



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.11.2 Reclaiming land
- 4.1.5 Creating capital cities
- 4.2 Supplying urban services (power, transport, fire prevention, roads, water, light & sewerage)
- 8.1.1 Playing and watching organised sport
- 8.1.3 Developing public parks and gardens

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 205 Air transport
- 206 Mail services
- 405 Sport, recreation and entertainment
- 407 Cultural activities
- 604 Innovators

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The pumping station is a fine example of a utilitarian structure in the Federation Free style that exhibits a high level of craftsmanship and design. (Criterion 1.2)

The open canopies of the perimeter trees help to relieve and define the expanse of flat ground, thereby contributing to the aesthetic qualities of the landscape. (Criterion 1.3)

The Narrows Interchange, Esplanade Reserve, Supreme Court Gardens, Barrack Square and *Langley Park* collectively define the southern edge of the city and provide contrasting qualities in the stretch of public space adjacent to the Swan River. (Criterion 1.4)

* 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Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA, unpublished report, 1997.

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

The development of *Langley Park* was 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, and is a continuation of the vision for the foreshore developed in the 1880s, which encompassed the ideals of the City Beautiful Planning Movement. (Criterion 2.1)

Langley Park was the site of Perth's first aerodrome between 1920 and 1924, and this function is commemorated with the Sport Aircraft Association's triennial fly-in. (Criterion 2.2)

Although it no longer serves as a regular airfield, the place has been in continuous use as a landing strip since 1920, and is now used by intermittent air services such as RAAF Caribou aircraft transporting accident victims to Perth. (Criterion 2.2)

Langley Park is associated with aviator Major Norman Brearley, who established Western Australian Airways in 1921, and began the first regular air mail service in Australia that year. (Criterion 2.3)

Langley Park is associated with Thomas W. Langley, acting Deputy Lord Mayor and councillor, after whom the place is named. (Criterion 2.3)

Langley Park is the site of the No. 2 low level sewage pumping station which, as well as being part of Perth's first sewerage system, is an example of fine craftsmanship and design in a utilitarian structure. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The place has the potential, through archaeological investigation, to provide information about the management of land reclaimed from the Swan River. The place may contribute to comparative analysis, which can be derived from adjacent sites reclaimed for different functions and at different times. (Criterion 3.1)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Langley Park is highly valued for both social and cultural associations, as a venue for a large number of both organised and informal activities, including a wide range of sporting and leisure activities, exhibitions and displays, and for its association with aircraft and motor rally events. (Criterion 4.1)

Langley Park is highly valued by the local and wider community as evidenced by a petition compiled in 2009 indicating public support for the inclusion of the place on the State Register of Heritage Places. (Criterion 4.1)

Langley Park provides an open 'green' space with river views for city workers, residents and visitors. (Criterion 4.1)

Langley Park contributes significantly to the Perth community's sense of place. It is highly valued as an open public area in a picturesque river setting in the centre of the city. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Langley Park is representative of the importance placed on public open space for passive recreation and large scale social, sporting and cultural events close to the central business district and with proximity to the local river. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Langley Park is in sound condition. The grounds are well maintained and receive consistent attention. The buildings on the site are less well maintained and show evidence of deteriorating fabric. The pumping station displays considerable staining from the park sprinkler system.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The original intention of *Langley Park* as a public open space close to the city and river, allowing for a wide variety of social, recreational and cultural activities is still evident. While the site no longer acts as a regular airfield, intermittent air services can still be facilitated. The pumping station no longer fulfils its original purpose as the equipment has been removed and the toilets closed. Overall, *Langley Park* has high integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Langley Park has moderate authenticity. Perimeter planting was introduced c.1960, but serves to enhance the place by defining the boundaries rather than detracting from the broad open space. Whilst the addition of change room facilities, children's playground and the removal of equipment from the pumping station have not detracted significantly from the original nature and layout of the place, they have reduced the extent to which the fabric remains in its original state.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian and the physical evidence by Katrina Chisholm, Graduate Architect and Anna Chauvel, Landscape Architect, in July 1998 with amendments and/or additions by the Office of Heritage and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Langley Park is an A Class Reserve, of 11.7ha, overlooking the Swan River. The place is bordered by Terrace Road on the north, Riverside Drive on the south, Victoria Avenue on the west and Plain Street on the east. Between 1920, when it was officially gazetted, and 1938, when it was vested in the Perth City Council, the place was officially referred to as Reserve 12510.¹ Buildings on *Langley Park* consist of the No. 2 low level sewage pumping station (1913) and the change rooms and toilets (1969).

