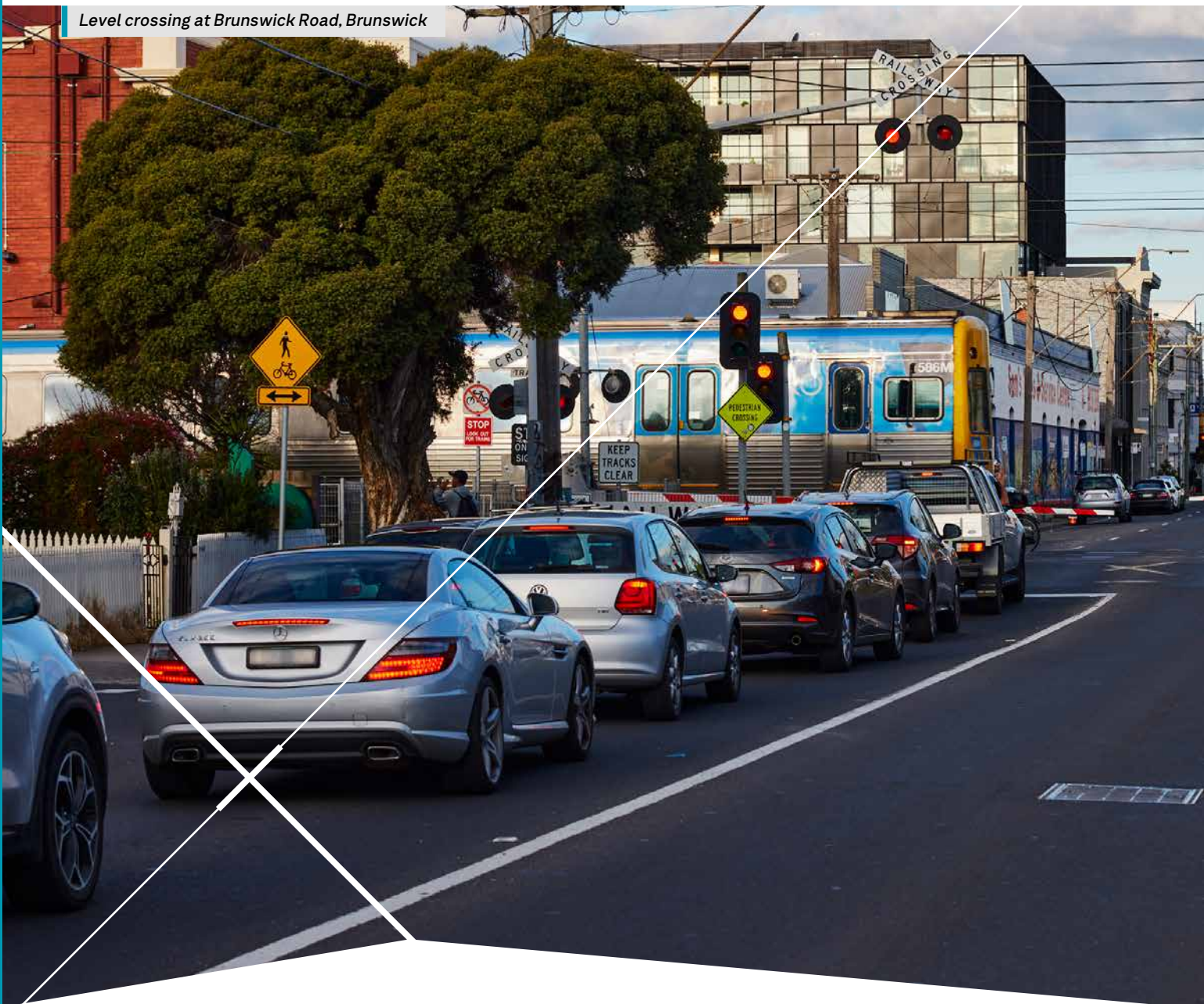


Brunswick level crossing removal project

Selecting the best design for Brunswick and Parkville

September 2024

Level crossing at Brunswick Road, Brunswick





Level crossing at Dawson Street, Brunswick



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Shared use path below rail line between Moreland and Coburg

Selecting the best design for Brunswick and Parkville

We're removing eight more dangerous and congested level crossings on the Upfield Line from Albion Street, Brunswick to Park Street, Parkville.

