



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.

11.1. AESTHETIC VALUE*

Barrack Square displays Paradise style plantings with mature introduced tree species, which reflects the idealised landscapes desired by Western society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The plantings continue the style of the adjacent Esplanade Reserve and Supreme Court Gardens. Recent modifications to the place, for example the roundabout plantings, have intruded on this style. (Criterion 1.1)

Barrack Square, together with the Narrows Interchange, Esplanade Reserve, Supreme Court Gardens and Langley Park, define the southern edge of the city and provide contrasting features in the stretch of open space adjacent to the river. (Criterion 1.1)

Barrack Square, formally designed as a public space, was laid out in 1905 based on the Union Jack design. The south-east and south-west corners of *Barrack Square* show clear diagonal lines through the plantings, indicating the route of the original path. The basic cross design is still apparent in the road plan. (Criterion 1.2)

Barrack Square is significant in linking the centre of the city to the river by creating and enhancing vistas, with glimpses of the river possible down Barrack Street from as far as the Hay Street intersection. (Criterion 1.3)

Barrack Square makes a landmark contribution to the foreshore through the presence of tall mature trees. The recently added Old Perth Port complex visually links the place to the nearby West Australian Rowing Club building, through the use of similar materials, form and proportions. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The location at the end of Barrack Street has been associated with river transport since the time of first settlement in 1829 and there has been a

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from 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.

jetty at this point almost from this time. The place has been a point of arrival and departure for river transport from this time. (Criterion 2.1)

The place was purpose built in 1905, replacing an earlier jetty, to cater for the increase in river transport and recreation due to the huge influx of population brought about by the gold boom. The place has continued to function as a river port, with the emphasis shifting to recreation and tourism as transport needs have changed during the century. (Criterion 2.1)

Barrack Square was part of a major work of reclamation carried out along the Swan River foreshore to provide improved transport facilities, public open space and recreational facilities. (Criterion 2.1)

Barrack Square is 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. (Criterion 2.2)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Barrack Square has the potential, through archaeological excavation, to provide information about the early history of Perth, in particular the earlier layout and structures of the place. It is believed that the original river wall and the original Barrack Street jetty lie directly under the Square. (Criterion 3.1)

Barrack Square is valuable as a site of research and information for the management of land reclaimed from the Swan River. The place contributes to comparative analyses that may be derived from adjacent sites reclaimed for different functions and at different times. (Criterion 3.1)

Barrack Square is valuable for the contribution it can make to our knowledge of public engineering practice as it was carried out in the early 20th century. (Criterion 3.3)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Barrack Square is highly valued for social and cultural associations as a point of departure and return for river transport and recreation. (Criterion 4.1)

Barrack Square contributes significantly to the local and regional community's sense of place. It has existed since 1905, and is highly valued as a public place and major landscape feature in a river setting in the centre of the city. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

Barrack Square is the only example of an urban park along the Perth foreshore, in comparison to the Supreme Court Garden which is a civic/administrative landscape, and Esplanade Reserve and Langley Park which are recreational landscapes. The original Union Jack layout was considered practical for the purpose of the place at the time of construction. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Barrack Square jetties and buildings, together with the West Australian Rowing Club building, are the only structures on the city side of Perth Water and are representative of buildings associated with river transport. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Barrack Square jetties and buildings are in fair to good condition, except the buildings on jetties No. 1 and 5 which are in fair and poor condition respectively. The aggressive river conditions exacerbate deterioration of the fabric. The trees are in good condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Barrack Square jetties and buildings were purpose built in the 1970s and 1990s, to facilitate river transport and associated services. The structures remain unchanged and demonstrate the design intent, although the number of outbuildings in place on the jetties indicates subsequent ad hoc development to facilitate the ongoing use. *Barrack Square* itself retains its function as a public park and access point to the jetties and river transport. The place has a high degree of integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Barrack Square has medium to high authenticity due to the loss of some of the paths which were laid out as Union Jack Square. These include the loss of diagonal paths to the corners of the square, the construction of the traffic roundabout, and the addition of recent plantings which are not in keeping with the original Paradise style plantings.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Laura Gray, Architect, and Anna Chauvel, Landscape Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Barrack Square was established in 1905-07, by reclamation of land from the Swan River.¹ The 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 on the north, the waters of the Swan River on the east and south, and reclaimed parkland on 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 smaller jetty on the south-west corner of the place is used for hire boat access. A commercial development known as Old Perth Port (1994), designed with regard to the style of the adjacent West Australian Rowing Club building, which abuts the eastern side of the place.² The complex comprises accommodation for restaurant, cafe, souvenir shop, and gift shop among others.

