



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Assessment Documentation

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for individuals or groups within Western Australia.

In determining cultural heritage significance, the Heritage Council has had regard to the factors in the *Heritage Act 2018* and the indicators adopted on 14 June 2019.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.8 Moving goods and people
- 3.8.4 Making economic use of inland waterways
- 3.11 Altering the environment
- 3.11.2 Reclaiming land
- 4.1 Planning urban settlement
- 4.1.4 Creating capital cities
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities
- 8.1.3 Developing public parks and gardens

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 107 Settlements
- 109 Environmental change
- 201 River and sea transport
- 308 Commercial services and industries
- 311 Hospitality industry and tourism
- 405 Sport, recreation and entertainment
- 602 Early settlers

11(a) Importance in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Western Australia's history

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth has been associated with river transport since 1845 as there has been a jetty located at the end of Barrack Street since that time.

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth has functioned as a river port since 1905-07, when river transport was booming due to the huge increase in population brought

about by the gold boom and reflects the shift in the role of the river from general transport to recreation following the construction of the Fremantle-Guildford railway.

Barrack Square was part of a major work of land reclamation carried out along the Swan River foreshore to provide improved transport facilities, public open space and recreational facilities.

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth forms part of a network of public open spaces and river amenities established throughout Perth, and was the result of the attitude that developed in the 1870s and 1880s, that squares and parks were needed to enhance the quality of city life.

11(c) Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Western Australia's history;

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth has the potential, through archaeological excavation, to provide information about early river jetty construction, in particular the earlier layout and remains of the former jetties and structures relating to its use as a river port.

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth is valuable as a site of research and information for the management of land reclaimed from the Swan River, and contributes to the knowledge of public engineering practice as it was carried out in the early 20th century.

11(d) Its importance in demonstrating the characteristics of a broader class of places;

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth are the result of a major work of land reclamation carried out along the Swan River foreshore intended to improve river transport facilities and provide public open space in the centre of the city.

11(e) Any strong or special meaning it may have for any group or community because of social, cultural or spiritual associations;

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth contributes to the community's sense of place, as a point of departure and return for river transport and recreation, and as a public place and major landscape feature in a river setting in the centre of the city.

11(f)¹ Its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by any group or community;

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth makes a landmark contribution to the foreshore with the Bell Tower, a prominent unique contemporary structure being the focal

¹ For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

point of the square to the north. The Tower and associated landscaping form a central avenue leading towards the Jetties and the Swan River.

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 CONDITION

Due to *Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth* having been developed in a piecemeal fashion over the years, the key components that make up the place are in a variety of conditions depending on their age. The Jetties are considered to be in a fair condition, with parts of the structures having been upgraded. All the public realm is in good condition as it is relatively new having been completed in 2015. The Bell Tower and jetty pavilions are 20 years old and considering this are in good condition, albeit showing some natural signs of weathering.

12.2 INTEGRITY

This section explains the extent to which the fabric is in its original state.

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth has a very low degree of integrity due to the significant changes that have been undertaken since it was first built, with no remains of the paths laid out as Union Jack Square and the original Paradise style plantings. The important definition of the boundary edge of the square has also been lost through ongoing development of the site. The two principal features that remain are its townscape component as a public open square and its function as an access point to the jetties. Original structures and landscaping have been removed with the square now characterised by an eclectic mix of new buildings which result in the integrity of Barrack Square being very low.

12.3 AUTHENTICITY

This section explains the extent to which the original intention is evident, and the compatibility of current use.

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth has a moderate degree of authenticity with its original intention as a piece of parkland and jetties along the Swan River still evident. The place retains its function as an access point to the jetties and river transport but does not however wholly function as a public park due to its now much more urbanised environment. The jetties were rebuilt in the 1970s and a variety of new buildings added from then onwards to facilitate river transport and associated services. This development has been done in a somewhat ad hoc manner but nonetheless has been undertaken to facilitate the ongoing use of the place. A section of soft green landscaping exists to the eastern half of the square which acts as a small gesture to the place's original intention as parkland.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage in October 1999, with amendments and/or additions by the Heritage Council and the Department.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Noongar people living around the Swan Valley in the pre- and early contact period can broadly be described as comprising small family groups moving through the landscape in response to seasonal change. The Noongar groups living in and around the Perth area are collectively known as the Whadjuk, whose significant cultural sites include Derbal Yerrigan (Swan River) and Karra kata (King's Park). This traditional way of life began to be disturbed after 1829 with the arrival of British colonists, who established the settlements of Perth and Fremantle along the Swan River.²

Barrack Square was established in 1905-07, by reclamation of land from the Swan River.³ Barrack Square was part of a systematic program of reclamation to provide a fringe of parkland around the Swan River. The place is situated at the south end of Barrack Street and is bounded by Riverside Drive to the north, the waters of the Swan River to the east and south, and Elizabeth Quay to the west. Four jetties were constructed (1905-07) off the southern side and in 1973-78, these were rebuilt and a fifth jetty added at the south-east corner. Buildings for the purpose of offices and ticketing are sited on each jetty. A commercial development known as Old Perth Port (1994), designed with regard to the style of the adjacent West Australian Rowing Club building,⁴ abuts the eastern side of the place, but is not included in the area covered by this assessment.

