



REPORT ON A CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF  
WELLINGTON SQUARE, EAST PERTH, WA

**PREPARED BY MOODJAR CONSULTANCY FOR THE  
CITY OF PERTH, JULY 2017**

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## **Spatial Accuracy**

Location coordinates contained within this report are in GDA94 Datum, MGA Zone 50 and are accurate to + 10 m.

## Acknowledgements

This report has been prepared by Moodjar Consultancy and its team of consultants, Professor Leonard Collard (BA, MA) Whadjuk Noongar, Sandra Harben (BA) Consultant, Whadjuk/Balardong Noongar, of Western Australia and Ms Jo Thomson.

The team would particularly like to thank the City of Perth, the Whadjuk Working Party (WWP), the Whadjuk Working Party nominated stakeholders, Moodjar Consultancy stakeholders and the Users of the Park for their participation and feedback in the preparation of this document. The Project Team is grateful for access to Noongar (people) moort (family or relations), Noongar boodja (country) and Noongar kaartdijin (learned understandings or knowledge).

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QUOTE:

*Wellington Square should have heritage interpretation and signage. Something that tells the Noongar story and for those still using the Park to reconnect with its history. Have the Noongar story so that other Aboriginal people respect this.*

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On behalf of the City of Perth the Project Team would like to respectfully acknowledge the Whadjuk Noongar people past and present for their contribution to the Cultural Heritage Assessment of Wellington Square, Perth.

**“WELLINGTON  
SQUARE SHOULD  
HAVE A  
NOONGAR  
NAME”**

## Executive Summary

The City of Perth is planning to undertake a rejuvenation project at Wellington Square in East Perth in order to enhance its current amenity and facilities. As part of this project, the City of Perth is preparing a Master Plan for the park. In October 2016, the City of Perth engaged Moodjar Consultancy to undertake a cultural heritage assessment of Wellington Square in order to inform the Master Plan.

The cultural heritage assessment has been undertaken by Moodjar Consultancy between March and May 2017 and has involved an extensive desktop research of literary and oral sources; engagement and consultations with stakeholders including Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners and Elders, former residents of East Perth, and a sample of current users of the park; an ethnographic survey; a cultural values assessment including the compilation of a Statement of Significance for Wellington Square. The visions and aspirations of the Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders for Wellington Square have also been documented and the stakeholders have suggested a number of interpretive themes and methods to be incorporated into the Master Plan for the park.

Based on the findings of the cultural heritage assessment, it is recommended that:

- Wellington Square may meet the requirements of section 5b and 5a of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and therefore should not be impacted upon in any way without Ministerial consent under section 18 of the AHA;
- The City of Perth consults with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs regarding the potential for Wellington Square to meet sections 5b and 5a of the AHA;
- Should the City of Perth wish to undertake works that will impact upon Wellington Square, an application is made for consent to use the land under section 18 of the AHA;
- The City of Perth consult further with SWALSC, the Whadjuk Working Party, Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders and other interested Aboriginal parties about any proposed section 18 application, mitigation and salvage strategies and the management of salvaged materials;
- The City of Perth ensures that any developments undertaken in Wellington Square do not have any deleterious effect upon the cultural values or significance of Wellington Place.

Specifically, they should ensure that proposed works do not disrupt the continuity of the role of Wellington Square as a meeting place and camping for Aboriginal people, families and community, nor negatively impact Wellington Square's 'sense of belonging' for Aboriginal people.

- The Moreton Bay Fig Tree known as the 'Kids Tree', located along the northern side of Wellington Square, should be avoided and measures put in place to ensure that its root system is not inadvertently impacted upon during any ground disturbing works.
- The cultural values of Wellington Square are considered and incorporated into the Master Plan and Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders are further consulted about design plans for the rejuvenation project.
- The Noongar stakeholder's visions and aspirations for Wellington Square are considered and incorporated into the Master Plan for Wellington Square.
- An interpretation plan for Wellington Square is developed in collaboration with, and under the guidance of, the Whadjuk Working Party.