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. Other jetties at Barrack, William, and Mill streets soon followed. Ferries and charter boats operated up and down the river, conveying goods and passengers.³ The first boats were powered by sail or oar. The first steamer, built on the foreshore below Mt Eliza, was launched on 13 October 1854.⁴

The area along the foreshore between Barrack and Pier streets was the site of the former 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

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ Nind, Michael. 'Sails and Oars on the Swan, 1829 to 1849', *Early Days*, Vol. 8 Part 5, 1981, pp. 53-62.

⁴ Seddon, George & Ravine, David, *A City and Its Setting: Images of Perth, Western Australia*, Fremantle, FACP, 1986, p. 56.

previously accommodated at the Pier Street jetty.⁵ William Street jetty was also used for cargo. Products such as sandalwood, hides and wool were loaded onto barges which were then towed by steamer to Fremantle.⁶ Mill Street jetty was the centre of boat building 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, facilitated by reclamation work which created the Esplanade Reserve on the foreshore between William Street and Barrack Street jetties.

This reclamation work, begun in 1873 by the Public Works Department, 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.'⁷ 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.⁸ 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.'⁹ 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.¹⁰ 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 the role of parklands.¹¹ With the growth of industrialisation, however, the middle-class desired 'idealised landscapes at the edge of their fast growing towns.'¹² 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.¹³

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 goldrushes. In the absence of the sea, many public reserves were associated with rivers. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries parks were a response to the focus on health and

⁵ 'Supreme Court Conservation Plan', Heritage and Conservation Professionals, 1998, pp. 53-55.

⁶ Seddon, G. & Ravine, D. op cit, p. 123.

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

⁸ *West Australian*, 7 June 1881, p. 3.

⁹ *West Australian*, 12 June 1890, p. 2.

¹⁰ *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.

¹¹ 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.

¹² Chadwick, George F. *The Park and the Town*, Architectural Press, London, 1966, pp. 314.

¹³ Ramsay, Juliet, op cit.

outdoor cures. They were the only public provision for outdoor recreation at the time.¹⁴

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. Much of the fill for the reclamation was provided by silt and shell dredged up from the Swan River in an ongoing effort to keep the waterway navigable.¹⁵

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.¹⁶

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 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.¹⁷ The new ferry services were run from Barrack Street jetty by boat builder Herman (Harry) Sutton in partnership with Jack, and later Oscar, Olsen.¹⁸

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.¹⁹ The Perth City Baths, situated between Barrack Street and William Street jetties, was an added river attraction. Pleasure cruises to Garden Island and Rottnest 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.²⁰

In 1904, 100,000 passengers were ferried back and forth across the river, the Zoo being a major attraction for travellers to the south side.²¹ The increased river traffic and the berthing of growing numbers of large steam boats required better wharf facilities on Perth foreshore.

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- ¹⁴ 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.
- ¹⁵ 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'.
- ¹⁶ HCWA assessment 3850 'Esplanade Reserve', op cit; photographs c. 1900, 472B/1-3, Battye Library.
- ¹⁷ 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.
- ¹⁸ Dickson, Rod, op cit, pp. i-xv; Photograph, c 1900, Barrack Street jetty, Battye Library 9647P.
- ¹⁹ Photograph, Seddon, G. & Ravine, D. op cit, fig. 2.2, p. 20.
- ²⁰ 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.
- ²¹ Batholomeusz, Cheryll, 'History of Ferry Services on the Swan River, 1830-1969', bound typescript, 1969, p. 12.

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.²²

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.²³ 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...²⁴

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 and four jetties projected from the wharf into the river. The place was 300 feet (91m) deep.²⁵

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. The

²² *Western Mail*, 13 February 1904, p. 44, 'Plan for Perth Water'.

²³ 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.

²⁴ *West Australian*, 16 August 1906, p. 6.