When the Swan River Colony was established in 1829, the sea and the rivers were the only transport routes available to the settlers. The Swan River provided the main transport route from the port at Fremantle to Perth, and on up to Guildford and the Swan Valley area. The first jetty built on the Perth foreshore was at Pier Street in 1829. By 1840, with the increase in population, a need for second town jetty arose. In November 1841 the *Inquirer* reported:

A sudden rage would appear to have sprung up in Perth on the subject of jetties. Until this week...it was somewhat doubtful whether we should even have one, and now we are promised three, within a quarter of a mile of each other – namely the Perth Town Trust Jetty at the end of William Street; the second, projected by a public company, at the end of Mill St; and the third, a private one, at the end of Barrack St to be run by our enterprising townsman Mr H.L. Cole.⁵

In November 1842, the Town Trust Jetty was completed.⁶ By 1845, all three

² 'About the Whadjuk Region', Kaartdijin Noongar – Noongar Knowledge, accessed 5 February 2020, <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/whadjuk/>

³ The place has been referred to as Barrack Square throughout the document as neither Union Jack Square nor Harper Square were gazetted names (Lands Administration file, CON 4080, 1938/1205, Public Records Office), and there is only one reference to the name Flagstaff Square (Seddon & Ravine, Index note). The place was usually referred to as Barrack Street Square or Barrack Street Jetty. Current PCC files on the place occasionally refer to it as Harper Square, but this name is not commonly known.

⁴ Apperly, R., Irving, R. and Reynolds, P. A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and terms from 1788 to the present, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1994, pp. 108-111.

⁵ *Inquirer*, 24 November 1841, as quoted in Stannage, C. T, *The People of Perth: A social history of Western Australia's capital city*. Perth City Council, 1979, p. 58.

⁶ Ibid, Stannage p.59

jetties were in operation.⁷ Barrack Street Jetty was also known as Cole's Jetty, after the first chairman of the Perth City Council (Mr. Henry Laroche Cole).⁸ Ferries and charter boats operated up and down the river, conveying goods and passengers.⁹ The first boats were powered by sail or oar, and the first steamer, built on the foreshore below Mt Eliza, was launched on 13 October 1854.¹⁰

The area along the foreshore between Barrack and Pier streets was the site of the Supreme Court building, and a police establishment comprising barracks, stables and boatsheds. In 1858, Pier Street was closed off from the river with the construction of the new Government House and the Pier Street jetty became the Government House Jetty. Barrack Street jetty was extended to take over the general cargo function previously accommodated at the Pier Street jetty.¹¹ William Street jetty was also used for cargo, and products such as sandalwood, hides and wool were loaded onto barges, which were then towed by steamer to Fremantle.¹² Mill Street jetty was the centre of boatbuilding activities.

With the opening of the Fremantle to Guildford railway line in 1881, river transport between the major points of settlement was substantially reduced. In 1882, there was only one licensed ferry on the Swan River, but as commercial use of the river declined, recreational use increased. This was facilitated by reclamation work which created the Esplanade Reserve on the foreshore between William Street and Barrack Street.

This reclamation work commenced in 1873 by the Public Works Department and was completed in 1881, after the land was handed over to the Perth Municipal Council by deed of grant 'for the free recreation and enjoyment of the people forever.'¹³ Despite a shortage of funds, the Council allocated £1,000 for work on the New Recreation Ground and sand infill was carted from the foot of Mt Eliza.¹⁴ Further reclamation was carried out in the late 1880s, creating what was described as 'a parallelogram' which 'crosses the (Barrack Street) jetty at its south-eastern boundary, forming an irregular triangle.'¹⁵ This effectively landlocked the south-east end of the jetty.

Creation of parkland along the river was supported by the people of Perth as demonstrated by the letters and editorials published between 1875 and 1890, and the plans drawn up by the PWD.¹⁶ Western Australia was following the trends of England with regard to the establishment of parks and recreation areas. In the early nineteenth century domain lands and government gardens fulfilled

⁷ Offen, Richard, *Lost Perth*, Pavilion Books, 2018, p.53.

⁸ *Inquirer*, 7 April 1875, as quoted in Seddon & Ravine, op. cit., p. 125.

⁹ Nind, Michael. 'Sails and Oars on the Swan, 1829 to 1849', *Early Days*, Vol. 8 Part 5, 1981, pp. 53-62.

¹⁰ Seddon, George & Ravine, David, *A City and Its Setting: Images of Perth, Western Australia*, Fremantle, FACP, 1986, p. 56.

¹¹ 'Supreme Court Conservation Plan', Heritage and Conservation Professionals, 1998, pp. 53-55.

¹² Seddon, G. & Ravine, D. op cit, p. 123.

¹³ Menagh, C. E. 'The Esplanade - link to WA's history', *West Australian*, 29 November 1978, p. 7.

¹⁴ *West Australian*, 7 June 1881, p. 3.

¹⁵ *West Australian*, 12 June 1890, p. 2.

¹⁶ *The Inquirer & Commercial News*, 7 & 28 April, 1875, p. 2; *West Australian*, 7 June 1881, p. 3; *West Australian*, 15 November 1884, p. 3; *West Australian*, 11 February 1885, p. 3; *West Australian*, 9 December 1886, p. 2; PWD WA 38, 1887 & 6172, 1897.

the role of parklands.¹⁷ With the growth of industrialisation, however, the middle-class desired 'idealised landscapes at the edge of their fast growing towns.'¹⁸ While English parks were placed on poor land in established towns, the relatively new Australian towns were able to develop their parks in prime city locations.¹⁹

The establishment of parks was also closely linked to wealth, with the result that Perth did not begin to develop a comprehensive system of parks until the early 1900s, when a civic infrastructure was being developed and consolidated after the gold rushes. In the absence of the sea, many public reserves were associated with rivers. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, parks were also a response to the focus on health and outdoor cures, and were the only public provision for outdoor recreation at the time.²⁰

As well as creating public reserve land, the reclamation work also got rid of the mudflats and shallows along the Swan River foreshore which were a breeding ground for noxious smelling algae, and mosquitoes. In addition to sand from the base of Mount Eliza, much of the fill for the reclamation was from silt and shell dredged up from the Swan River in an ongoing effort to keep the waterway navigable.²¹

