

# What we heard

## South Geelong to Waurin Ponds Duplication Consultation report

In late 2021, we asked the community to provide feedback on the South Geelong to Waurin Ponds Duplication project, which includes:

- rebuilt stations at South Geelong and Marshall
- removal of the level crossings at Fyans Street and Surf Coast Highway, which will be replaced with elevated rail bridges
- duplication of around 8km of track and signalling upgrades between South Geelong and Waurin Ponds stations
- more than 5km of new shared user path connections

The Australian and Victorian governments are investing more than \$1 billion toward better and more frequent services on the Geelong Line.

This includes the Waurin Ponds Station upgrade, Waurin Ponds stabling and the South Geelong to Waurin Ponds Duplication.

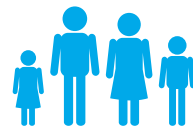
This report summarises the feedback and key themes raised by the community, businesses and stakeholders. Feedback will be used to shape the final design of the new stations, elevated rail bridges and new open spaces creating a lasting legacy long after the project is complete.

### Better train services for Geelong



Over **\$1 billion** for rail project upgrades between South Geelong and Waurin Ponds

Creating **1,300 jobs**



**Station upgrades** at Marshall and South Geelong to improve station accessibility and amenity for passengers



**Five train services** per hour during the peaks, and three per hour between the peaks

Access to **more frequent and reliable services** for the growing communities of Geelong and the Surf Coast

Creating new **green open space** and improved cycling and walking connections



**Removing level crossings** to boost safety for **36,000** vehicles



**8km of duplicated track** to allow trains to pass each other and recover more quickly from delays









## How we engaged

The South Geelong to Wairn Ponds Duplication is the subject of an extensive planning process to assess the environmental, social and planning impacts of the project.

Rail Projects Victoria is currently seeking planning approval from the Minister for Planning using Clause 52.36 which was added to the Victoria Planning Provisions in May 2021, to establish a standard planning approval process to assess all rail projects.

Community engagement is an important part of this process, with engagement undertaken between 7 August and 5 September 2021.

We asked for feedback on the concept designs for the South Geelong and Marshall station upgrades and the removal of Fyans Street and Surf Coast Highway level crossings, the urban design and creative opportunities associated with the project and planning and environmental considerations.

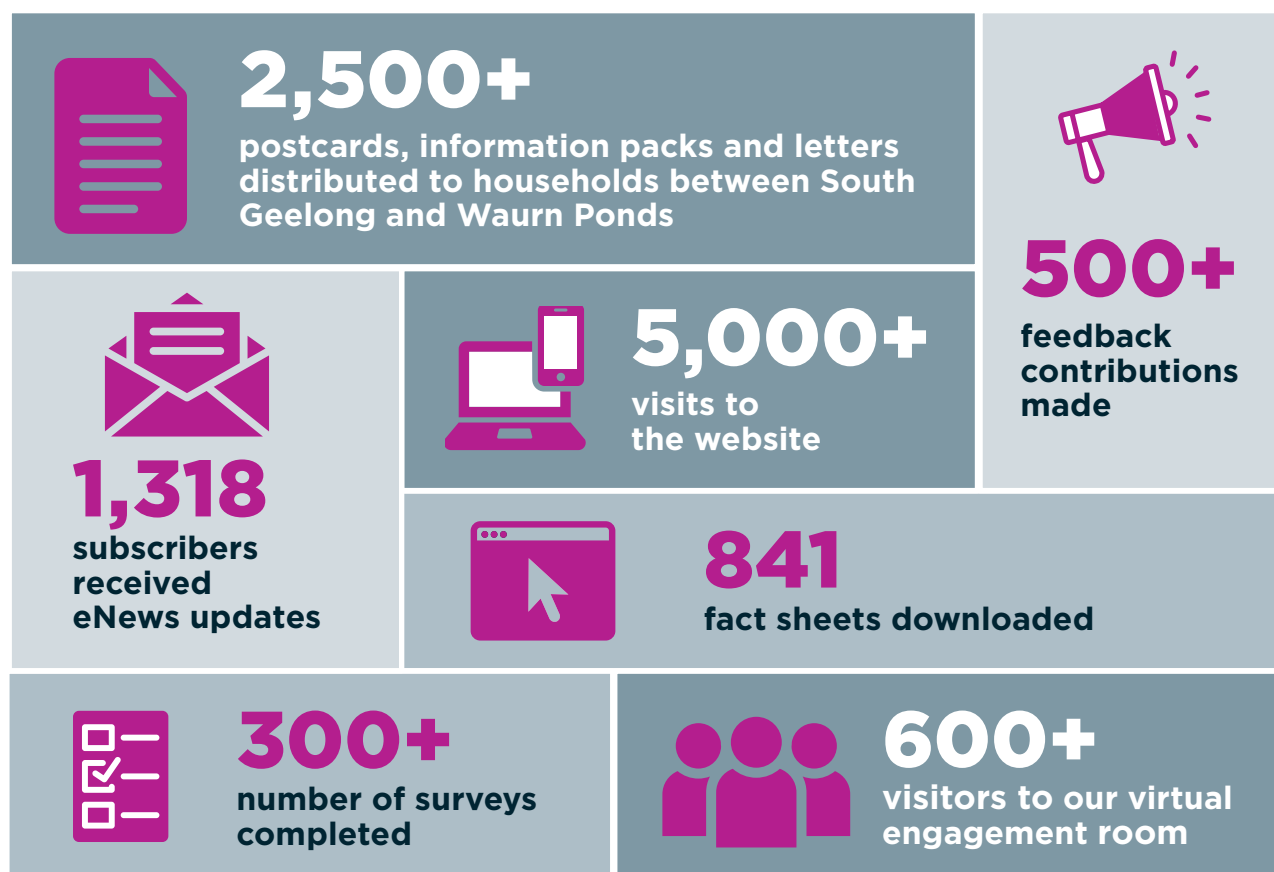
In response to coronavirus public health advice, all engagement was conducted virtually (online).