Within a few years of the initial European settlement of Western Australia, a large area of the Swan River foreshore was set aside as a 'Government Domain' for the purposes of parkland and government buildings. The land extended along the foreshore from Barrack Street to Point Fraser, near Heirisson Island. Although the land was set aside in Arrowsmith's plan of 1833, the following year much of it was subdivided for residential purposes, leaving only the area between Barrack Street and Lord Street (now Victoria Avenue) as public open space.²

In June 1845, after the Agricultural and Vineyard Societies of Western Australia proposed the establishment of a 'Horticultural Garden' in Perth, an area of the Government Domain was set aside and proclaimed 'Stirling Gardens'.³ By the 1860s, Stirling Gardens was a popular resort for the people of Perth and weekly performances by the band of the Metropolitan Volunteers, which began in August 1863, sustained popular use of the Gardens.⁴

As Perth developed, recreational use of the foreshore and river increased. In April 1862, believing it ought to encourage 'moral amusements and manly sports', the Perth Municipal Council agreed to the use of part of Bazaar Street, to the west of the William Street jetty, as a practice wicket for the town's cricket club.⁵ Use of the river frontage continued, with the establishment of the Western

1 The portion of land on the eastern side of Plain Street is often included in plans for Reserve 12510, but this area is Reserve 13375, and was named Ozone Reserve, for the Ozone Hotel (since demolished) on its northern boundary.

2 Gordon Stephenson, *The Design of Central Perth: Some Problems and Possible Solutions – A study made for the Perth Central Area Design Co-ordinating Committee*, University of Western Australian Press, Nedlands, 1975, p 10.

3 Considine & Griffiths Architects with Robin Chinnery Historian, 'Stirling Gardens, Perth: Conservation Plan', prepared for the City of Perth, December 1997, pp. 5-19. Although the gardens started off well, they fell into decay in the mid-1850s after a period of private lease. Stirling Gardens was returned to public use in 1858. Also in 1845, a large parcel of land was set aside for public recreation to the east of the central business district at Claise Brook. However, this was largely unused due to its distance from the town centre and later became the Western Australian Cricket Association Ground and Gloucester Park. See Australian Institute for Urban Studies, 'Perth's Foreshore: a creative challenge – Proceedings of a seminar held at Perth Concert Hall on 24 November 1990', East Perth, 1991, p. 50.

4 Considine & Griffiths Architects, op. cit., p. 19.

5 Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth: A social history of Western Australia's capital city*. Perth City Council, 1979, p. 157.

Australian Rowing Club boatshed and jetty, located between Pier and Barrack streets, in 1868. The first designated recreation ground in Perth was set aside in 1873 in Wellington Street, East Perth, on what is now known as Wellington Square.⁶ However, it was not heavily used until the 1890s when residential development of the area increased.⁷

Public debate on the lack of parkland in Perth was voiced in editorials in local newspapers between 1875 and 1886.⁸ The provision of a network of parklands in central Perth and around the river were themes central to these concerns. Following the successful reclamation of the area between William and Barrack streets for *Esplanade Reserve*, an editorial in *The West Australian* in 1886 supported the creation of an integrated system of park lands on reclaimed land along the foreshore of Perth Water from *Esplanade Reserve* to the Causeway:

...the main charm of the Metropolis of the colony must ever remain Perth Water. Upon our use or abuse of the natural attractions of this splendid sheet, chiefly depend the claims of Perth to be considered in time to come, one of the fairest of Australian cities. But if we are to keep and still further add to its picturesqueness, it is all essential that the capabilities of the long strip of foreshore lying to the north, be made the most of... The idea that has generally suggested itself is to fill in the shallows between Barrack street jetty and the Causeway and lay out the ground thus reclaimed as a public park or esplanade. On either side a carriage drive could be formed running between a double row of trees. These would give a vista of over a mile in length. The park itself we may assume would be tastefully laid out, and planted with tress and shrubs, with its gardens, walks and lakes.⁹

An editorial in *The West Australian* on 9 December 1886 continued the argument:

It is in furtherance of a most praiseworthy effort in this direction, that the suggestion has been made to the Municipal Council to take early steps to preserve against alienation the whole sweep of shore, from Mill Point round to the New Recreation Ground. It is Mr Wright's [the Commissioner for Public Works] wish, we believe, to see a People's Esplanade constructed along this bend, and continued below St George's Terrace up to the Causeway. So far as concerns a riverside park from the Recreation Ground to the bridge it is not merely a worthy or even a noble conception, but an eminently practicable one as well. Such an esplanade, if fittingly carried out, could of itself, and by itself, make of Perth a beautiful city. If it could be brought around to Mill Point this magnificent addition to the attractions of the metropolis would become incomparably more charming and effective...But the possibility of matters falling otherwise makes it obvious that the most judicious plan would be to commence the formation of the new river park at a point where it is certain to remain undisturbed, that is, to the east of the Barrack Street jetty....¹⁰

The editorial provided the first public call for an integrated park setting for Perth Water, proposing that public parklands be established right around Perth Water from Mill Point in South Perth to the Causeway, west to incorporate the new Recreation Ground (*Esplanade Reserve*) and along to the William Street jetty.

6 Western Australian Government Gazette, 8 July 1873, p. 163.

7 George Seddon & David Ravine, *A City and its Setting: images of Perth, Western Australia*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 1986, p. 123.