Structures for recreational use of the river were constructed off the Esplanade Reserve foreshore. Royal Perth Yacht Club (1881), Perth Flying Squadron clubhouse (1890) and Perth City Baths (1897) made the area popular for sports and enjoyment of the river.²²

In the 1890s, river transport began to pick up again with the huge population increase created by the gold boom. Ferry services across the river to Mends Street and Coode Street in South Perth were established in 1897. Previously, the lack of population on the south bank and the services of a horse-drawn tram across the Causeway had made a regular ferry service impractical.²³ The new ferry services were run from Barrack Street jetty by boat builder Herman (Harry) Sutton in partnership with Jack, and later Oscar, Olsen.²⁴

The Barrack Street jetty area was also the site of the West Australian Rowing Club, Swan River Rowing Club, Mounts Bay Sailing Club and the Royal Ophir Pleasure Boat Co, as well as boat hire operations. A jetty used by the Harbour and Rivers Department was situated on the foreshore to the east of Barrack Street. Perth Water was also the site of recreational and competitive sailing, with the river off Perth foreshore dotted with moored sailing boats.²⁵ The Perth City Baths, situated between Barrack Street and William Street jetties, was an added

17 Ramsay, Juliet, *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A classification and assessment method for the register of the National Estate*, Australian Heritage Commission, 1991, pp. 6-7.

18 Chadwick, George F. *The Park and the Town*, Architectural Press, London, 1966, pp. 314.

19 Ramsay, Juliet, *op cit*.

20 *ibid*; Chadwick, George F. *op cit*, p. 377; Richards, Oline, 'A fairer Athens & a freer Rome: Historic public gardens in Perth, WA' *Heritage Australia*, Winter, 1982, pp. 66-69.

21 Dickson, Rod, *They Kept This State Afloat: Shipbuilders, boatbuilders and shipwrights of WA, 1829-1929*, Hesperian Press, 1998, p. xi; HCWA assessment 3850 'Esplanade Reserve'.

22 HCWA assessment 3850 'Esplanade Reserve', *op cit*; photographs c. 1900, 472B/1-3, Battye Library.

23 Passmore, George, 'Harbours & Rivers PWD 1902-1934', *World Ship Society: Fremantle Branch Newsletter*, Vol 14, Nos. 8 & 9, September 1995, pp. 444-446 & 462-464.

24 Dickson, Rod, *op cit*, pp. i-xv; Photograph, c 1900, Barrack Street jetty, Battye Library 9647P.

25 Photograph, Seddon, G. & Ravine, D. *op cit*, fig. 2.2, p. 20.

river attraction. Pleasure cruises to Garden and Rottnest Islands and other picnic spots had become popular, and larger boats were constructed to carry passengers on these pleasure cruises. While the ferries operated from Barrack Street jetty, the pleasure cruises operated from William Street jetty.²⁶

In 1904, 100,000 passengers were ferried back and forth across the river, Perth Zoo being a major attraction for travellers to the south side.²⁷ The increased river traffic and the berthing of growing numbers of large steam boats required better wharf facilities on Perth foreshore.

The PWD foreshore reclamation plan, which had been approved as early as 1897, was refined to include a square at the end of Barrack Street for 'wharfage, baths, and other purposes', and the dredging of channels to the jetties at Coode and Mends streets to alleviate the problem of shallow water levels. The plan was published in the *Western Mail*, in 1904, with the following comments:

Here we give a plan which will convey an idea of the improvements proposed in the scheme of the Engineer in Chief, Mr. C.S.R. Palmer, to be made to Perth Water and foreshore ... so disposing of the dredged material that reclaiming along the foreshore what is now exposed river bed at low water will form valuable reserves ... Barrack Street is to be widened to 100ft along the reclamation, and a square formed for wharfage, baths and other purposes ... [P]rovision is also shown on the plan for the deepening and enlarging of the existing channels, and generally of improving the waterways ... There is no intention of making the whole scheme a cast-iron one, but rather to admit of it being so varied in the future as the requirement of the time may demand.²⁸

Also included in the work to be carried out at this time was the reclamation of the foreshore between Barrack Street and Lord Street, now Victoria Avenue, and the straightening of the foreshore between William and Barrack Street, parallel with St George's Terrace. Stepped breastwork was added along the river edge making the river more accessible for boats and people.²⁹ The work was welcomed at the time.

The immense area that has already been reclaimed is truly a boon to the town ... nothing short of the State's bankruptcy should allow the work to come to a standstill ... a delightful resort, with over a mile of river frontage, laid out in gardens, walks and drives...³⁰

Barrack Square was constructed by building banks of shell sealed with pitch to create an enclosed square projecting off the existing stone river wall. The enclosure was filled by pumping in soil from the dredging works. A 500 foot by 23 foot (152m x 7m) timber wharf ran the full length of the southern face of the place

²⁶ Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth: A social history of Western Australia's capital city*. Perth City Council, 1979, p. 316; Wise's Post Office Directory, 1903; Dickson, Rod, op cit.

²⁷ Batholomeusz, Cheryll, 'History of Ferry Services on the Swan River, 1830-1969', bound typescript, 1969, p. 12.

²⁸ *Western Mail*, 13 February 1904, p. 44, 'Plan for Perth Water'.

²⁹ LePage, J.S.H. op cit, p. 332; PWD drawing 11340, 31 July 1904, PWD File 'Swan River Vol. 2' AN7 ACC 689 Item 334, Public Records Office; photograph 1933, 3373B/97 Battye Library.