## Contents

<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Scope of work.....	1
1.2 Report structure.....	4
<b>2.0 BACKGROUND</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 Location.....	5
2.2 Project Overview.....	5
2.3 Physical context.....	5
2.4 Applicable legislation.....	8
2.4.1 Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972.....	8
2.4.2 Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990.....	9
2.4.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984.....	10
2.4.4 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.....	10
<b>3.0 METHODS</b> .....	<b>11</b>
3.1 Desktop and archival research.....	11
3.2 Engagement and consultation.....	12
3.2.1 Selection of Aboriginal Consultants.....	12
3.2.2 Aboriginal Engagement.....	12
3.2.3 Aboriginal Consultant Profiles.....	13
3.2.4 Limitations.....	13
3.2.5 Other park users.....	13
3.3 Field work.....	14
3.3.1 Site visit.....	14
3.3.2 Cultural values workshop.....	14
3.3.3 Interviews.....	15
3.3.4 Park user survey.....	15
3.4 Cultural values assessment.....	15
3.4.1 Definitions and terms.....	15
3.4.2 Data collection and analysis.....	17
<b>4.0 DESKTOP REVIEW RESULTS</b> .....	<b>18</b>
4.1 <i>Nitja boodjar</i> : Aboriginal significance of Wellington Square.....	19
4.2 <i>Wam koorliny</i> : non-Aboriginal significance of Wellington Square.....	25
4.3 <i>Kura</i> : past Noongar use and enjoyment of the wider Perth and surrounding areas....	26
4.4 <i>Ngulla ngoorn koorliny</i> : Noongar, restrictions and East Perth.....	35
4.5 <i>Ngulla boodjarup</i> : Some important local places, names and meanings in the area....	41
4.5.1 <i>Beeljar</i> – Swan River.....	45
4.5.2 <i>Boodjargabbeelup</i> – Point Fraser.....	48
4.5.3 <i>Goongoongup</i> – Claisebrook.....	48
4.5.4 <i>Ma'ta-garup</i> – Heirison Island.....	49
4.5.5 East Perth Girls' Home – Bennett House.....	49
4.5.6 The 'Bull Paddock' – East Perth.....	51
4.5.7 The 'Bunna' – East Perth.....	51

4.5.8	Miller’s Cave – East Perth.....	52
4.6	<i>Whajuk boordier</i> : important Noongar people for the area.....	52
4.6.1	Yagan and Midgegooroo .....	52
4.6.2	Fanny Balbuk (Yooreel).....	53
4.6.3	Jubaitch.....	55
4.6.4	Windan .....	56
4.7	Existing Registered Aboriginal Sites in proximity to Wellington Square .....	57
4.8	Places on the State Heritage Register in proximity to Wellington Square.....	58
4.9	Archaeological potential of Wellington Square .....	60
<b>5.0</b>	<b>ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY .....</b>	<b>62</b>
5.1	Objectives of the ethnographic survey .....	62
5.2	Ethnographic background .....	62
5.2.1	Previous ethnographic surveys.....	62
5.2.2	Existing ethnographic sites.....	63
5.3	Ethnographic survey results.....	63
5.3.1	Personal experiences and the importance of Wellington Square to Noongar people, families and community .....	63
5.3.2	Key Noongar families who lived in East Perth .....	67
5.3.3	Areas of cultural and spiritual significance in proximity to Wellington Square.....	67
5.3.4	Language and identity.....	69
5.4	Findings.....	70
5.5	Recommendations from the Ethnographic survey.....	71
<b>6.0</b>	<b>CULTURAL VALUES ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>72</b>
6.1	Previous Statement of Significance .....	72
6.2	Results of the cultural values workshop and interviews .....	73
6.2.1	Why is Wellington Square important? .....	73
6.2.2	What is important about Wellington Square? .....	74
6.2.3	Which parts of Wellington Square are important? .....	74
6.3	Results of the Park Users survey.....	74
6.4	Cultural values analysis .....	75
6.4.1	Primary values.....	75
6.4.2	Comparative values.....	78
6.5	Statement of Significance .....	79
<b>7.0</b>	<b>VISIONS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR WELLINGTON SQUARE.....</b>	<b>81</b>
7.1	Aspirations for Wellington Square.....	81
7.2	What would you like to happen at Wellington Square?.....	82
7.3	What would you like to be changed at Wellington Square?.....	82
7.4	What do you not want changed about Wellington Square?.....	83
7.5	What are your priorities for Wellington Square? .....	83
7.6	Interpretation.....	84
7.6.1	Key stories for interpretation.....	84
7.6.2	Interpretive methods.....	85

7.6.3 Interpretive design elements and devices.....	86
<b>8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>9.0 APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>91</b>
Appendix 1 – Stakeholder analysis.....	91
Appendix 2 – Department of Aboriginal Affairs Aboriginal Heritage Information System (AHIS) search results .....	92
Appendix 3 – Archival information on Old Joe’s burial.....	93
Appendix 4 – Guiding questions for the workshops and interviews.....	94
Site visit questions.....	94
Cultural values workshop questions .....	94
Appendix 5 – Users of the park questionnaire.....	96
Appendix 6 – Ethnographic survey stakeholder responses .....	97
Appendix 7 – Cultural values responses .....	103
Appendix 8 – Visions and aspirations responses.....	105
Appendix 9 – Interpretation responses .....	108
Appendix 10 – Park user survey responses.....	110

