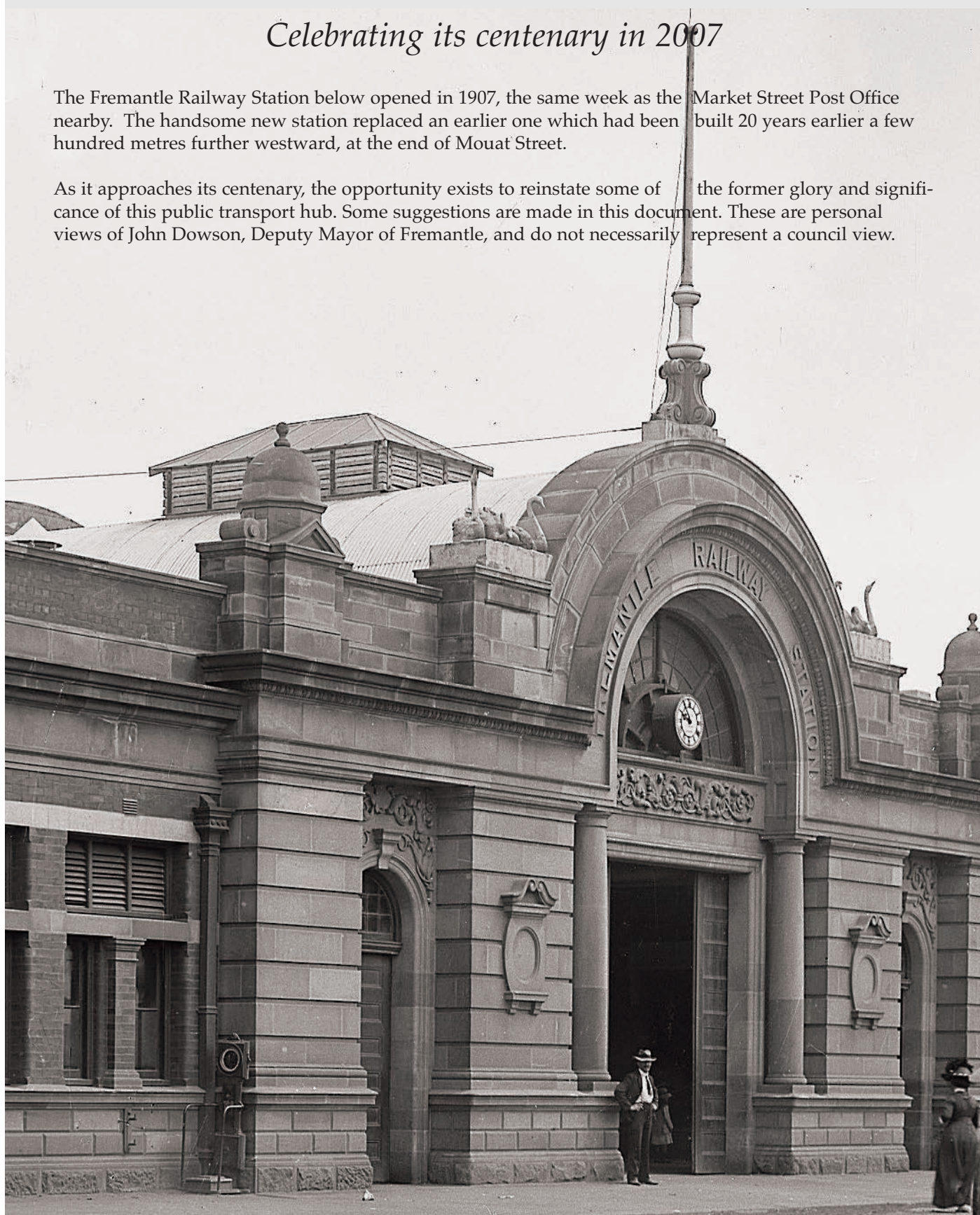


Fremantle Railway Station

Celebrating its centenary in 2007

The Fremantle Railway Station below opened in 1907, the same week as the Market Street Post Office nearby. The handsome new station replaced an earlier one which had been built 20 years earlier a few hundred metres further westward, at the end of Mouat Street.

As it approaches its centenary, the opportunity exists to reinstate some of the former glory and significance of this public transport hub. Some suggestions are made in this document. These are personal views of John Dowson, Deputy Mayor of Fremantle, and do not necessarily represent a council view.



Fremantle Railway Station soon after it opened in 1907. From John Dowson's *Old Fremantle*. RWAHS photo (detail).

Fremantle Railway Station- Full Restoration Deserved

For over 100 years the railways of Western Australia have been central to the development of the state and its consequent booming economy.

The boom began when the railways came to Fremantle in the 1880s and carried prospectors and supplies to the goldfields of Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie in the 1890s.

In the past few years the booming economy has been quite remarkable. We are a wealthy state. This gives even more weight to the argument that the railways, and their history, deserve serious funding for, among other things, restoration and interpretation. In particular, 2007 will be the centenary of the opening of the current 1907 Fremantle Railway Station, and projected works for a commercial/ tourist precinct on Victoria Quay make this the time to consider what works are needed for the area.

Contents

1. Station soon after opening in 1907
2. Centenary restoration for 2007?
3. *Daily News* report on opening
4. Significance of railway station
5. Former railway workshops
6. Unfinished Business
7. More Unfinished Business
- 8-9. The story of the swans
10. Draft proposed improvements.
11. Suggested Queen St. bus entry
12. Key recommendations
13. Visitors' Centre
- 14-18. Appendix of articles



Above: Rare interior photograph c1920 showing subway to second platform (Courtesy Fremantle Local History Collection)

Below: Fremantle Railway Station c1907 (from John Dowson's *Old Fremantle*).



Daily News

1 July, 1907

New Railway Station at Fremantle Opened Today

The new railway station at Fremantle opened this morning. The new building is a handsome structure, which does credit to the Port. The entrance-hall, which faces market -Street, is spacious and comfortable, and is furnished with seats for the accommodation of persons waiting the arrival of trains....there are four tick-

et windows opening upon the entrance hall...A well stocked bookstall occupies a corner of the hall....There are separate offices provided for the receipt and dispatch of luggage, and special provision has been made for handling the large quantity of fish that passes through the station.



Above: Sailors from HMS Hood sweep past the railway station in 1924 between the two gardens. The footbridge beyond, demolished recently, acts as an attractive vantage point and was a clear link between the port and city. HMS Hood itself looms over the station. (Izzy Orloff photograph from *Old Fremantle* by John Dowson)

Below: The formerly attractive station forecourt is now in 2005 an ugly sea of bitumen and buses.