³⁰ *West Australian*, 16 August 1906, p. 6.

and four jetties projected from the wharf into the river. The place was 300 feet (91m) deep.³¹

The old Barrack Street jetty continued to be used until the eastern section of Barrack Square and the first three jetties were completed in 1905, at which time the ferry services moved to the new jetties. The construction of the place in two sections was facilitated by an internal shell bank running north-south, roughly in line with the western boundary of Barrack Street. Once the eastern section was complete and functioning, the old wooden jetties and the collection of sheds were demolished.³² The western section of Barrack Square and the fourth jetty were completed in 1907.³³

The Swan River Rowing Club (SRRC) and the West Australian Rowing Club (WARC) were relocated to the foreshore east of Barrack Square. The WARC was to be located further east on the foreshore but was moved closer to the Square to its present site. This was at the request of the Governor, Admiral Sir Frederick Bedford, so it would be hidden from the view of Government House by the eucalyptus trees on the southern boundary of Government House gardens.³⁴

New boat sheds for lease by commercial operators, were constructed by the Government off the western side of Barrack Square in 1907.

The PWD have built by contract a number of boatsheds for the use of those people who hire out boats, and sell soft drinks and sweets to the crabbers who congregate on the bank of the river ... [The boat sheds] have a frontage [to Barrack Street] of about 200 feet and a depth of about 60 feet, and stand on an understructure of piles and cross-pieces ... they are roofed together ... and have cost £2,250 ... For storing boats there is too much ornamentation in the way of doors and windows.³⁵

The surface of Barrack Square was first covered with shell, but PWD Engineer-In-Chief James Thompson expressed a wish that the 'crude shelled over surface' should be improved. A design for the place, approved in May 1905, incorporated a Union Jack design,

a geometrical design ... intrinsically more appropriate to the conditions of the case than those more curved lines which would be the proper attribute of ornamental grounds, or of places where there would be likely to be less active traffic and congregation of people.³⁶

The plan called for the shell to be cleared off the areas between the paths and for the cleared ground to be left bare for some time so the rain could wash out

³¹ Le Page, J. S. H. *Building a State: The Story of the Public Works Department of Western Australia 1829-1985* Leederville, WAWA, 1986, p. 332; PWD drawing 11340, 31 July 1904, PWD File 'Swan River Vol. 2' AN7 ACC 689 Item 334, Public Records Office.

³² Le Page, J. S. H. op cit, p. 332; PWD drawing 11340, 31 July 1904, op cit.

³³ PWD Drawing 11340, 31 July 1904, & correspondence, 14 July 1905, PWD file 'Swan River Vol. 2' op cit. The main section of Barrack Street jetty may have been constructed of limestone and some of it may be part of the fill for Barrack Square.

³⁴ Correspondence & Plan 11340, 14 July 1905, PWD File 'Swan River Vol. 2, op cit.

³⁵ *The Morning Herald*, Editorial, 5 September 1907, sighted in PWD 'Press cuttings book, 1905-1911' AN7/11 ACC 748, Item 1, Public Records Office. Barrack Street ran through the centre of Barrack Square to the wharf. The 1904 PWD plan shows a bandstand in the centre of Barrack Square, but no evidence exists that this was constructed. Use of the place appears to have been for transport purposes only.

³⁶ Memorandum for Engineer-In-Chief, 26 April 1905, PWD file 'Swan River Vol. 2', op cit; MWSS & DD drawing No. 23, 24 April 1944. No mention of the Union Jack design was found in the *West Australian* or the *Western Mail* for 1905-1907. A report on the plan in the *Western Mail*, 1 July 1905, p. 33 did not mention the layout.

the salt from the river fill. These areas were then to be grassed and planted with 'a few palms' and 'flower beds'.³⁷ The Union Jack design was marked out with a post and chain fence comprising 'chain artistically hung on a couple of hundred posts'. Someone wasn't entirely happy with the final result however, because, according to a ferry passenger, 'this part of the work was nicely finished off ... when a gang of men arrived one morning and spent a couple of days rooting out every alternate upright'.³⁸

In 1906, the jetties were made the responsibility of the Harbour and Lights Department, while Barrack Square itself remained the responsibility of the PWD.³⁹ In January 1907, another newspaper editorial commented on the newly laid out and newly planted square:

It would be difficult indeed to overpraise the improvements that have within the past twelve months been effected here ... The so called "Barrack-street Square" ... is really a series of squares intersected by drives and footpaths. The work of tree-planting has been pursued vigorously and systematically, and already with satisfactory results. The main street has been continued to the edge of the water, and persons travelling to South Perth can step almost from the tram to the ticket office ... the work has made the "Zoo" and the pleasant suburb of South Perth more accessible places.⁴⁰

Twelve months later, a 'remarkable increase in the popularity of river trips' was attributed to the new Square from which the 'excursion steamers' now ran instead of from William Street jetty.⁴¹

The new work ... erection of boat sheds on west side of Square, finishing of No. 4 jetty, and ticket offices, completion of gardens and removal of Departmental workshops and offices [was completed]. The wharves just here are now 'spic and span'.⁴²

Among those who operated from Barrack Square were boat building partners G. McCarter and P. Anderson, who advertised themselves as designers and builders of high grade motor launches, yachts and rowing boats, and builders to the 'West Australian Government, the Principal Rowing Clubs, Public Schools, etc'. They also hired out boats, including the *Ophir* series of motor launches with 'competent men in charge'. This business was later taken over by Tom Rann.⁴³

Harry Sutton and Oscar Olsen's Swan River Ferry Company ran the Applecross, Canning Bridge and Como services with the 'Val' series of steamers. These were the *Valkyrie*, *Valhalla*, *Valdemar*, *Valdivia*, *Valthora* and *Valfrida*, built between 1904 and 1910, and the double-decked ferries, *Valdana* (1919) and *Valkyrie II* (1925). The Swan River Ferry Company did not have a monopoly on the ferry

³⁷ Memorandum for Engineer-In-Chief, 26 April 1905, op cit.

