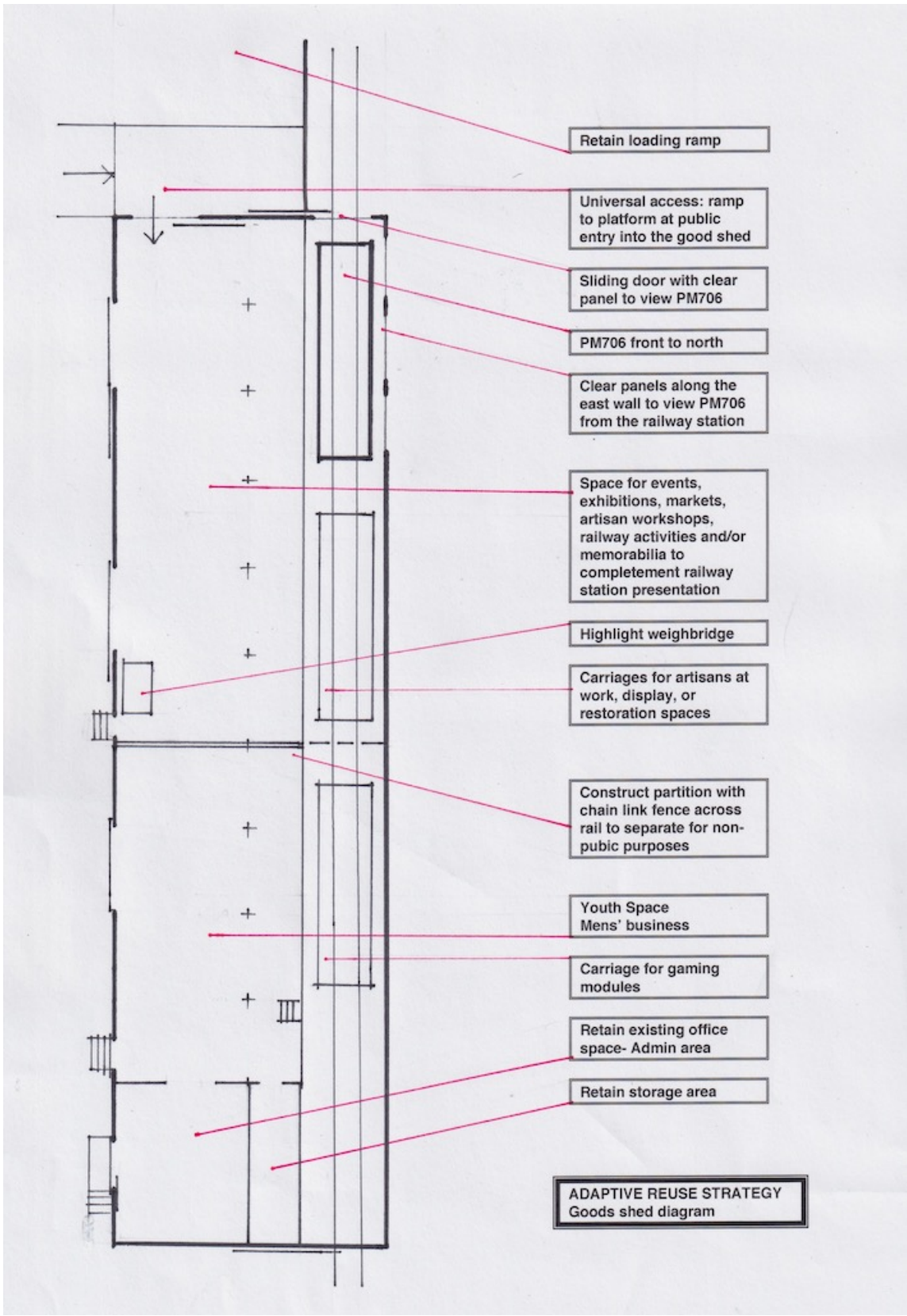
Point of difference? A group of railway buildings like no other (even more so with the signal box), a hub of arrivals and departures true to its intent. The railway passion of the community volunteers providing good ol' country hospitality (that's a worthy experience) and nostalgia of the way it was - not just another museum or visitors centre - it's an experience.

## 17.0 CONCEPT DIAGRAMS









Retain loading ramp

Universal access: ramp to platform at public entry into the good shed

Sliding door with clear panel to view PM706

PM706 front to north

Clear panels along the east wall to view PM706 from the railway station

Space for events, exhibitions, markets, artisan workshops, railway activities and/or memorabilia to completement railway station presentation

Highlight weighbridge

Carriages for artisans at work, display, or restoration spaces

Construct partition with chain link fence across rail to separate for non-pubic purposes

Youth Space  
Mens' business

Carriage for gaming modules

Retain existing office space- Admin area

Retain storage area

**ADAPTIVE REUSE STRATEGY**  
Goods shed diagram