8 The theme continued through to the 1930s in newspaper editorials and correspondence.

9 *The West Australian*, 16 June 1886, as quoted in Seddon & Ravine, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

10 *The West Australian*, 9 December 1886 as quoted in Seddon & Ravine, op. cit., pp. 129-30.

Many subsequent planners, including William Bold, W E Boas and John Oldham took up this theme.¹¹

Although a PWD plan of the proposal was drawn up in 1887, and reclamation of the foreshore was officially approved, the plan was not implemented for several years.¹² Nevertheless, major reserves were set aside for parkland and recreational purposes in and around the city c. 1900. These included the extension of the Mount Eliza reserve in 1890 (170 ha had originally been set aside in 1871 as 'Perth Park; the area became Kings Park in 1901), Queens Gardens, East Perth (1899), Third Swamp (Hyde Park; 1897), the Zoological Gardens, South Perth (1898), the WACA (1900), and Barrack Square and Supreme Court Gardens (1903).

The establishment of parks was closely linked to wealth, with the result that Perth did not begin to develop a comprehensive system of parks until after the gold rushes of the 1890s. The local concern for the provision of developed open space was prompted by the planning ideals of the City Beautiful and garden suburb movements and coincided with the general increase in affluence that accompanied the Western Australian gold booms of the late 1800s.¹³ Public parks were also a response to environmental and public health concerns, and were the only public provision for outdoor recreation at the time.¹⁴

Further impetus for the creation of foreshore reserves may have come from Town Clerk W. E. Bold, who took up his position in 1904. Carrying on the visions of the 1880s, he envisaged a system of parks and children's playgrounds throughout the city and suburbs, and set about reclaiming swamps, and drained lakes, which had previously been used as market gardens. Reclamation along the Swan River recommenced at this time, and between 1904 and 1906, the Public Works Department reclaimed a further section of land between Barrack and Lord Street, now Victoria Avenue.¹⁵ In part fulfilling earlier visions, roads and footpaths were laid and the area planted with ornamental trees.

There the foreshore reclamation stopped, resulting in a letter to *The West Australian*, which demonstrated that the people of Perth saw the provision of parks and gardens as desirable:

That this great work should cease at Lord-street [sic] for an indefinite period I consider no less than a calamity. The immense area that has already been

11 As discussed in Seddon & Ravine, op. cit., p. 123.

12 PWD WA Plan 38, 1887 & 6172, 1897.

13 Heritage and Conservation Professionals, 'Supreme Court Conservation Plan', 1998, p. 55. Western Australia followed British trends with regard to the establishment of parks and recreation areas. Until the early nineteenth century domain lands and government gardens fulfilled the role of parklands. With the growth of industrialization, however, the middle-class desired 'idealised landscapes at the edge of their fast growing towns,' but it was not until 1844, that the first government-funded public park was laid out in London. While British parks tended to be placed on poor land in established towns, the relatively new Australian towns were able to develop their parks in prime city locations. See Ramsay, Juliet, Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A classification and assessment method for the register of the National Estate, Australian Heritage Commission, 1991; Chadwick, George F. The Park and the Town, Architectural Press, London, 1966.

14 Chadwick, 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.

15 Le Page, J.S.H. Building a State: the story of the Public Works Department of Western Australia 1829-1985, Leederville, Water Authority of WA, 1986, p. 332. The section of Lord Street south of Victoria Square, was renamed Victoria Ave 3 March 1903. Information supplied by DOLA, Geographic names.

reclaimed is truly a boon to the town....and 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 and walks and drives, where the ladies of Perth could take their walks in comfort and peace, away from the dirt and dust and noise of the streets and roads...to stop the work at Lord-street makes the distance too short for driving, and too short for the nice, long walk that would do the ladies of Perth so much good; and I much fear that, unless the space is filled in as far as Bennett-street, or beyond, the odours arising from this part of will prevent them from using the portion that is finished.¹⁶

The odour referred to came from the marshy shallows along the river's edge where 'water, nearly as thick as mud' encouraged algae growth and provided a breeding ground for mosquitoes and birds. Reclamation east of Victoria Avenue was begun, but it proceeded slowly as other work was claiming PWD time and finances. Perth City Council added to the infill by using the area for the dumping of rubbish.¹⁷

The first mention of Reserve 12510 (later to become *Langley Park*) is in 1912, when land was allocated for the No. 2 low level sewage pumping station.¹⁸ The Reserve was officially gazetted on 10 December 1920, for the purpose of 'Parks, Gardens and Recreation.'¹⁹ Reclamation at that time was still some 85 metres west of Plain Street.²⁰

In 1925, the State Government introduced the *Swan River Improvement Act*, to clarify the situation resulting from its river reclamation work. The passing of the *Swan River Improvements Act 1925* was designed to:

authorise the reclamation of land along the shores of the Swan River in the vicinity of East Perth, Maylands, Burswood Island, Victoria Park and South Perth, the improvement of the river channel near such shores, and the construction of roads along the river front of such reclaimed land.²¹

In moving the second reading, the Minister for Works stated that:

When the work is completed it will have the effect of removing the present nuisance [odourous algae growth in thick mud], enhancing the value of adjacent property, and making Perth the first city in the Commonwealth in point of beauty...²²

One of the main considerations of the Act was to make sure that landowners who had lost a river frontage due to reclamation were not in a position to lodge a claim against the Government, although the Government would resume their land at a negotiated price if they so wished.²³ The continued reclamation of the river also had a detrimental effect on the local wildlife. With the loss of breeding grounds, black swans deserted the River.

