



LEADSUN

EST. 2005

ALWAYS DEPENDABLE



CASE STUDY

CLIENT

Bass Coast Shire Council

PROJECT

Wonthaggi Rail Trail

TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

Bunurong People

Bass Coast Rail Trail's 'dark tunnel' receives solar illumination to connect local communities

The neighbouring towns of Wonthaggi and South Dudley in rural Victoria are co-located along a short section of the 23-kilometre Bass Coast Rail Trail

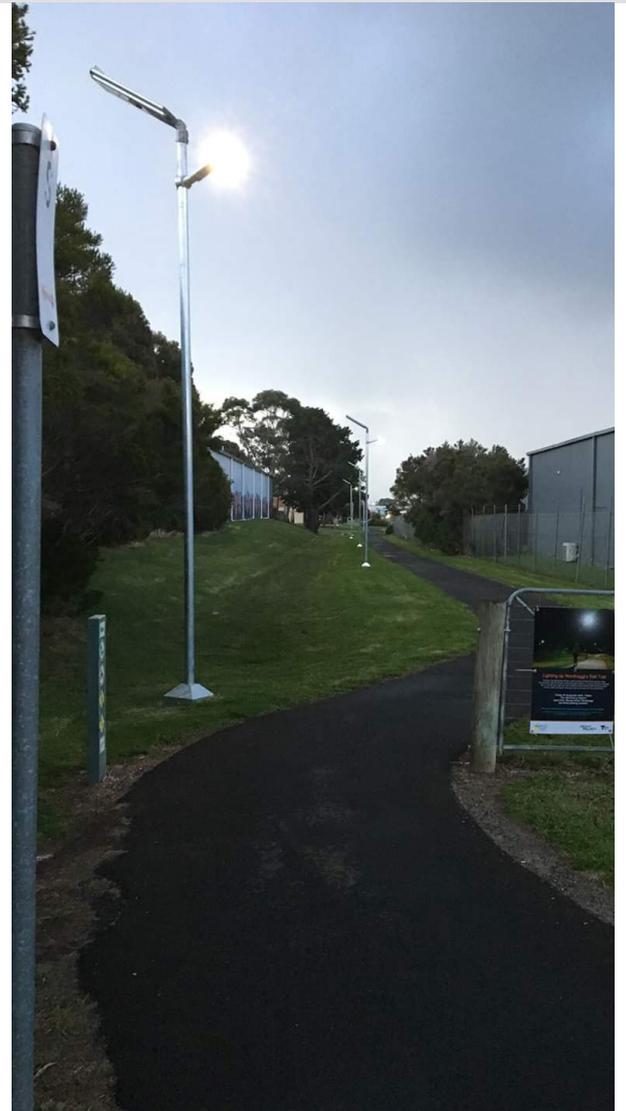
When trains ceased operating over 40 years ago, the 1.3-kilometre stretch of old railway became devoid of activity. Fortunately, the Bass Coast Rail Trail development reactivated the area for cyclists and pedestrians during the day. However, the path still plunged into darkness at night – reducing visibility and causing safety concerns for locals.

Trail's tunnel of darkness divides two townships

“At night, there was a dark tunnel between the townships of South Dudley and Wonthaggi. Even at dusk and dawn, it was too dim for locals to walk, ride or scoot along the trail safely,” said local resident Karen Thorp. In lobbying for Wonthaggi's Apex Park to become the Town Square, Karen and a small team of passionate locals advocated for installing lights along the adjacent trail.

“It's been proven that when you put lights in an area at night, it deters crime and makes the area safer for women and children. So, we knew we needed lights - but getting funding was the next hurdle,” Karen said.

Many Shire-funded projects increase tourism to support the local economy, whereas lighting a short section of the rail trail within the town was valuable to residents more than tourists. As a result, the team chose to submit their 'Rail Trail Illumination Project' to the Victorian Government's 'Pick My Project' grant initiative, whereby local communities vote to decide which ideas add the greatest benefit to their regions and deserve funding.



