



# Yealering Walk Trails Opportunities Plan

for the Shire of Wickepin

2014





Project design and documentation by:



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## 1.1 Introduction

This Walk Trails Opportunities Plan has been prepared to assist the Shire of Wickepin (the Shire) enhance its existing trail network in the town of Yealering.

This Plan has been prepared to highlight opportunities to improve the existing Yealering trails network, which runs around Lake Yealering. This plan seeks to identify broad strategies to:

- improve legibility and enhance accessibility of the trails
- increase usage of the trails by locals and visitors alike
- elicit curiosity and raise awareness of the history and natural beauty of the Town

## 1.2 Background

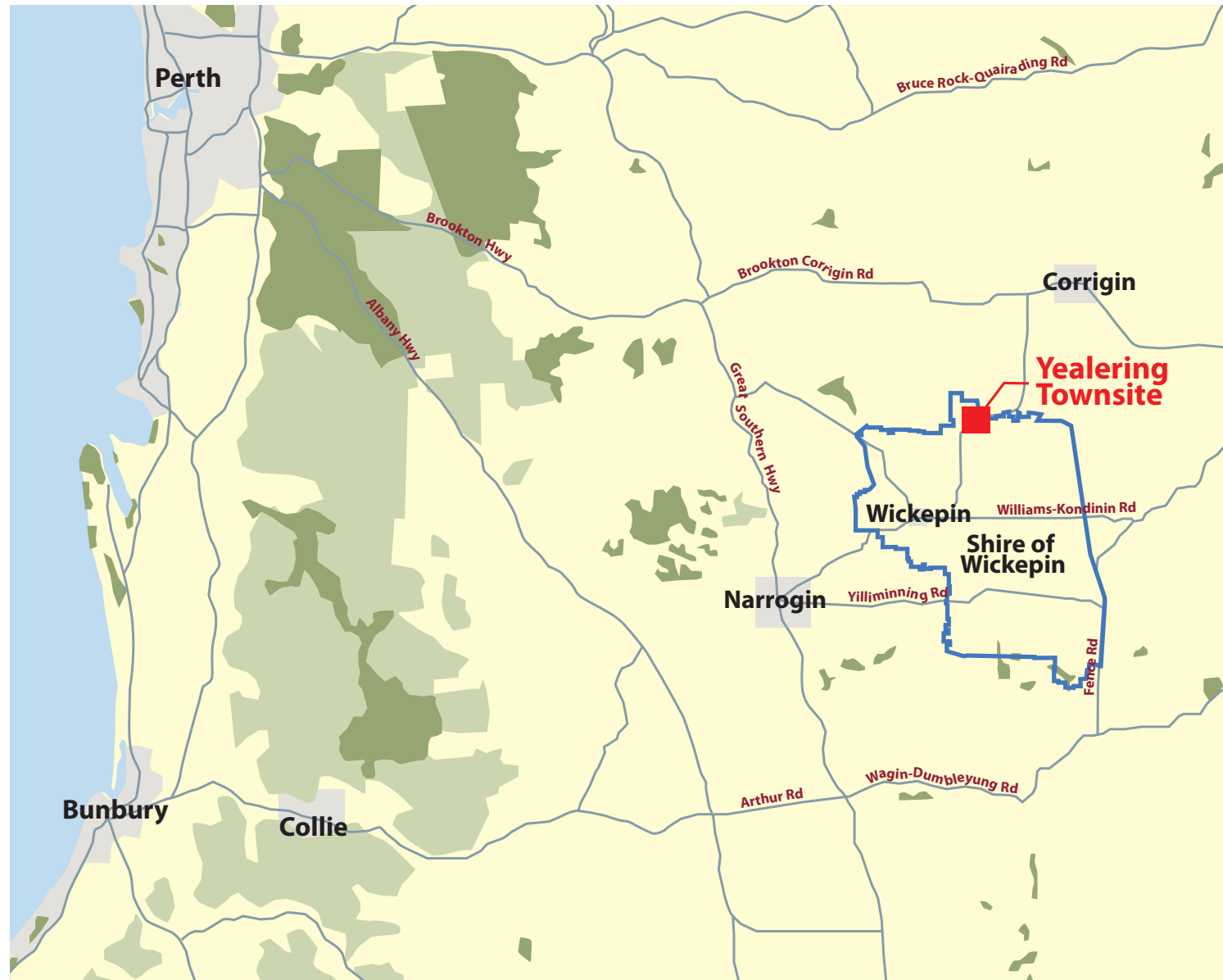
In 1998, the Shire commissioned a Townscape and Cultural Plan (1999), which set out strategies to improve its main streets and cultural identity. The report by Michael Tooby and Associates also included a Trails Plan Report for the towns of Yealering and Wickepin.