Little is documented on the early use of Reserve 12510, but its open, unplanted space had early appeal as an airstrip. After World War One, Australian Flying Corp pilots flew joy rides and charter flights from areas such as Belmont Park

16 The West Australian, 16 August 1906, as quoted in Le Page, op. cit., p. 333.

17 Le Page, J. H. S. op cit., p. 415; maps showing the foreshore, 1838, 1889 & 1907.

18 Western Australian Government Gazette, 1 March 1912, p. 1084.

19 Western Australian Government Gazette, 10 December 1920, p. 2200.

20 Le Page, op cit., p. 333. He states that reclamation 'had been completed to 800 feet east of Bennett Street by 1921.'

21 As quoted in Le Page, op. cit., p. 415.

22 ibid.

23 ibid.

Race Club. At the beginning of World War One, at the age of 23, Norman Brearley went to England and joined the Royal Flying Corps in order to learn to fly. Australia at that time had only two military aircraft. Brearley was awarded the DSO and Military Cross after being shot down in France while flying bomber escort. He spent the rest of the war training other pilots.²⁴

Brearley brought two Avro 504 bi-planes back to Perth after World War One. He believed that air flight had commercial applications and was determined to prove it. Kimberley MP, Michael Durack, saw the advantages of air travel and invited Brearley to build a hangar at the bottom of the garden of his Adelaide Terrace house and use Reserve 12510 as his base. Durack's house was at No. 263 Adelaide Terrace, on the corner of Victoria Avenue.²⁵ The area used for the air strip was approximately 300 metres by 200 metres, between Victoria Ave and Hill Street, at the west end of Reserve 12510.²⁶

As planes became a more common sight, the Federal Government decided it would be worth testing whether aeroplanes could have useful peacetime applications. Following the introduction of the *Air Navigation Act*, 1920, the Government called for tenders for a twelve month trial of an aerial mail service.²⁷ In 1921, Brearley established West Australian Airways Limited and won the contract to carry mail and passengers between Geraldton and Derby on a once a week round trip. It was the first scheduled air service in Australia. Perth was not included in the route because of a Government policy of non-competition with existing railway services.²⁸

The launch of the new airmail service was a popular occasion:

On Saturday afternoon as a preliminary to the inauguration on Sunday, several thousand people, including the Governor, the Hon Lady Newdegate & Miss Newdegate, assembled at the aerodrome, from which Major Brearley and his staff made numerous flights with passengers.²⁹

The following day, 4 December 1921, Brearley and two other pilots left the 'aerodrome' at Reserve 12510 for Geraldton.

With 3 passengers and 2,500 letters and other mail matter, 3 aeroplanes of the Western Australian Airways Ltd rose at 8.30am from the Eastern Esplanade facing the Swan River, and after circling to a high altitude, flew off on their journey to Derby, inaugurating the first Commonwealth subsidised weekly aerial service.³⁰

Many spectators cheered the departing airmen and their passengers, one of whom was Michael Durack, who was undertaking the return journey to Derby. Congratulatory messages on the inaugural flight were received from Prime Minister William Hughes, the Postmaster General, and Premier Sir James Mitchell.³¹

24 'Profile: A Pioneer Aviator, Sir Norman Brearley,' Skywest Inflight, February 1984, pp. 13-15.

25 *ibid*; Wise's Post Office Directories, 1921; photographs, Western Mail 1 December 1921, p. 21.

26 PCC File 1901425/3748.

27 O'Donnell, R. P. 'The History of Civil Aviation in Western Australia,' unpublished Teacher's Higher Certificate thesis, 1959, pp. 6-14.

28 *ibid*.

29 The West Australian, 5 December 1921, p. 6.

30 The West Australian, 5 December 1921, p. 6.

31 *ibid*; photographs, Western Mail 8 December 1921, p. 21.

Brearley used Reserve 12510 as his Perth base until 1924, when Perth's first official aerodrome, at Maylands, opened on 100 acres of land. The government's policy of not competing with railway services had never been sustainable and, with the opening of Maylands Aerodrome, the airmail service was extended to Perth.³² In 1928, Western Australian Airways won a Government contract for an air service between Perth and Adelaide. The company was taken over by Australian National Airways in 1936. During World War Two, Norman Brearley served as Commanding Officer of 4 Service Flying Training School in Geraldton and the RAAF Training Centre at Tocumwal. He was awarded a CBE in 1965, and a knighthood in 1971.³³ Brearley Avenue, which leads to Perth's Domestic Airport, is named after him.