The Significance of Fremantle Railway Station

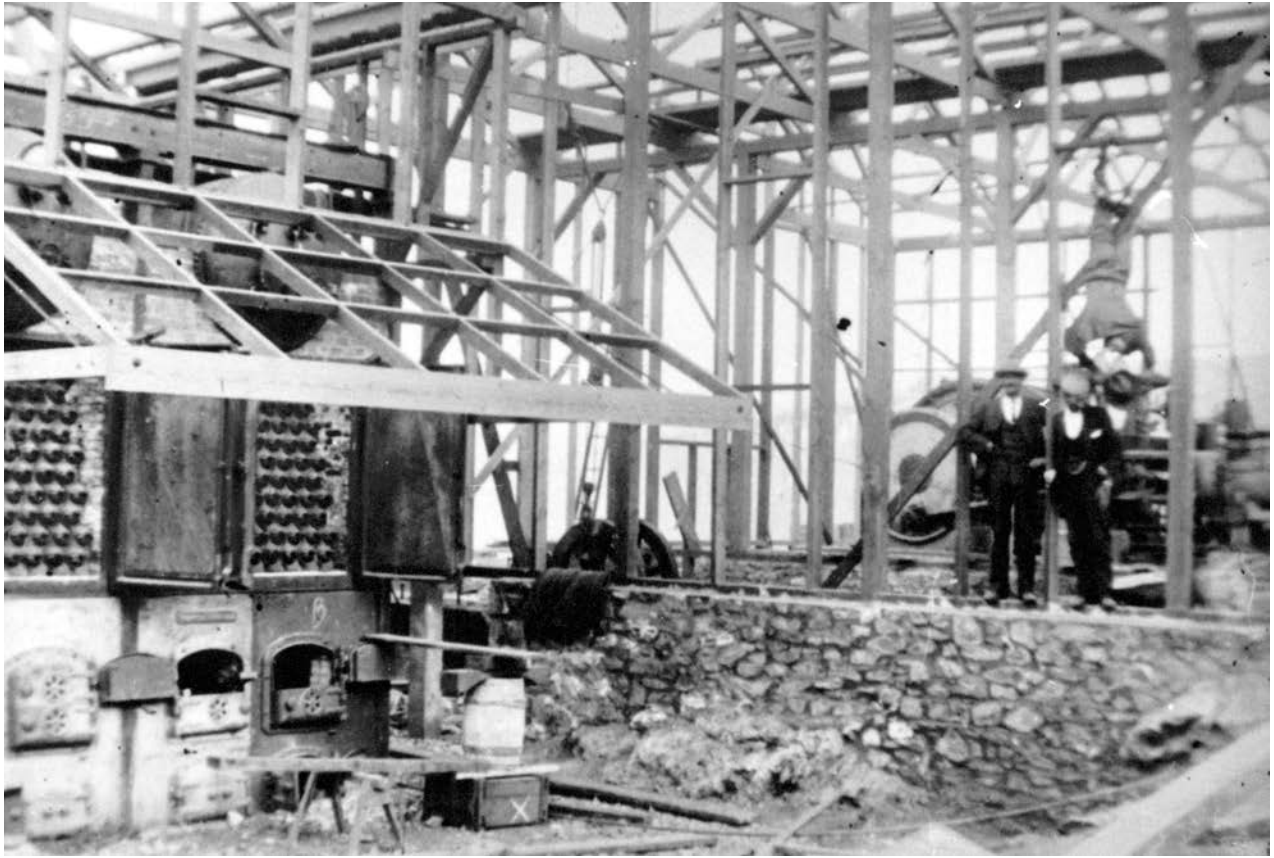
Statement of Significance- from *Conservation Plan for Fremantle Railway Station* by Kelly Aris, 1999.

Fremantle Railway Station has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

- the imposing style of the place serves as an important reminder of the historical importance of Fremantle as Western Australia's principal port town.
- the place has historic value as the former location of the railway workshops, prior to their relocation to Midland in 1904
- the place is aesthetically and historically linked with Fremantle's maritime history and is one of a number of important buildings built at the turn of the century associated with rail, port, and maritime operations.
- the place has scientific value to Western Australia as an archaeological site which can yield information on activities and technology associated with the first railway workshops in Western Australia, the people who worked in the first railway workshops in Western Australia, the goods passing through the station from 1906, and the material culture of passengers passing through the station from 1906.

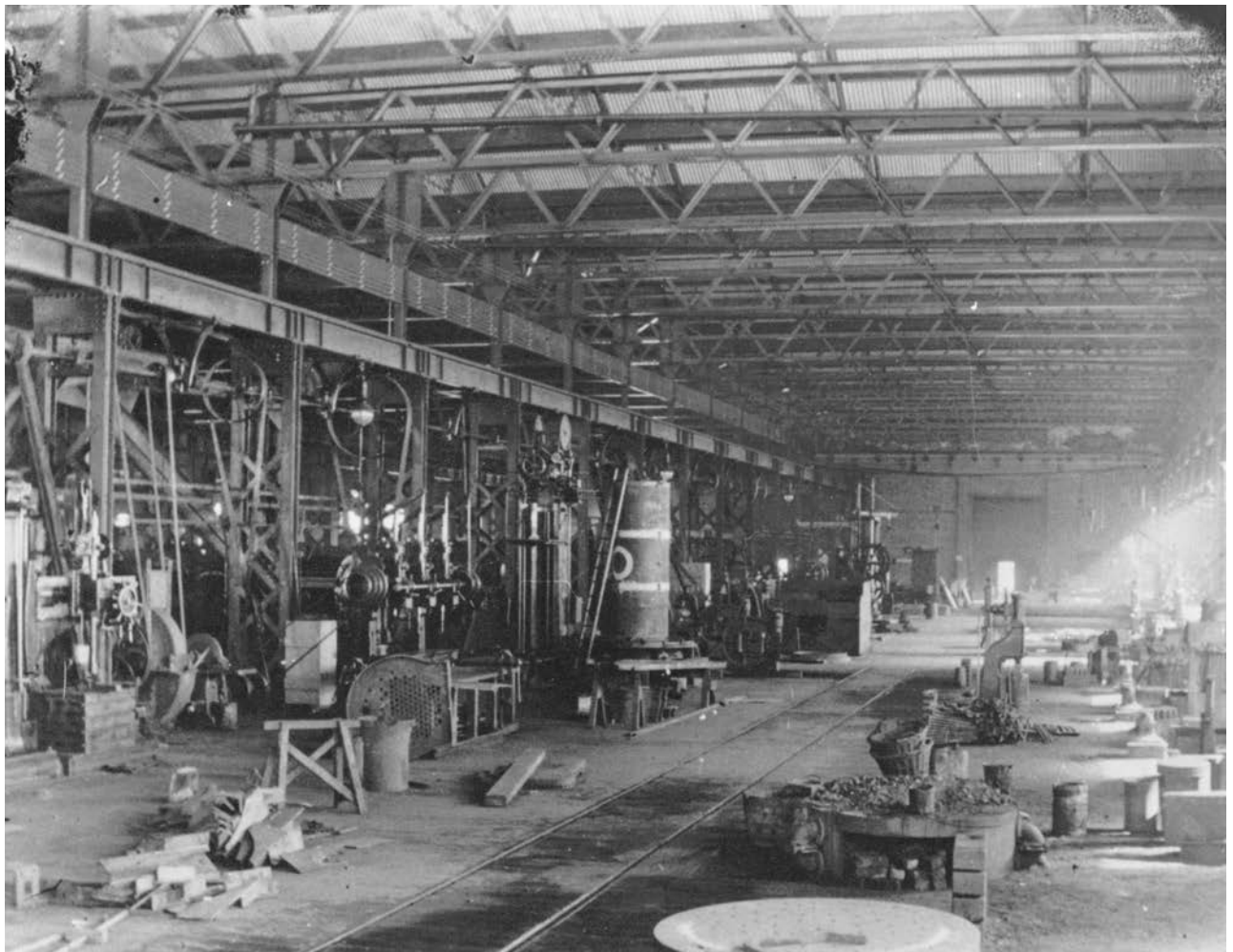


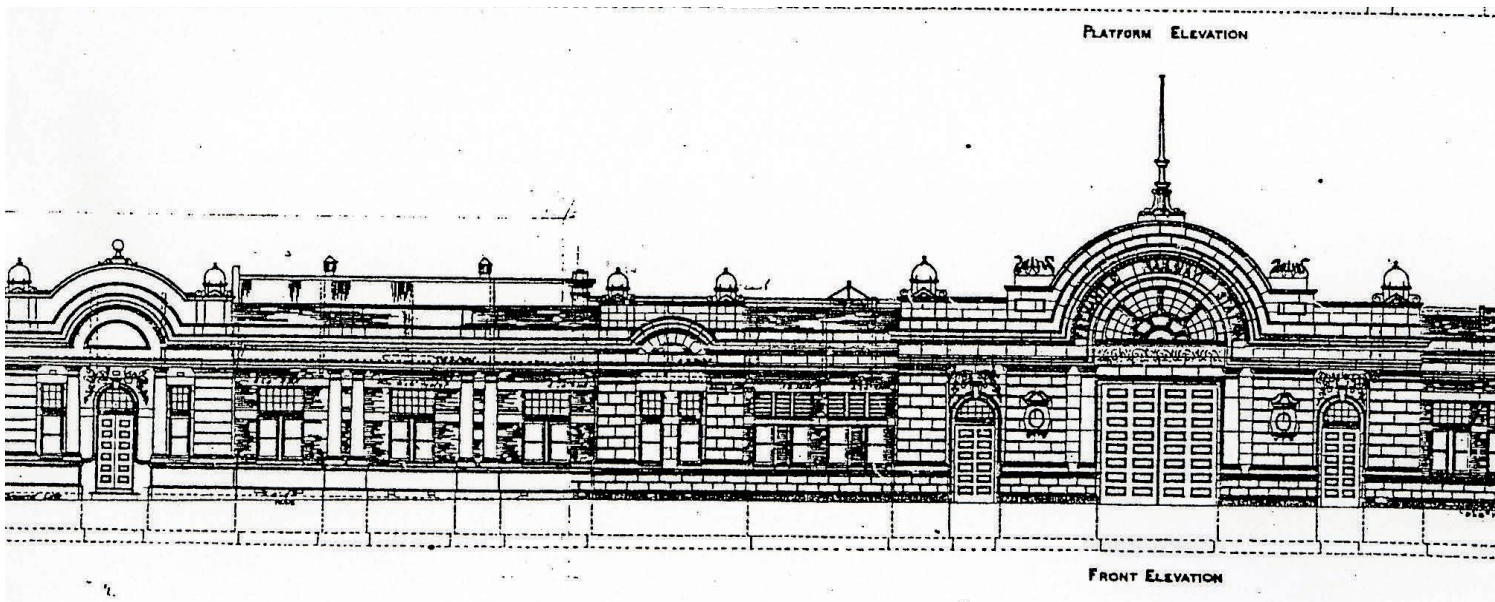
Very rare unpublished view (detail) of Fremantle's first railway station at the end of Mouat Street, built 1881 (Dowson collection).