We've already removed five level crossings on the Upfield Line and in 2030 another eight will be gone for good, from Albion Street, Hope Street, Victoria Street, Albert Street, Dawson Street, Union Street and Brunswick Road in Brunswick, and Park Street in Parkville.

Extensive engineering and technical assessments have determined a rail bridge over the roads is the best solution to remove these level crossings.

We'll also build modern and accessible stations in Brunswick's north and south with direct and easy access between train services and residential areas, RMIT University, community and education facilities, employment, retail and dining options.

Building a new 2.1 kilometre rail bridge over the roads will create two MCGs worth of new open space, transforming the former rail corridor into new public space.

The local community will play an important role in shaping these new spaces.

We'll also transform the Upfield Bike Path by delivering separate, dedicated bike and walking paths creating safer and more efficient routes for everyone.

The project team has worked to minimise the impact of the design on nearby properties however some compulsory property acquisition will be required. We are working directly with affected businesses and landowners to assist them through this process.

This brochure explains the key considerations of the design, as well as the locations and benefits of the two new stations.

Why these level crossings need to go



71,000 vehicles travel through these crossings each weekday



Boom gates are down for up to **30 minutes** of the morning peak (7am to 9am)



Up to **16 trains** pass through these crossings during the morning peak (7am to 9am)



36 near misses since 2016

Transforming Brunswick and Parkville with a new rail bridge

Locals don't have to look far to see the benefits of removing level crossings with a rail bridge. Further up the rail line we've removed four level crossings in Brunswick and Coburg by building a rail bridge over the roads. This project also included building new stations at Coburg and Moreland.

The twin 2.5-kilometre rail bridges now span the roads, eliminating traffic bottlenecks and enhancing safety.

We also upgraded the Upfield Bike Path, creating separate paths for bikes and pedestrians. This connected community now enjoys over two MCGs worth of new open space.

The open space includes recreation facilities like half-court basketball courts, table tennis tables, skate and parkour areas, playgrounds, exercise equipment, a dog park, recreational green spaces and a BBQ.

Brunswick and Parkville will have the opportunity to experience similar benefits from the rail bridge design.



New community open space

By raising the rail line over the roads we'll create two MCGs worth of new community open space beneath the bridge – an option not feasible with rail trenches or road bridges.

This new space will connect with the existing open space further north, resulting in a total of four MCGs worth of new open space between Coburg and Parkville.

The local community will play an important role in shaping these new spaces. Potential opportunities from other projects could include parks, playgrounds, sports and recreation areas, BBQs, dog parks, seating, and gardens.

We are still in the early planning stages and will consult with the community to determine the best uses for these spaces in the coming years.



More reliable roads and future upgrades

Removing level crossings is often the essential first step before other transport network upgrades can take place. Removing these crossings will reduce traffic congestion and travel times will be more reliable with no boom gate delays.

Removing the crossings also paves the way for future upgrades on the northern growth corridor, including extra train services on the Upfield Line in the future.



Separated walking and bike paths

Building a rail bridge over the roads creates the opportunity to significantly improve the Upfield Bike Path.

Like the enhancements made between Brunswick and Coburg, we will separate the bike and pedestrian paths from Moreland Road in the north to Park Street in the south.

Currently, 2,500 trips are made on the Upfield Bike Path each day.

Overall, locals will benefit from over four kilometres of dedicated walking and cycling paths between Coburg and Parkville once the project is completed.



New connections

With the rail line elevated, the local communities will be connected and new east-west connections will be significantly improved. Without the train tracks creating a barrier through the neighbourhoods, people will be able to move freely from east to west.