The community could contribute through our virtual information room, online survey and social map, social media, and website, or and could also directly contact the project team through the call centre.

There was a high level of engagement from the community across all elements of the project, with the Geelong community demonstrating strong support for the project and the benefits it will deliver and an interest in shaping the project.

We would like to thank everyone who provided feedback and we look forward to undertaking further engagement in 2022 and we will continue to provide opportunities for feedback throughout the project.

## Engagement Snapshot



## General feedback and themes



### Walking and cycling

Improving walking and cycling connections were identified as one of the top priorities based on responses. Safe access for pedestrians and cyclists is important, not only during construction, but also in the designs for the stations and level crossing precincts to improve safety, connectivity and accessibility.



### Environment and vegetation

More trees and vegetation should be planted as part of the project, to enhance the visual appeal of the local area. Majority would prefer to see semi-established trees and native species prioritised in landscaping plans.



### Noise

Concerns were raised about construction noise impacts. There were requests for residents to be made aware of any out of hours works well in advance. Concerns were also raised about additional train services increasing noise for residents living near the rail line.



### Design and visual appeal

Importance of quality design which should reflect and enhance their local area. There was an interest in creative and urban design opportunities and landscaping plans for the project and a desire for the community to be involved in the development of these plans.

We received ideas in relation to the concept designs for the project with respondents indicating their preference for the use of natural elements and materials with no loud colours to ensure the design complements the landscape of the local area. Other ideas such as outdoor gyms and dog parks were mentioned that could be incorporated into the plans for the new green open spaces.



### Construction and traffic impacts

Concerns about traffic changes or impacts to local roads and would like to be aware of any detours or potential delays as early as possible. It was noted there are many infrastructure projects already underway across Geelong impacting local roads.

### Most important aspects of the project



**Track duplication**



**Upgrading South Geelong Station**



**Removing Fyans Street level crossing**

### Top benefits the project will deliver



**More frequent services**



**New green open spaces**



**Better and safer walking and cycling connections**

## What you told us

**'My main concern is noise during construction and after'**

**'Sooner the better, please!'**

**'I am extremely happy that shared paths are being built as part of this project. I hope there is a focus on prioritising active transport over motorised road transport.'**

**'Ensure there is well thought out lighting to make the area safe under the elevated rail bridge.'**

**'Why aren't you also removing Yarra Street level crossing? upgrading the station at ground level will preclude any upgrades here in the future'**

**'I'm very excited as it means I will have more flexibility travelling and I get to watch the progress. So please, keep us updated.'**

**'The landscaping design at the round about will need to allow for visibility for drivers at the round about (Fyans Street) is very busy with many exits.'**

**'Elevated rail is a valid solution and in my opinion offers better urban design potential than a trench cut through the suburb.'**

**'It must be aesthetically pleasing (elevated rail bridges), for example parkland and usable spaces so that it does not create an eye-sore'**