## Figures

Figure 1. View south west of wellington Square .....	6
Figure 2. View south of Wellington Square .....	6
Figure 3. Location of Wellington Square, East Perth, WA.....	7
Figure 4. The Perth Lake System with an overlay of the 1833 City Plan. Source: Western Australian Museum. ....	21
Figure 5. Map of lakes and their recorded names over time. Source: Gentilli & Bekle 1993, p. 442. ....	22
Figure 6. Aboriginal dialect groups of the south west of Western Australia, based on Tindale (1974). Source: Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority 2016.....	27
Figure 7. Midgegooroo’s land which includes Perth .....	34
Figure 8. The Perth Prohibited Area 1927-1954 .....	37
Figure 9. Location of important places within close proximity to Wellington Square .....	43
Figure 10. Location of important places within the broader City of Perth Local Government Area.....	44
Figure 11. Depiction of Waugal by the late Shane Pickett.....	45
Figure 12. Reconstructed view of Perth in 1827 (looking west from the Claise Brook entry to the Swan River across the lakes of central Perth) Source: Edith Cowan University 2014©.....	49
Figure 13. Group of Aboriginal women at Perth, including Fanny Balbuk (far right). Source: State Library of Western Australia© 25341P .....	54
Figure 14. Fanny Balbuk's Track. The possible route of Fanny Balbuk's Track was drawn from historical accounts and superimposed on a reconstructed image of Central Perth as it would have appeared at settlement. Source: Edith Cowan Univeristy 2014 .....	55
Figure 15. Location of Registered Aboriginal Sites within 1 km radius of Wellington Square (source: DAA AHIS, November 2016).....	59
Figure 16. Areas of archaeological potential (source: city of perth).....	61



Figure 17. The 'Kids Tree', Wellington Square .....	64
Figure 18. Location of the 'Kids Tree', Wellington Square.....	64
Figure 19. Bull Paddock site .....	68
Figure 20. The area of Millers Cave today .....	69
Figure 21. Practicing culture in an urban setting .....	82
Figure 22. NAIDOC 2016.....	82
Figure 23. Audio signage and seating in Smiths Lake, North Perth. Description: SCITECH produced sound equipment in this rock, which has a speaker built in and six push buttons. Each tells stories of the site in English, Mandarin and Nyoongar (spoken by Doolan Leisha Eatts). Source: <a href="http://users.tpg.com.au/rich_mob2/ngardarb/Sculpture.htm">http://users.tpg.com.au/rich_mob2/ngardarb/Sculpture.htm</a> .....	87
Figure 24. Images from left: Round Fire Pit Design, source: hzcdn.com; Fire Pit at Night, source: klienslandscaping.com .....	87
Figure 25. Image: Amsterdam Light Festival, 2014-15, source: Amsterdam Light Festival; Flame projection on building, source: Scribbler is Seville .....	88
Figure 26. Example of Recognition plaque .....	88
Figure 27. East Perth in the 1960s ... was mostly populated by Aboriginal families. Photo courtesy of The West Australian Centenary Aboriginal housing history .....	102

## Tables

Table 1. The five primary cultural values (after the Burra Charter 2013) .....	16
Table 2. Comparative values and criteria (after Russell and Winkworth 2009) .....	17
Table 3. Important places in proximity to Wellington Square .....	42
Table 4. Key individuals and families living in East Perth from 1920s to 1970s.....	56
Table 5. Summary of registered Aboriginal Sites located within a 1 km radius of Wellington Square (source: DAA's AHIS, November 2016).....	57
Table 6. Summary of Other Heritage Places located within a 1 km radius of Wellington Square (source: DAA's AHIS, November 2016).....	57
Table 7. Places on the State Heritage Register within the vicinity of Wellington Square.....	58
Table 8. Previous ethnographic surveys covering Wellington Square (Source: DAA AHIS).....	62
Table 9. Personal experiences and the importance of Wellington Square to Noongar people .....	65
Table 10. Key Noongar families from East Perth .....	67



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The City of Perth recognizes the Whadjuk people as the traditional owners of the greater Perth area and in particular Wellington Square. It is a place that has strong social, spiritual, cultural and historic significance for Noongar people.

The City of Perth is planning to undertake a rejuvenation project at Wellington Square in East Perth in order to enhance its current amenity and facilities. As part of this project, the City of Perth is preparing a Master Plan for the park. In October 2016, the City of Perth engaged Moodjar Consultancy to undertake a cultural heritage assessment of Wellington Square in order to inform the Master Plan.

The cultural heritage assessment has been undertaken by Moodjar Consultancy between March and May 2017 and has involved an extensive desktop research of literary and oral sources; engagement and consultations with stakeholders including Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners and Elders, former residents of East Perth, and a sample of current users of the park; an ethnographic survey; a cultural values assessment including the compilation of a Statement of Significance for Wellington Square.