The first railway workshops in Western Australia lie beneath the current railway station and its forecourt.

John Coulsen Pearson (1866-1934) arrived in Australia from England and photographed the Fremantle railway workshops he worked in. Visitors to this area should be made aware of the significant railway history they are walking over (*courtesy Battye Library*).





Unfinished Business- the never completed west wing (above)

Untidy Business- acres of hot bitumen

Some Key Conservation Policies
(Conservation Plan for Fremantle Railway Station 1999)

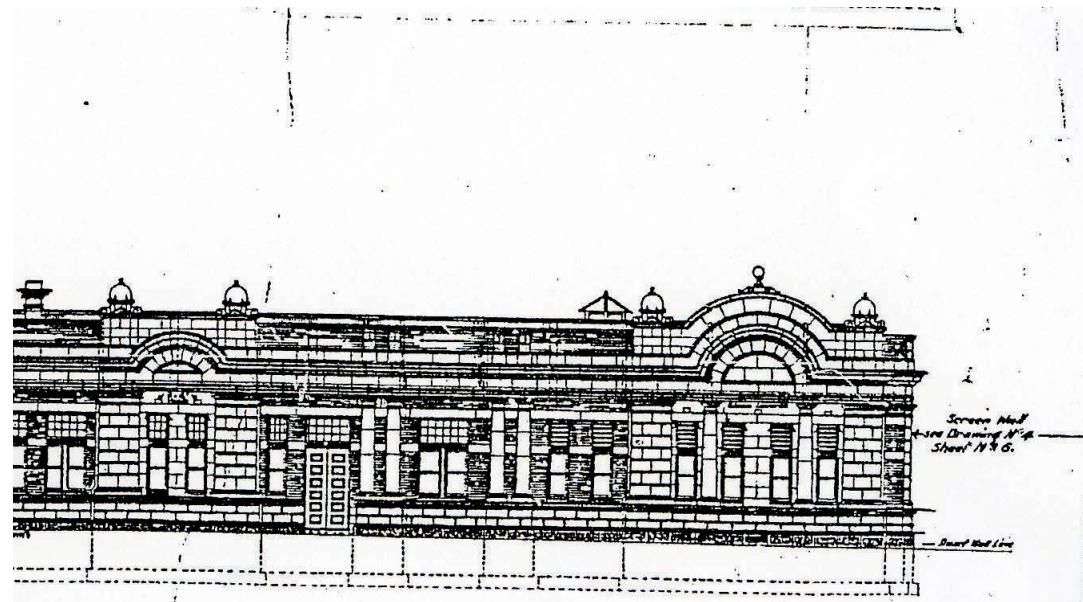
Policy 3.17: Visibility from the platform of the station to the port related activities is to remain in order to retain the significance of the place as an important reminder to the community of the historical importance of Fremantle as Western Australia's principal port town.

Policy 3.27: Phillimore Street forecourt is to remain a key public space to enable the facade of the station to be appreciated and to facilitate free movement and mingling of high volume pedestrian traffic.

Policy 4.1: The significant fabric of such spaces (zones of considerable significance) is to be preserved, restored and reconstructed as appropriate. Reconstruction is desirable provided sufficient detailed information is available.

Question: Have the recommendations of the adopted Conservation Plan been carried out?





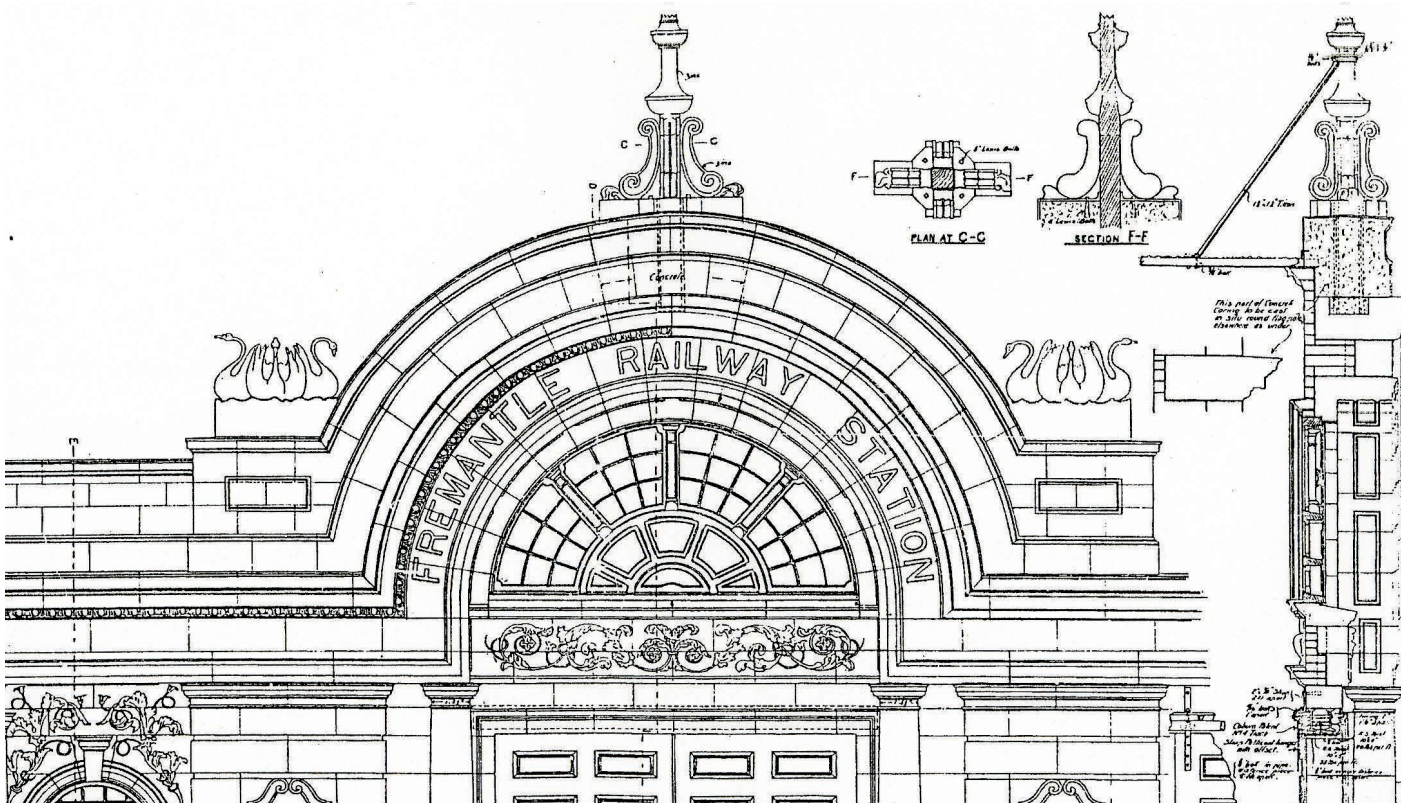
Difficult pedestrian access to Queen Street at top right of picture.