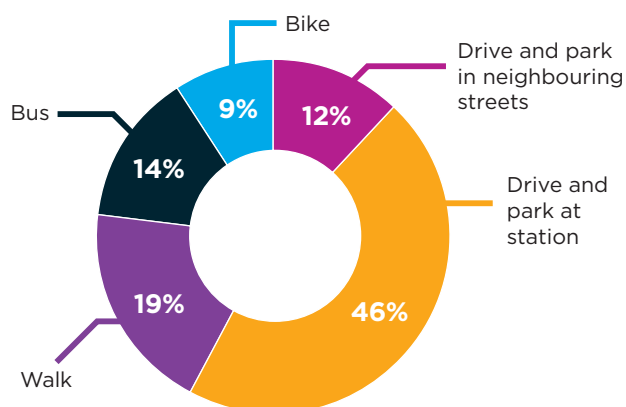
**'Good providing more steady and consistent services to commuters. Geelong region is growing significantly and needs extra support and services.'**

**'Long overdue.'**

## South Geelong Station

Upgrades to South Geelong station include a brand new station building and forecourt, new accessible second platform and pedestrian overpass, improved lighting and CCTV, reconfigured safer car park including improved landscaping and architectural design. There will also be additional parkiteers and bike hoops and shared user path connection along Carr street to better connect the station through to key destinations such as the Bellarine Rail Trail and Kardinia Park precinct.

### How passengers currently travel to South Geelong Station



**'As a local resident this is an exciting and beneficial project for the suburb of South Geelong and also greater Geelong. The suburb is becoming more vibrant and diverse and this upgrade is very exciting.'**

#### Feedback summary



##### Feedback received

Pedestrian and cyclist safety and accessibility through the station precinct and car park was emphasised throughout the qualitative comments submitted by respondents. This includes increased wayfinding to key destinations in the area such as GMHBA stadium and the Bellarine Rail Trail.

There was a preference for the design of the station to reflect the heritage of the local area and connect with City of Greater Geelong's Urban Design Framework. *'Maintaining past heritage of the area would be a nice touch'.*

Landscaping and retaining vegetation around the station was also important to people, with the use of semi-established plants a priority.