Further reclamation works in the vicinity of Reserve 12510 were undertaken in the mid-1930s, following proposals from the City of Perth to lay a road along the foreshore from the Causeway to Mount Street, to provide both a scenic drive and a city bypass.³⁴ Continuing the theme, in 1936, the South Perth Roads Board convened a conference of representatives from local authorities to co-ordinate foreshore reclamation, mosquito eradication and general improvements on both sides of the Swan River from the Causeway to Fremantle.³⁵

Riverside Drive was made in 1937 and gazetted a public thoroughfare on 16 February 1940. The creation of Riverside Drive effectively cut easy public access from Reserve 12510 to the foreshore.³⁶ This was exacerbated in the late 1950s when Riverside Drive was widened to take traffic to and from the Mitchell Freeway and Narrows Bridge interchange.

Meanwhile, reclamation works elsewhere along Perth Water undertaken between the 1930s to the late 1950s involved the reshaping of Harrison Island (1930s), the filling in of Millers Pool on Mill Point, South Perth (1935), and reclamation of the southern foreshore along the peninsula to Mends Street (1935). Filling also occurred near the Causeway to establish McCallum Park (1934).³⁷ The reclamation of the South Perth foreshore and the subsequent establishment of Sir James Mitchell Park, which was completed in 1960/1, was one of the last major reclamation works undertaken on the Swan River.³⁸

Reserve 12510 was initially under the control of the State Gardens Board, but in 1938, the place was vested in the City of Perth.³⁹ The Council named the place *Langley Park* for Thomas W. Langley, acting deputy Lord Mayor of Perth at the time.⁴⁰ The City Council had plans to develop *Langley Park* for organised sport. They wanted to move the bowling, tennis and croquet clubs from Esplanade Reserve to the west end of *Langley Park*, with hockey grounds in the centre

32 O'Donnell, op cit.

33 ibid.

34 Stephenson, op. cit., p. 57.

35 ibid.

36 Australian Institute for Urban Studies, 'Perth's Foreshore: a creative challenge – Proceedings of a seminar held at Perth Concert Hall on 24 November 1990', East Perth, 1991, p. 56.

37 ibid., p. 54.

38 Le Page, op. cit., p. 494.

39 Western Australian Government Gazette, 22 April 1938, pp. 558-559.

40 DOLA, Geographic names.

section and baseball and basketball at the eastern end.⁴¹ To facilitate this, the vesting order was altered in 1940, to allow the Council to lease parts of the reserve for a period of 21 years.⁴²

But the advent of the Second World War, followed by a shortage of materials, put these plans on hold. These factors also postponed the provision of women's toilet facilities, and taps for drinking water, until the early 1950s. The exact location of the women's toilets is unclear, but they are supposed to have been situated off *Langley Park*, north of Terrace Road.⁴³

In 1960, a plan to develop *Langley Park* and adjacent areas was approved by the Council. Terrace Road west of Plain Street was closed to become part of Ozone Reserve and the sports clubs on Esplanade Reserve were finally relocated to this site in the late 1960s. The Western Australian Ladies Bowling Association and Perth & Tattersalls Recreation & Bowling Club Inc now occupy the site.

Tree plantings were included in this plan. Olive trees were planted on the north side of *Langley Park* and an avenue of Rottneet tea tree planted along Plain Street.⁴⁴ The Coral trees along the southern side of *Langley Park* had been planted earlier and gaps in this planting were filled with trees removed from along an old road through the east end of the place. Twenty four garden seats were set around the perimeter of *Langley Park*. Total cost of this work was £540.⁴⁵

In 1969, change rooms and toilets designed by architects Finn, Van Mens & Maidment were constructed by A. Woolhouse & Sons on the northern side of *Langley Park*, next to the No. 2 pumping station. Special off-white bricks were supplied by Midland Brick Co. It was claimed that graffiti could be easily cleaned from these bricks with water and detergent. Cost of the building was \$66,122. In 1977, Newby Brothers installed a powder coated corrugated galvanized steel patio measuring 37.5m by 4m to the south side of the change rooms, at a cost of \$2,890.⁴⁶

A 1977 plan shows the layout of *Langley Park* for organised sport, with four hockey grounds between Victoria Avenue and Hill Street, and another eight grounds to the east, including three designated for rugby union.⁴⁷

Langley Park is watered from an artesian bore that taps into the groundwater in the Leederville Aquifer of the Perth Basin. The first bore was sunk in 1901, by the Water Supply Department. In 1938, this bore became the responsibility of the Perth City Council when it took over responsibility for *Langley Park*, but the bore collapsed before the Council could put it to use. A new bore sunk the following year, at a cost of £2,971, was 1200 feet deep and could supply a million gallons of water a day. This bore originally supplied water to all the city parks

41 PCC File 23/72. This plan arose from the 1930 City of Perth (Harold Boas Report) which called for the relocation of the bowling green and tennis courts from Esplanade Reserve to Langley Park, and for the establishment of other playing grounds at Langley Park.