Improved safety

Moving around the area will be safer for pedestrians, bike riders, drivers and station users.



Landscaping at Moreland Station, Coburg



Playground at Moreland Station, Coburg

What we considered

We assess every level crossing site based on its unique characteristics when determining the best solution for the project.

When developing designs, we consider a range of factors including, impacts to homes and businesses, opportunities for open space, protecting heritage in the area, accessibility requirements and the width of the rail corridor.



Narrow rail corridor

The rail corridor between Brunswick and Parkville is very narrow, with residential, retail and community precincts built up along the Upfield Line.

Many designs are too wide to fit in the space available and would have resulted in significant compulsory acquisition of homes and businesses.



Construction impacts

Building major infrastructure in densely populated areas poses challenges, with construction impacts affecting the local community and passengers.

We're seeking to minimise impacts where possible.



Protecting heritage

It is important that the impacts to an area's local heritage are considered throughout the project's design and construction.

When developing a design, our team will look to preserve and incorporate the Victorian heritage listed station buildings into the open space where possible.



Reducing compulsory acquisitions

While some property acquisition will be required for this project, we always look to minimise the extent of potential property acquisition.



Local vegetation and re-greening opportunities

We consider how a design will impact on the existing vegetation along the rail corridor, and look to uncover ways to positively contribute to the local area's long-term landscaping and urban design plans.



Brunswick Station



Brunswick Baths on Dawson Street, Brunswick



Jewell Park



Park Street, Parkville level crossing



Upfield Bike Path, Brunswick

Designs we considered

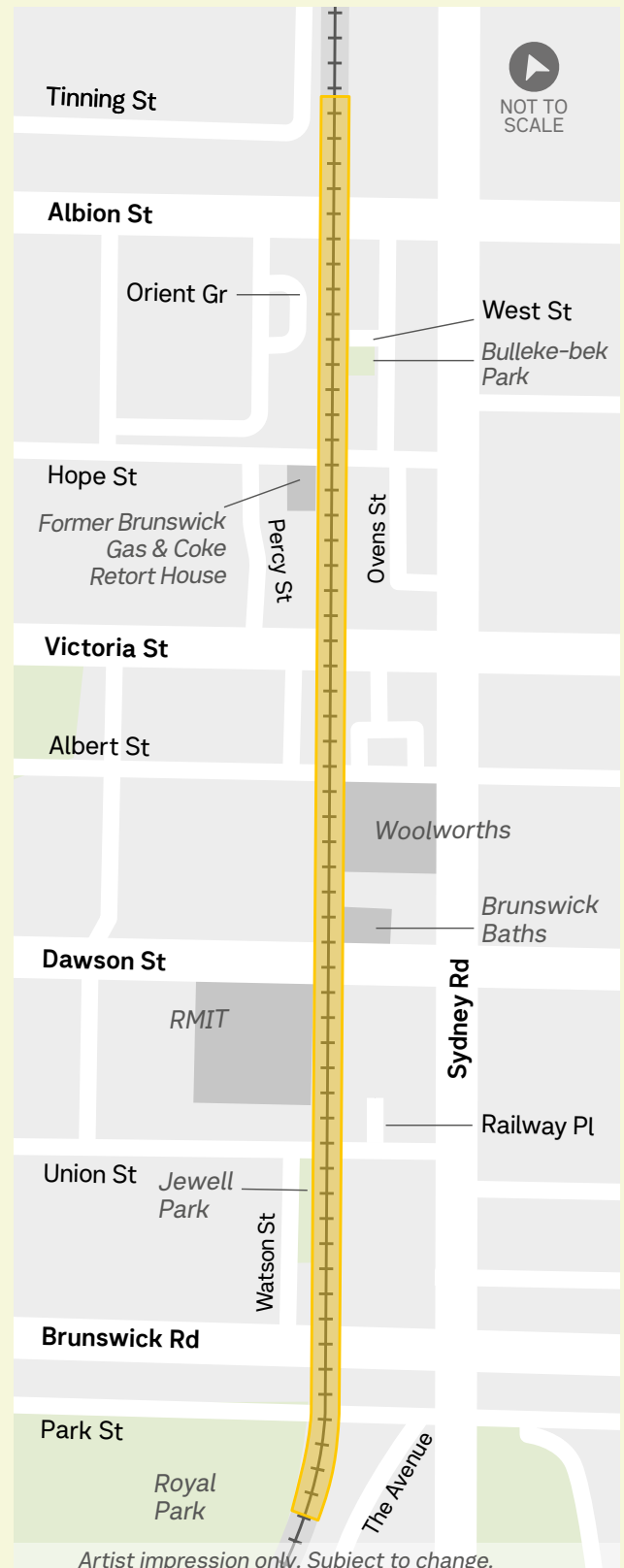
We investigated multiple options to remove these eight level crossings in Brunswick and Parkville.