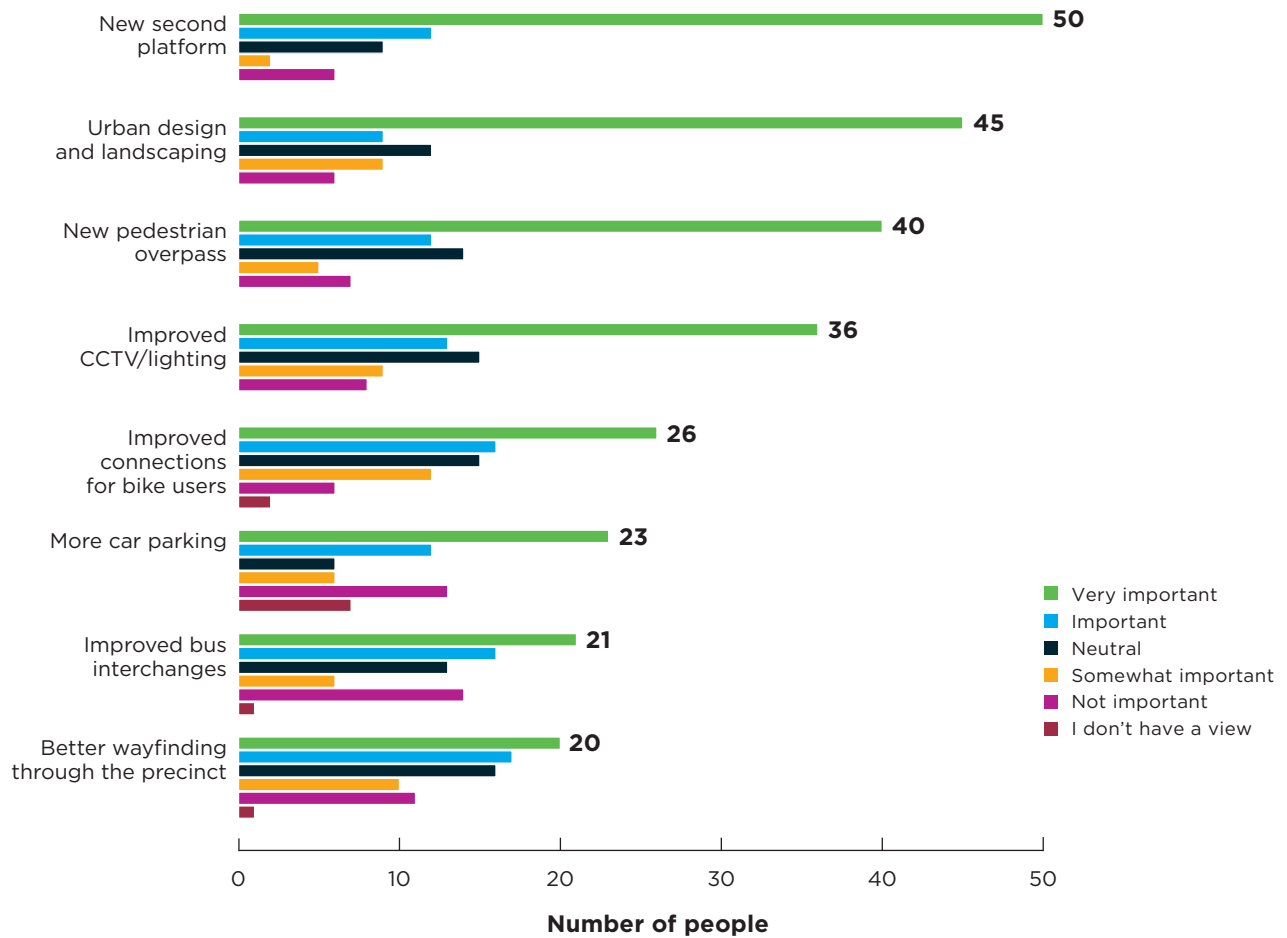
##### Project response

Key urban design principles will guide the design and landscaping outcome for the project which will aim to leave a legacy that celebrates the local area. These principles include celebrating place and local identity, improving access and movement, supporting neighbourhood safety, promoting high quality-built design, establishing green connections and planning for the future.

The station will be designed to ensure the station precinct is accessible and safe for all users including pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, ride share and those coming by bus.

We will work with the local community and stakeholders on landscaping plans to maximise the opportunity to plant new trees and vegetation beside the rail line (where appropriate) and along the new shared user path connection on Carr Street.

## What's important to you?



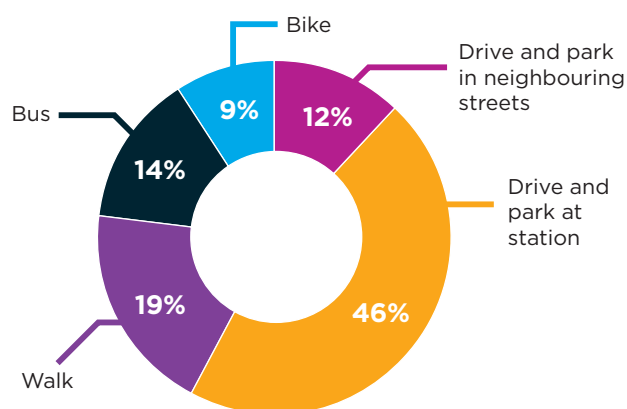
South Geelong Station upgrade view from Carr Street | Concept image



## Marshall Station

Upgrades to Marshall station include a brand new station building and forecourt, new accessible second platform and pedestrian overpass, improved lighting and CCTV, more than 200 new car parking spaces and an integrated public and active transport precinct with improved connections and facilities for walking and cycling including additional parkiteers and bike hoops.

### How passengers currently travel to Marshall Station



**‘Good to see walking paths and entrances for the new platform on the west side of the tracks.’**

**‘This is long overdue and such a great idea.’**

#### Feedback summary



##### Feedback received

Responses showed that being able to enter the station from all directions will be of great benefit and allow for better pedestrian and cyclist access. *‘Good to see walking paths and entrances for the new platform on the west side of the tracks’.*

Station design and improved safety including a much-anticipated enclosed waiting room, lighting and CCTV were highlighted as important to the community as well as ensuring there are enough shelters and myki top up stations on both platforms.

Traffic, disruption, and associated construction impacts were raised, with many requesting early notification of works occurring - especially outside of business hours.