²⁵ 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.

western section of *Barrack Square* and the fourth jetty were completed in 1907.²⁶

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 it was moved closer to the Square, to its present site, 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.²⁷

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.²⁸

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.²⁹

The plan called for the shell to be cleared off the areas between the paths and for the ground thus cleared to be left bare for some time so the rain could wash out the salt from the river fill. These areas were then to be grassed and planted with 'a few palms' and 'flower beds'.³⁰ 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

²⁶ 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*.

²⁷ Correspondence & Plan 11340, 14 July 1905, PWD File 'Swan River Vol. 2, op cit.

²⁸ *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.

²⁹ 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.

³⁰ Memorandum for Engineer-In-Chief, 26 April 1905, op cit.

men arrived one morning and spent a couple of days rooting out every alternate upright'.³¹

In 1906, the jetties were made the responsibility of the Harbour and Lights Department, while *Barrack Square* itself remained the responsibility of the PWD.³² 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.³³

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.³⁴

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'.³⁵

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.³⁶

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 service to the south shore, however. In 1912, the State Government purchased the Mends Street jetty and established State Ferries to run that route.³⁷

³¹ *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.

³² 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.

³³ *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.

³⁴ *West Australian*, Editorial, 27 January 1908, sighted in PWD 'Press cuttings book, 1905-1911' op cit.

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ Dickson, Rod, op cit, p. 177.

³⁷ *ibid*; *World Ship Society*: Passmore, George, op cit.

Boat hire businesses at *Barrack Square* 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*. Mrs E. M. Pound ran the refreshment rooms, and her husband, James, a painter and decorator, was half of the Sellin & Pound partnership that also operated from the place. The Pounds lived on the premises, as did some of the other lessees.³⁸

On 21 February 1922, a fire destroyed the boat sheds, the refreshment rooms, and many boats. Losses amounted to over £6,000.³⁹ 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*.⁴⁰ The Government did not rebuild the boat sheds, possibly because the boom in river transport was coming to an end as it was overtaken by train, tram and the new motor vehicles. Other areas of the Swan River had also been developed for recreation. 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.⁴¹ 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.'⁴² 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 Garden. *Barrack Square* has been classified as 'urban space', a style which covers public areas that have a formal design.⁴³

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

³⁸ *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1921.

³⁹ *West Australian*, 22 February 1922, p. 3, sighted in PWD 'Departmental press cuttings, 1911-1941', AN7/11, ACC 748, Item 2.

⁴⁰ Passmore, George, op cit.

⁴¹ *The State Gardens Board*, op cit, p. 24.

⁴² *West Australian*, 3 July 1924, sighted in PWD 'Departmental press cuttings, 1911-1941' op cit.

⁴³ Richards, Oline, 'Theoretical framework for Designed Landscapes in WA, Final Report', April 1997, pp. 85-86 & 99-100; Ramsay, Juliet, 'Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A classification and assessment method for the register of the National Estate', Australian Heritage Commission, AGPS, April 1991. Oline Richards argues that the Geometric style displays a higher level of architectural order and geometry, and classifies *Barrack Square* as urban space.

section of Langley Park were created by reclamation. Riverside Drive, from the Causeway to William Street was opened in August 1937.⁴⁴

In 1938, the Barrack Street to Victoria Street section of Riverside Drive was widened and sealed, and *Barrack Square* was gazetted Reserve 21881 and vested in the City of Perth, for the purpose of Park and Gardens.⁴⁵ 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.⁴⁶ 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'.⁴⁷ 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, 1937-1939.⁴⁸

Barrack Square continued to be the focus of ferry and river cruise journeys, and greater controls were placed on use of the river to combat rubbish dumping and pollution.⁴⁹ The construction of the Narrows Bridge 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.⁵⁰ 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. 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.⁵¹ 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

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

45 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.

46 Lands Administration file, op cit; Site plan 1981, PCC file 529/81.

47 PWD File 'Swan River - control of foreshore Crawley to Causeway and construction of Riverside Drive,' op cit.

48 First reference to the name is a letter dated 12 September 1939, Lands Administration file, op cit.

49 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-).