This aesthetically challenged path leads to Market Street.



The Story of the Swans

Three swans straddle each side of the entrance to the railway station. Walter Burvill (1875-1924), a local plaster modeller, made the swans which, for many years, were all white. At one stage, the swan on the far left was damaged and when repaired, the swan was now facing downwards instead of facing upwards, as can be seen here, and on the cover. Some of the swans were painted black many years ago, and when painted white again in 2005 during restoration of the station facade, many people wanted the black back (see the article on the next page).



Put the black back

The people speak

by CLARE DAVIDSON

EVERY person who the *Rooster* spoke to this week told us they thought the Fremantle train station swans should be repainted black, as they were before the station's restoration.

Two weeks ago the first stage of the restored entrance was revealed, exposing the now-white swans at the top. Since the 1950s some

Jake Flynn, 20, East Freo, student: "Black swans are iconically west Australian, but I don't really care either way."

The restorations are being undertaken by the Public Transport Authority. Dr David Leith, from the PTA, told the *Rooster* the need to restore the station was identified in 1999.

"The external facade of the building needed repairs and it was decided that a capital works submission be made towards the restoration."

of the swans had been black but heritage experts determined they should go back to their original colour.

Well, we approached 12 people around Fremantle on Tuesday to ask their views. All said the swans should be black.

Tristan Smith, 24, Morley, plumber: "The black swan is WA's emblem, so I would have thought it'd be the only choice."

Gail Hardie, 50, Willetton, art gallery manager: "I always remember them being black ever since I was a child, they should have stayed that way."

Andrew Steele, 35, Collingwood, Victoria, tourist: "Black swans are not actually native to WA, they were originally from Victoria. But if they are the emblem then the statues should be black. Maybe the reason for painting them black is a bit controversial – is it saying we should be a white nation?"

Jessica Judd, 20, Attadale, student: "The



He told us the station was built in 1907, and the white swans were constructed by Walter Burvill, a plaster modeller who had a business in Fremantle in the 1900s.

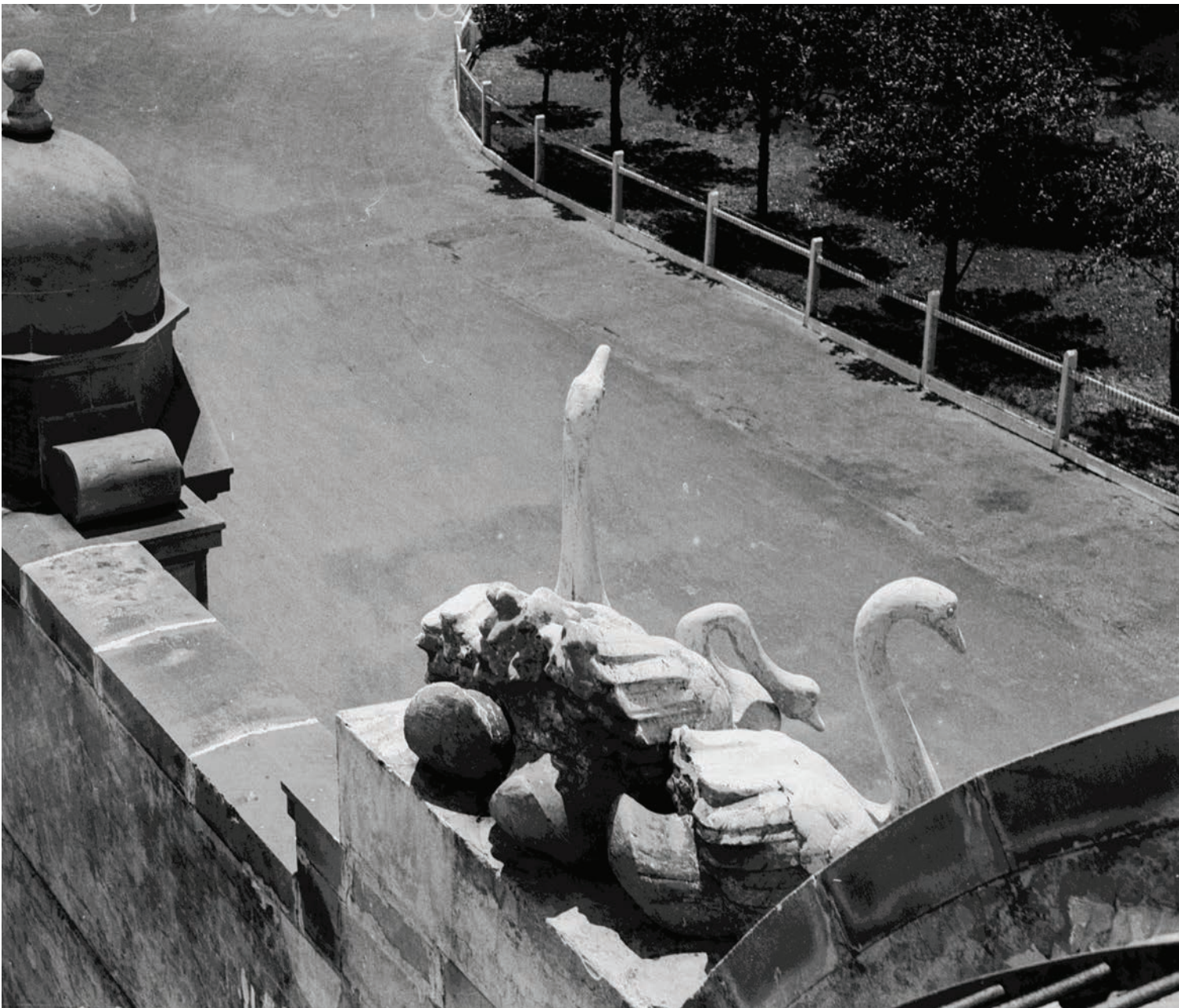
We also asked Fremantle city councillor John Dowson, chair of the Fremantle heritage and special places committee, former Fremantle Society president and heritage warrior, for some input. He didn't have time to talk for long, due to end-of-school week but he did mention an interesting story: "One of the swans' heads was knocked off during the 1950s. When they glued it back on, it was on the wrong way."

It was around this time the swans were

Sometimes people focus on the small details and they miss the big picture- which is getting the station fully restored!

Above: The Fremantle Rooster (December 9, 2005) raised concerns about the now all white swans.

Below: A view from the railway station roof looking east shows the swans as they were in 1934. The photograph also shows the attractive and mature fenced off gardens (from Old Fremantle by John Dowson, 1st edition only.)