##### Project response

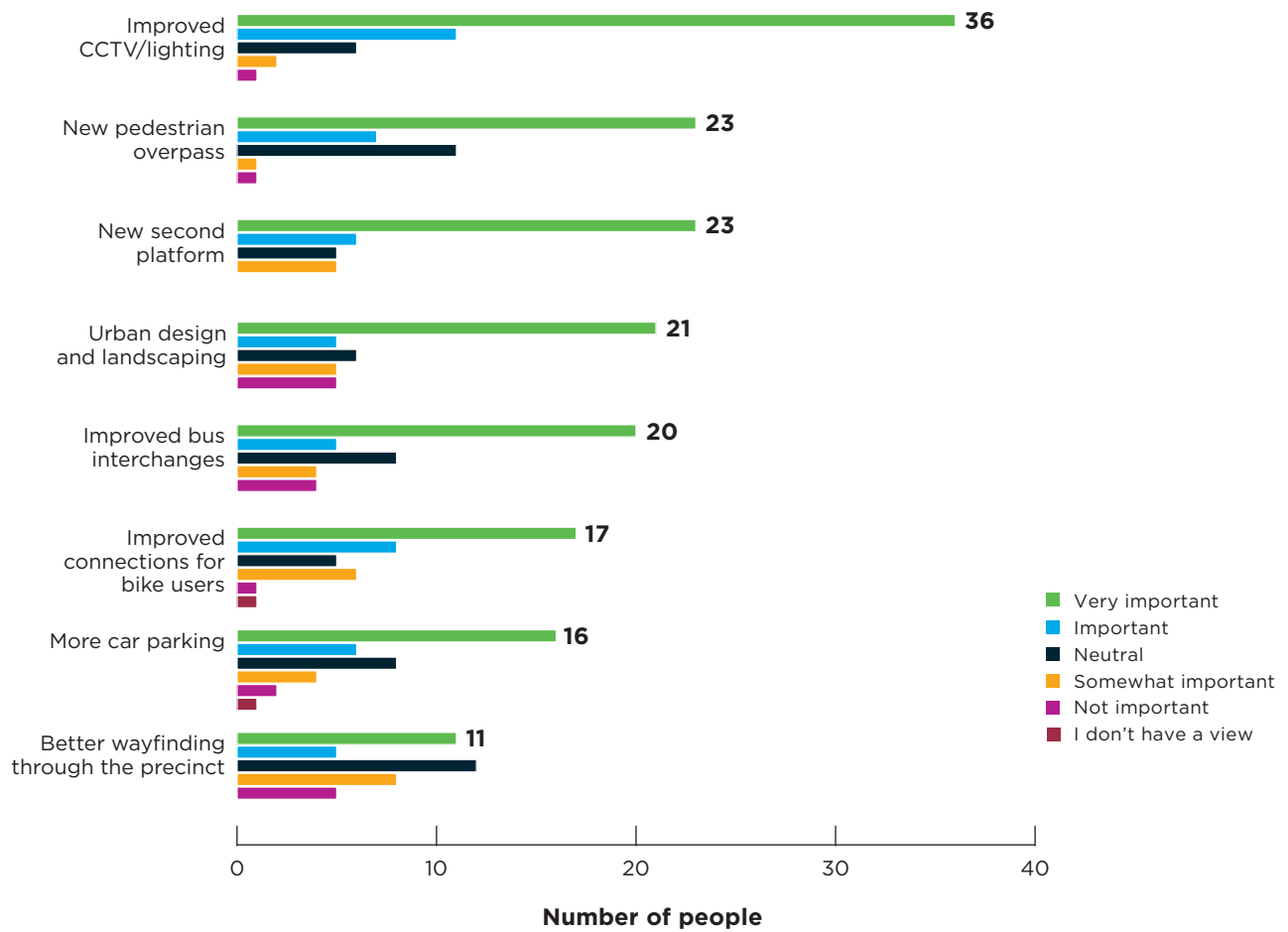
We will ensure the station precinct improves connectivity by including additional pathways into the area. We will also ensure it is accessible and safe for all users.

The upgraded Marshall Station will feature a brand-new enclosed waiting room, new platform, accessible pedestrian overpass, new shelters, improved lighting, myki stations and bus interchange which will improve the safety and accessibility of the station.

We'll aim to keep residents and the community informed about construction timelines as early as possible and work closely with adjacent residents to address and manage individual noise concerns.



## What's important to you?



# Fyans Street level crossing removal

By removing the Fyans Street level crossing with an elevated rail bridge, we will be providing time savings for around 14,000 vehicles using this intersection each day. It will also improve safety and reliability for trains crossing this intersection and allow for more services to be introduced.