50 Site plans 1998.

51 Le Page, op cit, p. 598; *West Australian*, 13 February 1980, op cit.

boat operators competed for business, and the PCC now found itself responsible for controlling this activity.⁵²

In 1979, the Government cancelled Reserve 21881 and revoked the vesting order. *Barrack Square* was designated a road reserve.⁵³ At some point, a roundabout was established in the centre of *Barrack Square* for better traffic movement. At one stage a tram terminus, *Barrack Square* now became a bus terminus. As 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.⁵⁴ One developer put forward some adventurous plans, priced at 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. Both Departments relocated to Fremantle. The buildings on the new jetty, known as Old Perth Port, were designed to house various retail enterprises which would appeal to tourists and visitors, and appear to be an attempt to recreate the bustling river port of the 1900-1920s period.⁵⁵ In 1998, Old Perth Port is occupied by Moorings Cafe, Barnacles Cafe, Boardwalk Souvenirs, Australian By Design gift shop, and a Chinese seafood restaurant, among others.

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 is to 'enhance the current use of *Barrack Square* by ferry and cruise operators by improving passenger access and facilities'.⁵⁶

An archaeological survey was conducted in September 1998. This report, which aimed to identify Aboriginal Sites of significance only, concludes that the area has low Aboriginal archaeological potential.⁵⁷ However, no survey has been undertaken to identify or assess the potential of archaeological deposits associated with European development and use of the place. The proposed belltower and surrounding water feature is sited above the old stone river wall, which edged the early reclaimed foreshore, and also above the north-south oriented shell bank which enclosed the eastern section of *Barrack Square* during construction of the place. The remains of the old Barrack Street jetty are also believed to be part of the

⁵² Perth City Council file, 'Barrack Square June 1977-December 1980', 529/81.

⁵³ *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.

⁵⁴ *Central Perth Foreshore Study - Interim Report*, March 1985, p. 61.

⁵⁵ Perth City Council files, 101/90, September 1987-June 1990; 4900631/4739; P1008082/1, July 1994-October 1997.

⁵⁶ *Barrack Square: Draft Master Plan*, Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet & Hames Sharley.

⁵⁷ Johnson, Barry, Swan River Trust, 'Stage 1 Barrack Square Redevelopment and Associated Works: Report on Ethnographic Consultation', Swan River Trust, September 1998, unpublished report.

infill and may, or may not, be uncovered during the proposed development. In addition, early boat sheds and other jetties were demolished or relocated to make way for the construction of *Barrack Square* in 1904/5.⁵⁸ The work may also encroach on the plantings, some of which, such as the palms, are over 90 years old.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Barrack Square is an urban park located on the bank of the Swan River at the termination of Barrack Street. The area predominantly functions as a ferry terminal. The area is characterised by tree planting, annual garden beds, seating, lighting, bollards and flagpoles.⁵⁹

The design of *Barrack Square* 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 mature trees and the concentration of buildings provide an indicator and focal point for people accessing the foreshore and the river.

There are two distinct areas to *Barrack Square*, a large, paved promenade around the edge of the river and a central landscaped area. The promenade skirts the waters edge along the east, south and west boundaries of the place and provides access to the buildings and jetties. There are five jetties, numbered 1 to 5, west to east across the southern boundary of *Barrack Square*, each with a building used for ticketing and administration purposes. The buildings, constructed at the same time as the jetties between 1973 and 1978, are of no specific style. A sixth jetty and associated development, known as Old Perth Port and constructed in 1994, is located off the east side of *Barrack Square*. This complex has been modelled on the restored timber West Australian Rowing Club building situated on the foreshore to the east. A smaller jetty is angled off the south-west corner of the place.

The promenade is open with little shelter from the sun and wind, enhancing its maritime character. In contrast, the central area of the place is predominantly green lawn with a large shady canopy of mature trees. This area is divided into four quadrants by vehicular roads, and a formal paved area along the Barrack Street axis.

The approach down Barrack Street to *Barrack Square* features an avenue of Morton Bay Figs planted along the Barrack Street frontages of the Esplanade Reserve and the Supreme Court Gardens. A roundabout has been constructed on the Barrack Street axis in the centre of the Square, and two rows of flagpoles erected on the river side of the roundabout. There has been recent decorative planting in the centre of the Square, which together with the roundabout, restrict views of the River from Barrack Street.