42 Western Australian Government Gazette, 26 June 1940, p. 1276. This is standard practice if sports clubs are to have exclusive use of certain areas for greens, courts or club buildings.

43 PCC File 219/89.

44 The tea trees have since been removed.

45 PCC File 23/72.

46 *ibid*; PCC File 1901425/3748.

47 PCC File 1901425/3748 – Layout of Langley Park.

and gardens, but it was found to be unsuitable for garden displays as it caused discolouration, and some parks changed to scheme water in the 1950s.⁴⁸

By 1980, the quantity and quality of water from the bore was deteriorating and bores were sunk in other parks (Wellington Square, Haig Park, Queens Gardens) to supplement the supply. The bore at *Langley Park* was replaced in 1990, but was soon damaged by salinity and had to be replaced again in 1997, this time using corrosion resistant materials.⁴⁹

In the early 1980s, the Perth City Council initiated a study of the foreshore between the Narrows Bridge and the Causeway. The Perth Central Foreshore Study (draft final) stated that:

The Foreshore landscape of the central city is one of the most important features on the river system and provides central Perth with a unique image and amenity.⁵⁰

The foreshore reserves, including *Langley Park*, were identified as being of 'civic importance', while the strategy acknowledged '...the supreme importance of the river and parkland foreshores setting of the city. In the grandest sense the foreshore is the city's front garden...'⁵¹ In the Study, *Esplanade Reserve* was designated 'special events and recreation', while *Langley Park* was designated 'Recreation – passive and active'.⁵² The stated aim of the strategy was to 'foster greater recreational use' of the foreshore areas through the provision of a wide range of attractive and functional spaces.

Langley Park has been a popular venue for organised sport since the early 1940s, and well patronised for exhibitions and other activities in the past 25 years.⁵³ As the population of Perth has grown, so has its need for large exhibition and display space. *Langley Park* provides the only such large space in the city area.⁵⁴

The following is a sample of organisations, societies and events that have used *Langley Park* since 1973: WA St Bernard Social Club & Welfare Association, WA Leukaemia Foundation, Swan Exhibitions, ANZ Christmas party, Junior Soccer display, World Firefighter games, Opera in the Park, Fiesta Food & Wine Festival, South Pacific & Australia Pipe Band Championships, Family Kite Flying Day, WA Farming Expo, State Tee-Ball Championships, State Hockey games, BRW Corporate Team Triathlete Series, Mining Expo, St John Ambulance Annual Parade and Inspection, Port to Court relay, WA Pal Super Dogs performance, Scout and Guide Show 88, WA Frisbee Disc Association State Championships, Australian Bicentennial Exhibition, skydiving displays, football and soccer training for Trinity College,⁵⁵ an annual polo carnival and the Super 14 Rugby Competition. The place also acts as a marshalling area for participants

48 PCC Files, P1013524 - Langley Park Artesian Bore, 6 February 1998; P1012179.

49 *ibid.*

50 'Central Perth Foreshore Study: Draft Final Report – Summary', prepared by the Central Perth Foreshore Study Group, June 1987.

51 *ibid.*

52 *ibid.*

53 PCC files covering the use of Langley Park do not predate 1973. Files dated from 1938 which cover provision of facilities, indicate early use for sport.

54 PCC File 157/86. PCC advised hotel management (1986) that only small events and displays could be accommodated as Langley is developed as a sporting reserve.

55 PCC Files P1007793, P1000679, 8005566, P1009157 - Usage of Langley Park, 1993-1997.

in the annual Anzac Day parade and is the venue for Australia Day activities such as vintage car and motorbike exhibitions and is a vantage point for people watching the Sky Show fireworks.⁵⁶

From 1991 to 2006, *Langley Park* was the site of the annual Rally Australia event, formerly held in the streets of Northbridge. The use of *Langley Park* by Rally Australia resulted in the place being unavailable for sporting events for some time afterward because of the need to repair and resurface the ground. Initially this did not present a problem as the ground was ready in time for summer season sports. However, in 1997, Rally Australia moved its event from September to November, resulting in the place not being fully available for sport until after April the following year.⁵⁷

Since 2006, *Langley Park* has been the venue for the annual Red Bull Air Race, with over 250,000 people attending the event in 2008.⁵⁸ The park is also the venue on occasion for other international events such as Cirque de Soleil and the Great Moscow Circus.

Langley Park has continued to be used intermittently as an airfield and still serves an important function in this way. It is the landing place for RAAF Caribou aircraft when transporting accident victims to Perth, and a helicopter pad is situated on the south side of Riverside Drive at the Causeway end.⁵⁹ The Sport Aircraft Association of Australia holds a regular tri-ennial fly-in over a long weekend in March.