**35% of respondents travel through Fyans Street level crossing at least one or more times each day**

**'The removal of the awkward crossing at Fyans Street is so needed, especially for bike riders. The bike path here is currently unreasonable to use due to this crossing and poor design.'**

## Feedback summary



### Feedback received

Respondents indicated the importance of the visual appeal and design of the new elevated rail bridge. They requested that the landscaping and urban design plan be incorporated to enhance the design, along with the use of native and semi-established plants. *'The area around the Fyans street crossing is very industrial at present and I would like a softening of the area with the planting of native and indigenous plants and landscaping'.*

Many respondents left positive comments about the new shared user path connections to the Bellarine Rail Trail and highlighted the importance of safe pedestrian and cyclists access through the busy area.

There was some concern in relation to construction noise and questioned whether the elevated rail bridge would increase operational noise due to the trains needing to accelerate from a stationary position at South Geelong Station up the elevated structure.

### Project response

Visual impacts of the structure will be mitigated through considered landscaping, urban design and creative treatments which will be further explored throughout community consultation and incorporated into the final design.

We understand trees and vegetation are important to local communities and support biodiversity along the rail corridor. Minimising the impact of tree and vegetation removal is strongly considered as part of the project's design and construction. Where vegetation removal cannot be avoided, we will work with the local community and stakeholders on landscaping plans to maximise the opportunity to plant new trees and vegetation beside the rail line (where appropriate) and along the new shared user path connection on Carr Street.

For residents living near the level crossing, train horns and level crossing bells will be eliminated, reducing noise to the surrounding area. We will minimise construction noise where possible and work closely with residents to manage any individual noise concerns.







Surf Coast Highway level crossing removal view south towards Armstrong Creek | Concept image

## Surf Coast Highway level crossing removal

Removing the Surf Coast Highway level crossing with an elevated rail bridge solution will provide time savings for around 22,000 vehicles using this crossing each day. We are also moving the rail line further to the south, away from residents homes creating new green open space and shared user paths, connecting the communities on either side of the new alignment. This new alignment and elevated design will allow for the integration with the future Bellarine Link road extension.

**34% of respondents travel through the Surf Coast Highway level crossing at least one or more times each day**

**‘Elevated rail is a valid solution and in my opinion offers better urban design potential than a trench cut through the suburb.’**

### Feedback summary



#### Feedback received

Design and visual amenity was rated as highly important by respondents, along with green open spaces and planting as much vegetation as possible to help landscape and beautify the area and to increase its use by the community.

Respondents were pleased to see safe shared user path connections proposed through the area as well as plans for green open landscaped spaces helping connect to key destinations by other modes of transport. *‘Very happy to see the connection from the stations to the Surf Coast Highway’.*

Residents close to the rail line indicated their concern about noise from construction and whether additional services would increase operational noise along the line.

#### Project response

Urban design and creative opportunities will be explored through the community consultation period and incorporated into the final design. Landscaping and minimising the impact of tree and vegetation removal is strongly considered as part of the project’s design and construction.

The new shared user path is a key benefit of the project, improving connections and safety through the region. We will ensure new shared user paths are up to 3 metres wide and create a safe and visually pleasing environment.

For residents living near the level crossing, train horns and level crossing bells will be eliminated, reducing noise to the surrounding area. We will work closely with adjacent residents to address and manage any individual noise concerns as the project progresses.





## Other feedback

A number of other ideas and issues were raised during this round of consultation.

These included:

- additional level crossings to be removed along the Geelong line, in particular Yarra Street, Swanston Street, Reserve and Marshalltown Roads.
- extension of the shared user path connection from Baanip Boulevard to the south side of Waurm Ponds Station
- retail shops or a café at Marshall Station
- relocating South Geelong Station closer to Moorabool Street to allow for a better bus interchange and access to Kardinia Park.

While this feedback is outside the current project scope, it has been noted and passed onto the Department of Transport for consideration.

## What's next

We'd like to thank everyone who has provided feedback on the South Geelong to Waurm Ponds Duplication to date.

We will undertake further consultation throughout 2022 to inform the detailed design of the project. Please register below so we can let you know about upcoming consultation opportunities.

## Project timeline

2021

### Planning, design and procurement

Engagement with the community commences.

2022

### Contract award and construction

Engagement with the community continues on the design. Construction commences.

2024

### Construction completed


Construction completed subject to planning and environmental approvals.

## Keep Informed

Please subscribe to our email updates by visiting [regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au/geelong](https://regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au/geelong) or follow us on Facebook [facebook.com/RRRGeelongWarrnambool](https://facebook.com/RRRGeelongWarrnambool) so we can continue to keep you informed and provide regular updates as the project progresses.

### More information

 [regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au](https://regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au)

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