### 1.1 Scope of work

The overarching scope of work for the project issued on 7 July 2016 required Moodjar Consultancy to:

1. Undertake a desktop review to identify and source further information relating to Wellington Square's cultural heritage, in addition to Thomson Palmer's Heritage Assessment of Wellington Square, Perth, 2001;
2. Conduct a cultural heritage assessment of Wellington Square, including the identification and articulation of the cultural heritage values of the place;
3. Submit a written report on the cultural heritage assessment which may serve as a reference to guide and inform the design development of the Wellington Square Masterplan and, if required, accompany an application under section 18 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 to use land for the enhancement of the Wellington Square public open space; and

4. Develop an Archaeological monitoring program to inform ground disturbance and construction works.

The brief has been divided into three stages:

1. Stage One – Cultural heritage assessment
2. Stage Two – Section 18 application
3. Stage Three – Construction

The scope of work for Stage One – cultural heritage assessment required Moodjar Consultancy to:

- Complete a desktop review of Thomson Palmer's *Heritage Assessment of Wellington Square, Perth, 2001*.
- Use the finding from the desktop review to prepare a Cultural Heritage Assessment. The report is to consider Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture and include an ethnographic survey and cultural value assessment. Suitably qualified professionals shall undertake these studies and relevant experience shall be demonstrated.
- The objective of the Cultural Heritage Assessment shall be to:
  - Respond to information from desktop review and identify and source outstanding information.
  - Consolidate and record past and present knowledge and histories relating to Wellington Square.
  - Establish strategies for holistic management of recognising Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture.
  - Develop a set of recommendations, accurate stories, interpretations and/or mappings to guide and inform the development of the masterplan.
  - Provide recommendations relating to archaeological monitoring during ground disturbance works.
- Meetings and correspondence with key stakeholders – anticipate the number of meetings required.
- Attend external stakeholder workshop in August [2016].
- Attend the following project milestone meetings with the City's Project Team at City of Perth, Council House. Note: Specific dates are indicative and may be subject to re-scheduling:

- Project meeting (1) Start-up meeting – Week of 25-29 July 2016.
- Project meeting (2) Interim Project Update – Thursday, 01 September 2016.
- Project meeting (3) Delivery of Draft Cultural Heritage Assessment – Thursday, 22 September 2016.
- Project meeting (4) Delivery of Final Cultural Heritage Assessment – Thursday, 13 October 2016.
- Provide advice in a review capacity for the Wellington Square Masterplan.

The Stage One – cultural heritage assessment further required that Moodjar Consultancy:

- Undertake a desktop review of Thomson Palmer's Heritage Assessment of Wellington Square, Perth – Part One: Cultural Significance, Rev 1, June 2001 and Part Two: Draft Recommendations and Guidelines, April 2001, identifying the information that is still relevant and accurate and that which is limited, no longer current or not covered within the report.
- Ensure all engagement, surveys, and reporting are in accordance with all relevant statutory bodies, including, but not limited to *Aboriginal Heritage Act, 1972*, *Environmental Protection Authority Act, 1984* and the *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS, 1992).
- Prepare and outline an engagement approach to liaise with identified stakeholders.
- Engagement with Aboriginal representatives shall be, but are not limited to the process outlined in the *Noongar Standard Heritage Agreement, 2015*. A list of current stakeholders identified by the City's project team shall be provided, including current status of communication between organisations such as South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council and the Whadjuk Working Party.
- Undertake Cultural Mapping of Wellington Square including the following surveys:
  - Ethnographic Survey by a suitably qualified Anthropologist.
  - Cultural Value Assessment.
- Engage and document relevant local knowledge, including recognising Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal information from identified stakeholders, for example:
  - Stories
  - Traditional practise
  - Seasons
  - People – families, language

- Connection to place and country
- History from the dreaming to today
- Mapping of key objectives and values for country and culture.
- Future vision for country and cultural management of Wellington Square.
- Identify key considerations that may impact on the heritage and cultural value of Wellington Square from future enhancement works.
- Comment on the potential for the heritage values of the area to inform and augment the project.
- Outline protocols of how to act and approach Traditional Custodian matters on Whadjuk Noongar Country in relation to Wellington Square. Including protocols in preparation for site disturbance for enhancement works.
- Recommend future management approach to meet expectations in developing a strong community and ownership for Wellington Square.