No. 2 low level sewage pumping station

In 1913, *Langley Park* became the site of the No. 2 low level sewage pumping station, situated at the bottom of Hill Street. It was one of three such pumping stations situated along the foreshore as part of the new Perth sewerage system. Each station consisted of a small, ornately styled building that comprised a male public toilet with separate entrance, twin underground reinforced concrete receiving tanks, and a machinery room below the building. The stations pumped sewage up to the branch pipeline on the Terrace where it gravitated to the Claisebrook/Burswood treatment works.⁶⁰

The need for a sewerage system became acute when Perth's population rose from 9,500 in 1891, to 87,000 in 1911, and there were several epidemics of cholera and typhoid fever. No. 1 pumping station is situated on Ozone Reserve, and No. 3 is at the bottom of Mill Street. The buildings were designed by architect Alfred Robert Linus Wright, a member of the architectural staff of the Public Works Department.⁶¹ Wright was born in Wales and trained in England. He came to Western Australia in 1895, after spending nine years in Queensland. He was active in the establishment of the WA Institute of Architects.⁶²

No. 2 low level sewage pumping station was completed in February 1913. The stations were checked daily by travelling pump attendants, and remained in use

56 Information provided by H.E.L.P (Heritage Entitlement for Langley Park, October 2009.

57 PCC File P1012179, op cit.

58 www.redbullairrace.com [Accessed 28 January 2010]

59 PCC File P1007793, Part 2; map of the area showing the helicopter pad, PCC File P1014190.

60 National Trust assessment, July 1992, HCWA File 3298.

61 *ibid.*

62 Morison, M. P. 'Immigrant Architects and their work, 1885-1905,' unpublished paper, p. 15.

until the 1970s, when submersible sewage pumping units became available.⁶³ While the toilets at Nos. 1 and 3 pumping stations are still in use, the toilets at the No. 2 station are not, probably because of the provision of the new change rooms and toilets on *Langley Park* in 1969.

Two plaques have been attached to the No. 2 low level sewage pumping station to commemorate the use made of *Langley Park*. The first commemorates the use of the place as Perth's first airfield between 1920 and 1924, and was unveiled on the 8 December 1987, 66 years after Norman Brearley flew out on the first airmail service. The second plaque commemorates the visit of the Australian Bicentennial Exhibition to *Langley Park* in April 1988.

In March 2006, *Low Level Sewage Pumping Stations No.s 1 & 2 Perth*, (P3298), entered permanently on the State Register of Heritage Places. No. 2 low level sewage pumping station lies within the curtilage of *Langley Park*.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Langley Park is an 11.7 hectare public open space located at the eastern end of the City of Perth and bounded by Terrace Road, Plain Street, Riverside Drive and Victoria Avenue. The site is flat with a large expanse of open grass featuring some planting and physical features around the perimeter. The park runs parallel to the Swan River and receives the full impact of the south-westerly weather. Mature perimeter trees, located along the north, south and west boundaries are generally medium sized and broadly spaced. They act to enhance the exposed and open character of the park instead of sheltering it. The land behind the park rises to the north and is developed with medium density housing and some medium-rise structures such as the Sheraton Hotel.

Structures within the park boundaries include No. 2 low level sewage pumping station; a brick and tile changing facility for sporting groups and a children's playground. These structures are grouped around the termination of Hill Street with Terrace Road.

Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), planted along the foreshore, frame the view across the park to the river from Hill Street, Burt Way and Bennett Street.

The trees grown in *Langley Park* are able to tolerate exposed conditions including strong winds, driving rain, salt spray, periodic drought and poor soils. The most prominent trees are the avenue of Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) along the flat section of Victoria Avenue. The line of palms is continued beyond the Riverside Drive intersection into the foreshore park in attempt to visually link the city with the river. Coral Trees (*Erythrina indica*) have been planted along Riverside Drive. Olive trees (*Olea europaea*) have been planted along the northern edge of the park. There are no plants along the eastern boundary.

There is a red bitumen dual use path along Victoria Avenue and a standard concrete slab footpath along Plain Street. An in-situ concrete path wraps around the southern side of the change room building. A black bitumen driveway surrounded by bollards services the pumping station. There are four vehicular

63 National Trust assessment, July 1992, HCWA File 3298.

access points along Riverside drive and one vehicular crossover along Plain Street.

There are a number of street furniture items located around the park periphery. These include the steel frame and timber slat park seats which are set into a concrete slab and located at frequent intervals; the play equipment located east of the change rooms, set in a clean sand bed, surrounded on the northern edge by a low chainmesh fence; rubbish bins enclosed within vertical timber slat cladding; drink fountains along the northern edge of the park; painted, treated pine timber bollards; and parking signs and parking ticket machines along Terrace Road and Plain Street.

A service easement along the length of the park, between the change rooms and Terrace Road is differentiated from other areas by the type of grass and numerous manhole covers on the surface.

The Metropolitan Water, Supply Sewerage and Drainage Department (MWSSDD) structure at the bottom of Hill Street is Pumping Station No. 2 in a set of three identical structures which are located along the river foreshore. The design of these structures is similar to subsequent stations constructed by the department in Fremantle. The Perth stations share a classical tripartite form. The rockfaced cement block walls, cement rendered pilasters, roughcast frieze and corbelled cornice evoke a strong image of a small public temple, which is then moderated by the inclusion of quarter paned windows and picturesque gablets, terracotta ridge capping and finials on the red Marseilles tiled roof.⁶⁴

Pumping Station No. 2 bears the lettering 'W.S.D.' and '1913' in the gable of the eastern end. The design of the pumping station incorporates a number of features from varying styles of the Federation period.⁶⁵ The idiosyncratic application of classical forms in a structure of domestic scale is at odds with the utilitarian function of the building and uncommon in comparable contemporary structures.