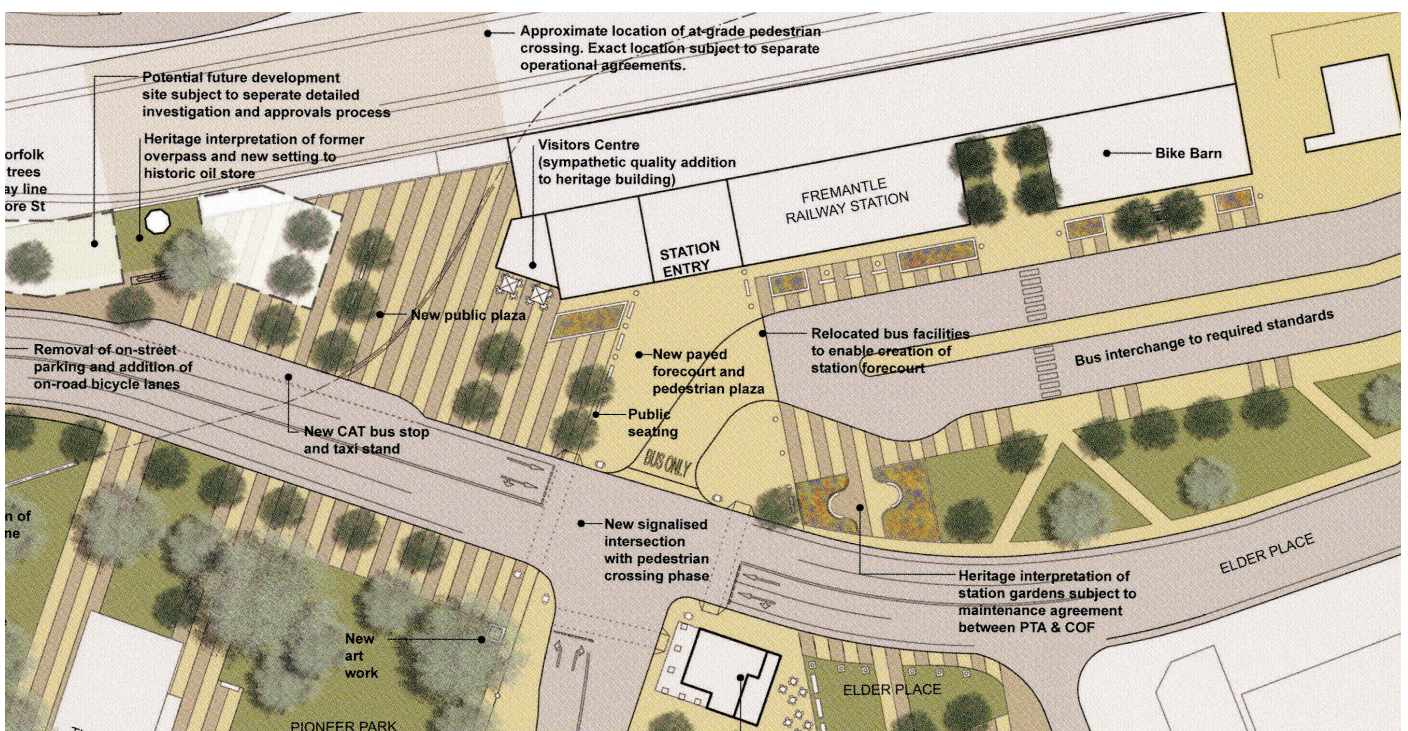


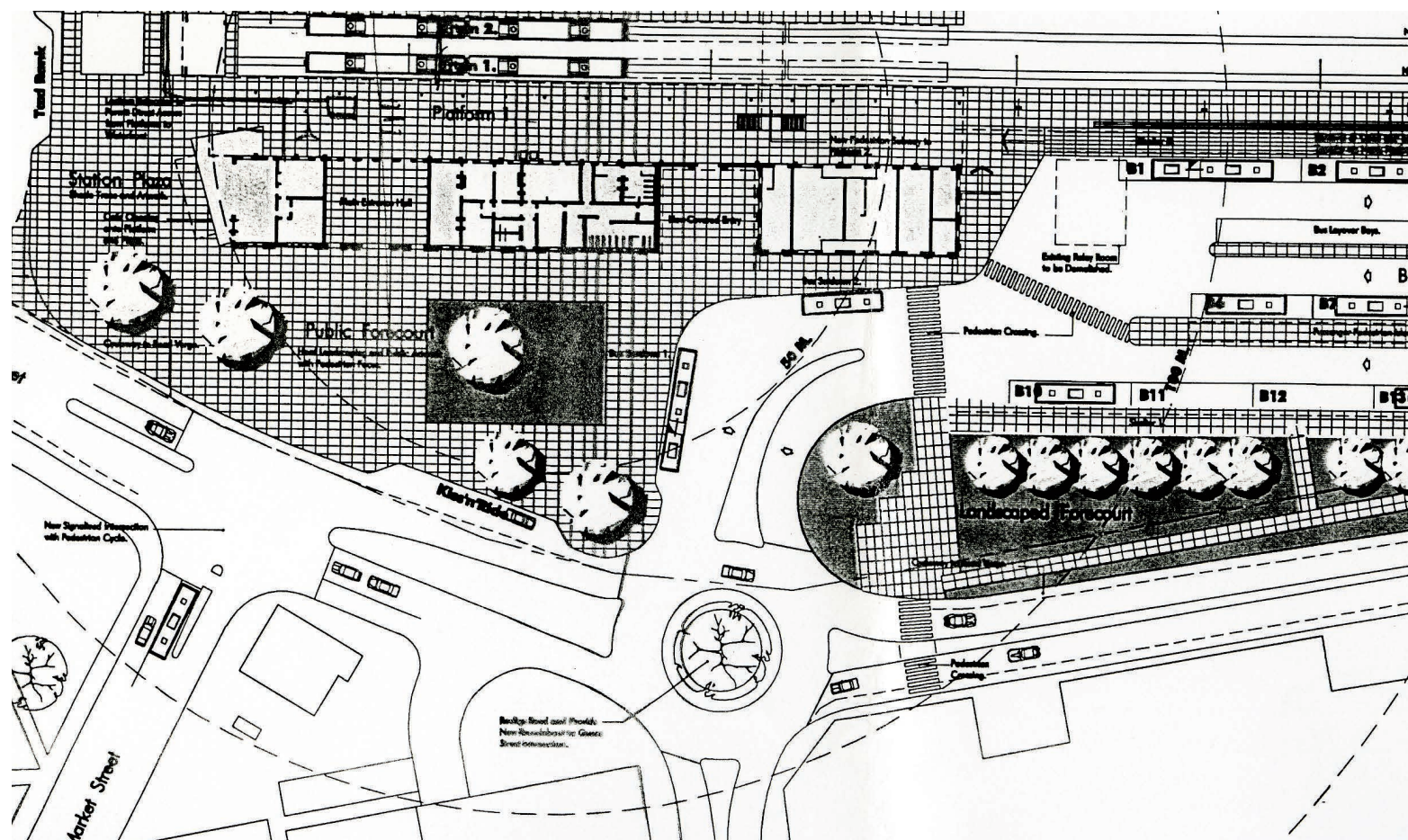
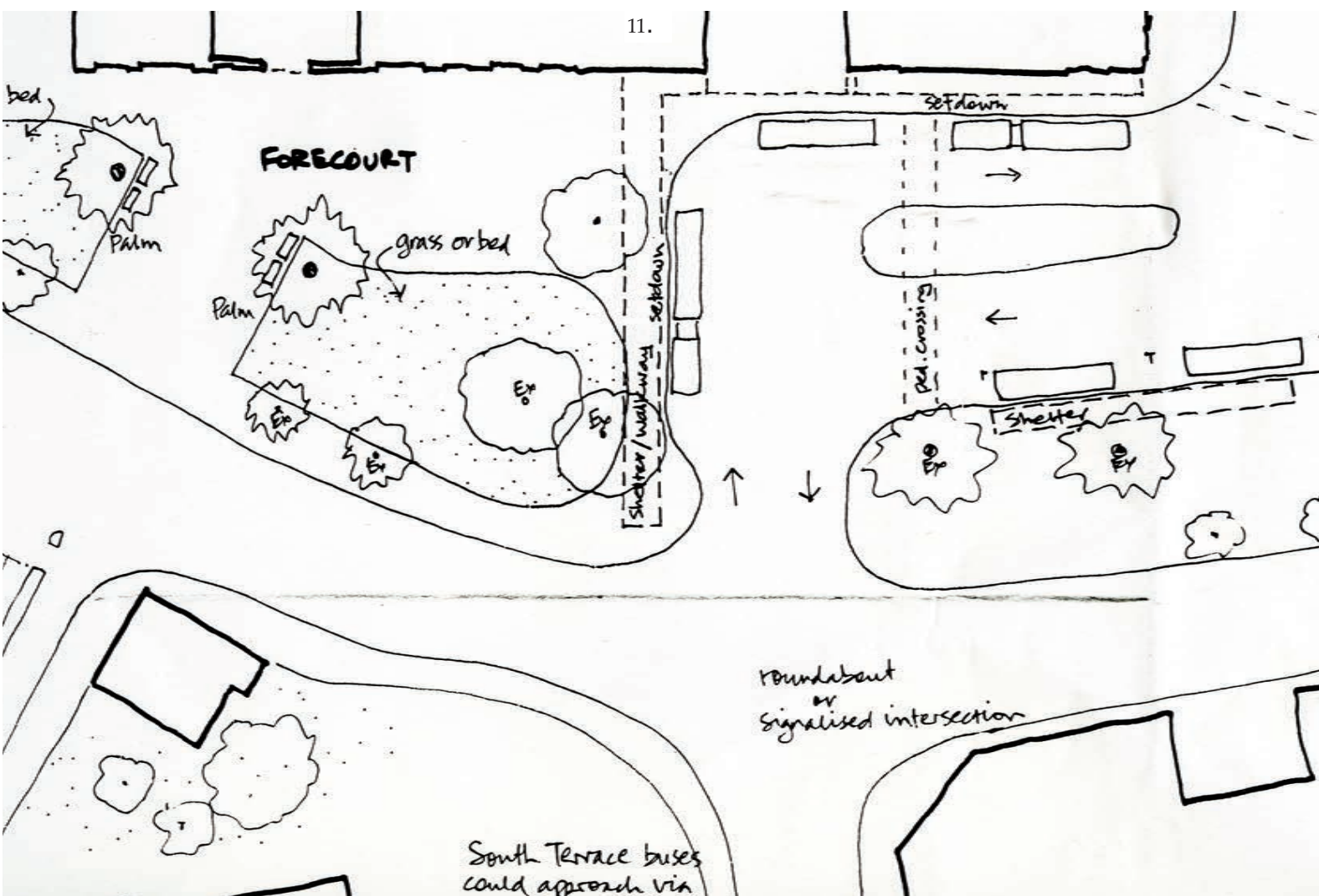