The promenade around *Barrack Square* continues east along the Perth foreshore. The parkland between Riverside Drive and the river is currently being upgraded. To the west of *Barrack Square* there is a small beach and a narrow stretch of park through which passes the foreshore

⁵⁸ Le Page, J. S. H. op cit, p. 332; PWD drawing 11340, 31 July 1904, op cit.

⁵⁹ Richards, Oline, op cit, pp. 85-86.

dual use path. The beach, which is covered with litter and traversed by a storm water pipe, is accessed by a set of broad concrete stairs and a gentle grass slope. The amenity of the area is restricted by a golf driving range.

The existing road design generally maintains the Union Jack cross. The main vehicular entry to *Barrack Square* is a continuation of Barrack Street. At the central roundabout the road forms a one way (clockwise) circuit. There is angle parking and bus parking along east/west roads. The north/south roads are extended to Riverside Drive to form an additional entry and exit. The roads are sealed with bitumen and generally finished with a mountable concrete kerb on the outer edge and a low square kerb on the inner edge. The promenade and the formal Barrack Street axis are paved with light grey and charcoal coloured precast concrete that has the appearance of a cobblestone. Along the waters edge the pavers are finished with a slightly raised concrete edge beam.

A red bitumen dual use path loops across the north-east and north-west corners of *Barrack Square* connecting the foreshore paths with the Barrack Street intersection. Joggers and pedestrians, keen to continue a straight path rather than loop, have worn pathways across the grassed areas (marked on the landscape site plan with a dotted line).

The park furniture includes a number of randomly placed concrete frame and jarrah slat freestanding park seats; recently installed Mark Cox 'Promenade' park seats; rubbish bins in two styles painted in a pale marine blue; unfinished treated-pine bollards, and concrete-filled steel pipe bollards painted white. A chain link fence with concrete-filled steel pipe posts is used as a barrier to prevent people accessing the river along the promenade.

The main signage in the area is associated with Department of Transport and local businesses. Standard Main Road streetlights are used to illuminate the roads. Along the river promenade two types of decorative pedestrian lighting standards are used.

Jetties 1 to 5 are timber pylon constructions with concrete slab decking. The jetties have different floor levels at boat berthing points and steel pipe railings in various locations. Timber fenders and steel bollards are located on each jetty, except jetty No. 4 which has rubber fenders. Water, fire and electrical services, and a proliferation of equipment associated with boarding and disembarking from the boats, are evident on the jetties.

The elevations of the buildings at the shore end of the jetties are aligned with the retaining river wall boundary, with covered porticos extending into the promenade area. The gable roofs of the buildings on jetties No. 2, 3 and 4 and the Old Perth Port building on jetty No. 6, and the similarity of jetties 1 to 5, present the only cohesive building elements of the river port facility at *Barrack Square*.

The westernmost jetty is diagonal to jetties 1 to 5. It is a narrow timber planked jetty on timber pylons with timber rails along the edge and timber fenders around the end. A steel framed entrance and gate restricts entry. The signage at the entrance indicates that the jetty is associated with drive-yourself boat and party pontoon hire.

Jetty No. 1 is the Transperth Zoo Ferry berth. The front portico of the building has a flat roof and Transperth corporate coloured boxed fascia, supported by two right-angle composite pillars with panels depicting animal murals fixed to each side. The building is a composite concrete and pebble panelled wall construction on the exterior with cream coloured face brickwork on the internal walls. Each side wall features a row of four portholes. The centre of the building is open through to the jetty where two steel clad structures with flat roofs adjoin each side of the building.

Jetty No. 2 has a single-storey gable roof building with a double gable portico. The building is clad with varnished weatherboards and a Colorbond 'custom orb' profile roof. Occupied by two separate companies, access to the jetty is gained through the centre of the building. On the west side, Oceanic Cruises have a ticket office opening onto the promenade, and Golden Sun Scenic Ferry Cruises have a ticket office on the east side of the building. The portico is supported with square timber posts with lattice panels. Immediately behind (south) the main building, on the jetty, is a flat roofed steel clad building and a small gable roofed steel clad structure.

Jetty No. 3 has a double-storey gable roof building with a single-storey double gable portico. The building is clad with varnished weatherboards and a Colorbond 'custom orb' profile roof. Occupied by two separate companies, access to the jetty is gained through the centre of the building. On the west side, Captain Cook Cruises have a ticket office opening onto the promenade, and Boat Torque Rottneest have a ticket office on the east side of the building. The portico is supported on square timber posts with lattice panels. At the rear of the building, on the south (river) side, there is a first floor verandah. A flat roofed steel clad building and a small gable roofed steel clad structure are located on the jetty.

Jetty No. 4 has a double-storey gable roof building with a single-storey triple gable portico. The building is clad with varnished weatherboards and a Colorbond 'custom orb' profile roof which breaks pitch at a row of windows along the west and east. The building is occupied by Boat Torque and her vehicular and pedestrian access to the jetty on the east side of the building. The front portico is supported on square timber posts with lattice panels as for Jetties No 2 and 3. An open sided steel framed structure with a gable roof extends the length of the jetty and is enclosed at the south (river) end by another varnished weatherboard building. This structure provides some weather protection for passengers and is the only jetty so equipped. The jetty is one level with rubber fenders on both sides.

Jetty No. 5 is in the same east-west line with jetties 1 to 4, but is located off the south-east corner of *Barrack Square* and not off the main promenade. This jetty was added in the 1970s, when the original four jetties were rebuilt. The building on this jetty is a composite concrete pebble construction with a flat roof and steel deck fascia, similar to the building on Jetty No. 1, and also has a series of porthole windows. It is in only fair condition and has no signage.

The Old Perth Port complex comprises two two-storey buildings interconnected on the first floor level along the east side to form a U-shape. There are single-storey free standing buildings inside the U and another single-storey section on the north side of the complex featuring a

deck. The buildings are constructed on jetty No. 6, a structure of steel pylons and steel beams supporting a spaced board deck. The complex is weatherboard clad with gable roofs, and is similar in style, form, materials and colour to the restored West Australian Rowing Club building on the foreshore to the east. A verandah at first floor level, and corresponding colonnade at ground floor level, encircle parts of the building.

The Moorings Cafe is located on the river (east) side of the Old Perth Port complex. Boardwalk Souvenirs, gift shop Australian By Design, Barnacles Cafe and Shun Fung Chinese Seafood Restaurant also occupy sections of the complex. The single-storey building in the centre, facing the promenade, houses the Activity Booking Centre, which includes Rottneest Island Bike Hire.

The dominant vegetation in the *Barrack Square* gardens includes mature trees and palms planted in lawn. The collection of trees is a diverse mix of introduced tree species, ranging in age from 90 years to recent planting. The oldest specimens are the tall Cotton Palms (*Washingtonia filifera*), Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), Port Jackson Figs (*Ficus rubiginosa*), European fan Palms (*Chamaerops humilis*), Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), and Norfolk Island Hibiscus (*Lagunaria patersonii*). These trees form the structure planting of the square.

The formal planting along the lines of the original Union Jack layout is difficult to distinguish in places, due to the loss of trees and modification of roads and paths. This is especially true in the north-west and north-east corners of the place which appear to have had the most modification, the north-west corner having been affected by the intrusion of a road. However, the south-east and south-west corners of *Barrack Square* show a clear diagonal line through the plantings, indicating the route of the original path. The basic cross design is still apparent in the road plan.

Palms were planted along Riverside Drive and along the Barrack Street axis to create an entry statement. Port Jackson Figs, clumps of European Fan Palms, Norfolk Island Hibiscus and Norfolk Island Pines seem to have been planted randomly within the triangular grass areas created by the diagonal paths.

The younger trees (up to 20 years), including Cotton Palms, Port Jackson Figs and Cook Pine (*Araucaria columnaris*), have been planted to reinstate some of the formal layout. The most recent plants (up to 5 years) are located in the roundabout. These include a centrally planted Golden Honey Locust (*Gleditsia tricanthos*) surrounded by decorative shrubs and annuals.⁶⁰

13.3 REFERENCES

13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

Archaeological analysis during excavations for the proposed belltower and associated water feature may be warranted due to the position of the old

⁶⁰ Hames Sharley have available a surveyed plan if this is required.

river wall and the shell bank. Remains of the old Barrack Street jetty may, or may not, be located at this site.