## **1.2 Report structure**

This report is structured into several sections. Section 2.0 overviews the context for this assessment, Section 3.0 describes the methods used, Section 4.0 outlines the findings of the desktop review, Section 5.0 comprises the ethnographic survey, Section 6.0 includes the cultural values analysis and Statement of Significance for Wellington Square, Section 7.0 outlines the Noongar stakeholders' visions, aspirations and suggested interpretive themes and methods for the park, and Section 8.0 provides a number of recommendations.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Location

Wellington Square (Lot 75 DP 28365) is located at 110 Wellington Street, East Perth, within the City of Perth, Western Australia. The park is bounded by Wellington Street on the south side, Wittenoom Street on the north side, Bennett Street to the east and Hill Street on the west side. See Figure 3.

### 2.2 Project Overview

The City of Perth is proposing to undertake works to enhance Wellington Square. The objectives for the enhancement of the park include:

- To enable Wellington Square to become a contemporary, inner city, urban park that supports a growing residential population.
- To provide a strengthened sense of place, recognising Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage through meaningful engagement with stakeholder groups.
- Provision of diverse and inclusive active and passive recreational opportunities.
- Respond to the safety and anti-social behaviour concerns.

The City of Perth is currently developing a Master Plan for the enhancement of Wellington Square and the results of this assessment will feed into the proposed plans.

### 2.3 Physical context

Wellington Square is a 'C' class reserve for the purpose of recreation. It comprises a large square-shaped park, approximately 7.7 hectares in size. Wellington Square originally comprised swampland and was part of a chain of streams, lakes and swamps which were drained and built over between the 1830s and 1880s. The park currently consists of open, flat grassed area lined around the outside and along the paths with tall trees of various species. A toilet block is located on the western side of the park, some in-situ sporting equipment is located along the northern edge of the path, and there are a limited number of benches located around the park, see Figure 1 and Figure 2.

**FIGURE 1. VIEW SOUTH WEST OF WELLINGTON SQUARE**



**FIGURE 2. VIEW SOUTH OF WELLINGTON SQUARE**





FIGURE 3. LOCATION OF WELLINGTON SQUARE, EAST PERTH, WA

## 2.4 Applicable legislation

Relevant legislation for the purpose of this Aboriginal archaeological survey includes:

- Western Australian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*;
- *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990*;
- Commonwealth *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*;
- Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

### 2.4.1 Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (the AHA) provides automatic protection for all places and objects in Western Australia that are important to Aboriginal people because of connections to their culture. These places and objects are referred to as Aboriginal Sites. There are several key sections of relevance:

Section 5 of the AHA defines the places to which the Act applies as:

- a) any place of importance and significance where persons of Aboriginal descent have, or appear to have, left any object, natural or artificial, used for, or made or adapted for use for, any purpose connected with the traditional cultural life of the Aboriginal people, past or present;
- b) any sacred, ritual or ceremonial site, which is of importance and special significance to persons of Aboriginal descent;
- c) any place which, in the opinion of the Committee, is or was associated with the Aboriginal people and which is of historical, anthropological, archaeological or ethnographic interest and should be preserved because of its importance and significance to the cultural heritage of the State;
- d) any place where objects to which this Act applies are traditionally stored, or to which, under the provisions of this Act, such objects have been taken or removed.

It is important to note that the interpretation and application of section 5 has changed significantly since 2012, with more stringent application of the criteria being applied by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal Cultural Materials Committee (ACMC).

Under section 17 of the AHA, it is an offence to:

- a) Excavate, destroy, damage, conceal or in any way alter any Aboriginal site;
- b) In any way alter, damage, remove, destroy, conceal, or deal with in a manner not sanctioned by relevant custom, or assume possession, custody or control of, any object on or under an Aboriginal site;

unless it has been authorised by the Registrar of Aboriginal Sites under section 16 or by the Minister under section 18 of the AHA.

When assessing the importance of a place or object, section 39(2) of the AHA directs the ACMC to have regard to:

- a) any existing use or significance attributed under relevant Aboriginal custom;
- b) any former or reputed use or significance which may be attributed upon the basis of tradition, historical association, or Aboriginal sentiment;
- c) any potential anthropological, archaeological or ethnographical interest; and
- d) aesthetic values.

Section 39(3) further emphasises that 'associated sacred beliefs, and ritual or ceremonial usage, in so far as such matters can be ascertained, shall be regarded as the primary considerations to be taken into account in the evaluation of any place or object for the purposes of this Act'.

#### **2.4.2 Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990**

The *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990* (HWA) is 'An Act to provide for, and to encourage, the conservation of places which have significance to the cultural heritage in the State, to establish the Heritage Council of Western Australia, and for related purposes'. The HWA establishes the Heritage Council of Western Australia; defines criteria for establishing and adding to a Register of Heritage Places; and considers other protective mechanisms for heritage places. The Heritage Council considers public submissions and makes recommendations to the Heritage Minister who approves any additions to the Heritage Register.