³⁸ *West Australian*, letter to the Editor from 'Zooite', 25 September 1906, sighted in PWD 'Press cuttings book, 1905-1911' op cit; Photograph, Barrack Square 1906, Battye Library 10020P. Early photographs of Barrack Square are scarce. The library at the *West Australian* has been unable to locate any even for its own use.

³⁹ Harbour & Lights File, Public Records Office, AN16/5 ACC 1066, 'Handing jetties over to Harbour & Lights', 24 August 1906; *The State Gardens Board: Twenty Years Progress and Policy 1919-1939*, Perth, State Gardens Board, [1940], p. 29.

⁴⁰ *Central Perth Foreshore Study - Interim Report*, March 1985, p. 65; *West Australian*, Editorial, 16 January 1907, sighted in PWD 'Press cuttings book, 1905-1911' op cit.

⁴¹ *West Australian*, Editorial, 27 January 1908, sighted in PWD 'Press cuttings book, 1905-1911' op cit.

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ Dickson, Rod, op cit, p. 177.

service to the south shore, as the State Government purchased the Mends Street jetty in 1912 and established State Ferries to run that route.⁴⁴

Boat hire businesses at *Barrack Square and Jetties, Perth* were run by Charles Hawkins, and Woodhead & Flowers. The Perth Dinghy Club had its premises and boats at the place and many private owners kept row boats and steam launches moored nearby. The steamships *Zephyr* and *Westralian* were berthed at *Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth*. Mrs E. M. Pound ran the refreshment rooms, and her husband, James, a painter and decorator also operated from the place. The Pounds lived on the premises, as did some of the other lessees.⁴⁵

On 21 February 1922, a fire destroyed the boat sheds, the refreshment rooms, and many boats. Losses amounted to over £6,000.⁴⁶ After the fire, Tom Rann moved his boat building business to Mill Street where he continued to operate until 1942, when the land was reclaimed for Riverside Drive. Of the private operators, only the Swan River Ferry Company remained at Barrack Square.⁴⁷ The Government did not rebuild the boat sheds, possibly because the boom in river transport was coming to an end as other means of transport such as trains, trams and the new motor vehicles became popular. Other areas of the Swan River had also been developed for recreation by this time. The Perth City Baths had been superseded by Crawley Baths in 1914 and demolished in 1920, with only the jetty remaining until much later.

In the early 1920s, the State Gardens Board, set up to care for public parks and gardens, put new plantings in the Supreme Court Garden, and may have planted more trees at Barrack Square at the same time.⁴⁸ A 1924 newspaper report commented on 'the notable improvements to the water frontages opposite and adjacent to the city, which have been carried out by the State Gardens Board in recent years.'⁴⁹ The plantings of cotton palms and Moreton Bay Fig trees on Barrack Square was in keeping with the Paradise style plantings of Esplanade Reserve and Supreme Court Gardens.

In 1933, Perth City Council (PCC) requested that the State Government allow them to take control of all the river front reserves within the Council's boundaries. The State Government agreed to vest the land in the PCC on condition that it constructed a riverside drive from the Causeway to Mounts Bay Road within three years. The PCC agreed. A gravelled roadway already existed from Barrack Street to Victoria Avenue, constructed c.1905 when the Supreme Court Gardens and the western section of Langley Park were created by reclamation. Riverside Drive, from the Causeway to William Street was opened in August 1937.⁵⁰

In 1938, the Barrack Street to Victoria Street section of Riverside Drive was widened and sealed and Barrack Square was gazetted Reserve 21881 and

44 *ibid*; *World Ship Society*: Passmore, George, *op cit*.

45 Wise's Post Office Directory, 1921.

46 *West Australian*, 22 February 1922, p. 3, sighted in PWD 'Departmental press cuttings, 1911-1941', AN7/11, ACC 748, Item 2.

47 Passmore, George, *op cit*.

48 The State Gardens Board, *op cit*, p. 24.

49 *West Australian*, 3 July 1924, sighted in PWD 'Departmental press cuttings, 1911-1941' *op cit*.

50 PWD File 'Swan River - control of foreshore Crawley to Causeway and construction of Riverside Drive,' AN7 ACC 689, Item 1082/33, Public Records Office.

vested in the City of Perth, for the purpose of Park and Gardens.⁵¹ The Reserve was made up of Perth Town Lots 733-736, each of the four lots being a corner section of the Union Jack design.⁵² The vesting order was 'subject to the right reserved by the Crown to cancel the vesting order and resume control when the area is required as a traffic terminal'.⁵³ The jetties, and the 28 foot (7m) strip of timber wharf along the southern edge of the place, remained the responsibility of the Harbour and Lights Department. In 1939, the PCC renamed the place Harper Square, most probably after Charles Harper, Lord Mayor of Perth, 1937-1939.⁵⁴

Barrack Square and Jetties, Perth continued to be the focus of ferry and river cruise journeys, with greater controls were placed on use of the river to combat rubbish dumping and pollution.⁵⁵ The construction of the *Narrows Bridge* (P4795 RHP) and the Kwinana and Mitchell Freeways in the 1950s and 1960s, necessitated further reclamation work in the area, which created parkland on the west side of Barrack Square. The freeway interchange, located across the reclaimed land, encroached on the north-west corner of the place.⁵⁶ The construction of the Narrows Bridge reduced the use of the ferry services across the river, but as the ferries declined, pleasure cruises grew. Night and day cruises to Fremantle and the Swan Valley wineries, charter cruises and ferries to Rottnest continued to ply the river, and the boats were getting bigger.