Many of the recommendation of the above Trails Plan Report have been carried out in Wickepin. Some recommendations have been carried out for Yealering, for example it appears a path was laid out around the Lake. However, supporting initiatives such as a bird hide and signage were not implemented.

In 2013, the Shire applied for and was successful in obtaining grant funding from Lotterywest for the development of a Trails Master Plan for Wickepin, Harrismith and Yealering. The primary focus of the Master Plan was on the town of Wickepin. However, broad strategies for the towns of and Harrismith and Yealering were also sought. This Opportunities Plan provides these requested broad strategies.

## 2.1 Regional Context

Yealering is a small town located 27km north of Wickepin, with a population of approximately 100 people. The town was gazetted in 1912 and forms part of the Shire of Wickepin a broadacre grain and sheep farming area.



Regional Context

## 2.2 Local Context

The town is located along the northern side of Lake Yealering and the railway line.

To the north and west, the town is surrounded predominantly by bushland and farmland. Park and recreation facilities form a boundary around the edge of the lake to the south, with a golf course to the east.

The lake area is approximately 200 ha with an additional 600 ha comprising the salt lakes further to the east and west.



Local Context



## 2.3 Existing Town Places

The town of Yearling is located north of Lake Yealering a large scenic water body. The lake is relatively shallow, in most years does not fill completely, and dries out during summer months by evaporation. The highest recorded lake depth was 2.56 metres in 1983. The large lake was once freshwater and has now become saline.

The Town Hall, caravan park and picnic facilities are located on the northern side of the lakeshore. The lake has been the venue of many recreational and sporting pursuits since the earliest days. Early pursuits included washing, kangaroo hunting, duck shooting, sailing, swimming, picnics, cruising on the steamer "Kookaburra", tennis on the shore, and later, croquet.

More recent activities include canoeing/kayaking, caravanning/camping, rowing, sailing, swimming, water-skiing, windsurfing and jet-skiing. The land around the lake is used for hiking, bird-watching, cycling, barbecuing, and golfing and water-skiing clubs.

Overlooking the lake are modern sporting facilities including tennis courts, bowling green and cricket oval. An 18 hole golf course surrounds the lake and the 18th hole features a unique tee box over the water.

Dwellings and commercial buildings are located on the north side of Sewell Street, which includes a two-storey hotel and a number of single storey shops located along Dalton Street. The wheat silo, along the railway line, is a landmark feature opposite the hotel.



Hotel



Shop



Oval



Town Hall



Diagram of Existing Town Places

### LEGEND

- 01** Warrawee Park
- 02** Shops
- 03** Honeyman Park
- 04** Hotel
- 05** Wheat Silo
- 06** All Saints Church
- 07** Golf Course
- 08** 18th Tee
- 09** Swimming pool (fmr)
- 10** Croquet Lawn
- 11** Lawn Bowls
- 12** Football / Cricket oval
- 13** Caravan Park
- 14** Lake Yealering
- 15** Carpark