The HWA specifies six criterion for listing places on the State Heritage Register:

Criterion 1: It is significant in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Criterion 2: It is significant in the evolution or pattern of the history of Western Australia.

Criterion 3A: It has demonstrable potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the natural or cultural history of Western Australia.

Criterion 3B: It is significant in demonstrating a high degree of technical innovation or achievement.

Criterion 4: It is significant through association with a community or cultural group in Western Australia for social, cultural, educational or spiritual reasons.

Criterion 5: It demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the cultural heritage of Western Australia.

Criterion 6: It is significant in demonstrating the characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments in the State.

#### **2.4.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984**

The Commonwealth *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* protects places of significance to Indigenous Australians and is administered through the Federal Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts. The Act offers protection for significant places or objects through ministerial decision. Aboriginal people who believe that a place or object is threatened and that State Government processes offer inadequate protection can apply to the Australian Government Environment Minister to protect the place or object.

#### **2.4.4 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999**

The Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) protects the environment, particularly matters of National Environmental Significance. It streamlines the national environmental assessment and approvals process, protects Australian biodiversity and integrates management of important natural and cultural places.

### 3.0 METHODS

In order to deliver the required outcomes, the following methods were used:

1. Desktop and archival research;
2. Engagement and consultation with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal stakeholders;
3. Field survey; and
4. Values analysis and assessment.

These methods are based on current recognised best practice approaches to Aboriginal engagement and heritage management.

#### 3.1 Desktop and archival research

The desktop study was designed to identify and review the literature that captured Whadjuk, other Noongar and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal expressions about the significance and sense of place for the Perth area as a whole. The research for the desktop study reviewed published and unpublished documentary sources and literature, oral histories, recorded stories, narratives and commentaries. These stories, narratives and commentaries were incorporated into this Report to provide context and comparative information for the Statement of Significance.

The literature review incorporated previously recorded oral histories of Whadjuk Noongar, other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups relating to the broad area in and around East Perth and Wellington Square. It also took into account documentary sources, archival content and reports made available by the City of Perth, on the public record and in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs Heritage Register. For example, the review provided background information from published material such as Hallam's Fire and Hearth, the published work of Daisy Bates, Aboriginal Perth and Bibbulmun Biographies and Legends, Southwest Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, Aboriginal worldviews and colonisation: implications for coastal sustainability, Heartsick for County, Recording Traditional Knowledge, and Avon Catchment Council. Stories of Love, Spirit and Creation, "Introduction to Noongar History and Culture", "Noongar of the Beelias (Swan River)" Narrated by Collard. L., "Spirit of Fremantle" Narrated by Collard. Kickett, E. The Trails of the Rainbow Serpent and Tilbrook, The First South Westerners: Aborigines of Western Australia and., Collard, L. Harben, S & Van Den Berg, R., 2004, "Nidja Beelias Boodjar Noonookurt Nyininy: A Noongar Interpretive History Of The Use Of Boodjar (Country) In The Vicinity Of Murdoch University." The literature

review also included selected nineteenth-century explorers' journals such as those compiled by Grey (19983/84 [1841]) and George Fletcher Moore in secondary form.

The desktop research revealed a large amount of information about a range of Aboriginal Sites in the proximity of Wellington Square. Information gathered about the wider Perth area also identified considerable Noongar place-name information.

The information gained from the desktop research was used to augment the knowledge and information contributed by the Whadjuk Working Party and Moodjar Consultancy stakeholders.

## **3.2 Engagement and consultation**

The consultation process was designed to follow appropriate cultural protocols, to gather additional information relating to the significance of Wellington Square as a whole to Whadjuk people, and to ensure appropriate inclusion of Whadjuk history and connection in City of Perth projects.

### **3.2.1 Selection of Aboriginal Consultants**

The City of Perth has liaised with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) throughout the process to engage the Whadjuk Working Party to assist in the preparation of the cultural heritage assessment of Wellington Square, including the identification and articulation of the cultural heritage values of the place.

In recognition of the need for a focused dialogue on the project, the City of Perth proposed that SWALSC identify four key Whadjuk stakeholders to assist in developing the ethnographic material. Moodjar Consultancy nominated two Whadjuk Traditional Owners and two long term Aboriginal residents of the East Perth area.

### **3.2.2 Aboriginal Engagement**

Any consultation, dialogue, discussion, negotiation or conversation with the Whadjuk and Moodjar Consultancy stakeholders was based on fundamental principles to ensure their meaningful participation in the process. Consultation with all of the stakeholders followed the principles of free, prior and informed consent.

Consultation included the provision of sufficient information for people to make an informed decision about the activities and plans of the project with sufficient time to consider options and

discuss with other stakeholders. The consultation was also based on the principle of mutual respect.