Rail bridge

Based on assessments, the selected design is to remove these level crossings with a continuous rail bridge.

This design:

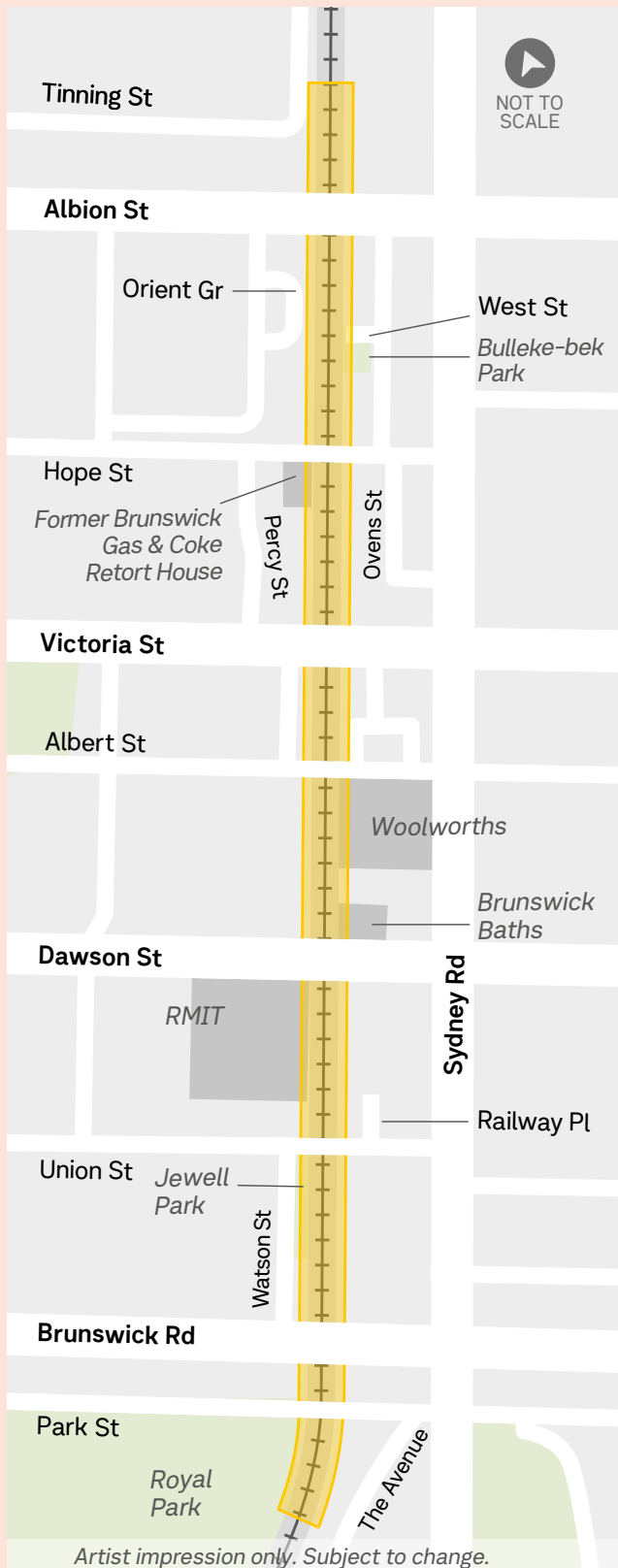
- unlocks opportunities for open space and greenery
- connects the community by removing the barrier of the rail line
- improves east-west connections
- separates bike and walking paths
- improves safety for road users and pedestrians
- means less disruption during construction to the community and passengers.



✗ Rail trench

Lowering the rail into a long trench would:

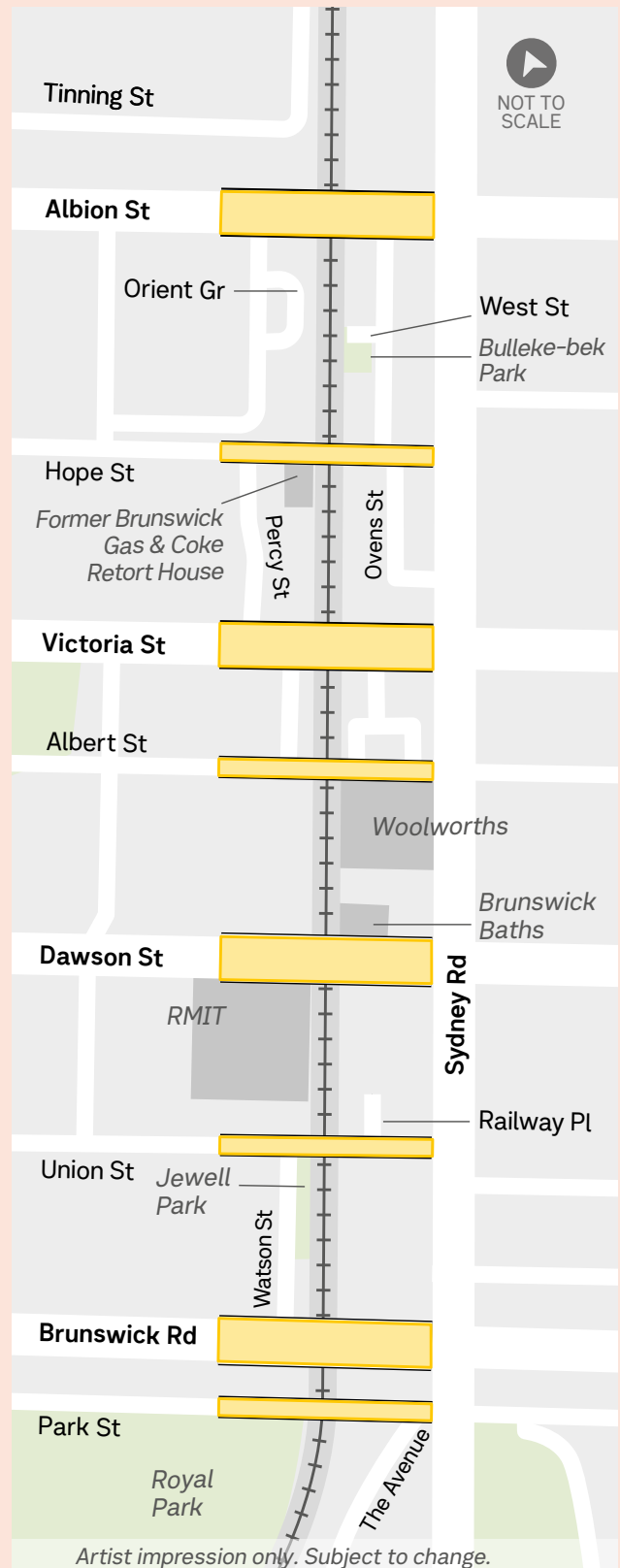
- require the compulsory acquisition of many homes and businesses because the rail corridor is very narrow
- cause more disruptions during construction to the community and passengers
- create no new open space
- not allow for improvements to the Upfield Bike Path
- impact heritage items significant to the rail line and Royal Park.