Between 1973 and 1978, the jetties at Barrack Square were progressively replaced and upgraded to cater for the larger boats, and a fifth jetty was added at the south-east corner. On the east side of Barrack Square, a new jetty was built for the Harbour and Lights and Police Departments.⁵⁷ The seven metre wide wharf, which acted as the main footpath providing access to the jetties, was replaced with land fill and paved. The paving was continued around the east and west sides of Barrack Square to form a promenade.

The wharf was no longer considered part of the jetties and in 1979, the Harbour and Lights Department passed control of this area to the PCC. The wharf was also the area where 'touting' for customers took place, as boat operators competed for business, and the PCC now found itself responsible for controlling this activity.⁵⁸

In 1979, the Government cancelled Reserve 21881 and revoked the vesting order. Barrack Square was designated a road reserve.⁵⁹ At some point, a roundabout was established in the centre of Barrack Square for better traffic movement. The tram terminus, Barrack Square now became a bus terminus. As

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- 51 PWD File 'Swan River - control of foreshore Crawley to Causeway and construction of Riverside Drive,' op cit; *West Australian Government Gazette*, 22 July 1938, p. 1131.
- 52 Lands Administration file, op cit; Site plan 1981, PCC file 529/81.
- 53 PWD File 'Swan River - control of foreshore Crawley to Causeway and construction of Riverside Drive,' op cit.
- 54 First reference to the name is a letter dated 12 September 1939, Lands Administration file, op cit.
- 55 The Swan River Conservation Board (1958-1976) was the first river management body. It was superseded by the Swan River Management Authority (1976-1989), which was in turn superseded by the Swan River Trust (1989-).
- 56 Site plans 1998.
- 57 Le Page, op cit, p. 598; *West Australian*, 13 February 1980, op cit.
- 58 Perth City Council file, 'Barrack Square June 1977-December 1980', 529/81.
- 59 *West Australian Government Gazette*, 12 October 1979, p. 3169; Lands Administration file, op cit. Correspondence in this file states that the legal position of Reserve 21881 was in limbo as no name was ever gazetted, and boundaries of the place were not clearly defined.

well as creating access and traffic problems, the buses effectively restricted the view across Barrack Square to the river.

In the 1980s, the Central Perth Foreshore Study Group found that Barrack Square needed more public facilities. At peak summer times, about 4,000 people and 18 vessels a day were utilising the place.⁶⁰ One developer put forward adventurous plans at a cost of around \$8 million, but these were not considered viable. Development on a smaller scale that also encouraged family use was preferred.

In 1994, the No. 6 jetty was constructed on the east side of Barrack Square in place of the Harbour & Lights and Police Departments' jetty, as both Departments had relocated to Fremantle. This jetty was demolished at the time of the redevelopment of Barrack Square in 1999-2000 but retains a boardwalk that includes a two-storey timber commercial complex (1994), known as Old Perth Port (not included in this assessment).⁶¹

In 1998, the State Government commissioned Perth architectural firm Hames Sharley to design a plan for the redevelopment of the place. The focus of the redevelopment was to 'enhance the current use of Barrack Square by ferry and cruise operators by improving passenger access and facilities'.⁶²

In September 1998, an archaeological survey of Barrack Square was undertaken on behalf of the Swan River Trust to identify Aboriginal Sites of significance due to the proposed redevelopment. The resulting report concluded that the area has low Aboriginal archaeological potential.⁶³

The redevelopment also included the design and construction of the Bell Tower (1999-2000) to commemorate and celebrate the new millennium. The inspiration for the design of the Tower came from the historical context of Barrack Square, as a place where boat building was a prominent activity. As a result, the design of the Tower is that of a contemporary structure, 82.5 metres high that is evocative of boats and sailing. This is conveyed by way of external copper clad 'sails' which reflect the maritime history of the area, and the use of copper is a reminder of the importance of mining to the state.⁶⁴

The Tower contains 51 bells, including 12 historic change ringing bells from St Martin-in-the-Fields church in Trafalgar Square, London. These bells, with the addition of five new ones, were presented to the State of Western Australia as part of the 1988 Australian Bicentenary celebrations and a further bell was added in 2000 to celebrate the Millennium. The six new bells were manufactured by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, London, and were cast using copper and tin mined in Western Australia.⁶⁵ In addition to these 18 bells, the tower contains a carillon of 26 bells, originally part of the National Carillon in Canberra, a clock chime of five bells from Ascott Racecourse, Windsor, UK, the oldest bell in Australia (c1550)

⁶⁰ Central Perth Foreshore Study - Interim Report, March 1985, p. 61.

⁶¹ Perth City Council files, 101/90, September 1987-June 1990; 4900631/4739; P1008082/1, July 1994-October 1997.

⁶² *Barrack Square: Draft Master Plan*, Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet & Hames Sharley.

⁶³ Johnson, Barry, Swan River Trust, 'Stage 1 Barrack Square Redevelopment and Associated Works: Report on Ethnographic Consultation', Swan River Trust, September 1998, unpublished report.