Project picked for generous funding for Leadsun solar lighting

Backed by strong local voting, the Rail Trail Illumination Project for sustainable grid-free solar lights was successfully awarded a generous grant from the Pick My Project initiative. Originally, Leadsun quoted to supply 48 lights for that figure. However, because Bass Coast Shire was to manage the new community infrastructure, they required Leadsun to formally re-quote the project.

“The Shire told us to expect Leadsun’s quote to go up because that normally happens for approved projects. But Leadsun’s new quote provided more value, which was amazing! Leadsun added three more lighting systems and poles at no extra charge – to illuminate the car park of the Goods Shed, an arts precinct and community event space along the trail. I was so thankful to work with a community-minded company who’d do that for us,” Karen remarked.

Leadsun installed 48 lights on 5.5m poles with strategic solar engine configurations along the trail, from Wonthaggi’s McKenzie Street to South Dudley Road. Our technicians programmed the lights for five hours of full brightness from dusk and then dimmed them down to conserve power. Built-in motion sensors triggered the lights to maximum brightness for 30 seconds upon detecting any movement during the night.

Leadsun’s cable-free solution was a third more affordable than grid-powered lighting. With no ongoing power costs or carbon emissions and minimal maintenance – the community was pleased with the Leadsun installation.

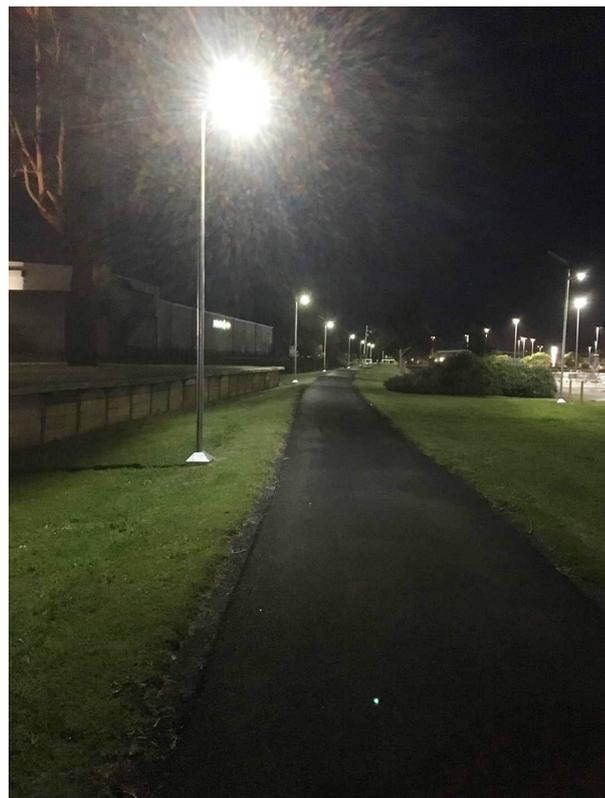
Rail trail lights connect towns and boost wellbeing

The solar lights have brought delight and freedom to residents. With a safe, accessible trail connecting the South Dudley and Wonthaggi communities, the improved visibility enables more people, especially women and children, to use the path beyond daylight hours.

“During the dark time of the pandemic, it was good to have the lights brightening up the trail between our towns and providing a safe space for local people to get out in the fresh air and exercise. The lights helped us all feel more joyful and connected,” said Karen.

“A lady from South Dudley told me, ‘I’m so happy, the trail lights are such a great idea. I wish they’d existed when I was a teenager! But now, my children can finally enjoy the trail as teenagers and be safe’ – so she was extremely pleased.”

“Leadsun were generous, genuine, and reliable. They installed the lighting quickly and gave us more value than we expected, which was incredible and appreciated by the community. Leadsun deserves all the credit they can get.”



Leadsun Products Used

P Category lighting compliance	AS/NZS 1158.3.1 P3/P4
Number of lights	48
Solar module series	AE3
Solar size	80W and 55W
LED output programming	Dusk 100% Illumination for 5hrs then dimmed with PIR adaptive control until dawn
Pole footing type	Ragbolt
Pole type	EZYLift hinged poles, 5.5m high
Additional solutions	EDGE

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this project was undertaken, the Bunurong People. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.