✗ Road options

Road bridges or underpasses would:

- cut off access to homes and businesses near the rail line
- not fit in the available space between Sydney Road and the rail line
- require the compulsory acquisition of many homes and businesses
- provide no improvements to walking and cycling connections or the Upfield Bike Path
- create no new open space
- impact heritage items significant to the rail line.



Understanding the new stations

Technical and engineering assessments identified building two stations reduces heritage and construction impacts, increases open space and paves the way for future upgrades on the northern rail corridor, including extra train services in the future.

The new stations will create direct and easy access between train services and residential areas, RMIT University, community and education facilities, employment, retail and dining options.

The three stations at Anstey, Brunswick and Jewell are within 1500 metres of each other, making them among the closest stations on the network.

Strategically located, the new stations in Brunswick's north and south will be located between 200 to 450 metres from the current Jewell, Brunswick and Anstey stations.

For the majority of people access to the new stations will be improved with new, safer cycling and walking connections.

For some passengers, the travel time to the station will be shorter, and in cases where it is longer, the increase is expected to be less than two minutes.

Each station will offer convenient access with two entrances, one at each end of the platforms, further improving access and making them highly accessible to the surrounding areas.

Built in accordance with current safety and accessibility standards, both entrances will be fully accessible with covered stairs and lifts providing direct access to the platforms above for all passengers.

The stations will be designed to reduce impacts on nearby properties and streets.



Preserving heritage

Important heritage assets will be preserved, including station buildings, signal boxes, gates and other infrastructure.

A key consideration of the rail bridge design was minimising impact to significant buildings such as the former Brunswick Gas & Coke Retort House and Brunswick Baths.



Planning for the future

The project also supports potential future upgrades on the northern rail corridor, including extra services on the Upfield Line in the future.








Moreland Station entrance

Map of Brunswick and Parkville area



Legend

-  Rail bridge
-  Level crossing to be removed
-  New elevated station
-  Existing station to be replaced
-  Existing station

New station locations

The existing stations at Jewell, Brunswick and Anstey will be merged into two new state-of-the-art stations in new locations in Brunswick's north and south.

To determine the new locations, we considered the additional distance for passengers to access the new stations, improving access for the broader community and limiting the impact on current and future rail operations.



Northern station

The new northern station will cater to the neighbourhood's rapidly growing residential community.

The new station will:

- be centrally located between West Street and Hope Street
- provide access to Bulleke-bek Park, West Street and Orient Grove via a northern entrance
- have a southern entrance to provide access to Hope Street.

To avoid impacts to the Victorian heritage-registered and state-significant Former Brunswick Gas & Coke Retort House and more significant compulsory property acquisition, the station could not be located south of Hope Street.

The station could not be located further north as it will require more significant compulsory property acquisition, increased passenger walking distance to the new station and limits future rail operations.



Southern station

The new southern station will be on the doorstep of the world-class RMIT University Brunswick campus and the iconic Brunswick Baths.

The new station will:

- be centrally located between Dawson Street and Union Street
- provide access to Dawson Street via a northern entrance
- have a southern entrance to provide access to Railway Place and Union Street
- connect passengers to RMIT University, Brunswick Baths, Brunswick Library, Brunswick Town Hall, and future precincts such as The Saxon Project, a cultural and community hub.

The station location has a wider rail corridor which provides more space for the station precinct and separated bike and walking paths.