⁶⁴ Hames Sharley. Swan Bells Tower. Available at: <https://www.hamessharley.com.au/project/swan-bells-tower>

⁶⁵ Pickford, C.J., Unpublished History of the Bell Tower, 2015.

and the ANZAC Bell. The 6.5 tonne ANZAC Bell, which was cast in Canning Vale, is the heaviest bell in Australia and is a State War Memorial. The 18 change ringing bells are rung at set times of the week and for special occasions by a volunteer group, the St Martin's Society of Change Ringers. The tower is open to the public daily and also used as a venue for weddings and corporate functions.⁶⁶

An inlaid path to the east of the Bell Tower was made of ceramic tiles, with each tile consisting of the signatures of some of the youngest and oldest cohorts of students from nearly every school in Western Australia from 1999, arranged alphabetically by school name. This was later removed as part of the construction of Elizabeth Quay project with the signatures having been reinterpreted within a new artwork to the east of the tower.⁶⁷

In 2014 during the construction of Elizabeth Quay, the area, including Barrack Square was subject to numerous archaeological assessments. During excavation works around Barrack Street jetty, a "sizeable wooden beam" thought to be part of the original jetty was uncovered and work was halted temporarily.⁶⁸

In 2020, Barrack Square no longer bears much physical resemblance to its original form. The Union Jack design employed in the formal layout of the Square in 1905 has been lost along with much of the original Paradise style plantings. The important definition of the boundary edge of the square has also been lost due to ongoing development of the site, which has resulted in a reduction in the size of Barrack Square due to high rise infill development.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth comprises an open public square on the foreshore of the Swan River, located at the southern end of Barrack Street near the central business district of Perth. The area predominantly functions as a ferry terminal and recreation area that is characterised by a variety of buildings to its perimeter and a combination of hard and soft landscaping that form the public realm.

The design of *Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth* addresses the relationship between the river and the city centre. It forms the termination of Barrack Street and is a major feature on the Perth foreshore. These factors, combined with the landscaping and the concentration of buildings provide an indicator and focal point for people accessing the foreshore and the river.

Siting

The place is situated at the south end of Barrack Street and is bounded by Riverside Drive to the north, the waters of the Swan River on the east and south, and Elizabeth Quay to the west. There are five jetties to the southern edge of the site with two jetty pavilions to the east and west corners that support the port operations. There is a building complex accommodating a mix of uses to the south east edge of the site known as the Old Perth Port. To the north east corner of the site, there is a nearly completed hotel development known as Double Tree

⁶⁶ <https://www.thebelltower.com.au/activities-to-do-in-perth/>

⁶⁷ <https://www.mra.wa.gov.au/see-and-do/elizabeth-quay/attractions/signature-ring>

⁶⁸ <https://www.perthnow.com.au/news/wa/historic-find-work-stopped-on-elizabeth-quay-after-wooden-beams-dug-up-ng-6508156eb70755ce57cbf3cbc122e9d1>

Hilton. Dominating the western edge of the site is the major development of the Towers and Ritz-Carlton that has a frontage to Elizabeth Quay as well as Barrack Square. The Double Tree Hotel, the Towers and Ritz Carlton and Old Perth Port are not included in the curtilage for this assessment.

A prominent feature of the site is the Bell Tower that marks the focal point of the square and arrival from the north. The centre of the square encompasses a pedestrianised landscape of gardens and pathways to link all the various buildings and jetties together as one piece of public realm. Integrated within this area is vehicular access to the perimeter of the square that serves the various buildings.

In summary, the place can be divided into the following key physical components, with a detailed physical description provided for each:

- The Jetties (1973-78, 2000)
- The Jetty Pavilions (2000)
- The Bell Tower (2000)
- Public Realm (2015)

The Jetties (1973-78 and 2000)

There were originally four jetties built on the site in 1905-07, located along the foreshore to the south edge of the square. Between 1973 and 1978, these were removed and rebuilt with a fifth jetty added at the south-east corner. These five jetties remain extant and are constructed from timber pylons with concrete slab decking. In 2000 they were extended to improve functional and service requirements. The jetty to the south east corner of the site (jetty no.5) has three smaller jetties that run perpendicular to the main jetty extending to the east. Water, fire and electrical services, and a proliferation of equipment associated with boarding and disembarking from the boats, are evident on all jetties. Each jetty also accommodates a single storey open covered area constructed from a steel frame structure with corrugated sheet roofing.

The Jetty Pavilions (2000)

As part of the Barrack Square Redevelopment in 2000, two double storey multi-function pavilions were built adjacent to the jetties to support port operations that include ticketing, administration, retail, storage and waiting areas. They are built as two independent identical structures in a cruciform layout on the shoreward end of the existing jetties, and constructed over water spanning between jetties no.1 and no.3 and jetties no.3 and no.4. This disposition reinforces the symmetry found in the original layout of the square and contributes to the axial alignment to Barrack Street that retains visibility of the Bell Tower.

The scale, bulk and character of the two buildings are sympathetic with the nearby Old Perth Port building complex and the WA Rowing Club which demonstrate aesthetic characteristics of a nautical and maritime appearance.

The ground floor of both pavilions primarily accommodates the ticketing and administrative functions of the cruise operators with additional tourist support retail outlets, food outlets and cafes. The upper levels accommodate business function areas, bar and entertainment facilities. A metal clad external lift is

located to the northern side of both buildings that acts as a dominant feature due to it puncturing the roof form.

The pavilions are made from a steel frame structure with generous double height verandahs and deep overhanging eaves. The cladding is predominantly dark stained timber weather boarding with corrugated iron sheet roofing. There are steel frame staircases to both the north and south elevations and also steel post and rail balconies with steel wire balustrading.

The Bell Tower (2000)

The Bell Tower is the centrepiece of the Barrack Square Redevelopment undertaken in 2000 to commemorate and celebrate the new millennium. It is a unique contemporary structure carefully positioned to align with the vista up and down Barrack Street and located adjacent to Riverside Drive. It was designed by local architectural firm Hames Sharley. The brief requirement was to express acknowledgement of the past and confidence and hope for the future. Its position and height in Barrack Square is essential to provide a theatrical presentation to the city and the foreshore.