The change room facility is a single-storey white brick structure with a pitched tiled roof and north facing skylights at the ridge. The building has a long, rectangular shape with the lengthy brickwork walls of the north and south elevations, relieved by the external expression of the structure in brick piers. A verandah roof, supported by slender steel columns, provides shelter over the concrete paved patio of the south elevation.

Most of the fabric, physical and natural, at *Langley Park* is in good condition although flooding is often evident after heavy periods of rain. Remedial work or replacement planting needs to be considered to conserve the landscape features of the park. The pumping station shows considerable staining from the artesian bore water used water the grounds.

⁶⁴ National Trust Assessment Form, 'Perth Low Level Sewerage Pumping Stations Nos 1,2 & 3', July 1992.

⁶⁵ Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter A *Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989. pp. 101-147.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Parks/Reserves within the City of Perth

There are 26 Parks/Reserves that are located in the City of Perth on the HCWA database. The following 7 places, five of which are on the Register, are all substantial public open spaces:

- P01947 *Supreme Court Buildings and Gardens* - The surrounding gardens were first set aside as a public park in 1845. Stirling Gardens is a mature public garden with a diverse collection of trees, shrubs large areas of lawn bordered by banks of shrubs & flower beds. The place is also associated with the reclamation of the Swan River in the late 1800s and early 1900s for the purposes of providing level public open space for the city.
- P03850 *Esplanade Reserve* (1881) is similar to *Langley Park* in that it comprises a broad expanse of public open space, the major portion of which is lawn with perimeter plantings. *Esplanade Reserve* was also part of the major work of reclamation carried out along the river foreshore to create public park lands that began in the 1880s. *Esplanade Reserve* is also the venue for a variety of social and cultural events such as the City of Perth's, 'Symphony in the City', exhibition sporting matches and public rallies.
- P04031 *Barrack Square* (1905) - an urban park located on the foreshore of the Swan River at the southern end of Barrack Street and functioning predominantly as a ferry terminal with five main jetties and associated utilitarian buildings.
- P04241 *Queens Gardens* (1898) - a public park featuring a series of artificially created ponds. The park was established in the 1890s on a former reserve site which had been used as a sports field and race track and later for clay pits. The clay pits were incorporated into a series of connecting Serpentine Lakes which reflect a picturesque design style. The park is surrounded by border planting and large areas of open lawn contain haphazard arrangements of trees, shrub beds and mass planting of annuals.
- P04572 *Harold Boas Gardens* (1898-1976) - a designed landscape in the Paradise Garden style comprising tree plantings (c. 1898-1900), a pump house (1956), toilet block, contoured land, lakes and waterfall, with footbridges, plantings of trees, shrubs and ground covers. The Australian Paradise Garden style, with its sculpted landform is in contrast with other public parks and gardens in Western Australia where more formal and open settings are the norm.
- P02184 *Kings Park* (1895) - comprises a large area of urban parkland and bushland comprising approximately 408 hectares on the edge of the Mt Eliza escarpment and overlooking the Swan River and the central business district of the City of Perth. The place is internationally rare as a large park with a substantial portion of 'natural' bushland located in the centre of a city.

- P03362 Narrows Interchange Park (1973) - was created by the reclamation of a large area of Mounts Bay and Perth Water (37 hectares). It is a designed landscape built to enhance 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. These include the Causeway and Heirisson Island landscape, *Langley Park*, *Supreme Court Buildings and Gardens*, and the *Esplanade Reserve*. This place is in the Current Assessment Program.

Langley Park is one of a number of public open spaces in the City of Perth used for passive recreational activities and due to the flat large expanse of open grass is also a popular venue for large scale sporting and cultural events. *Esplanade Reserve* is the only other comparable place located within the city in terms of its scale and use, and like *Langley Park* is also located in close proximity to the Swan River.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Australian Institute for Urban Studies, 'Perth's Foreshore: a creative challenge – Proceedings of a seminar held at Perth Concert Hall in 24 November 1990', East Perth, 1991.

* This involved a competition for a design concept for the City of Perth foreshore, including *Esplanade Reserve* and *Langley Park*.

'Central Perth Foreshore Study: Draft Final Report', prepared by the Central Perth Foreshore Study Group, June 1987.

Gordon Stephenson, *The Design of Central Perth: Some Problems and Possible Solutions – A study made for the Perth Central Area Design Co-ordinating Committee*, University of Western Australian Press, Nedlands, 1975.

National Trust Assessment Form, 'Perth Low Level Sewerage Pumping Stations Nos 1, 2 & 3', July 1992.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