Phillimore Street Integrated Master Plan Proposed Improvements

The proposals above and below are contained in a document put out for public comment in 2005 and headed *Linking Fremantle City with the Port*. The first thing to be noticed is that the proposed four lanes of traffic, the only such four lane road in central Fremantle, would act AGAINST a 'link'. The plan is over burdened with paved areas at the expense of green ones, insensitive to heritage, and transport dominated. Token efforts only are made to represent the enormous heritage of the area, let alone revert to some of the best early features of the area such as the two substantial gardens which existed at the front of the railway station.

Bus entries should be opposite Queen Street as suggested on the next page, in order to give a maximum forecourt of green and paved spaces for pedestrians and to enhance the status of the main station building. Bus passengers can still be dropped off within 50 metres of their train. And, this plan does not preclude future light rail entering the station forecourt directly from Market Street and traversing a pedestrian space..





Top: Queen Street access: Bus interchange concept by Fremantle Council officers 1999 (Ian James and Michael Willicombe)

Above: Queen Street access: Cox Howlett + Bailey Woodland Option 2. Aligned rail platforms are also shown.

Queen Street access has many advantages over the entry point proposed on the previous page.

Key Recommendations

1) Complete restoration of Fremantle Railway Station buildings in time for station's centenary on July 1, 2007. Restoration to include:

- a) Removal of all paint from Donnybrook stone finishes
- b) Removal of paint from masonry on platforms and where necessary in other internal spaces.
- c) Reinstatement of public facilities such as dining room and waiting room, albeit in a modern form.
- d) Restoration as prescribed in the 1999 Conservation Plan.
- e) Reinstatement of the second railway platform to centralise passenger movements and bring the centre of gravity of the station back towards its main entrance

2) 'Completion of never completed western wing of railway station as intended, to be used as visitors' centre and cafe (see opposite page).

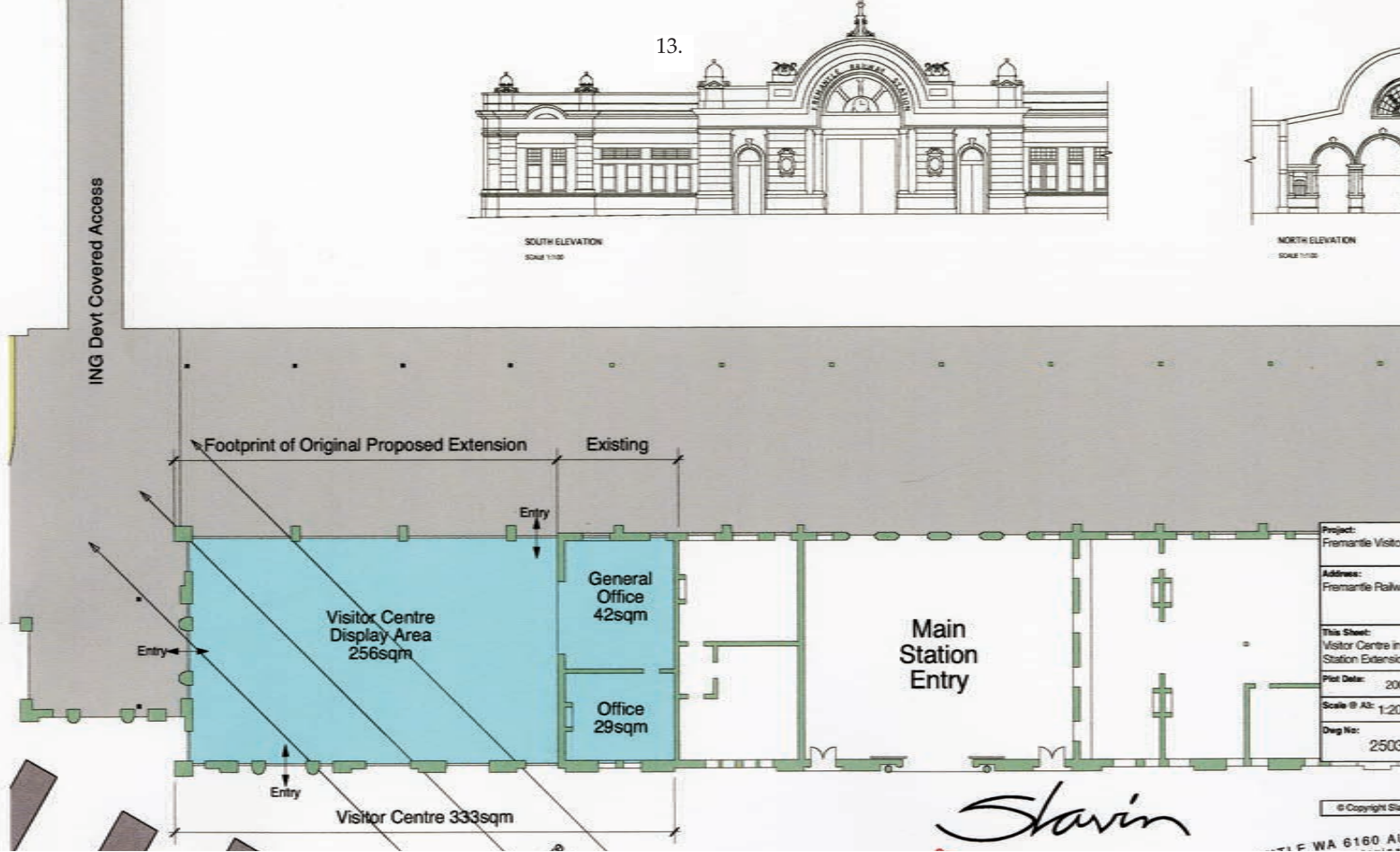
3) Bus entry to be opposite Queen Street. Better pedestrian access to Queen Street.

4) Reinstatement of significant gardens, plus green spaces, and public spaces in front of station.

The photographs below and opposite show that, at its peak, the port and the city were quite clearly separated environments, with the port being often closely guarded (especially during the wars) and difficult to get into. This separation was added to by the numerous sets of railway lines, in places a dozen or so, forming a barrier necessitating the wooden footbridge pictured which linked the immigration buildings on the left with the railway station and the town. (Photographs courtesy *The West Australian*)



13.



One concept by architect Murray Slavin for a visitor centre (above) uses the footprint of the never finished west wing with a modern see through design. Consideration should also be given to building the western wing as intended, for the same purpose.



APPENDIX- Relevant articles

Pedestrians and Roads

Urban design advice provided by Fremantle Council urban designer Ian James 22 December, 2005.

With regard to the train station, to me the major urban design issue is the need to make the area as pedestrian friendly as possible, while still accommodating managed movement of vehicles - both cars and buses. The proposal in the draft Phillimore St masterplan to make Phillimore St 4 lanes wide through this area is totally unacceptable.

A key objective of the project should be to improve pedestrian links between the city centre and the Victoria Quay waterfront, however increasing Phillimore Street from 2 lanes to 4 lanes is contrary to this objective and will actually reduce pedestrian accessibility. As the only 4 lane road in the city centre it will create a major obstacle to this improved link as well as to and from the rail / bus station and the city centre.

The roadway appears to have been designed to accommodate increased traffic movements to and from the proposed waterfront commercial precinct at the expense of a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment in this area.

Other than at the signalised intersections at Market and Pakenham streets, no provision has been made to accommodate safe and convenient crossings for pedestrians. Pedestrians will attempt to cross the 4 lanes of Phillimore Street anywhere between Pakenham and Queen Streets due to the open and continuous parks and plazas along this length of the street. The Queen Street intersection in particular has no provision for safe pedestrian crossing and is likely therefore to lead to a reduction in pedestrian movements to one of the city's key retail areas in Queen Street.

The design also means that traffic speeds through this section of Phillimore Street will not be constrained by the management techniques commonly applied elsewhere in the city centre, such as narrowing of carriageways, on-street parked vehicles, median islands, widened footpaths, etc.

It is acknowledged that traffic congestion is most likely to occur during peak periods if the roadway is retained as one lane in each direction. However in this key city centre location, priority should be given to the pedestrian's needs to ensure that Fremantle's pedestrian friendly status is maintained. Traffic congestion is also an effective form of city centre traffic management. An alternative traffic access has recently been provided to the waterfront commercial precinct via Peter Hughes Drive (one lane in each direction).

I certainly support development of a visitor centre at or near the station, restoration of the building and enhancement of the public spaces in the forecourt area (which could include an interpretation of the earlier gardens) - but all of this would be a waste of time if the station was cut off from the city by the only 4 lane road in the city centre.

A number of years ago Michael Willicombe and I developed a layout to accommodate the bus entry to the forecourt from Queen St. The railway's consultant architects at the time (Cox Howlett Bailey Woodland) subsequently drew up a plan to show that it could work, however Transperth have consistently opposed it because they say it disadvantages their patrons transferring between bus and rail as they have to walk an extra 30 metres or so. The benefits of opening the front of the station building are obvious, and as a daily public transport user I know that having to walk an extra few metres through a pleasant space would be quite acceptable to most public transport users.

National Trust Submission to City of Fremantle 2005

from: Karl Clement Haynes

The National Trust of Australia (WA)

West Perth WA 6872

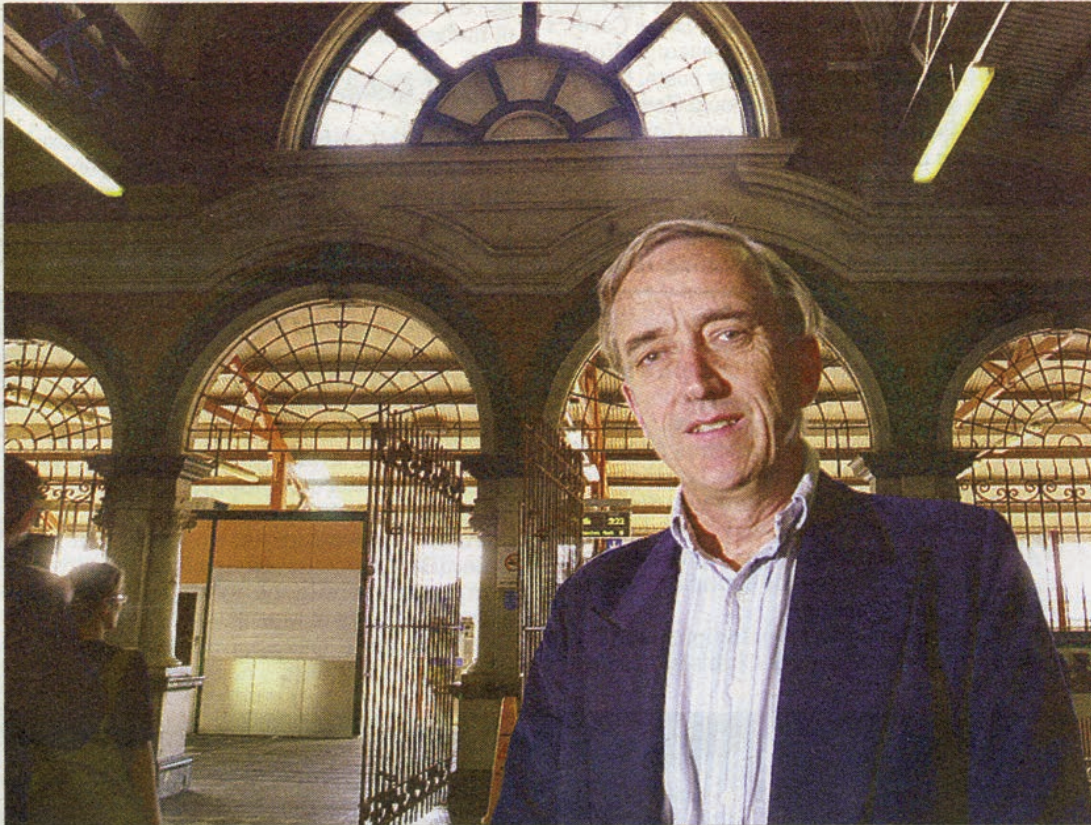
Concerned/objects to:

1. that Masterplan gives "substantial" weight to transport requirements to facilitate extensive commercial development on the waterfront without sufficient consideration of the heritage values of that place.
2. Use of Norfolk Island pine trees, contrary to the Conservation Plan recommendations.

Recommends:

- a) to strengthen heritage values of the precinct by reinstatement of the trains station gardens and relocation of the bus terminus;
- b) Cliff Street extension should be reconstructed as a road;
- c) Integration of the interpretation signage

Plan response



Fremantle Deputy Mayor John Dowson in the old booking hall at the Fremantle Railway Station. He has urged the public to have greater say on the future of the station. Picture: Bruce Hunt

disappoints

By **KAREN OAKLEY**

FREMANTLE Deputy Mayor John Dowson says the community's lack of interest in the State Government's proposed Victoria Quay redevelopment is disappointing.

Cr Dowson urged residents to send in submissions on the Phillimore Street Master Plan before the comment period closes on Friday, October 28.

He said few community members had so far bothered to comment.

"This is the end game before the launch of the massive, possibly six to seven-storey, \$100 million retail complex on the waterfront next to the railway station, with its associated car park possibly up to six-storeys," Cr Dowson said.

He wanted a comprehensive restoration of the historic station to include operational ticket windows, reinstatement of the waiting room and a Victorian-style coffee shop.

"The railway station is 100 years old in 2007, so why not make a proper job of restoring it?" he said.

He said the Government only appeared interested in restoring the building's facade.

"If the Gallop Government is serious about enticing people on to public transport, then it will do it up," he said.

"The master plan is the opportunity to make the railway station a truly iconic public transport hub and entry into the wharf – something sympathetic to its amazing history."

"For example, 13 sets of railway tracks at one time ran along here, making Fremantle the western-most railhead in the nation and making railways a major part of our economy, but it seems government has little interest in interpreting that."

He said Fremantle architect Murray Slavin had submitted the "excellent idea" of building a visitors' centre on the station's western side.

He also supported Fremantle resident Michael Willicombe's idea to restore the front of the railway station as Victorian-style gardens, with the bus stops moved further east.

He said the existing master plan gave too much weight to transport requirements.

Submissions should be addressed to chief executive Graeme Mackenzie at the city administration offices at 8 William Street.

IN BRIEF

20/9/05

On track of \$7m

FREMANTLE Deputy Mayor John Dowson has called for a "proper" restoration of Fremantle Railway Station.

"It should be restored as a grand railway station," Cr Dowson said.

"The old building should be restored as a centrepiece of public transport."

Cr Dowson said he believed the project was deserving of a budget of about \$7 million.

Above: Fremantle Gazette

20 September, 2005

Left: Fremantle Gazette

25 October, 2005



• Fremantle train station before its makeover.

Dowson urges council rail lead

by WARREN HATELY

JOHN DOWSON has urged his own council to lead the way in the Fremantle train station restoration project.

Last week, the deputy mayor criticised the Phillimore Street Masterplan – a joint council, Fremantle Ports and WA government project – saying the design of the train station component was “unappealing and unsympathetic”.

However, Cr Dowson said his inquiries uncovered it was the City of Fremantle responsible for the design of the visitors’ centre component of the station upgrade.

In line with his standing as a former Fremantle Society president, Cr Dowson wants to see the immigration building on Victoria Quay used as a visitors’

centre instead

He also wants the interior of the train station more fully restored.

In a letter to heritage planner Agnieszka Kiera, Cr Dowson said he hoped for a “full internal restoration of the station to include a waiting room and facilities for the public befitting an iconic transport hub” along with a “reinstatement of the original Victorian Garden out the front”.

Cr Dowson welcomed the \$6.3 million project but said it was important to do the job properly.

He said the unfinished western wing of the station could also be considered as a visitors’ centre or a contemporary “see-through” building could be devised, as suggested by award-winning

local architect Murray Slavin.

Fremantle council CEO Graeme Mackenzie said he welcomed Cr Dowson’s submission but stressed the deputy mayor was speaking as a private individual.

Planning boss Jayson Miragliotta said no decision was yet made concerning the visitors’ centre.

“Council has not made any determination regarding a new visitors’ centre building; what is detailed on the Phillimore Street Masterplan is merely an artistic design,” he said. “The Phillimore Street Masterplan currently being advertised relates only to road and infrastructure improvements not buildings.”

Mr Miragliotta added, “The options have merit but need to be considered in more detail by all stakeholders.”

FREMANTLE HERALD

Volume 16 No 49
Saturday December 3, 2005

Fremantle's own INDEPENDENT newspaper

Letterboxed to Fremantle, Beaconsfield, East Fremantle, Hilton, North Fremantle, O'Connor, Samson, South Fremantle and White Gum Valley

Barrack buy out ordered

by JENNY D'ANGER

THE WA government is set to buy the heritage-listed artillery barracks cottages from the defence department.

The units, located on the corner of Queen Victoria and Burt streets will be upgraded for Homeswest housing.

"The three-year campaign to rescue and re-use the heritage cottages ... has finally borne fruit," WA housing and works minister Francis Logan told the *Herald*.

"Thank God we have rescued this for Fremantle," he added, quickly switching to his heritage minister hat.

Haggling continues over the final sale price for the nine two-bedroom units and a three bedroom unit. The row represents 15 per cent of the total barracks site.

Mr Logan said he was pleased the federal government had finally approved the sale but grumbled about how long it took: "The premises have been vacant for many years and with the passage of time are now in such a state of disrepair that significant funding is required to bring them to a standard where they can be made available to tenants."

The federal government had previously offered the whole of the barracks site to the WA government, but with restoration expected to cost in excess of \$17 million the Gallop government had declined. The vast majority of the site is in the hands of the Army Museum, which has a long lease.



• Housing and heritage minister Francis Logan outside the barracks the WA government is set to buy



• We sneak in a photo of John Dowson at the Freo train station, evading the guards. Photo by Marcus Whisson.

Photo ban

by WARREN HATELY

FREMANTLE'S deputy mayor expressed shock last week after being banned from taking photos inside Fremantle's historic train station.

At last week's council meeting Cr John Dowson said he had been approached and blocked by railway staff after going into the station with a camera to examine the interior.

"They told me I had to have a letter from the commissioner of railways before I was allowed to take a picture of the train station," an exasperated Cr Dowson told his colleagues.

David Hynes from the Public Transport Authority said the guards had been right to detain the deputy mayor.

"The difficulty facing our guards, whose duties include making sure that the filming policy is adhered to, lies in determining which is the happy-snapper and which is the professional," he said. "Given that Cr Dowson falls into neither category, the transit guards were correct to challenge him."

Mr Hynes said the PTA policy

both commercial and security reasons.

"It is not intended to stop 'happy-snappers'," he said.

Mr Hynes said a permit was required for any filming or photography inside WA rail stations – which are public spaces – with conditions and even a fee imposed.

The deputy mayor said he had a strong interest in the heritage restoration work currently finishing up in the train station. Last week he had applauded the work done on the station exterior, with the restoration of the original Donnybrook stone "now glowing proudly with all the plastic paint removed".

However he wants to see the project carried on inside.

"If the railway station is to become more than just a pretty face, it needs a thorough physical restoration internally and a reinstatement of some of the former services provided like waiting room and dining room," he emailed the *Herald*.

Fremantle train station celebrates its centenary in 2007 and Cr Dowson said he'd like to see the restoration complete

herald thinking allowed

... with Michael Willicombe

MICHAEL WILLICOMBE has been a strident critic of plans for the front of Fremantle train station, arguing for a park instead of the bus turning area. In this **THINKING ALLOWED**, he replies to some recent potshots at his plan.



Action station needed for Freo gateway

IN the *Fremantle Herald* of November 12 2005, Agnieszka Kiera made comment about the extensive liaison between council and the Port Authority, Transperth and the design team involved with the Port redevelopment as a whole, and the treatment of the train station forecourt in particular.

She seemed to think I was ill-informed about the work to date. I am not. In fact, it was my drawing, done in 1985 for the design of a park in front of the train station, that was developed into one of the earliest design layouts done for discussion by Ian James at council.

I showed it to Ian when I was still at council as he was starting to have discussions on these issues.

Agnieszka also made the comment that a "contemporary" solution was needed to the design of this space, as if to say that what I was seeking was "dated".

Well I've checked "contemporary" in my latest *Oxford English Dictionary* – "following modern ideas in style and design". There is no mention here of any requirement for contemporary design, with important public spaces such as the train station forecourt, to include expansive use of asphalt, concrete or brick paving so buses and taxis can have turning space in front of the main entrance.

I have visited many superb train stations in cities across Europe, Australia and elsewhere, where a modest walk between the train station and the buses and

taxis has been created precisely in order to create a very attractive entry setting for the station.

And precisely to create a more attractive and enjoyable civic space for all users.

This is why I talked before of a questionnaire outside the train station where all users would comment.

I stand by my assertion that 95 per cent of users, including taxi and bus users, would in fact be very happy walking an extra 20m or so (and may God give them the strength!) through this beautiful civic space in front of the train station in lieu of the current proposed concrete turning space for buses.

A memorable entrance statement to Fremantle please! Not a guard rail! We have that guard rail now and we will have it still in the current design.

In Perth, there is a much greater distance to walk between trains and buses and no travellers faint from exhaustion.

True contemporary design throughout the modern world consistently creates beautiful civic gardens and civic spaces for pedestrians in front of significant high use buildings such as train stations.

It is always accepted that this is a contemporary design principle that must override any preference by other players (such as Transperth in this case) for cars, or buses or taxis. Just think – you have to walk a bit to get a taxi or bus from the Sydney Opera House! Thank goodness Transperth didn't get in on that design.

We don't have an opera house, but we do have a beautiful train station right at the axis of the main entrance street into Fremantle and it could be spectacular. For God's sake let's not cock it up with a bus turning area.

Agnieszka, I accept that a lot of discussion has taken place and the current design is a "compromise" between the vested interests. But I'm sorry, again I will ask, "Why should we compromise?"

This simply does not disguise the fact that this is a very poor design outcome in terms of modern urban design principles for such a significant building in such a significant location as the primary visitor gateway to Fremantle.

We can do much better, and easily too. The people here in Fremantle, and our visitors, deserve much better.

This document was compiled by John Dowson, Deputy Mayor of Fremantle, as an individual response to issues relating to the Fremantle Railway Station aspects of the Phillimore Street Masterplan. This document does not represent a council view, but a personal one.

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9335 2113 j_dowson@yahoo.com

December, 2005