Visitor Information Bay



Interpretive Signage



Side of Hotel



Lake Yealering

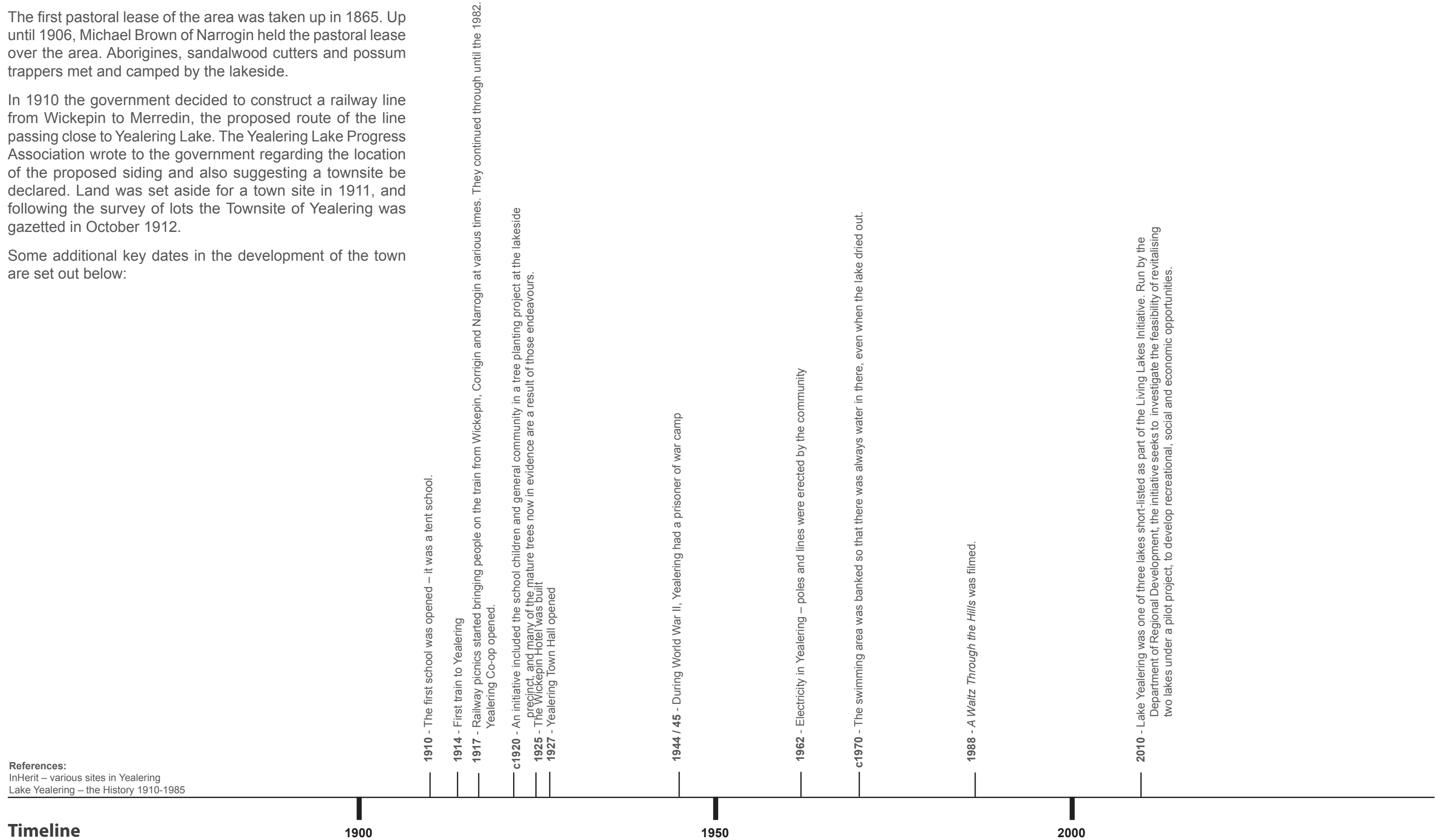


## 2.4 Historic Context

The first pastoral lease of the area was taken up in 1865. Up until 1906, Michael Brown of Narrogin held the pastoral lease over the area. Aborigines, sandalwood cutters and possum trappers met and camped by the lakeside.

In 1910 the government decided to construct a railway line from Wickepin to Merredin, the proposed route of the line passing close to Yealering Lake. The Yealering Lake Progress Association wrote to the government regarding the location of the proposed siding and also suggesting a townsite be declared. Land was set aside for a town site in 1911, and following the survey of lots the Townsite of Yealering was gazetted in October 1912.

Some additional key dates in the development of the town are set out below:



**References:**  
 InHerit – various sites in Yealering  
 Lake Yealering – the History 1910-1985

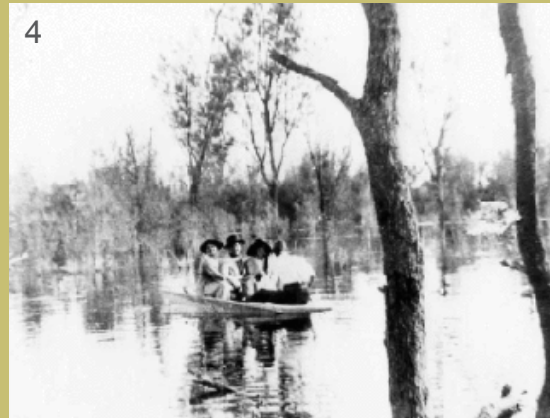
### Timeline

1900

1950

2000





1) Lake Yealering, 1925 2) Boating on Lake Yealering, 1920's 3) Swimming at Lake Yealering 4) Lake Yealering 5) Yealering Townsite 6) Farming at Yealering 7) Yealering, 1918 Source: State Library of Western Australia



## 2.5 Existing Trail Condition

There is an existing compacted gravel trail, which runs from the caravan park along the northern side of the Lake. The trail terminates near the golf course along the eastern side of the Lake.

The walk meanders past the Town Hall, bowling green, croquet lawn and cricket oval. There is no directional signage nor is there a connection through to the Town's main street.

There is some interpretive signage dotted around the Town including signage, which includes information on:

- School Sports
- Sporting Clubs
- Croquet Club
- Boxing Day activities
- Railway Picnics
- Historic photos of the Town in Honeyman Park

### LEGEND

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-  Existing walk
-  Much needed connection



Diagram of Existing Heritage Precinct Trail Conditions



The Yealering walk trail and supporting heritage information boards have been carefully considered and laid out to provide visitors with an insight into the history of the town.

The following opportunities seek to support the existing initiatives to improve legibility and enhance accessibility of the trails; and to increase usage of the trails by locals and visitors alike. They also seek to encourage the visitor to reflect on the past.

## 3.1 Thematic History

The information displayed around the town provides a snapshot of certain aspects of its history. Undertaking a thematic historic would assist in identifying key story lines that aren't represented to help inform future interpretation and to ensure the visitor gets a holistic view of the growth and evolution of the town and lakes. This would also be a good historical record to catalogue in the library or to upload on the Shire's website.

- Undertake a Thematic History to document the history of the town.
- Request the community send in historic photographs of the Lake and town for use in future interpretation.
- Identify themes not currently explored in existing signage for use in future interpretation.

## 3.2 Improved Connections

The caravan park is a source of potential trail users. However, there is no information available at the park to encourage or explain to guests how they can connect with the nearby trail or the other interesting features of the town.

- Trail information on the location of the wildflower walk should be provided at the caravan park – for example on the side of the toilet block.
- There is a need for a walk trail connection from the Lake to the Town. A zebra crossing would help give the pedestrians confidence to cross Sewell Street to Dalton Street.
- The former swimming pool is one of a number of special places at the north end of the lake. Projects that reinforce this area as a gathering place and a place of reflection should be encouraged (refer to Section 4 Projects).



There is ample room for tents along the shore, and the budding town ship alongside, with its flourishing Farmers' Co-operative store, supplies provisions, while fishing, shooting, swimming, rowing and tennis can be indulged in, or one can laze to perfection under the shady tree which line the banks.

*Western Mail, Thursday 21 February 1924*

View of the edge of Lake Yealering



## 4.1 Foreshore Connection

The existing former outdoor swimming pool is currently disused. It provides a good visual cue to draw people from town, to explore the foreshore and to commence the trail. The existing recreational facilities and a former croquet lawn provide potential opportunities to create a link to the town centre.

### Objectives:

- To celebrate the foreshore as a gathering place.
- To improve the physical and perceived connection between the existing facilities, the foreshore and the town centre.
- To increase visitors' understanding of the history and evolution of Yealering.

### Principles:

- Create a chain of special places through using existing structures to encourage people to explore more of the foreshore.
- Work with the existing structures to provide an integrated learning and physical exploration experience.

### Detailed Design Suggestions:

#### Former Swimming Pool

- Suggest formalising the pedestrian use of the edge of the existing pool with a gravel path loop.
- Suggest including a rest point area with seating and interpretation sign including information about the lake / wildlife.

#### Foreshore Area

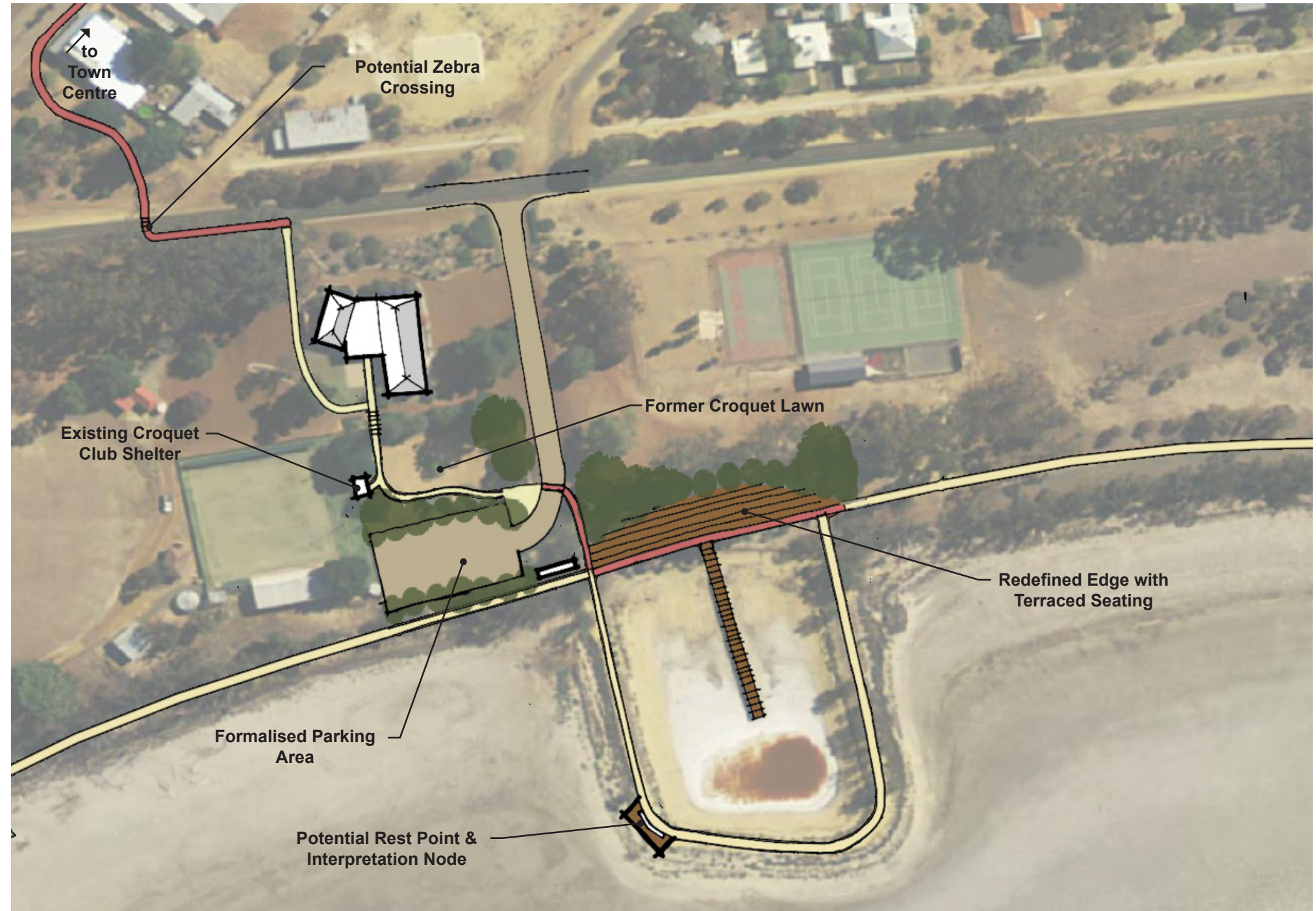
- Provide a formalised edge to the former swimming pool with terraced seating and shade trees to create a community gathering place.

#### Interpretation

- Consider placing interpretive signage around the swimming pool. Signage could feature a historic image of the lake being used in bygone times to encourage visitors to reflect on the former vitality of the lake.

#### General

- Support initiatives to improve the health and environment of the swimming pool.
- Define the path leading around the Croquet Lawn & existing buildings, and to connect to the town centre.
- Formalise and define entry to parking area between the recreation facilities and foreshore to enhance pedestrian priority along path.



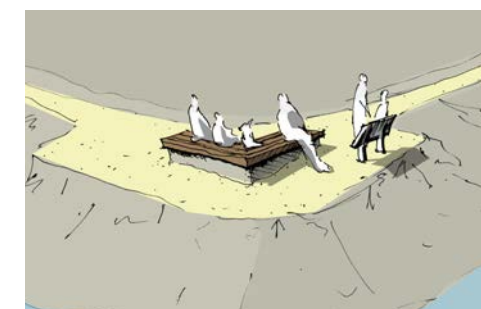
Indicative plan of proposals to connect foreshore to town centre



Aerial of existing Lake Yealering Foreshore.



Existing Croquet Club shelter.

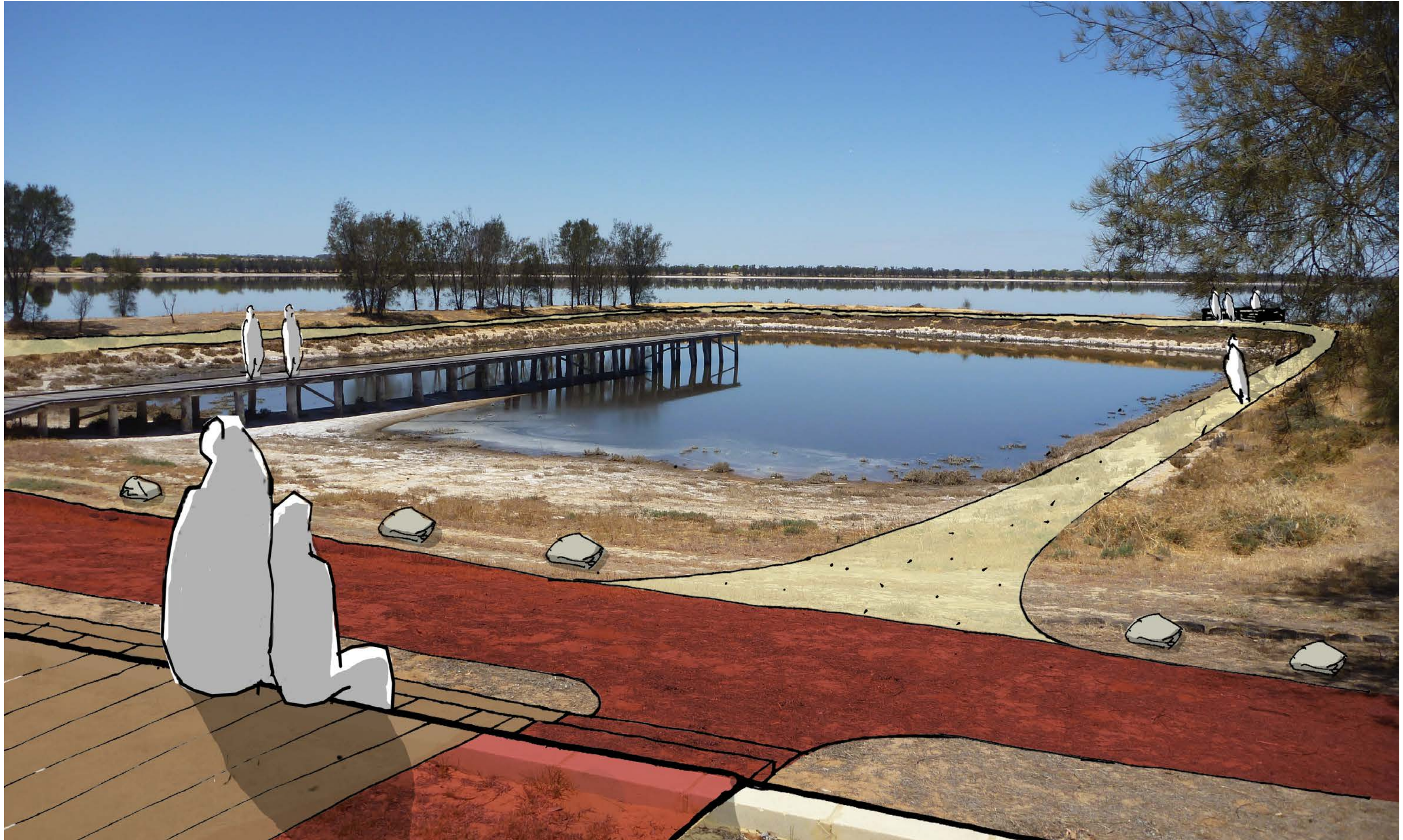


Sketch of Rest Point & Interpretation Node.



View-centred interpretation signage precedent.





Indicative view of Lake Yealering Foreshore



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