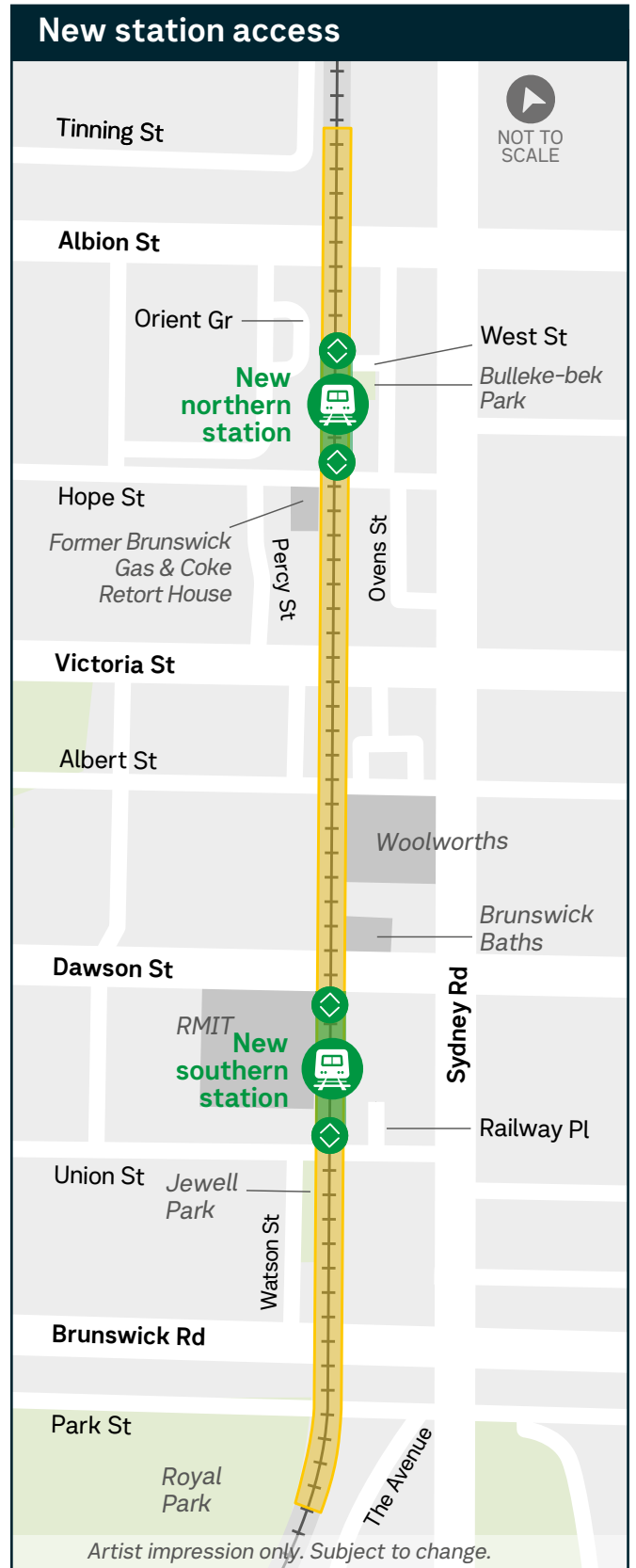
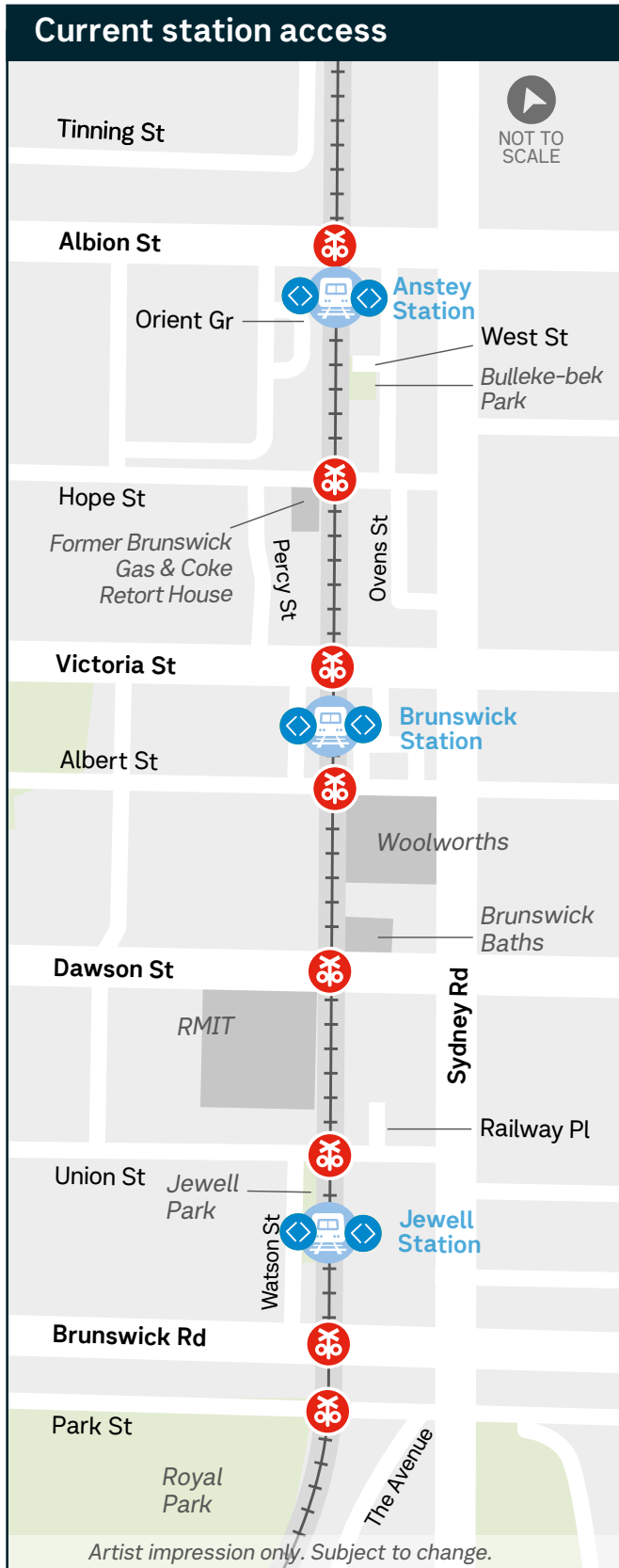
The station could not be located further north due to narrow rail corridor and Brunswick Baths, and close proximity to the new northern station.



Coburg Station entrance

More entries, greater connectivity

Each new station will have two entrances, one at each end of the platforms, further improving access and making them highly accessible to the surrounding areas. Both entrances will be fully accessible, with stairs and lifts providing direct access to the platforms above for all passengers.



Legend

Level crossings to be removed



Existing station to be replaced



Existing station entrance

Rail bridge



New elevated station



New station entrance

Next steps


Consultation is now underway to better understand how locals move around the area and what they love about Brunswick and Parkville.

This input, along with technical assessments and engineering requirements, will inform concept designs, which we will share later in the project.


The community will have further opportunities to provide feedback on walking, and cycling connections, accessibility, landscaping, open space and station precinct design over the coming years.


Stay up to date


The best way to stay up to date with the project is to:

 Read more about the project at levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/brunswick

 Subscribe to email updates at levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/subscribe and under Upfield Line select Brunswick

 Follow us on social media or send us a private message on our Facebook page

 For languages other English call **9209 0147**

 If you have any further questions, please call **1800 105 105** or email contact@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au to speak with a member of the project team

Project timeline



Timeline subject to change.



Train travelling between Dawson and Union streets



FROM CITY

Moreland Station, Coburg








levelcrossings.vic.gov.au

contact@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au



For languages other than English, please call 9209 0147.

1800 105 105 (call anytime)     

Please contact us if you would like this information in an accessible format. If you need assistance due to a hearing or speech impairment, visit relayservice.gov.au