The tower contains a set of 18 bells hanging in over an 80m high copper and glass campanile. To achieve the required rigidity, the Bell Tower was made with in-situ reinforced concrete, clad in glass and copper and surmounted by a glass and steel spire. The historical artefacts of the bells contained within provide a sense of drama and contrast to the tower's futuristic envelope.

The inlaid path made of ceramic tiles each comprising student signatures, was initially located in the parkland on the eastern side of Barrack Square. In March 2014, the tiles were removed as part of the Elizabeth Quay project. The art work was not reinstalled but the signatures, which were captured digitally, were reapplied to a different artwork to the east of the Bell Tower.

Public Realm (2015)

Accessed from Riverside Drive via two vehicular entry points, the public realm component of Barrack Square was upgraded in 2015 and primarily consists of basalt pavers of different shades of grey and pattern formations to create an area of hard landscaping to the perimeter. This area also provides two-way vehicle access to circulate the site but is clear in the materiality that it is a shared pedestrian surface.

The Bell Tower provides a key marker for the landscape design by creating a central avenue leading towards the jetty pavilions with a timber deck surface aligned either side with shade structures, planting and seating. There is a cluster of water fountains in a water pool that surround the Bell Tower creating an island to accentuate this central focal point of the square. To the east of the Bell Tower, there is an area of soft landscaping that has been divided in two sections with a portion of hard landscaping in the middle that accommodates a circular corten steel sculpture. A collection of mature trees and plantings are dispersed throughout the grassed areas including various species of *ficus*, Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), various palm trees.

To support the function as a public square, there is a variety of street furniture spread across the site including seating, bollards, bus stop, planter boxes, signage, street lighting and free standing toilet facilities.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Until the construction of 'Elizabeth Quay' in 2015, Barrack Square was a public open square and parkland that provided an access point to the jetties and river transport. In 2020, because of its more urbanised environment, it no longer wholly functions as a public park and the definition of the boundary edge of the original square has been lost due to ongoing development of the site. The two principal features that do remain are its townscape component as a public open space and its use as a jetty. The most comparable places include the following four public open spaces/parks which are in close proximity to the Swan River foreshore in the city centre of Perth:

- P3346 *Langley Park* (RHP) - an 11.7 hectare public park comprising an open 'green' space with river views for that was also part of the ongoing reclamation of the Swan River foreshore to create a network of public open spaces and river amenities aimed at linking the city environment to the river. The place continues to be a popular venue for large scale sporting and cultural events.
- P3850 *Esplanade Reserve* (RHP) - originally a 4.8 hectare public garden planted in the Paradise style. The place has been heavily modified with the development of Elizabeth Quay in 2015, and now comprises a quay with an artificial island that no longer exhibits parkland characteristics.
- P01947 *Supreme Court Buildings and Gardens, Old Court House, Stirling Gardens* (RHP) - The Supreme Court Gardens (1923-53) were created by land reclamation during the first two decades of the 20th century, forming a mature public garden with a diverse collection of trees, shrubs and large areas of lawn. *Stirling Gardens* (1845) was the first public garden in Western Australia, and served as the first public botanic garden in the State from 1884-5.
- P03362 *Narrows Interchange Park* (1973) - created by the reclamation of a large area of Mounts Bay and Perth Water (37 hectares). It is a designed landscape built to enable the construction of the Narrows Bridge and Mitchell Freeway interchange. Elements within the parkland include three lakes, with a waterfall at the western lake, footbridges and subways, and various pedestrian paths. The place is one of a number of important green spaces adjoining the Swan River foreshore that provide a sense of arrival to the City of Perth.

Public Squares

Purposely built open public squares are uncommon in Western Australia. The following places include or comprise a formally designed public square that has remained in continuous use:

- P2915 *Guildford Historic Town* (RHP) - contains one of the earliest purpose-designed public town squares in Australia (P2478 *Stirling Square* constructed 1833). The place comprises a rectangular area of public parkland on which the main church is situated and is one of the first three city squares planned in Australia.
- P4241 *Harold Boas Gardens* (RHP) - The original park on the site, named Delhi Square, was laid out and developed by the City of Perth in c. 1898-

1901. It was designed and implemented by the City Gardener, John Braithwaite, as a traditional Victorian park, with a central flower bed, tree plantings, and radial paths. The garden was redesigned in the early 1970s by landscape Architect Peter Cala and ecologist Marion Blackwell and is recognised as an important example of creative landscape design from that period.

- P15139 Russell Square – This square was first noted on the 1845 maps of Perth and was officially set aside as a reserve in 1873. The square is to a design based on the popular fenced squares of London. (Cat 4, June 2004 - does not warrant assessment for the Register)

Jetties (River transport)

The majority of jetties on the historic heritage database are associated with Ocean transport rather than river transport. River Jetties on the database include the following three places:

- P2915 *Guildford Historic Town* (RHP) - was the first (and only) inland port in Western Australia, providing an essential transport node, firstly by river and then by rail. However, the ferry landing included a wharf at Meadow Street rather than a jetty.
- P0089 *Lower Kalgan River Bridge and Jetty Group* (RHP) – the Jetty was constructed in 1912 specifically to facilitate the agricultural development of the Lower Kalgan district.
- P4834 Mends Street Jetty – became part of the river transport system between Perth and South Perth with the opening of the Perth Zoo in October 1898. This coincided with the building of a new jetty at the end of Barrack Street and the establishment of a regular ferry service. (On the Heritage Council's Assessment Program)

While *Barrack Square & Jetties, Perth* no longer wholly functions as a public open square and parkland, it retains its original function as public open space that provides an access point to the jetties and river transport in the city centre of Perth.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH
