REPORT ON THE WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS OF INVITED EXPERTS ON DIFFICULTIES IN THE PERTH CITY WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT (ELIZABETH QUAY)

PREPARED BY AN INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE CONSTITUTED BY: THE HON ROBERT NICHOLSON AO, EMERITUS PROFESSOR GEOFFREY BOLTON AO AND RETIRED ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE DAVID STANDBEN AM

31 January 2013
INTRODUCTION

1. On 24 June 2009 the Premier of Western Australia, the Hon Colin Barnett MLA, announced the public committal of the government to proceeding with the Perth Waterfront Redevelopment (subsequently identified by the name of the Elizabeth Quay development).

2. On 23 March 2011 the Project Director of the Department of Planning identified the development to the Public Accounts Committee as a priority of government. He said that at that time the waterfront had not been included in the WA Planning Commission’s Strategic Asset Management Framework (‘SAMF’) but would be included on the agency’s SAMF as it moved forward.

3. In December 2012 the Premier announced that contracts had been concluded for the purpose of implementing major site works to initiate the Elizabeth Quay development.

4. CityVision was established in 1987 as a voluntary, non party-political think-tank and advocacy group, focused on central Perth. It comprises 20 financial members (by invitation) active in the fields of planning, urban design, architecture, civil engineering, landscape architecture, heritage, arts and culture, and development.

5. CityVision’s aims are: “to see Perth become a true Capital city and source of aspiration for all Western Australians; a leading city commercially and culturally; a highly livable and beautiful city, responding in its built forms to its natural setting and environment.”

6. Members of CityVision have been concerned that insufficient time was permitted by the State Government for public comment or debate on the proposed development. Accordingly it decided to invite a range of experts to state in writing their perception of difficulties with the development.

7. CityVision also decided to establish an independent committee of three individuals to examine the submissions of the experts and report to it on what the views of the experts stated. It did not require the experts to be cross-examined or for the credibility of their submissions to be considered by the Committee members. It sought only that there should be a record of the views of experts made at this time as an aid to public debate and historical assessment of the development.

8. The Committee has decided to report to CityVision under each of the terms of reference referred to each invited expert for consideration.
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Submissions are invited as to the efficacy of the planning and design with specific regard to:

2. Heritage.
3. Urban Design/Landscape
4. Transport & Traffic.
5. Economics
7. Any other areas of concern

As well as concerns, contributors were asked to highlight positive attributes of the project

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CONTRIBUTING EXPERTS

Descriptions, where available, have been taken from the written submissions of the experts.

Peter C. Bruechle:
Peter Bruechle, APTC, FIEAust, F(Hon)RAIA is a structural engineer who has led structural design teams for such projects as Central Park, Exchange Plaza, Forrest Place, the grandstands and the light towers at the WACA ground and many landmark buildings. He lectured at the School of Architecture at UWA for many years and is the recipient of The John Connell Gold Medal from the Institution of Engineers Australia (2001) and the Robert Law Award from The Master Builders Association (2010).

Robert J. Hart:
FAICA (R), formerly 12 years as Senior Landscape Architect of the Public Works Department Architectural Division; subsequently in private practice as a landscape architect for 10 years.

Ken Eastwood:
Ken Eastwood is a Fellow and Life Member of CPA Australia and was both State and National President of that body. He was admitted to the General Division of the Order of Australia for services to the Community and to the Accounting Profession.

John Syme:
B Arch, MBA, Aff RAIA, FAICD. John Syme is a specialist in property economics, planning and development strategy, with many years’ experience in business operations and in consulting to the private sector and to government. He has a long career in all aspects of management and analysis of property projects, commercial projects and companies generally. He has been instrumental in the planning and development of many major projects in Western Australia, including major inner area redevelopment projects and prominent sites in inner areas.

His experience is broad: his career includes designing, marketing, building and developing in the residential construction industry, as an architect in private practice, a venture capital manager of technology company investments and operator and franchisor of retail outlets. He has been involved in the management, planning and policy aspects of large inner area redevelopment projects and greenfield land development, as well as undertaking a series of multi-residential development projects. His research projects, at doctoral level, have included investigation of factors for city competitive advantage. A specialty is the strategic analysis of development projects in a local, national and international context. He has advised government on several aspects of policy and strategy.

Chris Wiggins:
After graduating at Cambridge University in 1965, Chris joined Chicago Bridge and Iron (CBI), a US company specializing in welded steel construction, where he worked as an engineer and project manager on oil and gas projects in the Middle East and nuclear power station construction in North America.

In 1974, following completion of an MBA degree he emigrated to Australia and
joined Citibank N.A.'s. Corporate Banking division in Sydney, working in Australia and Asia. In 1979 Chris transferred to Perth to establish the Citibank Corporate Banking branch in Perth for which he was the Vice President and principal credit officer until 1986.

In 1989, Chris joined Rothschild Australia as Director for Western Australia. He also served on the Australian and Asian credit committees, assessing a wide range of banking proposals and investments.

Chris retired from Rothschild in July 2006. He is active in sailing (RFBYC), bridge (WABC), local community, traveling. Chris has lived in or visited many of the major cities in North America, Europe, Asia and Africa. He takes an active interest in art, history, architecture and planning.

Ken Adam:
LFRAIA, LFPIA, Hon FAIUS, Architect and Town Planner

I am a native of Perth. I was born here in 1942 and have lived here most of my life. I grew up in Perth, was educated here, raised my own family here, served in the professional public service here until 1974 and have practised here as an architect and planning consultant ever since then. I have also travelled extensively, experienced many of the great and not-so-great cities of the world, and been a resident for a time in two of them, the vastly different cities of Birmingham and Brasilia.

The City Centre, together with its river and Mt Eliza setting, have had a very conscious place in my life for more than 60 years, since I was a small child. I visited it with my parents as a child, explored it as a teenager, studied architecture at PTC in the Terrace, brought my own children there, worked there and enjoyed its cultural and commercial offerings all my life. I’ve been involved professionally with its design and planning, in the public service, in my practice and, for more than twenty years as an active member of CityVision. I’ve been both observer and participant and seen and experienced its cycles of change in all that time.

I was also directly involved in the earlier stages of the Elizabeth Quay project, as an expert participant in all three Peer Reviews.

When Stephenson delivered his seminal plan and report in 1955 I was an emerging teenager and Perth was a mature city of some 300,000 souls, with all the major attributes and facilities of a primate capital city, and an active relationship with its river. It would be a mistake (and a conceit on the part of some) to see Perth as equivalent to a big country town that is only now, through the insight and efforts of current politicians and planners, being dragged into capital city maturity. In the planning and design of any city a much better sense of the perspectives of time and place are essential.

This is not to say that there is not much to be done to realise Perth’s very considerable potential, or that mistakes have not been made in its planning and development. Indeed a large part of Perth’s (changing) potential remains to be discovered, and always will be. And great mistakes have been made along the way, and continue to be made, as evidenced by the need for this Enquiry.

I love this city and I believe that by dint of my life in it, my professional qualifications, experience and involvement and my independence (along with CityVision’s expertise and involvement) make mine a credible voice in discourse on the future of this city, including this project.
Ralph Stanton:
MRAIA, FPIA, Architect (Ret) & Urban Designer
Ralph Stanton practised as an Architect /Planner/Urban Design consultant in Perth, responsible for broad-acre developments from Mindarie to Yanchep and for regional centre design studies and planning strategies such as for Rockingham, Fremantle and Cannington.
He has studied modern city centres such as Stockholm, post-war rebuilt centres (Rotterdam and Coventry) and prepared strategies for Australian city centres (Adelaide)
He is a Past President, Planning Institute of Australia (WA Chapter) and is a foundation member of City Vision. He is also a practising visual artist.
Qualifications: B Arch (Melbourne) Dip TP (UCL) Dip Art (Fine Art, CSA) MRAIA, FPI

Lise Summers:
Dr Lise Summers (BA, DipIM-ArchivAdmin, MA, PhD) is a qualified archivist and historian with over thirty years experience in identifying, managing and researching cultural heritage. Dr Summers gained her PhD in 2008 from the University of Melbourne in the School of the History and Philosophy of Science with her thesis, "From wasteland to parkland: a history of designed public open space in the City of Perth, 1829 to 1965." In addition, Dr Summers has written on the history of Sir James Mitchell Park, botanic gardens in WA, intercolonial and international exhibitions in the colonial period, and the use of subsistence labour to develop the Esplanade and Yanchep. She has undertaken heritage assessments with architect Chris Keen, and has taught in the areas of history, heritage assessment and archives administration at university level. She is currently President of the History Council of Western Australia, and a member of the City Gatekeepers.

Statement of conflict of interest - Dr Summers has attended public fora on designs for the Esplanade since 2008, and has presented submissions on the heritage impacts of the plan to the WA Planning Commission and MRA, and to the WA Parliamentary Committee in support of the Gatekeepers petition. She is on an expert review panel, with Professor Geoffrey Bolton, for the Centre for WA History examining the current heritage interpretation strategy.

Jenny Gregory AM:
QUALIFICATIONS: PhD History UWA, FRHS, MICOMOS, MPHRA
PROFESSION: Historian
FIELDS OF EXPERTISE: Urban history and heritage.
CURRENT POSITIONS:
Winthrop Professor of History, Head of School of Humanities, University of W A
Deputy Chair, National Trust of Australia (WA) (2011– to date)
RELEVANT PAST POSITIONS:
Chair (2008–10), President (1998–2007), National Trust of Australia (WA)
Deputy Chair, Australian Council of National Trusts (2010)
President, History Council of WA (2003–07)
Gerard Siero:
Ecological Architect
RAIA A+ Architect, Archicentre Accredited Architect
ALVA AUDRC UWA PhD Candidate in Ecological Urbanism – Landscape + Architecture
I am a practising ecological architect, currently undertaking PhD studies at the University of Western Australia on the application of Ecology to Urbanism – A house as a tree; a city as a forest (William McDonough and Michael Braungart Cradle to Cradle.) I am a member of the Australian Institute of Architects, and have been active on its Environment/Sustainability, Urban Design, Practice and Chapter Council Committees, and am a member of City Vision and the Anglican EcoCare Commis

Linley Lutton
Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Earth and Environment, UWA
Lecture in Urban Planning, School of Earth and Environment, UWA
Chair, City Gatekeepers, Advocates for Better City Planning
Director of Urbanix
Architect and Urban Planner

Tony Brand
Anthony Brand AM A.ArchPTC.LFRAIA
Two of my architectural practices were conducted in offices fronting the Esplanade for periods of 5 and 10 years respectively.
My findings and opinion are based upon my experiences and expertise in the fields of architecture and City planning during most of the last 57 years of practice since being registered as an Architect in 1955.

During this time, I have been involved with many major CBD buildings including Exchange Plaza (and its Town Planning Scheme), Campus developments in WA including the planning and design of Two Rocks Town Centre, planning and design of Campus Development at Hedland College, John XXIII College and buildings at UWA and Curtin University. The architect responsible for the Forest Place and City Station Urban and Architectural Developments.

My professional interests and appointments have included:

- Past Member of Town Planning & Aesthetics Advisory Committee to Cottesloe Town Council
- Past Member- Appeals Committee for Minister of Town Planning and Infrastructure
- Past Temporary Member- Town Planning Appeals Tribunal
- Past Chairman- Residential Codes Advisory Committee to the Minister for Town Planning (Mrs June Craig)
- Past Chairman- Competitions Committee for the W.A. Chapter of R.A.I.A.
- Past Chairman- Town Planning & Building Committee of Cottesloe Town Council
• Past Member Vision for Perth Committee, Minister for Town Planning (Mr Graham Kierath)

My personal awards include:
• Order of Australia, A.M., in 1990 for "Services to Architecture, particularly in planning and for services to the community"
• The Architects Board award in 1988 for services to architecture
• Citizen of the Year- Cottesloe 1994
• Seniors Week- Community Award Certificate  1992
• 20 design and planning awards in Architecture including the acme Bronze Medal awards for two buildings
FIRST TERM OF REFERENCE: THE PLANNING PROCESS

Peter C. Bruechle:
I begin by saying that I am not against the development of the Perth Waterfront. I am, however, against extending the commercial CBD onto the Esplanade Public Reserve as the present plan proposes. I fully realise that no plan for a future development will please everyone and that the act of creation is much more onerous and difficult than the act of criticism. However I consider that the present plan for the development of the Perth Waterfront is so flawed that it must be reconsidered. Although the views I express in this are my own they have been arrived at after detailed discussions and correspondence with prominent experts in different fields.

Briefly my position, which is more fully detailed later in this, is:

- The historical and community values that the Esplanade has should not be lost to commercial development but enhanced by any development that is undertaken.
- Riverside Drive is a critical and irreplaceable connection between the eastern and western suburbs. It should not be lost to make way for a development that could de-value the city. It must be retained and improved at all costs.
- Tall buildings near the river’s edge will limit public access, create wind funnelling and overshadowing, and add to traffic congestion in what is already an overcrowded area.
- If studies that have thoroughly examined all environmental issues including flooding, shadowing, wind funnelling, the effects of dredging and regional and local traffic effects have been made they must be made public for critical examination by disinterested parties and the public. If they have not been made it is a disgrace that the scheme is going ahead without them.
- How the process that selected the designers was conducted should also be made public to ensure it was a sound selection process and that the public endorses those selected. For instance, it should be made clear that the architects for the proposed scheme are the architects who designed the Perth Arena that finished so badly over budget and overtime.

Until these important matters of public interest are clear and until the public has had an opportunity to consider matters that are, as yet, not known work on the present project should cease. There are complaints that the planning process is taking too long and that to make Perth an exciting city it is necessary for the present plan to proceed as quickly as possible. I disagree and consider that the plan to develop the Esplanade Public Reserve has so many downsides it should be thoroughly reviewed publicly prior to going further.

The plan takes the commercial heart of the city to the edge of the Swan River, an area of the city that has been reserved for the city’s civic, cultural and recreational activities and amenities, since the city was founded. As the railway is being sunk in Northbridge and as there are many under-utilised and degraded parts of the city there is an abundance of infill space for future commercial and residential development available so there is no need to utilize waterfront areas for those purposes. It is my opinion that it is not desirable to fill in the public areas on the river’s edge with development and there is not the slightest need to do so.
The Esplanade Public Reserve is a significantly beneficial and unique space that most cities of the world would regard as priceless. It must be developed wisely and not lost. I also consider that the plan now submitted to the public has many flaws and it should not proceed. The office towers that are proposed will cause those seeking unobstructed views of the river to migrate, taking the city to the river’s edge. This will not create a new heart but a crowded office enclave. If, instead, we redevelop the area over the railway and the degraded parts of the city with new buildings and parklands we will produce a new “heart” that will easily cater for our expansion needs for the next 50 years.

Planning and urban design of part of the public domain is much more than a commercial or technical undertaking. It is, or it should be, a moral and civic enterprise. In my view the present plan does not reflect those imperatives. The stated objective of the plan – to bring the City to the River – should be assessed on moral and civic terms. What, for example, is the civic value in taking a large and valuable area of public land and transforming it into a series of street-block sized, commercial development sites?

The decision has been justified by the arguments that large developments are needed in order to create a “critical mass” of users and to pay for the expensive footings necessary to support such tall buildings on what is a poor foundation. The critical mass proposition is questionable because if the planning and facilities are of sufficient quality the users will come to this prime area anyway.

Does such a development have any real civic value or will it be the small percentage of the population who occupy the area who receive most benefit? Will a bigger percentage of the population of Perth or more tourists be attracted to the area?

Any public open spaces, coffee houses or restaurants will be shaded by the tall buildings throughout most of the times of the year when they might attract custom and will face the prevailing winds in summer. I consider that the plan is an overblown design aimed at improving what the designers see as Perth’s “image”.

It has questionable commercial value, as studies have shown, and I consider it has little, if any, civic value. Its primary value appears to be that it provides the present government with an opportunity to leave a lasting mark on the city. I also consider that complicating the vital cross-metropolitan link of Riverside Drive, as outlined below, has a huge negative civic impact.

I understand the process of arriving at the present decisions has been a fairly protracted one. Despite this process being protracted I am concerned that the thinking and negotiations appear to have been carried out by a limited number of people and with a minimum of input from those whose opinions might run counter to those involved and from the public in general. Also there has been no publicity as to why those selected for their various roles were selected for this most important area of the city, how they were selected and by whom.

Why is this? I consider that for such an important development the selection processes should have been made with full involvement of the interested public and with full opportunities for public comment.

The basis for the selection of the architects who designed the Perth Arena for this very important civic development should be made public. Who selected them and on what basis? Why was there not a competition with quality judges for such an important addition to Perth?

I understand that public participation was called for from 22 February to 27 May 2011. Many, who would have responded had they known about the call, did not see or
know of the advertisements. I also understand that there were only 56 submissions but I know that there are hundreds who would have contributed had they known that such important decisions were being made.

Finally I understand that all objections were responded to with a note that the comments were “noted” but without any positive responses to the objections raised. This is not a proper approach to a public review.

**Robert J Hart:**

Elizabeth Quay is the latest in a string of recent planning disasters by the Barnett government. This is what happens when government engages professional advice from interstate or overseas.

This project, considering its size, cost, and ill-conceived location, should be the subject of a competition or consortium. In the pre-Burke days, this project could have possibly been directed by the Public Works department. To destroy the Esplanade for some ego-centric “trip” coupled with commercial profit, with no actual benefit to us, the owners, is beyond any professional reasoning. Elizabeth Quay is a project with no master plan or proper consultation, handed on a plate by an egotistical government mesmerized by Eastern States people who obviously know nothing of local conditions.

Over my twenty-five years with the PWD we were directly responsible for all government work throughout Western Australia. Unfortunately no such Department exists any more. Why?

**Ken Eastwood:**

The following is an extracted statement from the materials provided by the expert:

‘The State of Western Australia’s Public Accounts Committee presented a report to the Parliament in December 2011. It concluded that ‘the lack of transparency and engagement with the community does not give confidence that the planning is to the standard required by the SAMF processes.’

**John Syme:**

The documentation surrounding the current design for the development of the Perth waterfront at the Esplanade contains a number of supporting propositions. These include:

- The traffic consequences resulting from the diversion of Riverside Drive are inconsequential and can be resolved
- The waterfront plan will bring the river to the city
- Bicycle amenity and safety will be improved
- Heritage values are preserved
- Substantial development is consistent with Transit-Oriented Design
- Melbourne Southbank is a model for the Perth waterfront.
- High-rise high density development is required to activate the foreshore.
- Height is required to pay for the project

However, on closer inspection each one of these can be shown as being a myth. Of particular importance are the unintended consequences arising from the project for the overall future not only of the central city but also of the metropolitan overall arising from three project features:
• The reduction in options for east-west regional traffic arising from a substantial reduction in the capacity of Riverside Drive:
• The costs of the increase in traffic congestion in the city; and
• The contribution the project makes to an over-concentration of employment in the Perth inner area.

The Elizabeth Quay project is apparently planned with one narrow objective in mind, namely to increase the engagement of a relatively small part of the city with the river. However, by ignoring its regional and metropolitan context, there will be a number of unintended consequences. It is not hyperbole to say these consequences will be profound for the metropolitan area overall. In particular:
• The reduction in options for east-west regional traffic arising from a substantial reduction in the capacity of Riverside Drive and the inability to further expand the Farmer freeway almost certainly will require an addition to east-west regional capacity at some stage in the future. This will be very expensive and would be unnecessary if the capacity of Riverside Drive were maintained.
• The increase in traffic congestion in the city makes the city generally less efficient and has substantial and unnecessary economic costs.
• The contribution the project makes to an over-concentration of employment in the Perth inner area is substantial and makes a resolution of transport issues, particularly on the very high traffic and transit routes to the north and south, almost impossible. The result will be an increasingly dysfunctional and unpleasant city.

A redesign of the current plan is required. Alternatively, and on the basis that there is only a flimsy planning need for it and no economic justification, it could be abandoned, even at this late stage and left for another day. Either of these alternatives would be painful – the current project team would much prefer to get something done, no matter what. However, the shortcomings of the current plan are serious enough to warrant some retreat and re-consideration. However, new planning must have some constraints that are not obvious in the current design solution. The constraints and objectives would include:
• Ensure that the regional function of Riverside Drive as a main by-pass route for the CBD is preserved so that overall congestion is not increased;
• Maintain the objective of providing better connection and access between the city (at St Georges terrace) and the river, but measure and judge this very carefully;
• Improve cyclist and pedestrian amenity, including allowing for both commuter and recreational cyclists in separate bike paths away from the road traffic;
• Investigate, in detail, lower cost and simpler public realm design and low-rise alternatives for development sites;
• Incorporate heritage items into the plan;
• Do not include substantial employment uses in the plan – a low scale plan oriented towards tourist and ground floor activity would achieve this.
**Chris Wiggins:**

There are four self-evident problems with the Elizabeth Quay project.

- Traffic congestion and cost caused by closing one of only already congested four east-west links in central Perth is not justified.
- Unattractive building design, caused by surrounding each high rise building with 6-storey podium and parking garages.
- Bad environmental design caused by exposure to south west prevailing winds and overshadowing.
- Very limited public amenity in terms of entertainment, theatre, playgrounds.

Imposing the current plan on the populace will have long lasting negative impact on both the city and the plan’s proponents.

It represents an unacceptable return financially and socially on the use of prime waterfront land and the cost of development. It is a project driven by political aspirations, not human needs.

The project as currently proposed is opposed by a great majority of WA citizens. Work on the project should be suspended, and the project subjected to detailed review to come up with a plan that has public support.


The proposed inlet is a very bad design. The two elephants in the room, closure of Riverside Drive and exposure to wind, have been ignored. Both these are deal stoppers as far as including an inlet in the design.

There has been no proper scrutiny of this project.

The Government departments involved have misled both the public and parliament through exaggerating the benefits and overlooking the problems. We need facts and details in response to concerns such as those above and many others. All we get is an empty rhetoric and a meaningless slogan “The river. The City. Together again.”

I do not believe that the project as currently conceived is a wise use of either taxpayer monies or prime waterfront public land.

Net WA state debt is forecast to grow from $3.6 billion in 2008 to $24 billion by 2015. The economic outlook is uncertain. This is a time to be cautious.

I urge the people to consider carefully the proposed design of this project, which as an engineer, banker and citizen, I do not see as justified. Notwithstanding the impression engineered by the Government, I understand that it is not too late to halt the project.

The reason why the development of this area has not proceeded in the past is because these problems have proved intractable. What has changed?

I conclude with the remarks made on page 38 of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee report dated 12 Dec 2012”. (The full is report is attached to Mr Ken Eastwood’s submission dated 18 Dec 2012.)

“This is a large and complex project making major changes to the structure and working of the Perth CBD. If we get it wrong, in any one of several significant aspects, then the benefits to the city, its liveability and efficient functioning could be severely impaired. The lack of transparency and engagement with the community does not give confidence that the planning is to the standard required by the SAMF processes.”
Ken Adam:

I strongly endorse the essence of the project; that is, to join the city centre and its foreshore more closely and realise the optimum potential - human, physical and aesthetic - of the foreshore.

I fully endorse these elements of the project, in principle:

- extending the City grid and development towards the foreshore, with the main focus on the area between Barrack and William Streets;
- creating an interesting and socially active environment at the foreshore itself;
- creating a significant body of water within the present Esplanade reserve, either as a lake or, preferably, as an inlet from the river itself; and
- creating a site on the river itself, at the foot of William Street, for a major civic or cultural development, that would provide a landmark, complementary to its environs, and act as a major drawcard, bringing visitors to the foreshore.

I believe the development should be governed by these principles:

- recognising, respecting and positively responding to the essential natural landscape attributes of the place, especially the two dominant features: the low, flat foreshore and adjacent shallow Perth Water; and the steep escarpment of Mount Eliza and descending spine of St George's Terrace; with the latter two together encircling Mounts Bay and this part of the foreshore. This is the principal, universally recognised and valued, natural heritage of Perth;
- recognising that the urban development of the city centre to date, with tall buildings concentrated along St George's Terrace and now extending North along William Street, coupled with the relatively low profiles of the Bus Station, Convention Centre and Esplanade Rail Station, has positively reinforced the natural landform;
- understanding fully, and providing for, the climatic aspects of the place, notably that: the foreshore faces south and the land descends steeply southwards from St George's Terrace, making the place therefore vulnerable to Winter overshadowing from buildings and exposed to the blustery prevailing winds, both summer and winter, across the large water expanses of Perth Water and Melville Water;
- recognising that these features, both landscape and climate, strongly demand that the height of buildings at the foreshore should be kept low, rising towards St George's Terrace in a way to protect public spaces from overshadowing and wind turbulence;
- recognising that development on the foreshore itself – that is, on the river side of Riverside Drive – should best be dedicated wholly to the enjoyment of the general public, specifically related to the particular nature of the foreshore, and without compromise or privatisation other than to directly benefit visitors; and understanding that this would preclude both office development and permanent residential occupation, other than such as to serve public use;
- giving the highest possible protection of the heritage aspects of the land, notably the historic tearooms, the Moreton Bay Fig trees, and especially The Esplanade Reserve;
- retaining a significantly large part of The Esplanade reserve as a grassed area, both for continued and growing daily use by city workers for active and passive recreation, and importantly for public events such as the traditional Anzac Day parades;
- retaining Riverside Drive, and its completion as a two-way route between William Street and the Narrows Bridge, both for its essential role as a continuous route serving and by-passing the City centre (especially in the context of only one feasible alternative route, which is already overstressed, and the continuing growth of the city and metropolitan area it serves) and for its integrity as a valued and historic foreshore pathway from the Causeway to Victoria Avenue;
- providing for safe and continuous movement for pedestrians and cyclists along the foreshore itself, without diversion or interruption;
- providing safe and direct pedestrian and cycle connection between the city and foreshore at key points, grade-separated from Riverside Drive or other heavily trafficked road;
- maintaining permanent public ownership of the public land, especially where it is closely related to the foreshore itself; and undertaking an open, honest and continuous process of public understanding, discussion and debate throughout all stages of the design and development of the project, giving fair consideration and appropriate, respectful response to all comments, criticisms and suggestions.

Ralph Stanton:
In my role as a consultant urban designer, undertaking both broadacre and central-area planning, I have had considerable experience in commissioning and reviewing material prepared by other professionals, including in the categories I address under these terms of reference.

I come to this submission with somewhat of a “vested interest,” having been involved, with CityVision since 1988, in preparing schemes for suggested public development of the Perth city foreshore.

The publicity generated by CityVision led to an international design competition (PCC 1991), later to the city council’s own scheme(s), through various stages of State involvement to the previous government’s plans and lastly to the present proposals.

At every stage, CityVision has been active in response, through submissions, substantial commentary, seminars and so on; our Chairman, Ken Adam, was a member of the Peer Review committee (2007) which set parameters for the latter design of the development.

The Planning Process: a Brief History

Proposed Land Uses:
CityVision’s initial plans were aimed entirely at the public benefit of new recreational and civic uses. Subsequent schemes began to focus more on commercial and residential development, culminating in the current emphasis on substantial office, hotel and apartment buildings which dominate the plan.
In three major aspects never contemplated by the Peer Review, the latest schemes have overturned key parameters; namely by the introduction of a large water-body, the elimination of the Esplanade Reserve and the cutting of Riverside Drive – all of which were proposed by the present designers.

**Opportunities for Public Comment:**

The government, understandably, maintains that development of the Perth foreshore has been debated for many years and there is no need for further review. There has in fact never been a public review.

Several invited groups (including CityVision) made comments at various stages, but the single formal public procedure was a July 2011 Hearing by the WA Planning Commission with regard to (and limited to) rezoning under provisions of the Metropolitan Region Scheme to excise ‘Primary’ and ‘Other Regional Road’ Reserves from the scheme area – in other words to remove the MRS designation of Riverside Drive.

No fundamental issues other than rezoning were entertained by the Hearing. (It should be noted that the WAPC is the body ultimately responsible for the plan’s preparation, and thus was not and is not a disinterested adjudicator.)

The Elizabeth Quay development scheme has grave flaws in both conceptualisation and design. Major issues concern its financial viability, its environmental sustainability, its scale, and its appropriateness in terms of land use and community value. Its single most fundamental fault is its impact on traffic; cutting Riverside Drive will detrimentally affect commerce and amenity in wide areas of central Perth and the CBD.

These issues are serious enough for the scheme to be halted now, before sales and further contractual commitments proceed, and be thoroughly re-assessed.

Some argue that it should not proceed at all; as this is unlikely, I have shown – using CityVision’s experience - an alternative and more balanced approach that might be taken.

**Jenny Gregory:**

During the planning process of the Perth Waterfront/Elizabeth Quay Project, decisions by the WAPC, the City of Perth, and the Heritage Council of WA were crucial to its approval and ongoing development. Public documents reveal that the decision making process was flawed.

**1.1 WA PLANNING COMMISSION (WAPC)**

Between 22 February and 27 May 2011, the WAPC called for submissions on the proposed Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1203/41. Fifty-six submissions were received, which the WAPC chose to categorise as follows; 26 in support subject to conditions, 20 objections, 10 neutral.¹

The process was flawed.

Detailed examination of these submissions indicates that many were incorrectly categorised: there are 22 objections, and 25 submissions that express significant concerns about aspects of the project. The latter were categorised as supporting the amendment (for example, 36, 31, 39, 48).

Furthermore the concerns regarding the heritage listing of the Esplanade and the Florence Hummerston site were dismissed by spurious and inconsistent arguments based on insufficient or incorrect evidence.

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¹ Report on Submissions: Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1203/41 Perth Waterfront, October 2011, p.11
It was argued that ‘the space currently generates only sporadic use and conveys little of its history in its current form’, leading to doubt that ‘the functions of the land can continue to meet the changing needs and aspirations of the Western Australian community.’ This is incorrect, as shown in City of Perth Council minutes discussed below, which show that

*Formal bookings for the hire of the reserve (available prior to the State Government’s commitment to commence the Perth Waterfront Project) were at capacity during the summer months and between 30 to 60 per cent throughout the remainder of the months.*

It was argued that

i. ‘an array of public spaces…will continue the site’s historical purpose as a gathering, event, recreational and parade space although in a revised form’ This will not be possible. Most of this public land is to be sold off to private developers, leaving only a small public area, which will be unsuitable for the gatherings, events and parades that were previously held on the site. A public realm made up of boardwalks cannot compensate for the loss of a large public open space capable of holding more than 100,000 people.

ii. design and construction would provide ‘an opportunity to explain and commemorate the site’s history through interpretation’. That remains to be seen. International examples show that interpretation is generally inadequate to the task of presenting and explaining the past.

iii. as the Florence Hummerston Kiosk
   o would no longer be sited in open parkland its heritage value would be diminished, and had been altered during its lifetime it was no longer authentic,
   o it was in the way of the development
   o removal and relocation was considered the only option. These are spurious arguments. The alterations to the kiosk were of a minor nature. Space around heritage places is constantly subject to change and indeed, on the next page of discussion of heritage concerns, It is, however, irrefutable that the kiosk was in the way of development, as it stood on one of sites to be sold to developers.

iv. the heritage-listed Lawson Apartments would not be impacted by the project. In contrast to the kiosk, where it was argued that loss of parkland would diminish its heritage value, the loss of river views was deemed not to have any effect on the heritage values of Lawson Apartment.

The Report recommended that the amendment proceed with a minor modification relating to realignment of the western boundary of the site. The amendment was endorsed by the Minister for Planning and the Governor, and laid before each House of Parliament for 12 sitting days as required by statute. Motions to disallow the amendment were moved in both Houses, but failed. The amendment came into effect on 6 March 2012.

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2 City of Perth Council Minutes, item 715/11, 6 December 2011
3 Report on Submissions: Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1203/41 Perth Waterfront, October 2011, p.12
1.2 CITY OF PERTH

On 31 March 1880, Reserve 423, known as the New Recreation Ground, was handed over to the Perth Municipal Council by deed of grant 'for the free recreation and enjoyment of the people forever'.

On 17 May 2011, the City of Perth Council resolved ‘to support the Perth Waterfront project as it will make a significant improvement to the city’s relationship with the Swan River, and forwarded comments to the Western Australian Planning Commission on the proposed Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS) Amendment No. 1203/41 for the Perth Waterfront to reserve the land as Public Purpose - Special Use and the Stage 1 Environmental Assessment Report.’

Six months later on 8 November 2011, the Council granted ‘in-principle approval for the acquisition of Lot 79 The Esplanade and Lots 901 and 302 Riverside Drive by the State Government for the Perth Waterfront Project and authorised the Chief Executive Officer to sign the application for the approval to commence development and for subdivision approval.’

Subsequently on 6 December 2011 in seeking approval to commence forward works for the proposed Perth Waterfront project, the following advice from Council officers noted that there were concerns regarding the accuracy of documentation used by the Heritage Council of WA.

Accurate documentation of Cultural Heritage Significance

There are a number of inconsistencies in the supporting documents prepared by Hocking Heritage Studio especially in regards to the use of the Esplanade Reserve. The report concludes that the reserve is not used, however, the Esplanade Reserve has an extensive history of formal and informal use. Formal bookings for the hire of the reserve (available prior to the State Government’s commitment to commence the Perth Waterfront Project) were at capacity during the summer months and between 30 to 60 per cent throughout the remainder of the months. In addition, the reserve is noticeably utilised in an informal capacity by surrounding residents and workers and other groups. The misconception of the use of the reserve would reflect an inaccurate account of the site’s cultural heritage significance and further fails to address the capability of surrounding reserves to adequately service the needs of the current users of the site.

Furthermore, a Heritage Impact Statement for the Talbot Hobbs Statue supports the removal of the statue stating that the statue has little relevance to its current location. This is despite the Statement of Significance stating that this is the original location of the statue and has been used as the point of salute since 1940. In addition, the documentation also supports the deconstruction and removal of the Florence Hummerston Kiosk and the subsequent reconstruction of the structure in a new location. The report does not discuss the impact on the heritage significance of the Kiosk once it is removed from the site to accurately evaluate whether its displacement devalues its significance.

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4 Crown Grant 1066, Title Deed No. 5066, 30 March 1880
5 City of Perth Council Minutes, 6 December 2011
6 City of Perth Council Minutes, 6 December 2011
7 City of Perth Council minutes, 6 December 2011
Interpretation of the Public and Private Realms

The forward works component of the project involves the demolition of most of the elements within the project area with cultural heritage significance. It is therefore considered necessary to evaluate the overall heritage impacts of the project including any proposed outputs during the construction phases. The supporting documentation refers to the development of an Interpretation Plan for both the public and private realms within the project area, however, no details have been provided at this stage. It is considered necessary to have an appreciation of the proposed interpretation of the site’s rich and diverse history to support the removal of these significant elements. Any interpretation plan should also link into surrounding significant points of interpretation in the immediate locality including, but not limited to:

- Perth Town Hall (Stirling and Helen Dance).
- Stirling Gardens.
- Government House.
- Council House.
- Point Zero.

A number of significant developments are also occurring in the immediate area, creating an opportunity to link into other sites’ cultural heritage interpretation to give a coordinated and more complete account of these significant sites in Perth’s history.

In summary, it is considered that given that the Perth Waterfront Project will result in the demolition of a number of historical elements within the project area, it is critical to accurately capture and record the site’s cultural heritage significance including the buildings and gardens for the purposes of successful interpretation in the later stages. Any recommendation to the WAPC should be conditioned to require a review of the supporting heritage documentation to resolve its inconsistencies and misrepresentations of the significance of the site.

Council then recommended the application for forward works be referred to the Western Australian Planning Commission for determination under the Metropolitan Region Scheme with a recommendation of approval subject to a number of conditions including:

13. the heritage impact statements being reviewed in consultation with the City in order to accurately capture the sites full cultural heritage significance including, but not limited to, the public and private use of The Esplanade Reserve and the significance of the location of the Talbot Hobbs Statue, and the likely impacts to its significance as a result of the proposed works, prior to any works commencing on site;

14. an interpretation plan being prepared and submitted for approval by the City, illustrating the proposed methods of interpretation to be adopted in the project area, including opportunities to develop links with surrounding historic sites and points of interest, prior to any works commencing on site;

15. the City being consulted in regards to any future location for the reconstructed Florence Hummerston building.
Most of the conditions presented by Council were rejected by the WAPC acting on behalf of the State Government, the ones relating to heritage were ignored, and the City agreed to the transfer of the land on 31 January 2012.8

Thus the land that had been granted to the City of Perth for ‘the recreation and enjoyment of the people forever’ and had fulfilled this purpose for 131 years was handed over to the State Government.

As far as I am aware the opportunities for ratepayers of the City of Perth and the broader community to have input into the City’s decision-making process was extremely limited.

1.3 HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WA

In 2003 the Esplanade Reserve was permanently listed on the State Register of Heritage Places. Despite this, the Heritage Council’s submission to the WAPC on the proposed Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1203/41 supported the amendment to reclassify the land. Implicit in this was

1.3.1 HCWA as a Regulatory or Advisory Body

The Heritage Council of WA, which saw itself as a regulatory body from its inception in 1992, now sees itself as an advisory body only. On 12 June 2012 the Executive Director of the State Heritage Office advised as follows:

> Just to clarify the statutory framework, the Heritage Council is not an approving authority for development of places entered into the State Register. Rather, the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990 (section 11) requires decision-making authorities to refer development proposals to the Heritage Council for advice. The Heritage Act doesn’t give the Minister for Heritage a role in the development referral process.

> In the case of the Esplanade Reserve, the approving authority is the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC), which delegated its decision-making powers to the Central Perth Planning Committee (CPPC) for the Perth Waterfront Project.

> Upon presentation of the Perth Waterfront Concept Plan by the Department of Planning, the Heritage Council noted the Government’s decision to proceed with the project and resolved to broadly support the concept, noting that formal development applications would need to address the proposed preservation, adaptation and interpretation of the significant heritage elements of the place.

> There have been a number of formal referrals to the Heritage Council associated with elements of the project, including forward works and subdivision. The Heritage Council has supported these referrals subject to conditions such as the development of interpretation and design guidelines for the public and private realms, archaeological investigations and monitoring, appropriate plantings and so on. Recognising that interpretation will be a key heritage outcome, the focus of the Heritage Council’s advice has been to ensure that the

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8 City of Perth Council Minutes, item 57/12, 31 January 2012, p.187

First term of reference: The Planning Process
layers of history associated with the place, many of which cannot be read in the current form, are recognised and delivered throughout the site in both the public and private realms. Interpretation within the public realm is to be delivered as part of the contracts for delivery of the public spaces in the early phase of the project. Complementary interpretation in the private lots will be codified in Heritage Agreements established as part of the development process.

Whilst supporting the demolition of the less significant change rooms attached to the Florence Hummerston Kiosk, the Heritage Council did not support the proposal to deconstruct and relocate the Kiosk, which it preferred to remain in-situ and be integrated with the development. The Heritage Act requires the decision-making authority to make its final determination consistent with the Heritage Council’s advice (s11.3.c) unless there is no prudent and feasible alternative. Having considered the Heritage Council’s advice, the CPPC determined that there was no prudent and feasible alternative to the proposal to deconstruct and relocate the Kiosk. In advising the Heritage Council of its determination, the WAPC has committed to the deconstruction being undertaken under the advice of a Heritage Architect, with the building to be appropriately stored until another suitable location is identified in consultation with the local authority and the Heritage Council.\(^9\)

**Linley Lutton:**

Product and process are the two essential components of all created things. Manmade efforts such as planning and design are often analysed and discussed in these terms. A product may be excellent with great appeal yet the process whereby it was developed may be flawed. Conversely, the process may be thorough and rigorous, following all the rules, while the final product fails to appeal. Sometimes both are flawed - usually because the participants involved are inept. With public works, the process needs to be open and accountable and the community expects a good outcome. In the case of Elizabeth Quay the process has and continues to lack accountability and the product is seriously flawed and unpopular.

Government’s sometimes must act for the benefit of the whole community which may require overriding the concerns of some. Providing the outcome is beneficial and makes a positive contribution to the city, governments can sometimes be supported for taking autocratic action. Elizabeth Quay is not in this category. This is a case where the community has been overridden for the sake of implementing a poorly planned development which many refer to as a government ‘vanity’ project. This project bears all the hallmarks of another urban disaster which occurred several years ago in Brooklyn. The ingredients are the same. There, the government and developers colluded to take land by subterfuge but were eventually unable to realise their ‘vision’ leaving a ruined neighbourhood. If things don’t change, this too is the most likely outcome for Perth – a ruined park with a useless inlet, massive traffic congestion and little if any development.

\(^9\) Graeme Gammie, email, 12 June 2012
The current waterfront project has been derived with a focus almost entirely upon the physical form. It shows little or no understanding of commercial, social and environmental determinants.

The most misleading aspect of the government’s narrative with respect to Elizabeth Quay is the slogan ‘connecting the city to the river again’. There is no useful connection to the river offered by this introverted proposal and from pedestrian level any view to the river will be blocked by the project’s pedestrian bridge.

These are the key areas of concern with respect to Elizabeth Quay:
1) The government has misappropriated heritage-protected Crown land which was specifically created for the exclusive use by the public in perpetuity;
2) The public has been overridden and systematically disempowered and the government has failed to be open and accountable;
3) The planning is flawed in physical, environmental and commercial terms and will have a serious detrimental impact on the city and its foreshore; and
4) The expenditure is unreasonable given the current level of government debt and the need to find sufficient public funds for more critical programs and services.

This submission will address each of these issues.

Background

Development of the Perth waterfront has been discussed for decades. It has been the subject of an international competition but nothing has eventuated. No development has occurred in the past because there has really never been any pressing imperative to do anything at all with the waterfront.

Following Labor’s release of their Perth waterfront proposal in 2007/8, then opposition leader Colin Barnett stated that their project would be scrapped under a Liberal Government, if elected. He said that people didn’t want skyscrapers on the city foreshore and the plan would create an exclusive enclave for corporations and rich apartment owners. “If Labor builds what they are talking about, they will not have access to the waterfront, it’ll be an exclusive precinct and enclave. I will never be part of that”. (The West Australian, September 3, 2008).

As Premier and knowing, as he claimed, that the community did not want the Waterfront development in this form Colin Barnett then announced he would deliver the project saying the “time for talk was over”.

He now claims, or wishes, that 80% of the community want this project. Several polls have been undertaken to gauge community support the latest being a June 2012 poll of Perth’s most marginal seats revealing, as do most polls, that the community is divided in their support for the development. The seats polled were Forrestfield, Riverton, Wanneroo and Mt. Lawley. These are regarded as marginal seats in the forthcoming election and the government wanted to test their views.

This Campaign Capital poll of 400 people shows that feelings are much stronger among those who oppose the development (21% against versus 14% in favour).

This Campaign Capital poll of 400 people shows that feelings are much stronger among those who oppose the development (21% against versus 14% in favour).
The poll also shows revitalisation, tourism and family-use being the main reasons for support. This reflects people simply restating government propaganda rather than actually based on their understanding of the development as most people show very little real understanding of what the project entails.

Much anecdotal evidence gained from public meetings and letters in the media indicates that feelings in the inner suburbs, particularly the western suburbs, are significantly different to the Campaign Capital poll. In these areas objection is very much higher. (See Figure 1 showing one of several public protest rallies held during 2012).

I submitted a petition with more than 13,000 signatures, from people all over Perth, calling for an enquiry was submitted to parliament in March 2012. The government dominated enquiry (3 of 5 panel members are from the Liberal and National Parties) is yet to be completed and its findings released. The government has shown little appetite to hold the enquiry and continues to stall any hearings. A hearing regarding traffic was held in October 2012 and no report has yet been released.

Regular public meetings reveal the community knows little about the waterfront project. They certainly do not have a sound understanding of either the government’s activities or the implications of developing the waterfront in the way currently proposed.

Having changed his mind, the Premier has shown great haste to start this project in so doing providing a textbook example of how a democratically elected government can supress and disempower the community in order to achieve their political and planning objectives.

The works underway on the Esplanade Reserve are now revealing the many problems experts have been warning about. Site excavations are seriously contaminated, overdue traffic modelling confirms the chaotic implications of cutting Riverside Drive, the inlet is proving to be a long-term siltation problem, and few, if any, investors are showing any interest in purchasing land (Chevron was touted as one starter however they pulled out a few months ago).

How have things become so bad for a development which only five years ago was generally on track?

The problems started when the previous minister for planning became involved scrapping in the process the proposal prepared over many years by the City of Perth and placing the development in the hands of the Department of Planning (See Figure 2 showing the proposal developed by the City of Perth). The train station on the new southern Mandurah line became the convenient reason to justify intensifying development around the station.

Transport Oriented Developments or TODs are a concept where developments are intensified above or adjacent to train and/or bus stations to encourage people to use public transport. To argue, as the Department of Planning did, that TOD principles require
development of the Esplanade Reserve is completely without foundation and simply served as a convenient argument to support their desire to develop the park. They had the view that a park located adjacent to a train station was underutilisation of CBD land. (Internal discussions supporting this view were revealed to me by a past DoP director involved in the meetings at the time).

There are many subway stations in major international and Australian cities which have stations located adjacent to large public parks. Prior to the Department’s involvement, Riverside Drive remained and the Esplanade Reserve was retained. No previous proposals for waterfront developments proposed using The Esplanade Reserve or diverting Riverside Drive.

The government architect’s office recruited a Melbourne firm of architects and so was born the ‘Dubai on Swan’ concept – reflecting none of Perth’s unique sense of place and completely turning a blind eye to all previous waterfront plans (See Figure 3). This was rejected by the public so the Department of Planning, along with a few consultants, modified the plans and produced the version we have today.

The project’s planners decided to create an inlet in the belief that this would bring the Swan River closer to the city and reduce the walking distance to the current foreshore edge. Creating the inlet necessitates the diverting of Riverside Drive.

Urban planning principles developed for the area at the request of the City of Perth by regular visiting international expert Prof Jan Gehl were ignored. He had suggested developing right on the river’s edge, with humanly-scaled buildings that:

1) Fit in with their neighbours;

2) Protect the views of existing buildings overlooking the park;

3) Consider climatic conditions carefully; and,

4) Create a waterfront park.

At best, the revised plan should have been regarded as a preliminary concept only, in need of much further resolution and testing. It certainly needed to be subjected to some form of community involvement particularly since, for the first time, The Esplanade Reserve was to be part of the development. The Barnett government however hastily adopted the plan in 2011, without community input or refinement.

Lack of accountability and orchestrated community disempowerment

Labor’s second attempt at developing a foreshore plan was, as with the Dubai-on-Swan failure, not subjected to any form of community consultation. On February 15, 2011 Premier Colin Barnett announced the project and afterwards on February 22, the WAPC advertised the Metropolitan Region Scheme amendment needed to enable the project to precede.

The Planning and Development Act 2005 requires local governments to initiate the amendment process on behalf of a land owner, which includes a process of community consultation. When the amendment has been approved, usually 6 to 9 months later, developers can confidently announce the project and the sales process can begin.

The State government is not always required to follow the same planning protocols demanded of private developers however in the case of seeking a Metropolitan Regions Scheme Amendment it is required to undertake the process as if it were a local government which demands proper and objective community consultation.
Earlier, in August 2010 the WAPC released its planning document Directions 2031 which provides a high-level strategic framework for future urban development in Perth. The waterfront project was listed in this document as an important urban infill project yielding 1,400 dwellings.

The state government put the cart before the horse when Premier Barnett announced the project and from that point onward it had no intention of taking seriously any comments made by the public.

The illusion of public consultation orchestrated by the WAPC clearly can be seen its report on public submissions not released until October 2011. The report contains self-serving and incorrect statements such as:

1) Detailed traffic modelling has been undertaken (this was not done until April 2012);
2) The master plan has been subjected to and informed by detailed modelling of wind and overshadowing (this has never been done);
3) Visual connections to and from the site have been an important design consideration (this is completely untrue);
4) The master plan recognises the heritage and aesthetic importance of the Moreton Bay Fig trees and as such most of these trees will remain in their current locations (most of the trees including one 100+ year old heritage-protected tree have now been cut down).

The WAPC received fifty six submissions, indicating the project was well under the radar of most people. Twenty six submissions were in support, twenty objected and ten were neutral.

Every objection in this report was dismissed and no modifications to the master plan were made. The report recommended that all objections be dismissed on the grounds that “the issues have been, and will continue to be, considered...in future detailed planning stages”. This simply reinforces that the plan was not fully resolved and should never have been put forward for amendment under the requirements of the Metropolitan Region Scheme.

Those members of the public who requested a personal presentation of their objections found themselves sitting before a hearing committee of three including:

1) The Chairman of the WAPC;
2) A member of the Central Perth Planning Committee and past chairman of the Perth Waterfront Taskforce; and
3) One planner.

This was hardly an objective, unbiased panel to receive oral objections as two of the panel had a very strong reason not to recognise that the project had any faults. Also, the ‘one planner’ would hardly have seriously challenged the Chairman of the WAPC because, like most Perth planners, he would rely on being given private commissions from the WAPC. The most contentious issue raised in these public submissions deals with the redevelopment of the Esplanade Reserve because the government’s central objective in this development is to take the public reserve for private use.
The report (WAPC Report on Submissions 2011) responded to these objections as follows: “whilst the Esplanade Reserve is recognised for its history and contribution to the development of Perth, the space currently generates only sporadic use…it does give cause to consider how the functions of the land can continue to meet the changing needs and aspirations of the Western Australian community.”

The lack of fact in the way the WAPC dealt with this important objection is noteworthy. Firstly, records held by the City of Perth show the reserve to be well used all year round. Secondly, what studies show how the WAPC had determined the changing needs and aspiration of the Western Australian community? The reality is there are no such studies. The WAPC is not in the habit of commissioning this type of research.

**Misappropriation of heritage-protected land**

In the 19th century the Crown granted the Esplanade Reserve to the City of Perth, to hold in trust for the people of Perth to use for recreational purposes, in perpetuity). The site has been continuously used for this purpose for over 100 years right up until its closure this year.

The Barnett government colluded with the City of Perth to take back the peoples’ land. This collusion includes a confidential side agreement between the State Government and the City of Perth. The document is not available to the public however evidence of its existence can be found in Council minutes.

The trust agreement defining the public role of the site was also quietly lifted during the title transfer. This is very unusual as stated in Landgate’s protocols for transferring Crown land.

The Heritage Council of Western Australia, whose role it is to advise the Minister for Heritage, provides an example of how government agencies manipulate due process to achieve certain outcomes.

Three members of the Council are from:

1) The Committee for Perth;

2) The WAPC; and,

3) The City of Perth.

These three organisations are the primary drivers of the waterfront project. Each of these members declared an interest when the waterfront project was discussed. The declared interest was in the form of ‘a perception of impartiality’ which still enabled them to vote thus enabling a quorum to be formed which ensured the desired outcome, with respect to heritage issues, was achieved.

**Legal challenge not an option**

I sought legal advice in late 2012 in connection with seeking an injunction to stop any work on the foreshore until such time as the community was properly informed of what was eventuating. The advice given was that members of the concerned public, I was in that category, would not have sufficient standing in the eyes of the court to warrant an injunction being issued against the government.

I was advised that only those who can show that the actions of the government impact on them directly, say, by blocking their view over what they considered to be a
permanent public reserve, can take action in the courts. Approaches to property owners along The Esplanade, including The Weld Club, revealed that no one was prepared to mount a challenge, even though they felt very concerned about the impact the development would have on their property values due to the loss of views.

There are no planning laws which protect views as a right however views from land which overlooks a crown reserve specifically established for recreation, as is the case with The esplanade Reserve, have traditionally been regarded in planning terms as being permanent.

**Lack of civic and community value**

With the exception of an Aboriginal interpretative centre, which the government has put on hold, there is nothing of any civic value in the current development. The types of civic developments which attract people are museums and art galleries, none of which are in this development.

In Hobart, the Mona Gallery is one of the country’s real success stories and it draws huge numbers to its location every week.

There is no civic square or formal gathering space as there used to be on The Esplanade. Members of the public wishing to use the area will mostly have to pay to use a café or restaurant.

The so-called ‘island’ which appears in most literature describing Elizabeth Quay is the only free open space. It will hardly draw families because water lapping its shore will be unsuitable for wading, the wind will be strong and it will be in shadow much of the time. The existing foreshore edge south of Riverside Drive was not well used because of the wind and poor water quality. The condition here will be the same.

**In Sum**

Elizabeth Quay is a most unusual project as it has no redeeming features. The project is poorly planned and it destroys Perth’s foreshore, one of the city’s best-loved assets.

There is no imperative to do anything to the foreshore. It is not a rundown, derelict site desperately in need of revitalisation. Its prominent location means that it will be an uncompleted eyesore for decades.

It will be difficult to attract investors because the proposed sites are too large. The cost of dealing with very poor foundation conditions adds an extra burden. There are other sites available in the CBD which do not have these risks and these will be more appealing to investors.

A complete disregard for heritage protection has been shown by resuming The Esplanade Reserved and it will set a precedent for others to follow.

The government has demonstrated a callous and arrogant approach to dealing with the concerns of many in the community who do not wish the project to proceed in its current form.

Many issues have been brought to the government’s attention which it dismisses making no attempt whatsoever to address the concerns.

Diverting Riverside Drive will have major traffic implications which are confirmed in the government’s own report.

Site planning also shows great insensitivity to the micro-climatic conditions of the location which will have a detrimental impact on the site’s usage. These include wind, shadow and potential flooding.
Premier Barnett has been shown alternatives which are better planned, cost far less and make commercial sense which he dismisses outright. He has also been formally approached by delegations of very senior and experienced professional people who have urged him not to proceed. His response has always been to resist any change (Figure 13).

The cost of the development will not be recouped through land sales and the world financial climate is such that there will be little appetite for funders to become involved in this project. Launching the project at this time is a case of poor timing.

The project should be halted and planning should start again. To many this would appear to be a waste of money spent on works carried out so far. It is better however to accept the waste than continue with a project whose detrimental impact on the city will far exceed the cost spent so far.

Tony Brand:
At the outset I wish to stress I am not against the redevelopment of the Perth Waterfront on the proviso that any development is on the water's edge and Swan River foreshore.

I am very much in favour of providing civic and cultural facilities- including a long overdue indigenous cultural centre and museum as per the present proposal combined with recreational facilities for the public including integration with the existing Barrack Square Development and previous Esplanade public reserve.

My concerns relate to issues- enlarged upon hereafter- and summarised as:

• The eradication of the Esplanade as a publicly owned open space reserve to be used for the commercial benefit of private developers.
• The lack of adequately advertised public hearings in respect of the Government proposals.
• The questionable extension of the City to the peripheral south when the City core has the infrastructure to accept development over the next 30 to 40 years.
• The proposed development is architecturally mediocre and ordinary in its concept.
• The proposed development will be an environmental disaster.
• The closing of the direct east/west Riverside Drive connection will incur major traffic ramifications and is contrary to an independent traffic study and much expert opinion.
• The cost of the unnecessary development infrastructure and modified road system will amount to nearly one billion dollars ($1B) of taxpayers’ money- non returnable.

Whereas

The Government may easily resolve the foregoing issues by adopting one - or similar- of the many plans originally prepared by the City of Perth Planners with a publicly oriented development on the river’s edge south of Riverside Drive and William Street which would
- Allow the Esplanade to be kept for its present and future extensive public uses
- Allow a low scale, low height development to provide
- A water playground- as per the present proposal
- An indigenous cultural centre and museum- as per the present proposal
- A north facing sunny aspect for restaurants and other recreational cultural activities
- Conceal the ugly and obtrusive Convention Centre
- Allow simple pedestrian access from the William Street train station and adjacent bus terminal
- Allow 36,000- or more- cars a day plus future growth to bypass and minimise the present congestion in the City

And finally, just as importantly from the City point of view
• Encourage the proper development of offices and apartments into the centre of the City to unite with Northbridge and provide the much needed and talked about vibrant heart for Perth.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Government and its Planners have totally ignored submissions and petitions presented by the Public and have failed to conduct an open hearing of any public note since deciding to proceed with its proposal.

I understand others will be providing a detailed account of the many many thousands that have signed petitions presented to Government Ministers and the Parliament.

My own accounting of some 200 to 300 persons who have approached me over the last 2 years- I have recorded approximately 70% of their names- is that no more than one or two in every hundred accept the proposal as presented and then they are generally ambivalent. My discussions with Rotary Clubs, Probus Clubs and Private Members’ Clubs indicate around 90% to 95% of members do not favour the proposed development on the Esplanade.
• I refer to the only public request I am aware of, for submissions on the "Perth Waterfront" per se. This is distinct from the recent call by the MRS on the "guidelines" for the building proposals which is after the event. I refer to the Western Australian Planning Commission Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1203/41 with respect to the Perth Waterfront and their "Report on Submissions" dated October 2011.
The report (Section 2) states The purpose of this amendment to the MRS is to reclassify the land, the subject of the Perth Waterfront project, from a range of infrastructure and recreation related reserves to a single public purpose special use reserve.

The question to be asked and answered by any Tribunal, Planning Authority or member of the public is as to whether the present 'Waterfront' commercial development instigated for the profit of private individuals and financial loss to the present Government complies with "a single public purpose special use reserve"? If it does not comply with this zoning- and it certainly appears not- then the public have been totally mislead by this Government and its planners.

• The report Section 4 Submissions notes the following:
- 56 submissions in total were received on the amendment.

In my opinion, 56 submissions from a State population of around two million persons and organisations indicates the completely deficient advertising of the amendment or shortcomings in making the public aware of the proposal being available for comment by the public. I have been fully involved with the proposal for well over 2 years including having meetings with Government planners and the Premier. I was not aware of the call for public submissions.

10 of the submissions (mostly State Government agencies) contained neutral comments, non-objections or general comments on the amendment.

In my opinion, it would be expected that Government agencies would support their Government if at all possible or where they may benefit from the development. Nevertheless, 10 submissions only is a further indictment on the manner in which the proposal was made available to the corporate public.

20 of the submissions objected to the amendment.

In my opinion - having reviewed the report submissions - this is not entirely correct when taking into account many of the conditions - few of which have been met - applied by those alleged to have supported the amendment. Nevertheless, a near 40% of the submissions downright objected to the proposal. It is noted that a "straw poll" conducted by Channel 9 when the proposal was first published had resulted in between 65% and 70% of people objecting to the development.

26 of the submissions are alleged to have supported the amendment subject to conditions.

In my opinion when only 46% of submissions supported the amendment with the majority having a considerable number of conditions then the proposal should have been severely questioned by its proposers. Further, many many of the conditions to be met for approval have not been met. I am prepared to enlarge on these at any hearing and/or make a full submission in writing to the "enquiry."

The amendment was advertised for public submissions on 22 February 2011 to the 27 May 2011. Notice of the amendment was apparently published in the West Australian and Sunday Times newspapers but were obviously not seen by many readers.

Amongst objectors were well known pertinent and qualified organisations or authorities including City Vision, Committee for Perth, Heritage Council of Western Australia, History Council of Western Australia, National Trust of Australia, the City of Perth,
City of South Perth as well as well-known individuals with expertise in the planning arena and all of whom were conditional and sometimes evasive in their support.

- One of the major alleged supporters is the City of Perth. Their submission - No. 18 - naturally and conditionally supported a Perth Waterfront project and stated under clause 2 that it supported the MRS amendment for the Perth Waterfront to Reserve the land as public purpose - special use.

In my opinion, it is questionable under any Town Planning Scheme as to whether the "special use" was intended to be a permitted use for commercial purposes and for the gain of private developers. Certainly, some small parts of the proposed development will allow some minor public use but the major direction is the overpowering provision of 9 commercially owned multi-storey office and apartment buildings.

There were 14 other City of Perth conditions and 7 listed requirements to be negotiated, many of which I am aware of and can enlarge upon if necessary - which have not been met in part or entirety.

At a City of Perth forum a few months ago I asked the Lord Mayor as to whether all the conditions submitted to the WA Planning Commission had been satisfied to which I was unable to obtain any indication of satisfaction or otherwise. I was advised to follow up with the Government.

- The decisions made by the Western Australian Planning Commission in response to the main issues raised in the Waterfront submissions were briefly as follows.

(a) Removal of primary regional roads reservation and impact on local roads surrounding the waterfront.

18 out of the 56 submissions including CityVision raised valid concerns and made suggestions regarding the proposed removal of the primary regional road reservation and its associated impact on the regional road network i.e. the removal of Riverside Drive. The responses included shallow wording of a superficial nature such as:

While some roads will experience additional congestions, others will have less traffic but will still be busy during peak periods; and

Minor delays to traffic movement resulting from road network changes will occur however this outcome has been deemed acceptable; and

Some additional congestion is expected at signalised intersections together with a lot of generalised rhetorical nonsense. The objections were dismissed!

(b) Height, density and former buildings

There were 15 submissions raising concerns regarding the design of the Waterfront Master Plan specifically in regard to built form and density and also raising concerns with overshadowing and wind impacts on the public realm.

Again, there were generalised or non-specific answers such as "The design process has been to foster a seamless transition of the City to the water's edge" - which it doesn't. And "Buildings will be designed with podiums at an appropriate scale along the public promenade and street with taller tower elements situated in the centre of sites to the

First term of reference: The Planning Process
extent possible" - all of which means nothing because the podiums extend right around the development and the 9 extremely tall towers remain bulky and tall. All obliterating sun penetration to the internal public open areas for most of every day.

The non-specific answers by WAPC ended with the comment "Submissions noted." Nothing has been done about it.

(c) Loss of public open space
There were 14 submissions objecting to the loss of the Esplanade Reserve. The response was basically that all the Esplanade Reserve functions would have to relocate elsewhere. Many of the points and concerns made by the submissions were acknowledged but again with the usual "design speak" of the WAPC which stated - "Submissions noted."

Regrettably, the generalised response with few specific answers to the issues were not permitted to be debated.

Many of the events will not be relocated satisfactorily or will be lost. (d) Heritage-
the Esplanade Reserve
There were a total of 21 submissions raising concerns about the removal of the Heritage listed Esplanade Reserve; the relocation of the Florence Hummerston Kiosk and the potential impact on other heritage listings related to the site.

Again, the WAPC replied with "Submissions noted."

Subsequently, it is noted that the heritage value of the Esplanade site has been completely destroyed.

I am given to understand by members of heritage concerns that the reinstatement of the Esplanade would allow most of the heritage buildings to be re-located and much of the landscape reinstated.

- I am aware of many private submissions which have been made to the Premier and various Ministers of the Government. Those of which I have seen or received (copies available if required) have had replies or responses of a general rhetorical nature and not specific to the issues.

- The integrity of Barnett’s decision to proceed with the proposal should be publicly questioned following his statement as recorded on 3 September 2008. In that statement, the West Australian reported Mr Barnett as saying:

  The Perth Waterfront project ... would be scrapped under a Liberal Government, Colin Barnett said yesterday; and The Liberal Leader said People did not want skyscrapers on the city foreshore and the Premier’s (Labour Premier) plan would create an exclusive enclave for corporations and rich apartment owners; and

  If Labour builds what they are talking about, the public will not have access to that waterfront, it will be an exclusive precinct and enclave. I would never be part of that.

  What hypocrisy!

- In May 2012 a number of concerned professionals submitted an overview of their objections to the Perth Waterfront to the Premier and Minister for Planning. No response was received.
SECOND TERM OF REFERENCE: HERITAGE

John Syme:

Myth: Heritage values are preserved

The current plan involves the loss of key heritage elements, including the Esplanade Reserve overall, registered trees and the Florence Hummerston building, which the MRA website notes will be relocated, in part. It is unclear whether the heritage values of the site overall or of its elements can be satisfactorily preserved.

Ken Adam:

I have a number of deep concerns about the failure of the current plans to apply these principles:

- little or no respect has been given to heritage aspects: the Tearooms are to be displaced, the Moreton Bay Figs destroyed, The Esplanade Reserve emasculated, and Riverside Drive’s role as an historic parkway has been further compromised;

Ralph Stanton:

I will not comment on heritage issues as such, other than to note, with regard to the alienation of the Esplanade Reserve; in the words of the original 1880 Crown grant of the land between Barrack and William Streets:

"... the Premises hereby granted, with their appurtenances, unto the said Council and Burgess of the City of Perth, their successors and assigns upon trust for the purposes of a Place of Recreation for the Inhabitants of the said City for ever".

Handing over the land substantially for commercial development would seem to contradict the terms and intent of the grant. The Esplanade Reserve is a critical element of Perth’s heritage, whether formally recognized or not, and particularly in terms of urban design.

Lise Summers:

The Esplanade has been a meeting place and interface for the city, both in the narrow municipal sense, and for the wider community, for over 130 years. It is associated with the rational recreation and public parks movements of the mid 19th century, and has been a site of public commemoration, protest and celebration since its inception.

The Perth Waterfront project looks to create an area for the City of Perth which activates the foreshore and provides for a connection with the river. These are commendable goals, and are well stated. However, the waterfront plan will substantially affect the heritage, cultural and visual amenities of the city, and does not take into consideration the proposed developments at East Perth, or other contextual references. The definition of the 'city' is very narrow, focusing on the area between William and Barrack Streets, between the river and the railway, with no reference to City of Perth in its entirety, or to administrative, cultural and residential hubs.

2. Perth context and historic background

The city is laid out along the east-west axis facing Perth Water, and was designed to maximise access to the river, which provided transportation and other resources for the city. To the north a series of swamps provided fresh water and fertile soil, suitable for a more suburban development.

A number of north-south connectors, including Milligan, William, Barrack and Pier Sts and Victoria Ave, link the city together. Barrack St has historically provided a major link through the city from the river through to Northbridge and into the hinterland.

The Perth foreshore has been discussed since the 1860s as a way of connecting the city to the river, providing a central site for celebration, commemoration and recreation. In 1887 a masterplan for the foreshore was drawn up, including the Perth Esplanade, and providing for botanic gardens, an ornamental lake, cricket and football fields. At the International Town Planning Conference of 1917, esteemed local architect George Temple Poole spoke of, ‘the shallow fringes of Perth water [which] have been embanked and reclaimed, and are now in the course of planting, and each vernal season makes the river front more beautiful’ (Poole 1917). Undersecretary to the Premier, Louis Shapcott, and Town Planner W.L. Davidson had plans for a controlled and elegant foreshore from the 1920s to the 1940s.

The development of the Narrows Exchange and Freeway system provided its own challenges. Landscape architect John Oldham envisaged a landscaped and botanic garden space from the Narrows to Point Fraser, using the lessons learned a century earlier in New York's Central Park. The State Government revisited the foreshore with a competition for a design that again encompassed the foreshore from Mill St to Point Fraser. This plan reflected an awareness of and sensitivity to the environment, history and heritage of the area. More recently, noted city planner Jan Gehl has spoken of the need to activate the foreshore along the whole of the Perth waterfront.

2.1 Perth Esplanade and Barrack Square:

2.1.1 Aboriginal heritage

Prior to European colonisation, the area was occupied by the Wadjuk tribe of the Noongar people. The Swan River, Derbal Yerrigan, was formed by the Wagyl, the Rainbow Serpent of the Swan Valley, and was a source of physical and spiritual sustenance for the Aboriginal people. From the time of settlement, Aboriginal people were brought to the city from around the colony for employment and training, and as part of the ongoing efforts to either manage or integrate Aboriginal society.

This included celebrations on the Esplanade including display 'corroborees' during Foundation Day and other significant colonial celebrations. Aboriginal boxers and rodeo riders were featured at 'White City' at the base of William St in the 1920s, and as domestic servants enjoyed time off in the city and on the Esplanade. The Esplanade was also a focus of the ban on Aboriginal people entering the city, and has significance for both its positive and negative connotations.

2.1.2 Post-colonisation history

The Esplanade, or New Recreation Reserve as it was originally termed, was created to provide a more centralised site for the enjoyment of physical activity than was provided at the original reserve, now Wellington Square. Utilising and adapting available technology the reserve was created through a process of infill, using dredged mud from the river, and
'wharfing out', using street sweepings, including sand, horse and cow droppings and the like. The Reserve was largely completed between 1870 and 1880, taking up an area between the William and Barrack St jetties. By 1880 the reserve was well used, and highly sought after. Title in the site was vested in the City of Perth in trust, for the purposes of recreation for the inhabitants of Perth forever. In 1884, the city's first bathing site was developed at the end of the Esplanade, providing public bathing for both men and women. The reserve itself was a popular venue for celebrations including the Jubilee celebrations of 1887, Regatta Days and Foundation Day athletic carnivals. The proclamation of Western Australia's status as an independent colony was made on the Esplanade on 19 October 1890.

Further reclamation, east of Barrack St, began around 1880. A plan for the development of the foreshore from Mill St to Point Fraser was drawn up in 1887 showing the Esplanade reserve and further reclamation to the east, and depicting an extensive foreshore development including parks and gardens, cricket pitch and football oval. The plan was not implemented although it was evidently reviewed in 1904 in light of the Barrack Square and Supreme Court Gardens development.

Reclamation below the Supreme Court recommenced at the beginning of the twentieth century with the creation of Barrack Square and the infill of the foreshore, to combat health concerns associated with human and other effluent that was exposed at low tide on the mud flats fronting the city. The reclamation commenced with a series of barriers, behind which mud, silt, rocks and street sweepings were placed. Trapped behind the barriers, the stench of dying and decayed fish was cause for complaint. The reclamation process was not completed until 1906.

Further reclamation took place under Mt Eliza, forming the terraces, and work commenced on joining the islands at the Causeway into one. West of Mill St, in the area originally known as Bazaar Tce, some minor realignment of the foreshore took place, but the area remained as a vital transport hub, housing warehouses, wharves and the Customs office. The wharves and office remained as working sites until 1937, when the area was at last reclaimed, largely through 'wharfing out'. 'Wharfing out' - the process of covering jetties and structures, rather than demolition and fill, is more likely to lead to environmental issues, as the nature of the structures underneath cannot be fully known.

3. Heritage

The Swan River is a designated Aboriginal Heritage site. The Esplanade has been listed as having potential for further investigation, but has not been registered. The Esplanade became a State listed heritage site in 2003 under the Heritage Act, and Barrack Square was assessed and placed on the interim register in 1999. It was included in the City of Perth Town Planning Scheme as a heritage site in 2004. Langley Park became a State listed site in 2009. The sites have been identified as having aesthetic, historical, scientific and social significance. Langley Park and the Esplanade are representative of the recreational landscape form.

It is important to recognise that the heritage assessment of the Esplanade is critically dependent on the site's development as a reclaimed area. The Boston foreshore, Back Bay and Fenway are all reclaimed areas, as is New York's Battery Park, or Centennial Park in Sydney. The heritage values of these sites includes an assessment of the engineering and technological developments that created the sites. Similarly, the grassed space of the Reserve is reminiscent of the grass space of the Boston Common, Sydney's Domain, and the
open area beside the Seine in the Louvre Palace grounds, and serves many of the same purposes.

Under the Heritage of Western Australia Act, State and Local Government agencies are required to ensure that heritage sites in their control are identified, protected and conserved. Within the Act:

‘conservation means, in relation to any place, the management of that place in a manner that will —

(a) enable the cultural heritage significance of that place to be retained; and

(b) yield the greatest sustainable benefit for the present community without diminishing the cultural heritage significance of that place, and may include the preservation, stabilization, protection, restoration, reconstruction, adaptation, and maintenance of that place in accordance with relevant professional standards, and the provision of an appropriate visual setting...

Furthermore, the Act requires that:

“11. Public authorities to assist in conservation of registered places

(1) A person who, as a Minister of the Crown, is responsible as the Minister under any written law —

(a) shall not, as such Minister, initiate or take any action under that law; and

(b) shall give all such directions and do all such things as, consistently with that written law, can be given or done under that law by the responsible Minister to ensure that any decision-making authority in respect of which that Minister has a responsibility does not take any action under that law, which will, or will be likely to, adversely affect a registered place unless that Minister is satisfied that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the taking of that action and that all measures which can reasonably be taken to minimize any adverse effect will be taken.”

The State Heritage Register assessment for the Esplanade Reserve recognises the unique contribution of the reserve to the aspect of the city – criterion 1.4. This aspect is severely compromised by the Waterfront Plan. According to the assessment report:

“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) 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.

The foreshore reserves, including Esplanade Reserve, 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...’

The Waterfront plan, as it stands, will block views from established locations such as Kings Park and the Parliamentary precinct, while at the same time visually and physically blocking the river from sites such as the Supreme Court Gardens, Weld Club and Lawson Apartments. Moreover, the plan involves the destruction of the historically and environmentally significant avenues of trees, the removal of the 1928 kiosk, Vlamingh
Memorial and J.J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial and relocation of an iconic tourist drive – itself a significant heritage place. None of these actions are in keeping with the heritage values of the site, or contribute to their conservation.

**Jenny Gregory:**

**Historical Significance of the Site**

The proposed development ignores the reasons for the 2003 permanent registration of the Esplanade Reserve on the State Register of Heritage Places, which are as follows;

It was the **site of the proclamation of self-government in 1890**. Six thousand people (eighty per cent of the then population of Perth) gathered here to hear the acting Chief Justice, Sir Henry Wrenfordsley, read the preamble to the *Constitution Act*, in the presence of the governor, and to celebrate the birth of Western Australia – now a self-governing state with two houses of parliament.

In 1881 the **Perth International Exhibition**, which was influential in encouraging the search for gold in the colony, was held there.

**ANZAC Day parades** have been held on the Esplanade since 1916, with the exception of two years, when the William Street tunnel was being constructed.

Over many years it has been a **site of large gatherings for both celebration and protest** – protest during the great rallies at the height of the 1930s depression, secession meetings in the 1930s, scores of union meetings, nuclear disarmament meetings of the 1980s, and the recent rally protesting against the mining tax were all held on the Esplanade.

— celebration for Federation in January 1901, Armistice Day at the end of WWI in 1918, George V’s jubilee in 1935, the visit of the Apollo 11 astronauts in 1968, the America’s Cup win in 1983 (which attracted 100,000 people), and the recent CHOGM Barbeque for the Queen (attended by 120,000 people). As well people have packed the Esplanade every year since 1985 when the Australia Day Skyshow was first held.

Furthermore the Esplanade **has been integral to Perth’s sense of place for more than a century** – it links the river with the city centre and provides a contrasting setting between the backdrop of the city environment and the river.

**Inadequate historical documentation**

The documentation on which the above registration is based on limited research. As a result the historical understanding that it demonstrates is shallow. Further research is revealing a number of other important factors which contribute further to the historic significance of the site.

Many of the relevant documents that have been completed since 2003 also contain errors and these continue to be perpetuated. The following provides an example.

**MRA’s Draft Perth Waterfront (Elizabeth Quay) Design Guidelines, April 2012**

The brief site history in this document, for example, contains a number of errors and is misleading. Two paragraphs in this site history exemplify these errors.

➢ **In the late 19th century construction of the Perth railway station on Wellington Street removed the need for Perth Port and made the river foreshore available purely for recreational pursuits. As a result large-scale works were undertaken to reclaim portions of the foreshore to create a linked series of public open spaces.**

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10 Metropolitan Regional Authority, Draft Perth Waterfront Design Guidelines, April 2012, p.6
This is factually incorrect. The Esplanade Reserve was created before the railway came into operation and the Perth Port continued to be used until the mid twentieth century.

The historical research on which the Heritage Council of WA’s assessment which resulted in Permanent Registration of the Esplanade Reserve on the State Heritage Register is limited. It states that the PWD had begun reclaiming the foreshore in 1870, that there had been calls for civic improvement and a recreation space for the citizens of Perth from the mid 1870s, and that the partially reclaimed land, officially Reserve 423 and known as the New Recreation Ground, was handed over to the Perth Municipal Council by deed of grant ‘for the free recreation and enjoyment of the people forever’ on 31 March 1880.

However, further research shows that work on reclamation began earlier — in 1868 (Perth Gazette 31 July 1868) rather than 1870 — and public calls for an Esplanade were first reported in the media in May 1870 not the mid-1870s.\textsuperscript{11} The area was then an unofficial rubbish dump for some years consisting of heaps of glass bottles, broken and unbroken, of every conceivable shape, iron hoops, bricks, rags, and a host of other unsightly, end, what is more, disgusting, rubbish to the great danger of foot and other passengers.\textsuperscript{12}

In 1877 reclamation was only partly completed and correspondents complained about the slow pace.\textsuperscript{13} In January 1880, sufficient work had been completed for the Esplanade to be in use for public concerts and cricket matches.\textsuperscript{14}

On 30 March 1880, the Crown granted the Recreation Ground (L71) ‘to the Council and Burgesses of the City of Perth, their successors and assigns on trust for the purposes as a place of public recreation for the inhabitants of the said city forever.’

A peppercorn rent was to be paid to the Crown each March. The deed of grant noted that after twenty-one years the Crown could resume the land, with compensation paid to the City for any improvements that had been made.\textsuperscript{15}

At the end of 1880, the City Council debated the need to raise a large loan, the first in the City’s history, in order to provide better drainage because the reclaimed land seems to have flooded regularly, smelt, and was believed to lead to ill health.

‘The preservation of the public health [was considered to be] a matter of supreme importance, and there could be no doubt that the noxious exhalations which arose, especially at low water, by reason of the quantity of decomposing matter in this neighbourhood, was most prejudicial to the health of the citizens.’\textsuperscript{16}

By November 1881 sufficient works had been undertaken to enable the landmark Perth International Exhibition, which encouraged the search for gold in Western Australia, to be held on the Esplanade Reserve.

Buildings associated with the Perth Port, especially to the east and west of the Esplanade Reserve, continued to line the river for many years. Photographic evidence shows that many of buildings on the foreshore to the west of the Esplanade Reserve, that were used by boat builders

\textsuperscript{11} Perth Gazette, 20 May 1870
\textsuperscript{12} Inquirer, 10 July 1872
\textsuperscript{13} Inquirer 25 April 1877
\textsuperscript{14} Inquirer 28 January 1880
\textsuperscript{15} Crown Grant 1066, Title Deed No. 5066, 30 March 1880
\textsuperscript{16} West Australian 10 December 1880
and warehouse operators, were not demolished until the late 1950s.

In summary, the paragraph above is incorrect for the following reasons:
- work on reclamation of the Esplanade Reserve began twelve years before building of the railway commenced.
- The foundation stone for the Perth Railway Station was laid on 10 May 1880, with the Fremantle, Perth, Guildford line opening on 1 March 1881.
- The Perth Foreshore, particularly the area to the west continued to be used for port related activities for decades. This is also supported by photographic and other evidence.

The following paragraph in the site history in the MRA’s Draft Perth Waterfront Design Guidelines is also factually incorrect.

➢ Since that time [early 20th century] Riverside Drive has come to be seen as a barrier that separates the city from the Swan River and there has been a sustained desire to reconnect the city to the river to make Perth a truly waterfront city.\(^\text{17}\)

Riverside Drive was not constructed until 1937. Its development resulted from the 1930 Report of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission.\(^\text{18}\) However even at that time it did not link up with Mounts Bay Rd, but with Mill St.

After the Second World War, river reclamation gradually continued to the west, particularly after the release of Stephenson and Hepburn’s 1955 scheme for a ring road around the city centre in their plan for the Metropolitan Region. The ring road was later changed into a freeway system, with Riverside Drive as a 6-lane freeway, by US consulting engineers De Leuw, Cather & Co working for Main Roads. This scheme was approved in 1962 and 1964, but under City Planner Paul Ritter objections were raised about the way it would separate the city from its river and the plan was overturned.\(^\text{19}\) It was it this context that concerns were first raised about the foreshore and its relationship to the city.

It was later associated with the development of a north-south pedestrian spine for the city. In 1966 Paul Ritter’s Ideas Plan for the city proposed a pedestrian spine from the two transport nodes — Perth Railway Station in the north and the ferry service at Barrack Square in the south — utilizing existing arcades. The City approved a series of pedestrian ways in 1969, but the project got bogged down when the focus turned to sinking the railway so the city could be linked to the area north of the line.\(^\text{20}\)

It was not until the mid 1980s, with the America’s Cup challenge imminent, that the State Government and the Perth City Council determined to improve the foreshore. A public survey held during the 1983 Central Perth Foreshore Study highlighted concerns that traffic on Riverside Drive was preventing people from engaging with the river. A number of plans followed, including at least two seminars focusing on the foreshore and an international competition for redevelopment. In this

\(^{17}\) Metropolitan Regional Authority, Draft Perth Waterfront Design Guidelines, April 2012, p.6

\(^{18}\) Gordon Stephenson, Design of Central Perth, UWAP, 1975, pp.7-9

\(^{19}\) Jenny Gregory, City of Light: a History of Perth since the 1950s, City of Perth, pp.139-141

\(^{20}\) PCC Minutes, Special Meeting, 18 August 1969 cited in Gregory, City of Light: a History of Perth since the 1950s, City of Perth, pp. 184-185

it was suggested that Riverside Drive should be realigned as a meandering serpentine road, thus reducing traffic.\textsuperscript{21}

In summary
- In the 1960s, there was fear that Riverside Drive would become a barrier if it became a 6-lane freeway.
- In the mid 1980s it was thought that Riverside Drive had a detrimental affect on the use of the foreshore.
- In the mid 1980s some expressed concern over the separation and isolation of the central city from the river.

**Mulloway Studios for Hocking Heritage Studio, Perth Waterfront Project Heritage Interpretation Strategy, January 2012**

This document, which potentially will guide and provide a basis site interpretation, has been based on the documentation in the Heritage Listing and other documents most of which contain errors, inconsistencies or are skewed in their emphases. It is also based on consultation through a ‘community information and discussion session’ held on 31 August 2011 at Hocking Heritage Studio.\textsuperscript{22} Reports from stakeholders who attended this session indicate that there was little discussion, that the session largely delivered information about the proposed methodology, and potential opportunities for interpretation policies and strategies.

**The decision-making process and the documentation relating to the history and heritage of the Esplanade Reserve and associated sites has been seriously compromised and flawed.**

Until thorough historical research and analysis is undertaken, we will continue to be at the mercy of shallow, repetitive, incomplete and skewed accounts of the Esplanade’s history.

It is essential that, if the project proceeds as planned, high quality historical research and analysis be undertaken in order to provide the basis for very high quality interpretation of the important features of the very significant history of the site.

To date we do not have such a document.


\textsuperscript{22} PCC Minutes, 16 September 1985 cited in Gregory, *City of Light: a History of Perth since the 1950s*, City of Perth, pp. 312-314.

\textsuperscript{22} Mulloway Studios for Hocking Heritage Studio, Perth Waterfront Project Heritage Interpretation Strategy, January 2012, p.11
**Tony Brand:**

The Esplanade was zoned and gazetted in 1963 as a "Public reserve for recreational uses" and vested in the City of Perth.

The Government changed the zoning during one of the last Parliamentary sessions in 2011 after divesting the City of Perth of its vested powers. I am advised it was taken under threat on the basis that if Council did not agree, then Government would assume it.

An inspection of the Certificate of Title dated 13 August 1987 reveals a total grassed area of 4.7897 hectares albeit the Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1,203/41 states that the amendment affects "6.147 hectares of parks and recreation reservation" - presumably to include Barrack Square.

It is noted that "The sole proprietor of the land (was) the City of Perth." The Crown Grant Vol 651 Fol 105 shows the land is "To be used and held upon trust solely for recreation purposes."

I am given to understand that this "Trust" limits the uses of the land. For the land to be used for any other purpose the Trust must be removed. I am not aware as to whether the Trust has been removed.

I am further advised by Mr Hamish Vinnicombe of the Vinnicombe Property Group that Landgate referred him to page 492 of the Landgate Practice Manual, section 12.1.15 "Removal of Trust from Crown Grant" indicating a detailed process for the removal of a Trust. I am further advised that, and I quote "It appears to say that there is no provision to remove a Trust from a Crown Grant ...". Again, I am not aware as to whether this has occurred.

Nevertheless, the Esplanade was considered necessary and important enough for public uses to be gazetted 50 years ago at a time when well-respected and acknowledged planners, Alastair Hepburn, Professor Gordon Stevenson and Dr David Carr were at the helm of the Western Australian Planning Organisations.

There has been no public analysis or departmental survey by the present planning authorities to support or substantiate need for the removal of this unique public space on the doorstep of the City and which has provided the ideal space and location for numerous and constant major City events. The expertise and/or capabilities of the present planning authorities are severely questioned when they do not recognise or accredit the present usages let alone plan for the future protracted growth of City population.

In 2011 there were 12 major events excluding Anzac Day but including Skyworks; On the Bright Side Concert; Summerdayze Concert; CHOGM; Light the Night Leukaemia Foundation Event; Sade; Bridges Fun Run; Marathon City to Surf; Toyota's in the Park Supertop; Symphony in the City and two days of World Cycling. In addition, my observations (I occupied offices on the Esplanade for over 15 years) indicated on an average 100 to 200 people daily using the Esplanade during lunchtime for various purposes and there were an untold number of meetings/rallies.

The future growth of the City with its escalating commercial and residential population would have severely increased usage. Indeed I am advised that "The City of Perth November (2011) report identified that the Esplanade was fully booked for the summer months, and that casual use ran between 30 and 60%. It should be recognised that lengthy "rest" days are required between major events to allow the surface to recover.

In brief, the arguments against the unjustified and indefensible demolition of the Esplanade include:

It belongs to the public, it is our land and should not be sold for profit and gain to developers - let alone at a major financial loss to taxpayers. It is well over 130 years old with listed heritage buildings and landscape. These have been removed, most of which I understand, could be replaced.

It is a peerless space - acclaimed and identified worldwide by visitors and tourists. It is unique. Overseas and interstate visitors are amazed and envious to find that this is alongside our CBD.

It is a rare space on the doorstep of the City for which other cities would give their "eye teeth". Many world-wide cities are paying huge sums of money to create such public spaces on their doorsteps.

It is the only major space visually connected to the Kings Park War Memorial during the Anzac Day service. The adjacent future use of the Supreme Court Gardens is questioned; being half the size could provide logistical problems.

It serves the needs of the central district business recreationally - and - the State publicly. It is a precious space and unequalled space.

Many present major events will lose their impact and attraction by being moved elsewhere. Some will be lost.

The proposed development with its multi storey buildings is the reason why a major public event - the Red Bull Flying Circus - is now not available to the public as the buildings are in the flight path of the planes. Other events involving planes using the Langley Park are now forbidden.

The Esplanade is directly served by a train, buses and the ferries. The adjacent Langley park is elongated and distant from most forms of easily accessed public transport.
THIRD TERM OF REFERENCE: URBAN DESIGN/LANDSCAPE

John Syme:

Myth: Substantial development is consistent with Transit-Oriented Design

While placing development next to a railway station is one of the principles of transit-oriented development, in this case it represents significant over-kill. The Esplanade station already accounts for 43% of CBD workforce (over 50,000 workers) within its 800-metre catchment. More is not needed to make it a TOD design.

The minor gain in public transport will be sightly better ferry connections to the Esplanade station, accounting for a very small number of travellers. There is no real gain for pedestrians either. The “diverted” Riverside Drive “ will still have to be crossed - even with less traffic, it would be a much greater barrier to pedestrian waterfront access than if grade-separated, such as below a bridge.

Of greater concern is the substantial contribution the project makes to the centralisation of employment in the Perth central area. This is an example of a government-sponsored project working against its own planning policies. The WAPC Directions 2031 policy has a specific objective to place employment near to people’s place of residence. The Elizabeth Quay project will substantially increase employment away from the areas of highest population increase.

Put simply, the majority of population growth continues to be in outer areas of the city and employment growth in those areas, particularly of office / commercial employment, is not keeping pace with population growth. The graph below shows the latest population projections released by the Western Australian Planning Commission (WA Tomorrow 2012). These projections account for the effect of the WAPC Directions 2031 policy, which seeks to increase inner area population.

This shows the population of the Perth metropolitan area growing from 1.598 million to 2.439 million between 2006 and 2026, with the inner area population (Central Sub-region) growing from 710,000 to 898,000, but the population of the outer sub-regions (north-west, north-east, south-west, south-east and Peel) growing from 0.888 million to 1.541 million.

Third term of reference: Urban Design/Landscape
**Chris Wiggins:**

**Public amenity**

Looking at the plan, one can only conclude that the planners and architects have ignored wind and overshadowing impacts when designing Elizabeth Quay.

The plan above shows how little of the site is available to the public. Very little park or playground area. No public theatre or entertainment. All these are prominent features in the very popular Brisbane South Bank development. (for images see: [http://www.google.com/search?q=brisbane+southbank&hl=en&tbo=u&rlz=1G1GGLQ_ENAU271&tbnid=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ei=JLnjULmmB--aiAfJjGwDA&ved=0CEgQsAQ&biw=1199&bih=1308])

Of the 10 hectare site, public areas (walkways and parks etc) are only 1.5 hectares. Walkways between buildings and the water, average around 10 metres wide on 2 levels surround, the inlet. The wind effects as the sea breeze is forced through the inlet against the 15 metre high building frontages will make these unusable for an estimated 4 afternoons and evening per week through spring and summer.

There are three public spaces:
- Station Park; approx. 30 x 50 metres, 1,500 sq metres, (1 1/2 suburban blocks)
- The Landing; approx. 80 x 20 metres, 1,600 sq metres, (1 ½ suburban blocks)
- The Island; approx. 90 x 35 metres, 3,050 sq metres, (3 suburban blocks)

These will also be subject to wind exposure.

There are only two public amenities included in the project. A water playground as in Station Square and the reconstructed historic Florence Hummerston Kiosk on the island. In addition, plans are also underway to incorporate a new children's playground and public art on the island.

There is the nebulous Indigenous Centre and cable car maybe added sometime in the future. These and the Island can easily be constructed on existing and reclaimed

Third term of reference: Urban Design/Landscape
foreshore. They do not need the Inlet.

The boating facilities, ferry terminal and boat pens already exist at the current ferry terminal site, only 150 metres from the new ones proposed inside the inlet.

An as yet unmentioned consideration is safety concerns along the water frontage, deep and at times dangerously polluted river water.

The office and commercial space can be provided elsewhere.

Overall, the Elizabeth Quay concept provides no real benefit to the public.

On the other hand, the community loses its historic, heritage listed domain.

Contrary to Government claims, this area has been well used in the past as playing fields, exhibitions, parades (ANZAC). This represents a major and irreplaceable loss. The project will seriously worsen traffic congestion.

The proposed design provides substantial net disadvantage to the public. It has every appearance of being designed by developers for developers via a compliant Department of Planning, with the public interest ignored.

Ken Adam:

Why not tall buildings on the Foreshore itself?

Any tall building on the foreshore would be very prominent, visually, from Mount Eliza especially. This is the traditional and genuinely iconic view of the foreshore that has been part of our heritage from the earliest colonial days, and no doubt for thousands of years before that. After Riverside Drive it is the first place that, with great pride, we bring visitors to our city. Any tall building would be detrimental to the powerful and much admired natural landscape setting of the City, by virtue of its vertical scale visually disrupting the continuous low sweep of the river foreshore. This aspect is not detrimentally affected by either the Convention Centre or Barrack Square buildings, because of their relatively low scale.

Any tall building at the foreshore would be detrimental also to the visual and symbolic prominence of a building on the potentially iconic site at the foot of William Street. Without exception, as far as I am aware, this site has been greeted by both expert and public opinion for its potential to accommodate and give great prominence to a public building that would be both a drawcard to the foreshore and a genuinely iconic building in its own right. A national centre for indigenous heritage, or its equivalent, has been suggested. Other possibilities exist. It could, and should, be Perth’s (possibly more modest) equivalent of Sydney’s Opera House, Bilbao’s Guggenheim Museum or Wellington’s Te Papa Museum. Sydney’s experience is instructive, with enormous public and professional outrage at the proposed high-rise building, commonly called “the Toaster”, because of its visual impact on the Opera House, leading to its being reduced in height. This occurred notwithstanding that “the Toaster” proposal was not as high as the buildings proposed here, and possibly not as close as they would be to the William Street site.

Apart from a hotel, any tall building would necessarily contain either permanent residential or commercial uses, notably offices, that are actually damaging to the public enjoyment of the foreshore, for reasons that have been given in the submissions. And a hotel in that location doesn’t need to be a tall building. The most relevant precedent here is the hotel at The Rocks in Sydney. This is a successful hotel of the highest standard and superior design, its height and scale limited to avoid visual detriment to its setting, which includes the Sydney Harbour Bridge, The Rocks area, the Passenger Terminal, Circular Quay and, opposite, the Opera House.

Third term of reference: Urban Design/Landscape
The Melbourne-based architects appear to have a different attitude to their Sydney counterparts in relation to waterfront development. I do not question their competence – they are a nationally, indeed internationally, recognised firm – but competence and the appropriate response to a particular site and are different things, and the former can never compensate for getting the latter wrong.

Quite aside from the right response to the particular attributes of Perth’s foreshore, it is notable that the most publically successful waterfront developments are low in scale and building height. This is not a coincidence – their effective functioning and enjoyment largely depend on it. International examples include San Francisco’s Fisherman’s Wharf, Capetown’s waterfront, Barcelona’s, Bilbao’s, Copenhagen’s and many, many others.

Closer to home the only two comparable waterfront developments are Hillary’s Boat Harbour and Fremantle Fishing Boat Harbour. Both are successful – Hillary’s is claimed to be the most-visited site in the State – and both are only two storeys in height. Neither has high-density or high-rise development, not even residential, anywhere near. Coincidence? I don’t think so. There is plenty of evidence to suggest a connection between success and low scale, and none that I am aware of to support the proposition that high buildings would be beneficial to the public enjoyment of the waterfront.

**Why no permanent residential, office or large scale retail uses on the Foreshore?**

The government seems to have fallen prey to the temptation to reap a financial reward from selling foreshore land, for which there would undoubtedly be a demand, for permanent residential and office development. For a number of reasons this would be detrimental to public enjoyment of the foreshore itself. Apart from the obvious conflicts of added traffic and parking demand, there is the well known negative attitude of permanent residents to intensive public use and recreational/social enjoyment of adjoining land. The Swan brewery development experience should have told the government that, if local evidence were needed.

In fact, there is more than sufficient, and more appropriately located, land backing the foreshore, closer to The Esplanade (the road) and St Georges Terrace, to satisfy the demand for residential development and offices.

**Why is the size of the inlet a problem?**

We need to understand the thinking of the designers/architects here; their original design was, curiously, based on the scale and shape (both of which, by the way, are natural, not contrived) of Circular Quay and demonstrated a failure to understand the successes - and shortcomings - of Circular Quay. It is completely inappropriate to transfer that situation into Perth.

The scale of the inlet – or, at least equally attractive, a small lake instead - needs to be more intimate, for visual interaction across the inlet: it’s people, not Sydney Harbour Bridge or the Opera House, to be seen across this inlet.
**Ralph Stanton:**

A broad overview of the physical organization of central Perth reveals a city which developed historically along the higher ground between ancient swamp (now the Central Railway) and the Swan River. This basic east-west structure has prevailed throughout the city’s growth, and is reflected today in its inherent form—in a predominant east-west road pattern and in the location of its largest buildings on the firmer ground along or parallel to St George’s/Adelaide Terrace.

Progressive infilling of Perth Water south of The Esplanade and Terrace Drive has given Perth, among other benefits, two significant features fundamental to its current appearance and civic function. Both are important aspects of Perth’s unique urban design character, namely

a) the continuous greensward comprising Langley Park, Supreme Court Gardens and the Esplanade Reserve, which in many respects can be seen as a “front lawn” against the backdrop of city buildings, providing a well-used space for inner city civic and recreation activities, and

b) the city parkway route of Riverside Drive, which, apart from its essential traffic functions (mentioned in detail below) offers constant passing views of and across the Swan River, and in counterpart, of the city’s emerging bulk—opposite, but offset from the river.

Both these elements rely, to a large extent, for their beauty and functionality on their uninterrupted character, which will now disappear.  
(NB the alienation of Site 3 of the scheme—and possibly others—will make it virtually impossible, or very expensive, to ever reinstate Riverside Drive.)

**Linley Lutton:**

**Why development on the Perth foreshore is a city-wide issue**

Redevelopment of the Perth waterfront is an issue for the entire city. There are several reasons why. Firstly, this project destroys one of the most beautiful and distinctive characteristics of Perth. Together with the view from Kings Park and the wide expanse of the Swan River, the continuous green edge between the CBD and the river defines the unique visual character of our city centre.

It is one of the features most talked about by international tourists. Any other developed city would cherish such an asset and protect it at all costs. The waterfront project, in one fell swoop will destroy this great community asset for ever, at a cost to us all, regardless of where we live in Perth.

Secondly, the CBD belongs to all. Bureaucrats and politicians have assumed they know the aspirations or desires of the community without ever testing it. The City of Perth, the Department for Planning, the WAPC and the Central Perth Planning Committee are not representative of the broad community. Some of these organisations have a very poor track record in terms of producing good planning outcomes for the CBD going back many years to the destruction caused to Perth during the previous mining boom—all in the name of creating a so-called ‘modern’ capital city.

Even His Majesty’s theatre was slated for demolition in the 1970s before common sense and a protesting community halted this outcome. The CBD symbolises the culture and psyche of the city at-large. We tend to define or characterise a city’s residents based on our perception of their city’s heart, in Perth’s case, the CBD.

Thirdly, the waterfront project is setting a precedent about government...
Third term of reference: Urban Design/Landscape

disempowerment of the community. The government is road testing its new legislative planning powers which enable it to acquire any public land, anywhere in the Metropolitan Area and develop it in any way it wishes without any public consultation (see the MRA Act).

Fourthly, the one area of our city most vulnerable to ideological planning bureaucrats and the development industry is the CBD. Perth’s CBD has become the playground for big business and government planners. An extremely low permanent residential population in the CBD means that few people are really interested in mounting any rear-guard action to combat poor planning decisions – as they would do in their own neighbourhoods.

Flawed Planning

The failures of Elizabeth Quay can be categorised in the following urban and city planning terms:

Sub-regional level

- Lacks upgraded transportation and road infrastructure to support increased worker and visitor population increase;
- Cuts a major east west transport route which will impact on traffic flows through much of the inner suburbs. The impact on an already-busy Orrong Road is of particular concern as it connects to Leach Highway and will have a major impact on heavy transport.

City level

- Destroys Perth’s unique visual characteristics by breaking the existing continual line of the foreshore;
- Creates internal traffic chaos by diverting traffic flow from Riverside Drive into an already congested CBD;
- Consumes the CBD’s only major public parkland and privatises what used to be publically accessible land;
- Breaks iconic view corridors along Riverside Drive (See Figure 5);
- Prevents Langley Park from being used for future air shows because height of proposed buildings interrupt Langley Park’s only landing approach;
- The site is centrally and prominently located and will be an eyesore for decades as construction activity slowly takes place;
- The proposed retail component will struggle to survive due to its dislocation from the CBD’s main retail centre.

Precinct level

- Fails to follow good international foreshore planning practice which recommends low-rise buildings (up to three storeys) along foreshore edges
- Produces an introverted environment centred around an inlet which will have great difficulty working;
- Blocks internal views of the Swan River by a pedestrian bridge over the inlet entrance;

Third term of reference: Urban Design/Landscape
Development sites are far too large and out of scale with other sites in the adjacent areas;

Blocks current internal views from The Esplanade Reserve to Kings Park;

Lacks human scale due to extreme building height;

Will be subjected to consistent strong sea breezes blowing directly into the development from the south-west which will be compounded by strong wind shear forces generated by vertical faces of tall buildings;

Building forms are old fashioned ‘Shanghai-style’ high-rise buildings reflecting little of their context;

Lacks diversity of scale and form and is too intense;

Will be in shadow for most of the year due to the height of existing buildings along St Georges Terrace;

Public walkways around the inlet will be subjected to regular flooding during winter months in a similar way that Riverside Drive currently floods;

Federal inundation modelling indicates that this area of the river will be subject to rising sea levels;

Lacks a significant residential component which is essential to help the CBD grow as a relatively self-sufficient locality.

Development blocking views along Riverside Drive

Probably this development’s greatest single planning flaw is its failure to address the actual river’s edge. Brisbane’s Southbank, for example, is developed along the bank of the Brisbane River, not around an unnatural and introverted inlet, and it is regarded as one of Australia’s best waterfront developments.

Southbank’s greatest attractions are the man-made swimming beaches, which are not part of the river, and its abundance of beautiful gardens and walkways. Places for
people to eat, drink and be entertained are integrated into the landscaped setting. It has become a tourist attraction of great renown.

Southbank used to be a rundown area needing redevelopment, unlike the Perth Waterfront where this government is destroying one of our best foreshore parks. The development also turns its back on the Supreme Court gardens making little attempt to integrate with these gardens to create a much larger, continuous public open space.

Perth yearns to emulate the waterfront developments found in other Australian capital cities. However it is important to remember that South Bank, Docklands and Darling Harbour were all run down underutilised areas, located on the periphery of the CBD. By contrast, Perth is taking its one and only heritage-protected riverside parkland, the dress circle of our city, digging it up and creating an over-intensive development, all to supposedly ‘activate’ the city.

Throwing everything you can into a development doesn’t ensure success. There are so many excellent public places all over the world which are testament to the adage ‘less is more’.

The new Marina Bay development in Singapore includes a convention centre, casino, retail centre, hotels, apartments, offices, a water-body and surrounding pedestrian plazas, light shows and fountains yet it is still desolate;

By contrast and only ten minutes’ walk, Singapore’s Clarke Quay and Boat Quay are always pulsating and exciting as large numbers of people crowd the small restaurants and bars lining the edges of the narrow Singapore River;

The reason is so easy to understand. The characterful buildings along the river are only about three storeys, the plaza areas are small and meandering, the materials are rustic, and there is no continually prevailing wind.

Tony Brand:

The City of Perth consists of two linearly oriented precincts of diverse nature either side of the City Rail Link sites redevelopment.

The commercial/retail is extensive in an east/west direction but sits comfortably between the Esplanade on the south and Wellington Street to the north. It takes a reasonable 8 to 10 minutes to walk from the south to the north and the City Business District has been planned over the years to accept this major movement of people through its streets and arcades.

The other precinct in Northbridge occupies a similar elongated area and accommodates much of the cultural and recreational facets of a living city. It is closely accessible from the CBD and will become more so in the future.

Both precincts house increasing residential accommodation and both are served by the principle public transport systems of the metropolitan area.

The CBD is extremely large at present. I am aware that 20 years ago it was larger than Sydney CBD and am reliably informed it is at present larger than the greater centre of the City of London. It is questionable when taking into account the present size and including Northbridge, as to whether there is any need to extend the City beyond its present peripheral boundaries as this would increase walking distances from such boundaries beyond an approximate 20 minutes.

There is enough space in the centre of the City to accommodate at least three times as many commercial buildings as is proposed on the Esplanade. There is enough space within the City Rail Link development together with infill sites along Murray Street,
Wellington Street and Roe Street and particularly west of the Railway Station to satisfy the needs of Perth for at least the next 30 to 40 years.

There is plenty of room within the existing City fabric. The City needs consolidating internally and particularly in its centre where infrastructure, utilities, retailers and cultural activities already exist and provide services for present office workers and shoppers. Many of these services—particularly retail—are not fully utilised. Consolidation would assist in making the City more efficacious and lively. Consolidation would create the long sought after "heart" for Perth. Sound urban planning would ensure such consolidation takes place before needlessly extending the CBD beyond unreasonable walking distances.

Premature extension of the City southwards—as envisaged by the present proposal—will unnecessarily remove the centre of the gravity and City population away from the present retailers and civic and cultural activities while the cost of providing new infrastructure services foundations and underground parking in the unstable, silty soil of the previous river bed will be expensive.

It is not unreasonable, and there is little argument against it, to first develop the central sections of the City. This will provide greater social and financial benefits to Northbridge and to the existing retail section between Wellington Street and Hay Street. This would be in contrast to an extension of the City onto the Esplanade where walking distances would not only be increased but also the prime City offices along St George's Terrace and the present Esplanade would be severely compromised.

The development of office towers and expensive apartments on the Esplanade will obscure views from the extensive office buildings along St George's Terrace and will obscure views from the pavement areas of St George's Terrace and side streets. This would transfer life from the Terrace and its precincts and would reduce the lively financial and corporate life which has been built up over many years.

There is absolutely no need for a peripheral or satellite commercial extension of the City southwards as proposed by the Government on the public reserve Esplanade while the City centre is void of many buildings albeit which could occur to provide a heart for Perth within its centre over the next 30 to 40 years.
FOURTH TERM OF REFERENCE: TRANSPORT & TRAFFIC

Peter C. Bruechle:

The proposed Perth Waterfront development will practically and permanently close Riverside Drive as an east-west through way, unless very expensive tunnels or bridges are constructed in the future. During construction of the basin traffic flows will be chaotic and they will continue to be chaotic in the future. Those with the agenda of limiting private traffic into the city area will probably consider this a virtue but those who have to travel from east to west or from west to east by car or bus will be severely inconvenienced.

Slowing down traffic on this main east-west link by forcing it on to city streets that are already crowded to a distressing degree will force more traffic on to the only other main east-west link, the Graham Farmer Freeway, and that, especially at each end of the tunnel, has already reached its limits. For those who have taken the decision to suggest that traffic problems in the tunnel will be eased by changing from two lanes in the tunnel to three, narrower lanes borders on the ludicrous. Traffic weaving, already difficult will be further compromised and any breakdown in the tunnel will be catastrophic.

The problems are not in the tunnel but at each end. Historically Perth has enjoyed relatively free flowing traffic. To limit the Riverside Drive traffic flow to the extent that the proposed development will, will cause traffic congestion for cars and buses travelling east and west, time delays and wasteful production of carbon dioxide.

The occupants of the scheme’s towers will add to the traffic on the limited roads in the area – traffic that will already be at a standstill during peak periods due to normal east-west traffic. It is my considered opinion that Riverside Drive/Mounts Bay Road should continue uninterrupted to avoid huge delays.

These delays and added costs affect everyone and have the potential to cause a decline in the use of the city. For the health of the existing city it is important that the east-west link provided by Riverside Drive is upgraded and improved. A competent traffic study that addresses these issues of traffic delay and future traffic flows must be undertaken. If the present traffic plans are the result of studies already undertaken those studies should be provided to the public for critical examination. If such studies have not been carried out it is incredible that any government would embark on such major changes without first attempting to check the effects they will have.

Based on the present state of knowledge my considered view is that if the present Waterfront plan is adopted the traffic problems will become so gross there will be no alternative but to construct traffic tunnels, or bridges with sufficient clearance for river traffic to pass under them, in the future. Building these will also be extremely disruptive and they will be very expensive. It is my view that the valuable east west link must be retained and simplified, not constrained and made more complex and slower, which will be the result of the scheme now proposed.
**John Syme:**

**Myth:** The traffic consequences resulting from the diversion of Riverside Drive are inconsequential and can be resolved

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**The Function of Riverside Drive**

The diversion and throttling-back of Riverside Drive has consequences in the short term and very serious long term strategic implications.

In addition to its vital traffic functions, Riverside Drive has since the 1930’s been part of a continuous scenic vehicle route tracing beside Perth and Melville Water. (Prior to the 1959 advent of the Narrows interchange this ran both ways via Mounts Bay Rd — which the proposed plan will resolve by a new two-way road link between William Street and the Narrows.)

This scenic route runs all the way between the Causeway and Crawley and offers marvellous changing views of the city from “below” so to speak, complementing, and in many ways the equal of traditional tourist “overview” vistas from Kings Park.

Its continuity is part of the road’s natural heritage, a significant factor allowing users to bypass the CBD on the way to Kings Park, West Perth or Crawley. Under the new plan this flow will be restricted, a critical element in the functioning of the city.

For main bypass traffic (i.e. that not wishing to enter the CBD) there are only two routes: Riverside Drive and the tunnel. The latter gives no direct access to West Perth; morning peak traffic from Great Eastern Hwy, formerly using the Causeway, Riverside Dr and the Terrace, will now divert from a banked-up Riverside Drive to join Orrong Rd traffic in the tunnel; Shepparton Rd traffic will also be forced – by negotiating Burswood back streets - into the tunnel.

West Perth will only be reached via Thomas St, adding more to congested Loftus St traffic (or possibly the now-congested PCEC off-ramp into Spring and Milligan Streets). Evening peak will see the reverse, further congesting Thomas St / Loftus Street intersections and “rat-running” through Victoria Park and South Perth.

As an “access/distributor” Riverside Drive performs a vital role giving access into the CBD - at William, Barrack, Victoria and Plain Streets. Mitchell Freeway traffic - both bypass and access - will face new blockages at William St, Mounts Day Rd/ Esplanade/ Barrack St traffic-lights, or take Wellington Street off-ramp, adding to congestion there and in the Terrace.

Increased traffic congestion due to this restricted artery will be damaging, not only at peak periods, but throughout the day, as otherwise bypassing traffic is forced either into CBD congestion or to the single alternative - Graham Farmer Freeway.

Traffic on inner city streets will increase, at a time when much effort is being made by the City of Perth to reduce it. Earlier project traffic modelling indicated that immediate further CBD congestion will be around 15,000 extra vehicles per day in the Terrace, Wellington St and the Esplanade. However, long-term congestion is certain to increase substantially – no matter what new public transport is introduced - as Perth expands towards over 3 million people.

The traffic modelling undertaken so far does not account for the strategic nature of Riverside Drive and its importance to the overall planning and functioning of the metropolitan area – it is one of only two major east-west routes in the central part of the metro area – the other being Graham Farmer Freeway.
One solution advanced by the waterfront proponents, and now underway, is to increase the capacity of the Farmer Freeway tunnel by turning the breakdown lane into traffic lane, giving three lanes in either direction.

There are a number of problems with this:

- While it will provide short term capacity, within a 10 – 20 year time frame the situation will be back to the current;
- It ignores the real congestion points, which are the intersections at either end of the tunnel, particularly the Thomas St / Loftus Street on and off-ramps;
- It will increase rat-running through less direct east-west routes particularly through South Perth;
- Most tellingly, it puts all emphasis on one route and is thus vulnerable to a full or part tunnel closure, with significant gridlock across the whole of the inner city area in the event of a major closure at a peak time. The alternative metropolitan regional east – west connections are a long way north (Reid Highway) and south (Leach Highway).

This is not good long term planning for the city. It significantly diminishes future planning options and reduces the overall efficiency of movement across the city for vehicle movement all types. There is an economic cost to this in the form of reduced economies of agglomeration (i.e. reduced connectivity) for the metropolitan area as a whole.

Riverside Drive is one of two and only two east- west routes bypassing the CBD, with an alternate ‘rat-run’ through South Perth

The consequence will be the need for a strengthening of central east-west traffic connections in the longer term, probably within a 20 – 30 year time frame. Following its current expansion to three lanes in each direction the Farmer Freeway cannot be expanded any further.

The solutions required in the future will be very expensive. Options might include, for example, a long tunnel parallel with Riverside Drive under the River, much as has recently been built in Melbourne with the Burnley / Domain tunnels.

This was only afforded by the Government as a Public-Private partnership (PPP) toll road project. Many earlier PPP road projects in other states are now under some cloud and their success has proven to be variable.

The availability of multiple efficient high capacity east-west connections across the city will become increasingly important over time as the inner area intensifies. There are many expansions in destination locations that will drive this – the growth of the QE11 health complex and expansion in Subiaco and Leederville to the west and substantial increases in population and activity to the east on the Burswood peninsula, the Causeway Precinct in the Town of Victoria Park and the Victoria Park Town Centre, the very substantial development at Curtin Town and the continuing growth of the Airport.

Maintaining Riverside Drive as one of the main east-west city connectors is essential. The diversion of Riverside Drive and the reduction in its capacity thus leaves an expensive legacy to our descendants.

Perth City Council’s stated objectives and current plans are aimed at creating a more “pedestrian-friendly” city. St George’s Terrace has been narrowed from six traffic lanes to two, a “slow traffic mound” has been raised across Wellington Street at Perth Station, two-way traffic re-introduced in Barrack and William Streets and Newcastle St restricted to single lanes. All these limit, often counter-productively, the CBD’s ability to deal with naturally-occurring, but increasing traffic demands.

It is clear that cutting Riverside Drive at the new Perth Waterfront will have substantial further negative impact on the useability and functioning of the central city and by increasing CBD traffic volumes and congestion will operate in direct contradiction to the PCC’s aims.

For example, the effects at morning peak times will be severely detrimental, even in today’s traffic terms, as indicated by the following diagrams:
Morning peak routes, and routes at all times of the day, use Riverside Drive and approach from all directions. Disruption and congestion following its restriction will be substantial. The alternative of a bridge at the inlet would avoid these outcomes.

There are numerous variations on plans (for example that produced by CityVision) that illustrate that by not cutting the road and/or by building a bridge, (which if well designed can be a centrepiece in its own right) these shortcomings can be avoided, without in any way reducing the efficacy, practicality, development potential or attractiveness of the new Perth Waterfront.

**Costs of Congestion**

There is an economic cost to increased congestion. Traffic Congestion Costs consist of incremental delay, driver stress, vehicle costs, crash risk and pollution resulting from interference between vehicles in the traffic stream, particularly as a road system approaches its capacity, or congestion is “People with the economic means to act on their social and economic interests getting in the way of other people with the means to act on theirs.”

There are significant time savings to be achieved by reducing congestion. Since congestion is a non-linear function, small reductions in traffic volumes can provide a relatively large reduction in delays. This indicates that a 5-10% reduction in traffic volumes on a congested highway typically causes a 10-30% reduction in delay.

Linked to this is the delay resulting from traffic incidents which accounts for large proportion of all traffic delay. Although random events, they only cause significant delays where traffic volumes approach road capacity.

Congestion costs can be quantified by measuring its various elements, including hours of passenger delay, additional fuel consumption, reduced business accessibility, accident costs and noise pollution. The Bureau of Transport Economics estimates...
accumulated per kilometre road congestion charges (accumulating all of the elements noted above) of 9.5 cents per kilometre (1995 estimate) for each road user. Applied to the Elizabeth Quay project this will result in annual congestion costs in the millions (sufficient data is not available to give a precise figure)\textsuperscript{25}.

The following general points can be made concerning congestion – each is applicable to the Elizabeth Quay project:

- The incremental congestion delay an individual traveller imposes when making an urban-peak vehicle trip is often much greater than the incremental cost they bear. This violates the principle that prices (consumers’ internal costs, in this case including both financial and time costs) should reflect the marginal costs they impose. As a result, congestion is economically inefficient.

- Congestion is inequitable because the costs imposed and borne vary significantly between modes. Congestion costs imposed per passenger-kilometre are lower for bus and rideshare passengers, but they bear the same congestion delay costs as single occupant drivers. This is unfair and inefficient because travellers have no incentive to choose space efficient modes.

- Congestion also delays non-motorized travel and increases pollution emissions. For these reasons, even non-drivers are negatively impacted by traffic congestion, and can benefit from reduced congestion.

Thus planning to increase congestion, as in the case of the Elizabeth Quay project, makes no sense from an economic or a planning point of view. The regional function of the road is much more important to the functioning of the city as a whole than the specific issues of a small, albeit important, part of the central city and must take primacy in any design for the foreshore

\textbf{Chris Wiggins:}

\textit{Note on Traffic flow along the new Riverside Drive}

With the re-routing of the traffic with the cutting off of the Riverside road, drivers could be confronted with as many as eleven sets of multi-phase traffic lights at the various intersections, plus other traffic calming devices.

In the West Australian of July 11. 2012, Ken Acott wrote:

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\begin{quote}
“The partial closure of Riverside Drive to accommodate the Elizabeth Quay development will reduce some inner-city traffic to a crawl and add up to 10 minutes to peak-hour travel times, according to State Government modeling report by transport consultants Veitch Lister says there will be a significant increase in the number of vehicles on streets around the waterfront development as Riverside Drive traffic is re-routed around the Elizabeth Quay
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{25} Bureau of Transport Economics (1995), \textit{Traffic Congestion and Road User Charges in Australian Capital Cities
inlet. Traffic will also increase on Manning Road, Mill Point Road, Walcott Street and Charles Street as motorists look to avoid the area.

The report says most of the 40,000 vehicles that currently use Riverside Drive will opt to use Graham Farmer Freeway, coming from Great Eastern Highway or Orrong Road. It said that adding an extra lane to the Graham Farmer Freeway tunnel would help the system cope with the additional traffic ‘in the next few years’.

However, the tunnel was already close to capacity in peak periods and increasing its capacity would have been needed ‘irrespective of the Riverside Drive closure’. Westbound traffic that continued to use the Causeway and Riverside Drive would deviate around the Quay by taking a variety of routes through West Perth.

The report said peak-period congestion along William Street would have an impact on other city intersections and ‘traffic is likely to crawl along all approaches’. The impact on travel times for motorists seeking to bypass the area was "likely to be in the range of six to 10 minutes during peak periods.

Shadow transport minister Ken Travers said the modelling made it clear that the bad decision to close Riverside Drive would add to congestion in the city and beyond. ‘The impact on traffic is going to be felt over a much bigger area than the Barnett Government would have us think, he said. ‘We are going to see rat runs spring up all over the city and in neighbouring suburbs.’"

Vincent Mayor Alannah MacTiernan says that a second city tunnel is ‘inevitable’. However she says that one of the problems of a tunnel along Riverside Drive was the potentially large, ugly area where on and off-ramps would be located.”

**Ken Adam:**

The diversion of Riverside Drive would be a serious error, for all the reasons stated above. Reducing its capacity would create immediate problems of congestion, precisely at the point in time when public concern about congestion is rapidly mounting, and in the face of a very significant and continuing growth in demand which cannot conceivably be diverted onto public transport or met by the limited increased capacity of the Graham Farmer Freeway (which itself is gained at considerable added risk of gridlock).

It is an absurdity to reduce essential and irreplaceable traffic capacity at the very time when congestion is emerging as a serious problem and the doubling of the metropolitan area population is being contemplated.

In the long term public frustration would demand an inevitably extraordinarily expensive and unsatisfactory solution such as a tunnel under the river, parallel to the foreshore or, more likely, a reversion to a continuous Riverside Drive;

The diversion of Riverside Drive would also be seriously disruptive to the important pedestrian and cycle movement along the foreshore, with the effects of reduced amenity and consequent reduced usage;

The diversion of Riverside Drive would be seriously detrimental to its function as a scenic parkway;
Ralph Stanton:

The question of traffic - circulation, congestion and access - is a significant, if not the most contentious issue surrounding the scheme, and for good reason. Even a cursory view exposes the inherent damage to access and amenity, both in Perth’s CBD and more widely, to result from the cutting of Riverside Drive (referred to as a “diversion.”)

The MRS Rezoning report (WAPC Jul 2011) declared that:

“Transport Research Centre, has confirmed that the masterplan places a greater emphasis on green transport modes (walking, cycling and public transport) to maximise accessibility to and within the project area; and although it is anticipated that there will be some increased levels of congestion, the traffic modelling clearly shows that the impacts are manageable if a sustainable multi-modal approach is taken.”

This is plainly disingenuous, since the real problem is not access to the project, but the fundamental role played by Riverside Drive as a critical bypass and general city access route. Alternative “green” transport can have only marginal effect; congestion will be substantially increased.

This is substantiated by the Veitch Lister Consulting report on “Traffic Impacts of the Closure of Riverside Drive for Perth Waterfront Project” (Apr 2012) (NB This was commissioned by government only in Mach 2012, well after the plan had been approved.) It was not widely published, and contains important reservations.

For example:

“The Zenith model used for this analysis has adopted 2009 land use for the Perth Region. The model’s travel predictions and impact assessments therefore do not include traffic, public transport and pedestrian demands that will be generated by the Perth Waterfront Development itself. The model’s assessment of the adverse traffic impacts of the planned closure of Riverside Drive will therefore be somewhat understated.” (p1)

That in itself is a sizeable understatement, since Perth’s population was then just 1,780,000 and the project itself is planned “.. to deliver 800 dwellings, 400 hotel rooms, 200,000sqm of office space and 25,000sqm of retail space.” (Minister for Planning press statement Dec 2012).

At say 15sqm per worker, this would mean over 13,000 employees and, say, a minimum 1400 permanent and 650 temporary residents. No figures are given for car usage, traffic generated, required car spaces, or public transport take-up – but the impact will be considerable.

The report is worth quoting in detail:

“The Perth CBD is highly constrained in terms of accessibility by motor vehicle because of the barrier effect of the Swan River - especially from the south and southeast. There are only three river bridges in the vicinity of the CBD - the Narrows, Causeway and Graham Farmer Freeway - with a total of 20 general traffic lanes. By comparison Brisbane has six road crossings of the Brisbane River in the CBD reaches, with a total of 28 general traffic lanes.

In Australia, only the Sydney CBD is more constrained due to the barrier presented by Sydney Harbour.” (p1)

(NB Sydney retains both its Western Distributor freeway and Cahill Expressway bypassing the CBD, a vital role of Riverside Drive - RHS)
“The situation in Perth is exacerbated by the fact that the three CBD river crossings have dual roles, in providing access into the CBD and also providing connection to the CBD bypass network. This dual function also applies to Riverside Drive. With the closure of the section of Riverside Drive between William Street and Barrack Street, its CBD bypass role will be greatly reduced, as well as its CBD access function for traffic approaching from the west. (p1)

With the tunnel already close to capacity during peak periods ... increasing the capacity of the tunnel is required irrespective of the Riverside Drive closure.” (p 30)

In terms if generally increased congestion stemming from the closure: (ch. 6)

“The model predicts that the number of vehicle kilometres travelled each weekday will increase by about 17,800 kilometres. This is equivalent to approximately 500 metres of additional travel for each vehicle displaced from Riverside Drive. Similarly, the vehicle hours of travel is predicted to increase by approximately 1,600 hours each weekday. This is equivalent to 2.8 minutes of additional travel time for each displaced vehicle.

(This does not mean that the displaced vehicles will on average suffer a 2.8 minute travel time penalty, as this also includes the additional travel time of non-displaced traffic resulting from the closure.)”

In relation to the impact of the closure, together with other proposed alterations to road and traffic arrangements, the report has this to say: (ch. 7)

“Also the reconfiguration of the road network, particularly at the critical William Street/Mounts Bay Road/The Esplanade intersection, has the potential to further reduce road capacity through the subject area. This intersection currently accommodates large volumes of pedestrians and buses, which are both likely to increase following the opening of the Perth Waterfront Development. This intersection already has a 30 second duration scramble crossing signal phase to cater for the large number of pedestrians accessing the Esplanade Train Station and the Perth Busport.

“Following the conversion of William Street (south of The Esplanade/Mounts Bay Rd) to two-way traffic operation this intersection will most probably require the addition of another signal phase to accommodate northbound traffic on William Street. This will most likely result in reduced green times on the current approaches, and reduced traffic capacity through the intersection.

With the likelihood that congestion during peak periods along William St (near The Esplanade/Mounts Bay Rd) being significant enough to impact the operations of other intersections, the estimate above appears on the conservative side.

“Traffic is likely to crawl along all approaches, considerably impacting the travel time to bypass the road closure.

“Our estimate is that the travel time impact for the bypass routes ...are likely to be in the range of 6-10 minutes during peak periods. The combination of an additional signal phasing at William St/Mounts Bay/The Esplanade intersection, reduced

capacity along William St and Mounts Bay Rd, and the effect queue-back will have on other intersections, all contribute to significant disbenefits to travel time in the vicinity of the closure."

The report notes that there will be a significant increase in vehicles on surrounding streets as traffic is re-routed around the inlet. Traffic will also increase on Manning Road, Mill Point Road, Walcott Street and Charles Street as motorists look to avoid the area.

According to the report, most of the 40,000 vehicles that currently use Riverside Drive will opt to use Graham Farmer Tunnel, coming from Great Eastern Highway or Orrong Road.

Also, westbound traffic that continued to use the Causeway and Riverside Drive would deviate around the Quay by taking a variety of routes through the city centre. In my view, the tunnel does not provide any direct access to the city – it is strictly a bypass route, unlike Riverside Drive, which provides access to and from much of East Perth.

In CityVision’s submission to the MRS Hearing we concluded:

1. “The continuity of Riverside Drive in its current multi-functional role is both essential to the proper functioning of the city and to the best/most desirable and accessible waterfront development.

2. “Cutting Riverside Drive will create the problems set out in these notes. It is difficult to understand, given the options available, why this choice has been made, when the alternative plan would elegantly avoid these issues.

3. “The excision of a key section of Riverside Drive is not only unnecessary but is also a clearly damaging outcome for this otherwise very positive step for the development of the city. Riverside Drive can be retained as an integral part of the new development by means of an elegant low-profile bridge (replacing the stylistically forced island and pedestrian/bicycle bridge of the current plan) as CityVision and others have shown.

4. “If the masterplan proceeds in its present form, this aspect of it will cause irreversible harm to the city; it will become a matter of deep regret – and shame – in the future as real problems emerge, and it is seen to be seriously deficient.

5. “We urge the WAPC not to be a party to this aspect of the amendment, but instead be wise enough to study the proposal objectively, with a clear eye to the longer term.”

**Linley Lutton:**

The diversion of Riverside Drive is a very serious problem and its impact will be felt across the city for many years to come. It is so serious that, if it eventuates, future governments will probably be forced to reinstate the link using either a bridge or a tunnel, the latter being highly problematic and therefore unlikely.

A government-commissioned report presented to parliament in April 2012 describes the impact of diverting Riverside Drive (see Veitch Lister Consulting “Traffic Impacts of Riverside Drive Closure for Perth Waterfront Project).

The following are important relevant extracts from the report:

1) There will be severe queue back problems on both the Mounts Bay Road and Esplanade approaches to William Street - particularly in the peaks - such that the performance of adjacent intersections will be adversely affected
2) The travel time impact for the bypass routes are likely to be in the range of 6-10 minutes during peak periods. The combination of an additional signal phasing at William St/Mounts Bay/The Esplanade intersection, reduced capacity along William St and Mounts Bay Rd, and the effect queue-back will have on other intersections, all contribute to significant dis-benefits to travel time in the vicinity of the closure.

3) The number of vehicle kilometres travelled each weekday will increase by about 17,800 kilometres.

4) With the Graham Farmer tunnel already close to capacity during peak periods increasing the capacity of the tunnel is required irrespective of the Riverside Drive closure.

5) Drivers who currently use Riverside Drive will be affected by the road closure and will change traffic conditions in terms of congestion and delays on other parts of the network. This will have a flow-on effect in causing some drivers who are not users of Riverside Drive to also change their choice of route.

6) Vehicles are predicted to use Manning Road and Mill Point Road rather than crossing the river via Narrows Bridge. It also appears that some traffic from the northwest will divert to Walcott Street from Charles Street as a result of the closure. The largest single response appears to be traffic from the east a north-east choosing to access the Graham Farmer Freeway from the Great Eastern Highway (both north and south) and Orrong Road, rather than travelling across the Causeway to access Riverside Drive. Traffic originating in Victoria Park, Gosnells and Canning is predicted to use Manning Road and Mill Point Road to access Kwinana Freeway (crossing Narrows Bridge).

7) February 2012 traffic counts suggest that the subject section of road carries 40,750 vehicles per day. The Perth CBD is highly constrained in terms of accessibility by motor vehicle because of the barrier effect of the Swan River.

In Australia, only the Sydney CBD is more constrained due to the barrier presented by Sydney Harbour. The situation in Perth is exacerbated by the fact that the three CBD river crossings have dual roles, in providing access into the CBD and also providing connection to the CBD bypass network. This dual function also applies to Riverside Drive.

It is critical to note that the figures used in the consultant’s traffic report are based on 2009 land uses. The consultant has confirmed to me that they were instructed by Main Roads WA to do so. They do not include for any traffic increases due to the additional 550,000m2 of commercial space associated with Elizabeth Quay, City Link and Riverside.

It also makes no allowance for traffic increases due to an increasing population. Put simply, the report grossly understates the real traffic impacts to be experienced in the inner urban areas of Perth and they state as much in their report – probably to cover themselves because not to allow for future projections is not their usual practice, in fact it could be described as negligent.

The government agencies briefing the consultant probably wished to make the traffic impacts in the CBD seem less severe than they will be.

Additionally, this government plans to build a light rail track down the full length of Hay Street starting in 2016. On its own, this will radically alter traffic flow in the CBD but when combined with the impacts of cutting Riverside Drive will grind the city to a grid lock situation.
Tony Brand:

The loss of the Esplanade section of Riverside Drive will cause chaotic traffic conditions and very severe increased delays to traffic rerouted through and around the City. This has never been adequately or satisfactorily denied by the City planners or MRD.

Riverside Drive is a natural bypass road which every growing City in the world is striving to build in order to decrease existing and increasing internal City congestion.

Riverside Drive, in parallel with the Graham Farmer Freeway Tunnel, are the only two major traffic routes from east to west or in reverse which bypass and reduce the traffic going through the Central Business District. They carry most of the daily traffic that passes by the City. The rerouting of Riverside Drive will disperse somewhere between 35,000 and 40,000 cars which travel along at present. These will be dispersed through other suburbs, the City and the Graham Farmer Tunnel. It will exacerbate also the present traffic chaos in the present Esplanade roadway and further prevent pedestrian access to the south.

I am advised independent report by Worley Parsons International recommended the Main Roads Department not to close Riverside Drive along the Esplanade frontage and to not reroute traffic through the Tunnel. This report has not been made available to the public and should be called for by the Enquiry Panel.

The Graham Farmer Tunnel consists of 3 lanes; 2 of which carry moving traffic and are 3.5 metres wide and 1 of which is approximately 3 metres wide and is used as a safety traffic stopping lane. The Main Roads is proposing to remove the safety stopping lane and provide 3 lanes of traffic averaging approximately 3.4 metres wide.

It is known that a standard width lane in most roadways is 3.6 metres.

Tunnel Design Guidelines in Anglo Saxon countries where cars and trucks are generally large as in Australia - are constructed by broad agreement to a width of 3.6 metres. In parts of Europe and in Japan, Tunnel Design Guidelines accept a width of 3.5 metres basically because of the preponderance of smaller cars and vans.

In my opinion, and I know in the view of a number of civil engineers, a width of 3.4 metres for a lane in a dimly lit tunnel with cars travelling at 70 to 80 kph is dangerous unless the size of vehicles, and particularly commercial vehicles is limited and traffic speed severely reduced. This would in turn minimise the number of vehicles able to travel through in any one day.

In my opinion, the removal of a traffic stopping safety lane is extremely dangerous and could create carnage. It is known that vehicles run out of fuel, incur vehicle stopping faults such as flat tyres, seized brakes, electrical faults etc and accidents occur. For any of these reasons a vehicle will now not be able to pull across to one side but will have to stop in the middle of fast flowing traffic and all within underwidth traffic lanes.

The Main Roads Department/Minister for Transport have not satisfactorily demonstrated that an increase in tunnel traffic blockages or an increase in life threatening vehicle accidents will not occur.

The removal of the safety stopping lane in order to accommodate an extra 6,000 to 8,000 cars a day would be entirely unnecessary if Riverside Drive was allowed to continue as a bypass road in parallel with the tunnel.

In addition, St George's Terrace has now been reduced to one carriageway and experiencing many frustrating hold ups at present during peak hour periods. Much of the Riverside Drive/Mounts Bay Road traffic will be deviated through the already overburdened City street system.

The decision by the planners and Government to remove a vital artery in the present traffic system in order to accommodate an unnecessary irresponsible commercial development on a unique well used public reserve like the Esplanade, does not make any planning sense whatsoever. Nor has it been fully, let alone reasonably justified by the Government in terms of the public interest.
FIFTH TERM OF REFERENCE: ECONOMICS

**Peter C. Bruechle:**

I am concerned that the driving forces behind the planned development might well be immediately political and not thoughtful considerations by a large cross section of our society, which is what they should have been for such far reaching decisions for our future city. I am also concerned that they have not been subjected to critical and detailed financial review by disinterested experts.

No detailed cost/benefit plan, of which I know, has been made public. If there is one the fact that it has not been widely circulated is a failure by a government who has spent millions advertising their supposed successes and if there is not one it is a disgrace that a government would proceed with such a scheme without one.

This area of the city is unique and its development must be carried out with the same long term ends in view that bequeathed us King’s Park. It is not an area that should be rushed into development to ensure that the public see a government that is “doing something” or that is subjected to presently fashionable symbols and architecture. It is too important.

**Ken Eastwood:**

In considering a report on the financial implications of the Perth Waterfront one should bear in mind that the Waterfront project itself should not be considered in isolation. A useful starting point for this analysis would be the December 2011 Parliamentary Report No. 14 of our State Parliament’s Public Accounts Committee ([www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/commit.i](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/commit.i)) and any implications which may flow on to the Perth Waterfront.

My reading of this report indicates that there are two or three projects currently in the pipeline that will have a significant impact on the state’s capacity to retain its AAA Credit Rating, and that there are a number of issues that will have a significant impact on how the Perth Waterfront project is funded.

Quite apart from the comments within the above report it is obvious that alongside Premier Barnett’s decision to proceed with the Perth Waterfront project there have been significant cost blowouts on other projects, some not yet commenced, and a major projected shortfall (up to $600 million) in the state’s share of GST revenue flowing from the Commonwealth.

In addition to those shortfalls and overruns we now face the inevitable pre-election promises traditionally made to the electorate just prior to an election. Whilst it is accepted that at the time of writing this report the major parties have not yet released their election programs and “promises” it is significant to note that Premier Barnett has promised a complete revamp of Perth’s transport requirements which we are told will cost in the vicinity of $8 - $9 billion dollars. There has been no indication as to how this project is to be funded.

In order to gain a clear understanding of the potential for cost overrun’s with State infrastructure final costs relative to their initial budget it is necessary to also look at the final costs of other recent projects.
Perth City Link (PCL)

The Perth City Link is another project that is currently underway and appears to have all the hallmarks of being poorly costed. This project was initially costed at $468 million (in 2008) but has now blown out to an estimated $609.3 million (an increase of 30% on initial estimates). Of this $609.3 million the Commonwealth has agreed to fund $236 million (approximately half of the original cost estimate) and Perth City Council will fund $36.85 million.

In addition, the land development costs of the Perth City Link also need to be taken into consideration. The 2010/11 State Budget allocated $47 million for the subdivision works associated with the project. This figure has also blown out (in just over 12 months) to $128.1 million. This leaves some $81.1 million that must also be funded from the 2012/13 State Budget.

The still unfunded costs of the Perth City Link may be summarized as follows:

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Less Funding already approved

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Unfunded portion of City Link Project $128.10 m

The Public Accounts Committee notes at page 43 of the report that the PCL works “were probably not ready for consideration for funding when submitted to Infrastructure Australia in 2008 and 2009”. One must ask whether a repeat of this same enthusiasm to “get on with it” might result in the same level of undercostings for the Perth Waterfront Development.

s happened with the Perth Arena project where costs blew out from $160m to more than $460m there seems no acknowledgement that such a situation could arise again with the Perth Waterfront Project even though the Waterfront project will extend over several more years.

The Public Accounts Committee notes at page 46 of its report that “As with the Perth Waterfront Development the land development aspects of the Perth City Link carry with them the risk that the land will fail to sell due to lack of demand or that the sale price for the land will fail to meet expectations”

A shortfall of land sales for either of The Perth City Link or The Perth Waterfront projects would have serious impacts on revenue for future State Budgets. Land sales for the Waterfront Project alone are estimated at $170 million and if this is not achieved large sums of revenue anticipated to flow from Stamp Duty on projected land sales will also not be achieved.
Perth Waterfront Project

The total cost of public infrastructure for the Perth Waterfront (excluding the originally promised Indigenous Cultural Centre, development of a cable car service to Kings Park and road works to assist in the diversion of traffic from Riverside Drive to Graham Farmer Freeway) was estimated in June 2009 to be $440 million.

The sale of land created within the project has been budgeted to yield approximately $170 million leaving a net cost to government for the Waterfront project of $270 million.

This scenario is rather fanciful given that although the nine (9) blocks, which will be created, are to be sold at bargain basement prices of average $19 million each (about one third their true value), no ultimate purchasers of this land have yet been identified and no firm decision has been made as to whether the land available from the Perth Waterfront Development will be sold freehold or simply leased to developers on long term leases.

If the latter course is necessary then the State Government will be obliged to fund the full $440 million of the project without any reduction in the cost resulting from land sales.

A number of Perth’s prominent architects and builders have commented that building on this unstable land will be an extremely expensive exercise and will be akin “to building on porridge”. Developers will obviously be extremely wary.

In addition there has been no estimate included in the Waterfront costings to fund major road works at each end of Graham Farmer Freeway, or for the freeway itself. Such costs could easily require a further $200 million.

Neither has the impact of diverting traffic from Riverside Drive to other roads within the City (e.g. Esplanade, St Georges Terrace and Wellington St) been assessed as far as cost is concerned.

No such traffic study had been completed by December 2011 when the Public Accounts Committee filed its report.

The Public Accounts Committee is rather scathing of these aspects of this project and makes the comment (page 38)

“This is a large and complex project making major changes to the structure and working of the Perth CBD. If we get it wrong, in any one of several aspects, then the benefits to the City, it’s livability and efficient functioning could be severely impaired. The lack of transparency and engagement with the community does not give confidence that the planning is to the standard required by the Strategic Asset Management Framework processes”.

Riverside Drive - Traffic Flow

It is now apparent that little or no traffic modelling was carried out by the Department of Main Roads when the Perth Waterfront project was first conceived. The project papers contained an estimate of traffic using Riverside Drive each day to be about 25,000 vehicles per day. This number was dramatically increased to 41,000 vehicles when formal traffic studies were completed and released in mid-2012.

Given that this usage is almost 100% higher than the original anticipated usage it is obvious that the potential for a massive impact on Perth’s commuters has been wildly underestimated in the Perth Waterfront project documents.
Thomas Street Upgrade

With the disruptions to Riverside Drive, the only other route for persons from western suburbs to cross the city for travel to the airport and eastern suburbs will be by use of Thomas Street and then Graham Farmer Freeway.

The Department of Main Roads have already acknowledged that cross city travel via Mill Point Road and Graham Farmer Freeway will be hampered given that both of these roads are now at capacity.

Thomas Street, in its present condition, is also severely congested between Kings Park Road and Wellington Street and would not be capable of dealing with approximately 10,000 – 15,000 additional cars per day when Riverside Drive is re-routed.

An additional 3 properties are still to be acquired before Main Roads can commence any necessary work to realign and upgrade the West Perth section of Thomas Street.

The cost of this necessary work has not been factored into the overall costing’s associated with the Perth Waterfront.

Although no cost estimates are given, it is likely that the costs to purchase three properties and carry out this essential work could be well in excess of $100 million if like construction costs as in the Public Accounts Committee report are any guide.

Conclusion

From my reading of the Public Accounts Committee Report it would appear that there is little confidence in the rubbery figures surrounding these developments.

Much more work needs to be done to ensure that what is being attempted is the best solution for the large amounts of expenditure which is being committed with very little input from outside sources or the public.

The huge reduction of $600 million in GST revenue flowing from the Commonwealth to the State in 2012/13 alone is cause enough for “alarm bells to be ringing” as to whether this is the right time to commit to more highly questionable infrastructure projects.

In addition to the GST shortfall there are also a number of unbudgeted costs associated with major projects that are still largely unfunded not to mention the massive cost blowout of Perth Arena from its initial budgeted cost of $160 million to the final cost of some $460 million.

Also in progress at the moment, or about to commence, are the huge projects of Fiona Stanley Hospital, Perth Children’s Hospital and major upgrades at QE11 Medical Centre, upgrade of Great Eastern Highway, the Burswood Stadium, an undertaking to fund a light rail project throughout the City and now a complete review of Perth’s Transport requirements. (This last item is estimated to cost $8 - $9 billion on its own).

All of these infrastructure projects have the potential for very severe cost overruns. Indeed the Government has not yet decided whether it should build the Burswood Stadium or do so in partnership with a private developer.

In my view the overall final cost of the Perth Waterfront project is more likely to be $983.80 million calculated as follows:

Original 2009 Budget estimate ( 2008 estimate) $440.00 m
CPI increases over period 2009 – 2013 – 4 yrs. at 4% pa 75.30 m
Loss of Stamp Duty if land Leased rather than sold 8.50 m

Fifth term of reference: Economics
Farmer Freeway entries and exits upgrade 200.00 m
Farmer Freeway tunnel upgrade 105.00 m
Upgrade of Thomas Street 100.00 m
Access Road Narrows Bridge to William St 55.00 m
Total projected costs $983.80 m
Original Budget (2008 Estimate) 440.00 m

Unbudgeted cost of Perth Waterfront project $543.80 m

Coupled with the very real possibility that a purchaser will not emerge for the Perth Waterfront land being made available to developers, a reasonable summary of the total effect of these costs and shortfalls against State revenue for those of the above projects presently in progress is as follows:

Perth Waterfront
  Loss of revenue if land leased rather than sold $170.00 m
  Costs in excess of Budget (as Above) $543.80 m

Perth City Link
  Unfunded portion of project $128.10 m

General
  Loss of GST revenue $600.00 m

Additional Funding Required $1,439.90 m

The above loss of GST revenue and unfunded project costs has the very real potential to inflict a $1.5 billion hole in the 2013/14 State Budget.

Is it prudent to be allocating expenditure of $440 million for the Perth Waterfront project plus a further $200 million of necessary expenditure to upgrade Graham Farmer Freeway at a time when we also have to deal with a loss of GST revenue to the tune of $600 million?

Apart from all the other very unsatisfactory aspects of the proposed Perth Waterfront development it would appear that the State may be risking its coveted AAA Credit rating by having to borrow $1.3b additional funds to accommodate the Perth Waterfront development and the loss of $600 million of GST revenue.

The effect of a downgrading of the Western Australia’s AAA credit rating will be an increase in the interest rate that can be charged by lenders on TOTAL state borrowings not just on new borrowings for the 2012/13 year. If, for example, the State AAA credit rating drops from AAA to say AA+ an additional, say 0.25% may be charged on all borrowings of approximately $25 billion – i.e. the cost to the State would then be an additional 0.25% in interest or $62.5 million per annum until the rating returns to AAA. In times of tight fiscal policies interest hikes could well be higher than 0.25%.
Linley Lutton:
Lack of Commercial viability
Concerns have been expressed about the project’s intensity of development. How was the mix of 150,000m² of commercial space, 39,000m² of retail, 1,700 apartments and a hotel ascertained? What feasibility studies were undertaken to prove this demand exists?

There is no evidence available to the public to support that any proper study has been done.

Note that recently the MRA altered the development mix to 800 apartments, 200,000 commercial and 25,000m² of retail.

This reduction in residential apartment numbers from 1,700 to 800 is curious because the main rationale for the WAPC taking the Esplanade Reserve in the first place was to provide a large number of apartments.

Warnings have also been sounded by the State’s under-treasurer and property experts that the simultaneous development in the Perth CBD of the Northbridge Link, Riverside and the Waterfront are not workable due to oversupply.

The CBD currently has around 1,100,000m² of commercial space. These three projects combined will add a massive 645,000m².

The CEO of the Property Council in Western Australia has said that the foreshore vision, to be built by the private sector, could not happen at the same time as the Northbridge Link project and the 40ha Riverside project because “the market will not be able to absorb it”. (The West Australian, 2009)

Given the recently announced warnings on a slowing of the mining boom it is hard to imagine where the demand for commercial space will come from. Many businesses are finding lower rents and abundant parking are available in developments close to but not in the CBD. Perth is not quarantined from world-wide financial problems. China’s peak steel-making body has forecast that China will need 40% less steel by 2025 than estimates by Australia’s three big miners.

The Chinese construction market is also weak which could see an earlier fall in steel demand. (Australian Financial Review, August 31, 2012).

Risk management in property development is one of the key strategies driving development master planning and lot size is an important issue. Many developers prefer to market lot sizes no larger than say 1,500m² to 2,500m² which are small enough to enable purchasers to arrange funding while at the same time being large enough to provide a reasonable yield. The waterfront development with its focus upon intense development on very large lots is problematic.

High-rise buildings are very expensive to build in Perth and builders’ margins on such projects are very tight. There is little room for error and the foundation conditions on this site are fraught with risk.

The Government also does not show an understanding of the current apartment market. Over the last few years, apartment pricing has shifted significantly downward so investors and owner-occupiers can now purchase medium-cost apartments in many areas of Perth, leaving the waterfront out of the race.

Without substantial residential development this project is nothing more than another commercial enclave capable of going anywhere in the CBD.

The MRA is now attempting to secure a hotel developer.

Hotels too, in the high-rise configuration required in the current plan, will be very expensive to build on this site and the MRA will find that lenders for hotel projects are
scarce. Hotel experts warn that Perth is seen as a boom-bust city which does not suit the hotel business in the long-term. There is a market for serviced apartments in Perth however they must be built economically, which cannot be achieved on this site if the planners stick with their high-rise configuration.

**Failure to understand tourism requirements**

The essence of successful tourism is providing something which authentically reflects the unique character or quality of an area. People everywhere are attracted to visit localities which are different to their usual environment and which extend their experiences.

Elizabeth Quay offers no unique experiences. It is an enclave of typical commercial and apartment buildings. Even the view to the Swan River from within the development is compromised by the pedestrian bridge over the inlet.

Visitors from Asian countries, which are often stated to be the target tourist market, will have little interest in visiting an environment which is so similar to their own urban experiences.

Elizabeth Quay has no galleries or museums; no celebration of our unique culture; no tranquil or beautiful parkland; and no mature landscape because most of the existing trees have been destroyed.

The government claims that 4million tourists a year will be attracted to this primarily commercial precinct. They originally claimed 9million tourists a year. This prediction should be considered in the knowledge that the whole of Western Australia attracts around 6.5million tourists a year.

I attended a recent presentation at the West Australian Club, where the CEO of the MRA was asked about the tourism projections to which he replied that the predicted figures were based on an interpolation of the figures associated with tourist numbers visiting Brisbane’s South Bank redevelopment, one of Australia’s best known urban redevelopment projects.

To draw a comparison between the tourist-drawing capacity of Elizabeth Quay, with its many faults, and South Bank, with its many positives, is ludicrous.

**Unreasonable expenditure**

The government plans to spend $440 million on this project. This figure does not include the costs associated with the road works in and around the CBD, and public transport upgrades required to compensate for the traffic congestion to be caused by diverting Riverside Drive. These additional costs will most likely be hundreds of millions of dollars.

Capital works projects undertaken by the Barnett Government have shown a consistent tendency to blow out and exceed established budgets. There is every reason to expect this to happen on the Elizabeth Quay project due to the poor foundation conditions and its close proximity to the river.

The predicted return from the project through sale of the 10 sites is expected to be about $170 million. The total area of land for sale is 34,595m2 which equates to a land sales price of $4,914/m2 which is well below comparable land values along Terrace Road and The Esplanade.

The government is therefore placing the land on the market at a subsidised rate. It is difficult to understand why the government would choose to do this.
The major concern with respect to cost is that the Barnett government is embarking on this project while at the same time demanding that all government agencies cut costs in order to reign in government spending. This expenditure on an unnecessary project is seen by many as inappropriate.
Peter C. Bruechle:

The towers for offices and residential units that are being promoted would have many damaging effects on the area and on the city. They would cause over-shadowing of the area around the proposed basin and would create a funnelling effect for the prevailing south westerly winds that would make those limited areas left available to the public unpleasant.

Competent studies of overshadowing and wind effects that show shadows and wind are not the problems that I consider them to be, should have been or should be undertaken. I consider that such studies will confirm my concerns.

I am incredulous that the scheme has been put forward and championed without shadow and wind studies being undertaken and published for critical scrutiny. Is it a sign of a government that has made up its mind despite the evidence and will not tolerate criticism?

The office towers will bring about a migration of those seeking prestige offices with unobstructed views of the river from their present premises on St. Georges Terrace. This will mean that the CBD, which is, even now, almost certainly too big in area, will be further spread out making walking access more difficult and time consuming than it already is.

If, instead of taking the city to the edge of the river, we develop the area over the railway and degraded parts of the city with new buildings and parklands we will produce a new ‘heart’ for Perth that will easily cater for all our expansion needs for the next 50 years.

The occupants of the scheme’s towers will add to the traffic on the limited roads in the area – traffic that will already be at a standstill during peak periods due to normal east-west traffic. It is my considered opinion that Riverside Drive/Mounts Bay Road should continue uninterrupted to avoid huge delays.

Not only should Riverside Drive be preserved but the river’s edge should be preserved for low level, public amenities and open space, and be used for such activities as RSL parades, special events and major exhibitions. It should not be given over to high rise, commercial developments that will limit public access and will be out of scale with their surroundings.

An environmental assessment of the basin, which has been made public as all such studies should have been made public, has been carried out by the environmental group RPS. They have arrived at the conclusions that the bay water will not stagnate, that it will flush at short intervals and that dredging can be safely carried out, even though the sediments were found to contain heavy metals, pesticides, hydro-carbons and asbestos above human health and ecological guidelines.

They also found a potential release of significant amounts of acidity which would require neutralisation if dredging material is to be placed above water level. Under the circumstances it appears to me that there are risks in dredging and that it should be avoided unless it proves to be absolutely imperative. I also consider that their conclusions should be independently tested.

There has been no investigation of possible future flooding, of which I know, which is strange given the recent problems experienced in Brisbane, the flooding that occurred in the Swan River in the 1940s and the fears about rising sea levels. I consider that either full environmental studies should be carried out prior to the scheme going ahead and those studies be subjected to critical review or, if studies have already been carried out that they

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
be made public and reviewed by disinterested experts. Any other course of action is not in accordance with democratic principles.

**Robert J Hart:**
You have to live in Perth for a long time, even be born here, to understand our foreshore. For start you must understand the climate and the foreshore’s exposure to wind. Elizabeth Quay is a classic design exercise that ignores climatic conditions. I understand that Perth comes third in the world behind Chicago and Wellington NZ in the windy city stakes. Are mothers going to take their children to the “Quay”? I think not; too cold and windy.

**John Syme:**

**Myth:** The waterfront plan will bring the river to the city
The current plan relocates Riverside Drive towards the CBD. It remains a busy road, carrying around 35,000 vehicles per day. Even after diversion it will still carry around 20,000 vehicles per day. Clearly, in morning and evening peak this means a continuous traffic flow. The extent to which Riverside Drive as it is currently configured represents a barrier between the City and the river will be largely unchanged merely moved a little closer to the city.

The water will not be visible from St Georges Terrace, with the long views down William Street and Barrack Street essentially unchanged from the current. Alternative plans maintaining the through –traffic function of Riverside Drive would allow direct water access down Sherwood Court and Howard Street to The Esplanade so that it becomes an esplanade once more.

**Myth:** Bicycle amenity and safety will be improved
This is a big myth. Despite some recent re-design, the current plan substantially reduces pedestrian and cyclist amenity. The foreshore is heavily used by recreational and commuter cyclists, with a very high proportion commuting across the city (as with the east-west traffic vehicular movements).

Answering a question in the Legislative Council (3/11/2011) the Hon. Helen Morton indicated that cyclists will be accommodated “on road routes utilising the ‘new Riverside Drive,’ Barrack and William Streets.” Cyclists, particularly the many cyclists travelling through and not to the area, will thus lose the dedicated bike-path and be forced onto a bike lane on the road.

This is a substantial reduction in amenity and will deter many of the recreational and commuter riders that currently enjoy a busy dedicated bike path network that is becoming, overall increasingly of high standard. It is at odds with the rhetoric of “more sustainable transport.”

**Myth:** High-rise high density development is required to activate the foreshore.
There are many examples of highly active low-rise riverside precincts and many examples where high-rise development works against it (e.g. Melbourne Docklands). The city does not need the additional development capability – there is already have enough development land and placing more in the centre of the city works against the Governments

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26 MRA website; Elizabeth Quay Q&A

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
Directions 2031 strategy to intensify across the metropolitan area and provide employment closer to residences.

Earlier analysis has shown that if both the Waterfront and Northbridge Link projects were successfully built by 2031, and if the City of Perth maintained its current proportion of metropolitan employment (i.e. 17% at 2011) there would be demand for only 165,000 m² additional office floorspace (equivalent to 3 – 4 major buildings) elsewhere in the entire City of Perth area over that period.

An alternative would be to increase even further the proportion of all metropolitan and Peel workers in the City, but this has unsustainable regional and transport consequences as outlined above.

It also implies excess apartment supply for the projected population growth, with no demand for any development anywhere else in the City. While it is possible – and welcome – that inner city population growth could be greater than this, it is not clear that inevitably expensive riverfront apartments will achieve this.

This means that over-development on the foreshore would take demand away from other areas of the city where land is available and with greater need for re-generation. Areas east of Barrack St provide an example.

There is therefore no evidence that the residential or commercial accommodation implied in a very large waterfront project is appropriate. On the contrary:

- It contributes in a substantial way to an over-concentration of metro employment in the inner city
- It draws demand for residential and employment related development away from other areas of the city;
- It is not required to support the operations of the rail station: 54,000 workers, or 43% of the total inner city workforce, are already located within 800 metres of the station; more are not required to increase rail patronage and alternative accommodation elsewhere in the city would also be well serviced by public transport.
- It is not required to activate the foreshore or the street. In fact it could be counter-productive – active entertainment complexes and residential accommodation do not mix well.

**Myth: Height is required to pay for the project**

It is unfortunate that the financial analysis underlying the project has not been released for detailed scrutiny. However, it is a reasonable assumption that one objective is to maximise the return on land parcels by allowing maximum height and plot ratio on commercially available sites.

It is likely that there will be substantial piling required on development sites and the simple logic is that development above the ground (i.e. height and density) is required to offset below-ground site costs and to give the Government at least some recovery of its development expenditure (although if the outcome is going to be as dismal as the current plan it makes one wonder why they are throwing so much money away in the first place). Development densities and land uses in the current plan also involve substantial on-site carparking, which will add to local congestion.

However, there are alternatives that give as great or more return. In most inner city buildings with high pedestrian traffic flow and therefore very high values at the ground floor
from retail uses, the majority (in the order of 75% - 80%) of the land value arises from that ground activity. The value of the office or residential uses on upper floors is marginal, showing a small return on construction cost. It is therefore no accident that a large number of older buildings in the city have busy retail at the ground floor but are empty on upper floors. This has been analysed on many sites.

If the foreshore development is successful, with high pedestrian traffic flow, the majority of the land value will similarly be at the ground floor, not from increasing height. An alternative approach is therefore to consider, in detail, a much less expensive development approach which involves much simpler structures and earthworks and allows for only lightweight buildings (up to, say 3- 4 storeys, or more if super-lightweight) that do not require deep piling but ‘float’ on the ground. This is technically entirely feasible, will involve the Government in much lower risk and expenditure and a can be built over a much shorter time frame.

**Chris Wiggins:**

The Inlet connecting to the river is undesirable and unnecessary

The connection of the inlet to the river as proposed, provides little benefit to the public. The advantage stated by the project proponents that it eliminates the need for pedestrians to wait for the lights to change at the pedestrian crossings is far offset by the costs and traffic congestion closing Riverside drive entails.

The inlet may look cute in the artist’s helicopter perspective, but from the ground level you hardly notice the river from the public open space around the inlet. Only a glimpse under the bridge. It will make virtually no difference to the visual aspect if the inlet is replaced with a large, shallow fresh water feature.

This would reduce the project cost and permit the retention of Riverside Drive which resolves the intractable traffic problems (it is hard to see how Perth’s traffic system can possibly cope with the closure of Riverside drive, the traffic generated by the development of 1,700 residential apartments, 150,000 sq metres office and 39,000 sq metres retail, plus future growth).

It avoids using up limited options for coping with traffic future growth. It provides flexibility for a range of family friendly public amenities rather than 3 hectares of dirty windswept water. It could accommodate 2 – 3 floors of parking under the water feature, reducing the need for large ugly parking podiums. It would enable buildings to be laid out so that they provide public areas protected from the wind and not overshadowed.

A shallow water feature provides many advantages over the proposed inlet. Besides cost and permitting the retention of Riverside Drive, it is clean, no environmental problems, safe (a potential problem with the inlet) and can be protected from wind by landscaping. It provides flexibility for planning both now and in the future.

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
The buildings will be unattractive at ground level.

The proposed high rise buildings will be surrounded by 6 storey podiums, mostly used for above ground car parks. These will inevitably be ugly. The proposed design permits developers to use above ground car parking to save them the cost of putting the car parking underground. The above ground parking restricts the ground level layout and amenity.

Geometrically laid out multiple high rise projects are a concept originally developed in the 1930’s to 50’s by Le Corbusier and others which has been discredited by history. The concept puts space ahead of place.

Architectural pomposity ahead of human needs. While always looking impressive from the air, as argued below the design is people unfriendly at ground level. The use of 6 floor podium/car parks will be make for an oppressive ambience. The tower blocks may be architecturally interesting, but views and impact from ground level will be very obscured by the podiums.

Like many disastrous city planning examples, Elizabeth Quay appears to be a project driven by political aspirations rather than meeting human needs. It has been imposed without regard to the impact it has on the city.

The Government’s difficulties in attracting potential purchasers for the blocks and the low prices they expect to receive demonstrates the bankruptcy of what should be a sought after development opportunity.

To make up for an unattractive project, the Government has resorted to hype and slogans to promote the project. The artist’s impression below taken from the MRA website portrays Elizabeth Quay as a pleasant, open sunny site. It is highly distorted. By ghosting and flattening the images of the high rise buildings and parking garages it gives a totally false impression.

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
The proponents don’t dare show what it would look like – overshadowed for 6 moths a year, windswept and oppressed by surrounding buildings.

A picture recently published in the West (Jan 2) shows how the inlet and the surrounding public area is dominated by buildings. At first glance it looks impressive. However, from ground level it is a different story.

**Exposure to wind and overshadowing**

The south westerly aspect of the proposed Elizabeth Quay makes it unsuitable as Perth's premier civic feature or entertainment precinct. In all the information published on the project, I can find no evidence that consideration of the exposure to shadow and wind has been taken in the conceptual plan. Failure by the architects and planners to take account of aspect, wind and shadow is unacceptable. The proposed quay is too exposed to harsh weather to be classed as a major civic feature. The northern end of the cove including the important Landing and Fountain areas will be very exposed to the SSW prevailing winds. Having worked on the Terrace and the Esplanade for 30 years, I can vouch for how windy it gets. The Eastern States' waterfront projects such as the Southbank developments in Melbourne and Brisbane and Darling Harbour in Sydney face north. No other city has attempted to develop a south facing waterfront project, not withstanding that Perth has by far the strongest southerly winds.

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
The aerial view of proposed Elizabeth Quay development shown on the MRA website at [http://www.mra.wa.gov.au/Documents/Elizabeth-Quay/Masterplan.pdf](http://www.mra.wa.gov.au/Documents/Elizabeth-Quay/Masterplan.pdf) is based on suggests the shadowing when the sun is directly overhead in mid-summer. In fact, because of the high rise buildings, the development will also be in shadow for most of the year. Imagine the shadows from the 36 storey buildings on sites 4 – 8. The new BHP building already casts a shadow over a large part of the domain in the afternoon, reaching Riverside Drive. To the best of my knowledge, due to shadows from Exchange Plaza and the wind, the large south facing lawn of the Weld Club on the north side of the Esplanade which my office overlooked, has never been used for social purposes other than under a marquee.

Below, I show a Google Satellite Image taken 5 May, 2008, with building podium outlines and added annotations. The black line shows the extent of shadow at mid winter.

Looking at the plan to the left, one can only conclude that the planners and architects have ignored wind and overshadowing impacts when designing Elizabeth Quay.

Overshadowing information

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
The photos below show the high degree of shadowing from existing buildings during the winter months.

![9:20 am, 18 June, 2012](image1)
Photo from Floor 34, Exchange Plaza

![12:03 pm, 3 July 2012](image2)
Photo from Floor 23, Exchange Plaza

![3:20 pm, 3 July, 2012](image3)
Photo from Floor 23, Exchange Plaza

![3:16 pm, 3 July 2012](image4)
Photo from Floor 23, Exchange Plaza

**Estimates of the shadow lengths for Landing and Station Street**

The length of the shadows cast by a six storey podium at midday on the 21 June, 21 September, 21 March and 21 December, will be 32m, 13m, 12m and 3m respectively.

The length of shadows cast in the same time periods by a 33-37 storey building, assuming a height of 135m, will be 84m, 192m, 87m and 21m respectively.

The public area of the Landing stretches from approx 17m (allowing for the New Riverside Drive) to 48m from the south side of the podiums. The northern half of the Landing will be covered by podium shadow for 100% of the time in midwinter. The southern half would be covered most of the day intermittently from both existing buildings and the new tower shadows as the sun moves round over the day.

At the equinoxes (21 March and 21 September), the Landing would be subject to intermittent shadowing from the towers. In mid-summer, the Landing would receive full sun all day. Being at the north end of the inlet, it is totally exposed to wind.

The public area of Station Park area extends from 17m to 73m south of the podium of site 4 building. It will be subject to full or intermittent shadowing all day during the six winter months. It is also very exposed to wind.

Note: Information on sun elevations taken from Murdoch University webpage

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
Information on building heights and shadow effect are estimates by the writer based on measurements of diagrams on the information available on the MRA Elizabeth Quay website.

**Wind information**

Perth is windy all year round. While the Landing and Station Park area would receive some protection in the morning, in the afternoon and evening they are subject to the prevailing south–west winds, averaging 15 – 25 kms/hr on 75% of the days. Coming off the inlet water, these winds will probably stronger than the averages recorded at the Perth Metro weather station which is located near to Mount Lawley High School.

Here are the annual average wind strength roses for Perth Metropolitan area from the Australian Weather Bureau web site.

Mean 3pm wind speed (km/h) (17 years 1994 - 2011)

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For information on how wind impacts on comfort and building design, see paper “Wind and Comfort” by Ted Stathopoulos, Professor and Associate Dean, Centre for Building Studies, Concordia Univ, Montreal. [http://www.iawe.org/Proceedings/5EACWE/K04.pdf](http://www.iawe.org/Proceedings/5EACWE/K04.pdf)

This paper discusses the complexities of designing for wind with tall buildings. It indicates that when wind speeds exceed 18 kms hour, pedestrians will experience the onset of discomfort, with dust raised and papers blown about. It states (Sect 3): **“Conditions for pedestrians are considered acceptable if the wind speed exceeds 5 m/s (18 Km/hr) less than 20% of the time.”**

The figures from BOM (Bureau of meteorology) above are for the Perth Metro site (3

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
kms NE of Elizabeth Quay) the average wind speed at 3.00pm is around the 18 km/hr level. The sea breeze in summer normally peaks around 5.00 - 600pm at levels 25 – 50% above the 3.00pm wind.

Given the open exposure to the SSE sea breeze, combining this with the gusting that occurs around high buildings (as any one who has worked in the Terrace knows), there will certainly be a significant degree of discomfort in the Elizabeth Quay public areas during spring and summer afternoons and evenings. Wind speeds will exceed 18km/hr over 50% of the time.

Ken Adam:

The inlet is too large: it is overscaled, both visually, in proportion to its surroundings, and in terms of public use and interaction; and this has come at the further cost to The Esplanade Reserve;

The residual area of The Esplanade Reserve is far too small, both for its present and future utility for public recreation and for its historic function as a public gathering place; The public enjoyment of the foreshore would be compromised by the planned high density and use of buildings at the foreshore itself for permanent residences and commercial/office development, both of which are inimical to public enjoyment.

This is partly because of the traffic they would induce and because the well-known opposition of permanent residents to the noise and bustle of public enjoyment of adjoining space. Mixed-use development may be the prevailing planning ideology (along with public transport as a universal panacea for traffic movement) but it is not a universal solution and in this case the uses are as incompatible as would be industrial development on the foreshore;

There is no case for offices and other non-recreational commercial development at the foreshore, nor is there any compelling demand for them in the area adjacent; in fact that would both be counter to government policy of encouraging employment outside the central business district and would seriously detract from the more compelling need to revitalise other parts of the City;

The economics of high buildings at the foreshore, regardless of their use, are questionable, at best. The highest value of development would reside in the ground and first storeys (as a study of any successful waterfront development would readily show) and any development above three or four storeys would necessarily incur extraordinarily expensive piling;

The public enjoyment of the foreshore public spaces would be severely compromised by the impact of the proposed tall buildings, in terms of winter overshadowing and probable wind turbulence;

The proposed height of buildings at and close to the foreshore would be detrimental to the landscape/topographical setting of the City, and would be destructive to the much-valued – and genuinely iconic - view of the City and its river setting from Kings Park;

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
**Ralph Stanton:**

The draft design guidelines for the development (MRA Apr 2012) comprise ten very large sites, to be occupied by four-to-six-storey podium carparks along the streetfront, each topped by towers of up to 36 storeys.

The height of the buildings appears to be arrived at by the fact that poor foundation quality (being largely unconsolidated land fill) will require deep footings to each building; this is very expensive and in the designers’ minds can be justified economically only by tall structures.

These buildings (if and when they eventuate) will encase the inlet on three sides – west, north and east - and, due to their scale will, especially in winter, largely overshadow the public waterside spaces.

In addition, the development as a whole faces Perth’s prevailing south-west winds, which average 15-25 k/hr for three-quarters of the year (and noticeably in summer). It is clear from evidence worldwide (or even in Fremantle) that attractive and viable civic waterside and tourist developments function well with one- and two-storey buildings; they do not need massive structures above them in order to be made “viable” by creating a “critical mass.”

These are fundamental design errors, ensuring the complex will be perennially uninviting to visitors, due to its long winter shadows and strong (and cold, coming off the water as they do) summer winds.

Apart from a relatively small park, increase in public value and amenity seems focused on the provision of boat moorings, boardwalks and the coffee shops and boutiques which may line them. Little or no civic value is displayed in the scheme, other than a possible “indigenous museum” which may or may not come about.

Unfortunately this massive plan, in alienating large tracts of waterfront land, fails to return equivalent community benefit, other than the “profits” (in any case questionable) to be generated from the sale of valued communal assets.

Where, for instance, is a site for a future Perth Opera House, a Museum of the City of Perth, a Museum of Modern Art, a public amphitheatre, a waterside lake for public recreation, or provision for any other public or cultural establishment? Importantly, it is institutions of these kinds which provide real attraction for citizens and tourists alike.

There are many examples of inner-city waterside redevelopment from Australia and elsewhere; invariably they involve rehabilitation of derelict industrial land such as at Melbourne’s (or Brisbane’s) Southbank and Docklands, or Sydney’s Darling Harbour. Perth, by contrast, having no riverside industrial wasteland to assault, seems bent on a kind of self-mutilation – dressed up as self-improvement.

**Linley Lutton:**

**An unworkable Inlet**

The area of the proposed Elizabeth Quay inlet is very small - less than the length of the Subiaco Oval. Engineers previously engaged by the City of Perth warned against inlets in this part of the river because water movement is too slow and continuous smooth river edges are essential.

Creating inlets in contaminated fill is also a major concern because there is a likelihood of contaminants leaching into the river.

This year the Centre for Water Research at UWA developed a real time computer model of

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
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water movement in the Swan River and it shows, at Elizabeth Quay, that water remains around the Quay for an average 75-80 days.

When remaining still, water-borne solids are retained causing siltation and pollutant growth such as algal blooms. It is very likely that the slow movement rate of the Swan River at the entrance to the Elizabeth Quay inlet will cause the inlet to silt up on a regular basis.

**Gerard Siero:**

Aside from my objection to the privatisation of the commons in the form of the seizure of public lands for what will become, effectively, private profit, my concerns are twofold as regards the environment and ‘sense of place’ of the City of Perth as a city set alongside the Swan River, with its riverside parklands created for public enjoyment, and the ecological integrity our Swan River, as part of an ecological network of the biodiverse Swan Coastal plain.

Whilst water seeks its own level and will fill the excavations as soon as connection to the river proper is provided, the excavation will create what is effectively a dead end. That is, there will be natural no flow created through this artificial inlet that might establish a stable water environment. In terms of the processes of the river, the inlet has no raison d’être. In water systems that occur in nature, there is a cause and effect that arises from natural flows of water interacting with the structure of the landscape. The land forms that result are fluid, in that they represent lines of erosion and deposition of the materials through water action which ultimately tend towards either some form of dynamic equilibrium or continue in a state of flux.

Human land use and tenure has difficulty coping with fluid environments, because, unlike our indigenous predecessors, in our culture we tend to want to own land with fixed and knowable boundaries and allocate its use for some form of exclusive economic exploitation.

The Swan River is a depositional landscape, sands laid down from erosion of the uplifted Darling Scarp over eons. The riparian environments of the Swan River are subject to periodic inundation, plus erosion resulting from wind, water and wave energies. The plant life that has evolved along rivers tends to counteract these motile forces in order to provide as stable as possible an environment for life communities. In undisturbed – natural - places, such life communities evolve to become highly complex, and can contribute to reshaping the landscape through trapping silt, etc. Indeed, few landscapes on Earth were not shaped by the interaction of physical forces with life.

Where water continues to flow on route to the sea, or through tidal flux, there will be a constant dialogue between the stabilising effects of life and the motile effects of the energies at play in the landscape. When there is little of no flow, as in a backwater, materials and waters tend to accrete and stagnate. In a water body adjacent to human conurbations, the materials that can accrue tend to be pollutants and refuse. Elizabeth Quay is likely to be such a back water.

The city may choose to use the site as an outlet for storm water; in which case, pollutants from roads and buildings will enter the water, fouling it, and harming the river environment, poisoning life, and upsetting the chemical balance of the waters. Unless treated, as in the lakes at Point Frazer, the outcome can only be harmful to both the
Sixth term of reference: Environment.

Environment and to the people who use it. There is little or no space here to treat urban runoff, which will necessitate expensive engineering solutions, which, as history ably demonstrates, are often imperfect.

The MRA plan also calls for the inlet to function as a port for watercraft – ferries, tourist and pleasure boats, and the like. While such vessels will provide some water movement that will help circulate water to some degree, the vessels will also generate their own pollutants, such as oils and fuels and toxins from paints, etc., which will both tend to concrete in the backwater inlet and to the extent that they can, undoubtedly enter the river beyond, adding to the previously mentioned storm water pollution.

If Riverside Drive, or cycleways and walkways, on a bridge-like structure were retained, it would be possible for the inlet to be a perched lake. This would relegate watercraft to the River proper, and could function as a stormwater biofilter, though more than one body of water plus designed landscape treatments would be needed to provide adequate processing and filtration to clean the water. (Viz. Point Fraser.)

With the emphasis on land sales and urban construction in the project, naturalistic alternatives such as this unlikely outcomes, which brings us back to the likelihood of an inlet that is a backwater that will accrete noxious pollutants and refuse over time. Not a good look for a city, nor for tourism.

Whilst understanding that the time of the Inquiry is limited, I refer the Inquirers to the work of the late George Seddon, who took the time to study the Swan River setting that so much shapes the form and experience of the City of Perth both for its residents and its visitors:

Swan River Landscapes (Perth: University of Western Australia Press. 1970)
Sense of Place (Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1972)
A City and Its Setting: Images of Perth. (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1987)

These works are essential background reading for this Inquiry. In these writings, Seddon expresses many of the landscape and environmental issues that are impacted by this Elizabeth Quay scheme more eloquently that I can.

Before his critical injury, Seddon partnered my practice at the time, Landmarc Consultancy, in the Swan River Landscape Plan project for the Swan River Trust (incomplete), undertaken following our design entry in the International Perth Swan River Foreshore Competition. The Landmarc Foreshore Plan Competition Entry – below - appealed to Seddon, because it spoke of the Swan River foreshores as constituting a continuous landscape, an Ecological Corridor from the Coast to the Scarp and into the Avon Valley hinterland.
Sixth term of reference: Environment.

Swan River Foreshore – Overall Plan – Landmarc Consultancy

The idea of the Swan River as an Ecological Corridor has since taken up by the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) in their Perth Regional Biodiversity Strategy:


The WALGA Plan contains a map – Appendix 6 - that outline a network of Ecological Corridors for the Perth Region as part of a necessary strategy to help conserve something of the biodiversity of the Perth Region, which is dying the death of a thousand cuts as a consequence of a myriad of incremental land urbanisation projects.

Loss of biodiversity is both a regional and a national issue for Australia, and, indeed, one of the major issues facing humanity at a global scale. Our activities in pursuit of economic wealth, have led us to despoil vast tracts of the surface of the earth, both land and sea. The earth is, in effect an organism, a life system, which has produced the biosphere over millennia to enable and sustain life as we humans know it.

The biosphere conditions for life that gave rise to and made possible human civilisations are provided by the vast and infinitely complex inter-relations of the ecosystems that comprise earth’s biosphere.

One of the critical effects of human use of the land is that in adapting the landscapes of the earth to our purposes – agriculture, urbanism, extraction - we have fragmented habitats and ecosystems to the degree that they and the entities that inhabit them, are like isolated islands in a sea of human activities.
Sixth term of reference: Environment.
Now that they are no longer interconnected, they can no longer function properly nor recover from the physical impacts imposed by climate and geology that they evolved to stabilise.

A consequence for humanity is that we will be exposed to ever increasing instabilities and events, often catastrophic in human terms, which can now be attributed to outcomes of human actions to such a degree that our present age is being referred to as the Anthropocene.

The setting aside of lands for the creation of ecological corridors and habitats protected from human impacts is an essential element in strategies aimed at helping to arrest and stabilise the effects of humanity’s expansion into every place on the planet, towards the goal of creating a new stability by design.

The science/discipline of Ecological Restoration is developing as we speak to manage this urgent human endeavour.

The ecological corridor planned in the WALGA Biodiversity Strategy along the Swan River from Coast to hinterland is an essential ingredient in the creation of an Ecological Corridors Network for the Perth Metropolitan Region.

The Elisabeth Quay project, and others like it along the Swan River’s Foreshores, are in direct opposition to the establishment of an ecological corridors network along the river. Therefore they run counter to ecological sustainability, and ultimately, contrary to the long term interests of the people of Perth and their economy.

Some say that there is ample open space in Perth, and that selling off some of it for urbanisation is necessary and inevitable — usually for economic reasons, for the land IS valuable — citing that almost all cities have built up to their river edges and beyond. I suggest that the existence of Perth’s riverine foreshores is what makes its landscape, and actually gives identity to Perth as a place. Without this SenseM of Place, Perth is immeasurably diminished.

Further, in any place or region, riparian environments represent amongst the riches and most diverse habitats on Earth. That is a fundamental reason why riverine environments and the lands that adjoin them are so attractive to humans too. It is essential that we recognise their ecological roles and that we learn to conserve riparian environments sufficiently to enable their ecological infrastructure to remain fully functional.

To that end, the construction of intense built urban fabric to the edge of the river in this project ought be abandoned, and replaced with ecological infrastructure — parklands with minimal but highly functional buildings and/or buildings on piers in the water at the foreshore, accessed by bridges such that the ecologically restored landscape of the Swan River ecological corridor can remain continuous.

**Tony Brand:**

The proposal is not appropriate to either the West Australian climatic conditions or to the foreshore environmental conditions. It has intruded grossly upon the Waterfront landscape while rudely turning its back on to the present City.

My primary concerns in objecting to this ill-conceived and inessential development are:-

• The unnecessary and misconceived use of the public reserve Esplanade for commercial purposes. To the advantage of a few and to the disservice of the greater public.

Sixth term of reference: Environment.
• The indifferent attitude by the various authorities to consolidating the centre of the City and providing a lively heart before there is a need to extend the City peripherally.
• The unwarranted and potentially traffic hazardous removal of one of only two east/west traffic bypass arteries either side and parallel to the City.
• In terms of design and planning the project is neither original, advanced in innovative design nor unique. It is a routine, uninspired copy/archetype replicating the forms and features of similar developments both in the eastern states of Australia and in Asian, European and American cities bordering water around the world.
• The proposal is a dull repeat of many worldwide similar banal developments, it is unlikely to receive any international architectural or planning recognition and is questionable as to whether it would attract specifically overseas or interstate tourists. Maybe local tourists for a "first time" look-see.
• Functionally the planning layout or footprint of the development is questionable. Primarily the multi storey buildings address an internal space facing south and give the impression of turning their backs onto the existing City. There is no attempt at integration or acknowledgement of the business activities along St George’s Terrace.
Secondly, the form of the buildings with almost continuous 2 to 3 storey podiums surmounted by multi storey towers will cast continuous shade or shadow for most months of the year and particularly during the winter period and its shoulder months either side.

It can be easily seen with taller-30 to 36 storeys - buildings and their podiums placed around the space of the existing Esplanade and between Barrack and William Streets that the shadows from early morning through to the evening will be more extensive and occur right around throughout the day.

The internal public spaces will be sunless. It can be shown that during the spring and autumn equinoxes that for most part of the day there will be only a few shafts of sunlight onto the public spaces and then by and large to only half the area- most of which will be water.
This will not attract any visitors.

In addition, the U-shaped footprint facing south will trap the cold southerly winds extending from both the east around to the west which occur from spring through winter and into autumn. The same aspect will exacerbate the windy conditions that occur from the south east and south west during summer.

The wind within the more protected streets of Perth is already a concern and well known. In my observation of Barrack Square - while working in buildings on the Esplanade - over a total 15 year period there have been very few people enjoying its built-up precincts. It is extremely unlikely that with the wind entrapped, shady, internal spaces of the development that people are likely to have a preference for visiting what will be for most of the time a cold and miserable space. The sunny open spaces of the Esplanade were welcomed.
• The designers/planners have failed consequently to design for the West Australian climate and the foreshore conditions. Numerous City of Perth plans - by planners who understand the City - have acknowledged these conditions and built out from the river’s edge in order to back on to the cold winds and to face the comfort zones on the north and east of a development - while facing, acknowledging and embracing the City and surrounding the Esplanade.
I do not have sufficient expertise to comment upon other environmental problems I am given to understand will occur with the likely lack of flushing and chemical problems related to the man-made inlet. I understand there have been a number of expert reports condemning the inlet proposal and suggesting the activities provided therein be located within the actual river and its natural flushing system.

A full and independent report should be made available to the public.

The Esplanade and Mounts Bay Road have been known to flood to high levels in the past and scientific/engineering investigations indicate that the river water levels are rising annually.

Excessive filling to overcome future flood levels would detach the "ground" level for public use and association at the river inlet level and raise it above present road levels. Further alienating the public from the present river.

The top of the multi storey towers will considerably exceed the ground level in Kings Park where the war memorials occur.

The Anzac Day services will have much of their symbolic meaning destroyed because the Dawn Service participants will not be able to see the sun rise over the horizon as the upper stories of the buildings will interfere within a direct line between the memorial and the location of the sun as it rises at dawn.

The participants in the Anzac Day march during the service in the smaller enclosed Supreme Court Gardens will not be able to identify with the Anzac War Memorial in Kings Park because they will not be able to see it. This was a major connection available from the Esplanade.

The Bali War Memorial was specifically designed to incorporate the rising of the sun above the horizon on the date of the Bali Bombing massacre. This will not now occur because the upper stories of the towers will intrude.

In summary, the proposal will not attract repeat public attendance for the following reasons.

The planned footprint and almost continuous buildings surrounding the proposed inlet will provide a sunless windy and often cold internal public space which will not encourage outdoor activities.

The massive podiums with high-rise towers above will dominate the people using the somewhat confined public spaces.

Access from the existing CBD will be little or no different to the present windswept and cold access across Mounts Bay Road adjacent to the bus station and adjoining buildings. It is likely to be more difficult and uncomfortable when compared to crossing Riverside Drive at present.

The proposed buildings will further isolate the existing business district and particularly St George's Terrace and its present buildings from the river and its landscape surrounds.

Views from all round the existing Esplanade precinct will be lost forever. This includes views from the Terrace and side streets across the Esplanade; views from the Supreme Court, William Street and Supreme Court Gardens across to Kings Park.

The provision of parking - if any for visitors - will be highly expensive within the mud flats below the Esplanade and is likely to minimise a desire for the ordinary suburban
visitor, particularly as a repeat performance. In addition access to whatever parking is provided for corporate offices or residential apartments will be extremely difficult and probably minimal.

- The cost of the development is likely to be a little less than $1 billion to provide the unnecessary infrastructure and this will be at the expense of West Australian taxpayers probably amounting to between $500 and $1,000 per person for public facilities already available elsewhere and for the real loss of the major public reserve and precious public events at the Esplanade.

- The complexities and high cost of providing building foundations and car parks within the soft river bed is likely to inhibit full scale and immediate development for upwards of 30 to 40 years, all of which could be accommodated in the present centre of Perth.

- The cost of the apartment buildings will result in only the rich being able to afford the purchase price or rents. Hotels find it difficult to meet normal land costs at present. It is likely that only 6 star or boutique type hotels could be financially viable.

- Views from existing office buildings along the upper part of the Terrace and along the Esplanade will be totally lost from these developments which have paid a premium for the assurance of such views expecting the public unencumbered reserve of the Esplanade to be maintained in perpetuity. It is accepted that while no one person has a right to a view, however, when a premium has been paid on the basis that a building overlooks a public reserve which in law theoretically cannot be built upon, then it would seem that such persons or buildings have a legal right to retaining that view. I understand that a number of planning tribunals have accepted this point of view. I was present on one local planning tribunal which decided accordingly.
SEVENTH TERM OF REFERENCE: OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN

Robert J Hart:

Maintenance will come into play, something Perth doesn’t understand or account for. We are obsessed with letting things run down and the next one in the chair has to change it. Can you imagine keeping this inlet flush and clean? No way. And how deep is it? Do we really want an Aboriginal Centre on the foreshore? Wouldn’t such a centre be better located with more space or maybe at the old power station?

John Syme:

Myth: Melbourne Southbank is a model for the Elizabeth Quay project. There is no question that Melbourne’s Southbank is a very successful example of pedestrian oriented waterfront development. (It is noteworthy that the waterfront buildings at Southbank are generally of small scale - up to 5-6 storeys – on the front with very tall buildings either set well back or in the streets behind)

It has some crucial differences which make it not a good model for Perth:

- It is north facing and sheltered from blustery winds, in contrast to Perth which is south facing and exposed to the elements;
- It is anchored by significant destination elements, (principally the Crown Casino complex and to a lesser extent St Kilda Road and the Melbourne Arts Centre complex) which provide activity independent of the quality and configuration of the waterfront pace – all the waterfront has to do is to capture and build on this activity.

An unfortunate Melbourne precedent for the Perth waterfront is the Docklands development, which is exposed to blustery winds, has very tall buildings right on the waterfront and has very low activity at the pedestrian level.

There are many famous examples worldwide of activated waterfronts which are relatively low scale and focus on ground floor activation, rather than upper floor density: Barcelona’s Vila Olimpica Complex Marina Village; Bilbao’s waterfront projects around the Guggenheim Museum and the San Francisco Fisherman’s Wharf are prominent examples.

Ken Adam:

- there is an inappropriate and unnecessary emphasis on reaping a financial return (which is likely to be an unrealistic expectation) from the potential for potentially expensive real estate next to the Swan River, at the expense of the potential for public enjoyment;
- the proposed alienation of public land is not in the long term public interest, either financially or in terms of controlling the use of the land – its guardianship - to the highest public benefit;
- having been involved in it in more than one way, I have grave reservations about the integrity of the process of public consultation. In short I believe, with others, that the process has been marked more by tokenism than a genuine desire to listen, and more by expensive salesmanship of a plan already decided on than by any attempt to learn from the public or from freely offered independent expertise. The integrity of the processes of WAPC (MRS) and HCWA review and consultation appear to have been compromised, as far as the public can discern, by virtue of their silence and
the appearance of their positions being indistinguishable from those of the government or the Department of Planning. The public hearings into the MRS endorsement of the waterfront proposals were heard by a panel of three, one of whom chaired the Taskforce that prepared and promoted the scheme, and one was the (recently sacked) Chairman of the WAPC, who had already publicly declared his (the WAPC’s?) support for the proposals, and that the time for talk was over. This cannot inspire confidence in the system. Nor has CityVision, for example, ever received the respect of a considered response to its detailed submissions and counter-proposals for the project.

I have been involved, as an active member of CityVision, in study of the foreshore and the City over a long period of time. CityVision’s first plan for the City foreshores was published in 1987.

I am convinced that CityVision’s plan and submissions, which represent the collective work of a number of experts, meet all the essential principles for optimum development of the foreshore area, in aesthetic and functional terms, and are greatly superior to the government’s plan. I believe they would also prove to provide a better financial outcome, although this is both outside my own area of expertise and not a key objective.

I am fully aware that planning for this project has already proceeded a long way, with a gathering pace of decision-making. This gives the strong appearance that decisions have been taken hastily in order to pre-empt consideration of the demand for review and to meet a political timetable, to wit, the forthcoming State election. Planning and development of our beloved city should never be compromised in that way.

In my submission it is essential for the best future of the City, indeed of the Metropolitan Region as a whole, to call a halt to the present development and to undertake a proper review of the whole scheme, taking into account the comments and principles outlined in this and other submissions and with a continuous process of genuine public opportunity to comment and be heard.

Unattributed comment:
Potential conflict of interest amongst members of the Heritage Council.

The Chair of the Heritage Council is also

- CEO of the Committee for Perth, which ‘strongly supports the development of Perth’s waterfront’,
- a member Central Perth Planning Committee (CPPC), which was established to oversee and provide direction for planning in the Perth central area. It exercises delegated authority to deal with the City of Perth local planning scheme and scheme amendments; the Metropolitan Region Scheme and amendments; subdivisions, strata titles, leases and licences; and development on reserved land in the City of Perth. It was the body that called for submissions on the Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1203/41 Perth Waterfront.

27 Submission 22, Report on Submissions, Metropolitan Region Scheme Amendment 1203/41 Perth Waterfront

Seventh term of reference: Other areas of concern
Heritage Councillors include a member of the WAPC, an employee of the City of Perth, which supports the development, and others who receive regular government contracts,

A question in parliament from John Hyde MLA elicited the following response – 4 members of the Heritage Council declared conflict of interest over the Waterfront. However, all were done as ‘impartiality perception’, thus allowing themselves to vote despite the declaration, and thus enabling a quorum to be present.28

**Lise Summers:**

Consolidating the whole of the foreshore area, including John Oldham Reserve, Esplanade, Supreme Court Gardens, Stirling Gardens and Langley Park into one 'A' class reserve plus Heirrisson Island would allow for development to be considered across the whole of the foreshore area. This could be vested with the Kings Park Board, or a separate board could be created for the foreshore.

The Parks and Reserves Act allows for the establishment of certain buildings and amenities, such as a cultural facility like a museum, art gallery, theatre or leisure centre. Such a facility could be constructed opposite the Convention Centre, reflecting where the entertainment precinct of White City was once located. The many uses of the Esplanade and foreshore provide inspiration for a range of facilities, including a Museum of Perth, a new home for the Museum of Sport (either independent of, or associated with, a major community leisure centre), a Swan River science and discovery centre, or a sporting facility including a swimming pool (either in the river or fully enclosed), and courts for tennis, basketball, etc.

The Parks and Reserves Act would also allow for the establishment of traffic calming. Rather than changing Riverside Drive, a slower recreational drive at 40km as per Kings Park, and similar rules, with associated and increased pedestrian and bicycle access, would allow greater access to the river. A flyover or elevated freeway entry point at the Convention Centre would frame the Centre, and allow for improved access to the Freeway. Pedestrian access via an underpass at this point would provide improved access to Barrack Square and to the proposed new museum.

Redevelopment of the area west of the Esplanade and south of the Convention Centre would allow the city to regain a commercial, industrial and recreation hub. The area west of William St once included a fun fair site, called White City, which was a well known venue for charitable organisations, but also for Aboriginal people to demonstrate their skills in the sports allowed to them at the time, such as boxing and rodeo riding. Beyond White City lay the City of Perth's commercial maritime hub, including wharves, warehouses, and bondstores. Use of this area would be consistent with the city's development over time, and would allow for interpretation of lost environmental and historic sites, reconnecting the city not just physically but chronologically with the river. A floating stage and marina, for example, would enhance Perth Water and reflect and interpret the commercial and boatbuilding activities.

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28 WA Legislative Assembly Estimates Committee B, Hearing, 30 May 2012

Seventh term of reference: Other areas of concern
The Esplanade
The Kiosk should be retained in its original position, providing social, historic and aesthetic links to Barrack St, Supreme Court Gardens, Lawson Apartments and the Weld Chambers.

Redevelopment also provides an opportunity to link to the heritage of the site as a place of protest and debate, with a speaker’s corner, enhanced plantings (including native flora or heritage plantings, reflecting the development of this site for the 1979 sesquicentenary).

Although the distinctive avenues of Moreton Bay and Port Jackson Figs have been destroyed, replanting of comparable Australian species would reflect the importance of the original species choice in the years leading up to Federation, and reflect the aesthetic significance of these trees.

Barrack Square
Sensitive development of this site provides an opportunity to connect to the river and revitalise Barrack St, through connections to the new Treasury Buildings, Perth Railway and Vital Link and the Perth Cultural Centre. When the site was developed for the Bell Tower considerable care was taken to reflect and reference the early design of the square as a utilitarian set of paths designed to improve and expedite pedestrian flow.

Redeveloping the Square and incorporating design elements from the Supreme Court Gardens and Stirling Gardens is precisely the opposite way to which the Square was designed. Maintaining those clear, direct routes is a key component of any interpretation or development of the Square. The named bricks which were incorporated into the Square have significant social value and any project that requires the removal of the bricks will need to provide an appropriate alternative.

A small beach currently exists opposite the Vlamingh Memorial and is popular with small children wanting to wade and canoeists from Point Fraser and further downstream looking for a break in their trip on the river. The Quatricentenary of Dutch exploration provides an opportunity to enhance and engage with the Vlamingh Memorial.

Conclusion
The inlet will not re-establish an historic connection with the city and the river, as it involves the demolition of part of the Perth Esplanade, which has provided that connection for over 130 years. The current configuration of the inlet neither reflects the original gentle embayments of the Perth Water foreshore, which was essentially straight, nor returns the river to that original waterline. The proposed inlet is a new and significant departure from the way in which the city has traditionally interacted with the river.

The Esplanade redevelopment provides an opportunity for the city and the State to demonstrate their commitment to the history of the State and to heritage legislation generally. The Esplanade and foreshore developments have provided residents of the City proper, and the city as a whole, with venues and opportunities to engage with the city and the river, acting as an interface between the two.

Seventh term of reference: Other areas of concern
**Ralph Stanton:**

There is no substantiated demand for the amounts of office or apartment floorspace envisaged by the scheme. In fact the government is presently creating similar floorspace at the “City Link” and “Riverside” projects, both in clear competition with this scheme. As well, across central Perth, there are many unrealised sites for private office and residential developments.

Any alternative scheme should be aimed primarily at providing civic amenity, with commercial development a secondary (if still necessary) aim. It should respond intelligently to the native site characteristics: poor foundations, wind and tide/flow conditions, and the broad, historic, grassed areas. (Unfortunately many magnificent trees on the site have been destroyed; they would have added significantly to amenity. The rest must remain and be incorporated.)

This begs several primary questions. For example,

- What is an appropriate mix and intensity of uses for this land?
- Should there be an excavated inlet – for what purpose? What if it were simply a “perched lake,” for beauty’s sake and for recreation, with no connection to the river? (This may overcome many environmental concerns.)
- Retention of Riverside Drive is imperative; how is this best achieved – by a tunnel? (hugely expensive), a bridge? (also expensive) or by not digging the inlet and allowing the road to remain?
- What if commercial development were no longer the driver here? Would the government still proceed?

There have been several alternative concepts put forward, including by the City Gatekeepers group and earlier by the Perth city council.

CityVision’s own concept assumes government’s determination to construct an inlet cannot be halted, but might be moderated. It entails reasonably modest development on the present road grid, but retains a substantial portion of the Esplanade Reserve. A high proportion is given over to sites for future community, communal, public and civic uses as noted earlier.

The scale of buildings would rise from two storeys at the Swan River, to perhaps fifteen or twenty at the Esplanade. Hotels could be incorporated as required. Critically, Riverside Drive is retained, in this case as an elegantly designed low-profile road bridge. Boats can pass beneath, as can people on boardwalks lining the inlet. Riverside Drive is no longer the “barrier” it is claimed to be.

(NB this “barrier” could easily be overcome via pedestrian bridges right now.)
Seventh term of reference: Other areas of concern