The team followed Whadjuk protocols to ensure a successful consultation process. We were mindful of these protocols during the consultation process. The team sought permission before taking photos of people as well as using their quotes and information. The team developed a consent form to use their intellectual knowledge and multimedia containing images of the stakeholders.

Confidentiality and privacy are serious issues for the Noongar community, particularly information that is culturally complex such as 'women's business' or 'men's business'. The team ensured that any information collected as part of this project process remained confidential and private and was recorded and stored in a respectful and culturally appropriate way during the consultation process.

### **3.2.3 Aboriginal Consultant Profiles**

Consultation with the Whadjuk Noongar people was an integral part of the process of investigating and assessing the cultural heritage of Wellington Square and its surrounds. The Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders were Mrs Rona Woods, Mrs June Della Bona and Mr Nick Abraham, Mrs Sylvia Collard (Ninyette), Mr Don Collard, Mr Steve Kinnane and Mrs Kinnane (Elder).

### **3.2.4 Limitations**

There were some limitations associated with the community consultation that should be acknowledged. Members of the Whadjuk Working Party stakeholders were initially reluctant to engage as they felt that there were many Noongar people who had a long association and history with Wellington Square and East Perth. However, once the scope of the project was presented and confirmation that the consultation was not about decision-making, then the stakeholders were happy to continue to offer their oral histories about the focus area.

### **3.2.5 Other park users**

In addition to the Whadjuk stakeholders, several other interested parties were identified during a stakeholder analysis undertaken during the early stage of project planning (see Appendix 1). One of the groups identified that will be significantly affected by the proposed Wellington Square rejuvenation project included the existing users of the park. Users of the park are comprised of a wide variety of people including Aboriginal people from regional Western Australia, corporate

workers from surrounding offices and local residents. The City of Perth's user study has indicated that the biggest age group using the park are between 20 and 40 years of age and the majority of active users exercising in the park are joggers and corporate sports players. The report also noted that the use of the park peaks in the midday of a weekday with less people frequenting the space in the evenings and on the weekends. Approximately 1140 people were reported to use the park on an average weekday and 750 on a weekend. This group of interested people were consulted on-site during their use of Wellington Square.

### **3.3 Field work**

The field work comprised a number of qualitative methods including a site visit, interviews, workshops and questionnaires. The information gathered from all stakeholders during the fieldwork was used to inform and develop the cultural heritage assessment of Wellington Square, including the ethnographic assessment and the identification and articulation of the cultural heritage values of the place.

#### **3.3.1 Site visit**

A site visit to Wellington Square was undertaken on 8 April 2017 with Whadjuk Working Party stakeholders Mrs Rona Woods, Mrs June Della Bona and Mr Nick Abraham. This included a visit to the park followed by a bus tour around East Perth. The site visit was followed by lunch and further consultation at the City Farm, East Perth. The results of the desktop survey were presented to the stakeholders. The site visit started at 10:00am and concluded at 2:00pm.

The purpose of this site visit was to provide an overview of the project, view the park and surrounding local area, consult with stakeholders about the history of the area and seek any additional ethnographic information about Wellington Square. Consultation was directed by a set of open questions, see Appendix 4.

#### **3.3.2 Cultural values workshop**

A cultural values workshop was also held with the Whadjuk and Moodjar Consultancy stakeholders on 22 April 2017 at the City Farm, East Perth. The attendees for this workshop included Mrs Rona Woods, Mrs June Della Bona and Mr Nick Abraham.

The purpose of this workshop was to consult with stakeholders about the cultural values associated with Wellington Square as well as their vision and aspirations for the future of the park.



During the workshop stakeholders were asked a series of questions about their values, visions and aspirations for Wellington Square, see Appendix 4. Their responses were either written or transcribed onto sticky notes and placed onto butcher's paper where the group could view all the responses, discuss and build upon them.

### **3.3.3 Interviews**

Moodjar Consultancy undertook further consultation and interviews with stakeholders Mr Don Collard and Mrs Sylvia Collard (Ninyette) on 18 and 19th April 2017 at their home in Kondinin, WA and Mr Steve Kinnane and Mrs Kinnane on 26 April 2017 in Hilton Park, WA. The stakeholders were asked the same questions as the stakeholders were asked during the site visit and cultural values workshop, see Section 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 above.

### **3.3.4 Park user survey**

An on-site survey was carried out by Moodjar Consultancy with existing users of the park to collect information for the cultural values analysis. A questionnaire was developed by Moodjar Consultancy to collect information, see Appendix 5. The users of the park were approached whilst using Wellington Square during the period of 1 to 7 May 2017. The main target time for the survey was during peak time in the middle hours of the day on weekdays. Users were randomly selected and invited to participate anonymously in the survey. The Moodjar Consultants explained the reason for the survey and the users of the park who chose to complete the survey freely participated. Fifteen surveys were completed with park users in total.

## **3.4 Cultural values assessment**

The cultural values assessment involved the identification and analysis of the cultural values attached to Wellington Square by the various stakeholders and the creation of a Statement of Significance for the place. A combination of two nationally recognised and endorsed approaches, the Australian ICOMOS Burra Charter (2013) and Significance 2.0 (Russell and Winkworth 2009), were used to undertake the values analysis and prepare the Statement of Significance.

### **3.4.1 Definitions and terms**

Following the Australian ICOMOS Burra Charter (2013), we view cultural significance as comprising the sum of the qualities or values that a place has. Article 1.2 of the Burra Charter (2013) defines five primary values including aesthetic, historic, scientific, social and spiritual value

(see Table 1 below). The degree of significance or importance is assessed by undertaking comparative analysis with other similar places or objects (Aplin 2002: 21; Darvill 2005: 39; Schofield 2008: 25). Significance 2.0 (Russell and Winkworth 2009) defines a number of comparative values or criteria including rarity, representativeness, condition or integrity, and interpretive capacity (see Table 2 below).

A Statement of Significance is a concise, distilled, but comprehensive statement of the reasons why a place is of value or importance to past, present or future generations<sup>i</sup>. It is important to note that by nature, significance is relative, multiple, attributed by people, context and perspective-specific, dynamic and changeable and often conflicting (Avrami et al. 2000; Darvill 1994; de la Torre 2013; Lipe 1984; Mason 2003; Truscott 1992). Statements of Significance therefore require regular reviews.

TABLE 1. THE FIVE PRIMARY CULTURAL VALUES (AFTER THE BURRA CHARTER 2013)

Value	Definition	Assessment questions
Aesthetic	Sensory and perceptual experience of a place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the place have special compositional or uncommonly attractive qualities involving combinations of colour, textures, spaces, massing, detail, movement, unity, sounds or scents?</li> <li>• Is the place distinctive within the setting or a prominent visual landmark?</li> <li>• Does the place have qualities which are inspirational or which evoke strong feelings or special meanings?</li> <li>• Is the place symbolic for its aesthetic qualities?</li> <li>• Does the place display particular aesthetic characteristics of an identified style or fashion?</li> <li>• Does the place show a high degree of creative or technical achievement?</li> </ul>
Historic	A place may have historic value because it has influence, has been influenced by an historic event, phase, movement or activity, person or group of people. It may be the site of an important event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the place associated with an important event or theme in history?</li> <li>• Is the place important in showing patterns in the development of history locally, in a region, or on a statewide, or national or global basis?</li> <li>• Does the place show a high degree of technical achievement for a particular period?</li> <li>• Is the place associated with a particular person or cultural group important in the history of the local area, state, nationally or globally?</li> </ul>
Scientific	Information content of a place and its ability to reveal more about an aspect of the place through scientific techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would further investigation of the place have the potential to reveal substantial new information and new understandings about people, places, processes or practices which are not available from other sources?</li> </ul>
Social	The associations that a place has for a particular community or cultural group and the social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the place important as a local marker or symbol?</li> <li>• Is the place important as part of community identity or the identity of a particular cultural group?</li> </ul>

	or cultural meanings it holds for them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the place important to a community or cultural group because of its associations and meanings developed from long term use and association?</li> </ul>
Spiritual	Intangible values and meanings embodied in or evolved by a place which give it importance in the spiritual identity, or traditional knowledge, art and practices of a cultural group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the palce contribute to the spiritual identity or belief system of a cultural group?</li> <li>Is the place a repository of knowledge, traditional art or lore related to spiritual practice of a cultural group?</li> <li>Is the place important in maintaining the spiritual health and wellbeing of a culture or group?</li> <li>Does the physical attributes of the place play a role in recalling or awakening an understanding of an individual or group's relationship with the spiritual realm?</li> <li>Do the spiritual values of the place find expression in cultural practices or human-made structures, or inspire creative works?</li> </ul>

TABLE 2. COMPARATIVE VALUES AND CRITERIA (AFTER RUSSELL AND WINKWORTH 2009)

Comparative value	Definition
Rarity	Places which show rare or endangered aspects of Australia's history.
Representativeness	Places which are 'model' examples of types of heritage places.
Condition / Integrity	Current state of the place in relation to each of the values for which that place has been assessed.
Connectedness	Inter-site relationships, whether a site can be linked to a 'complex', series or pathway.
Interpretive capacity	Ability of the site to be interpreted and/or used for education.

### 3.4.2 Data collection and analysis

Information on the cultural values of Wellington Square was collected during the site visit, workshop, interviews and on-site surveys. The information collected was qualitative in nature and was therefore analysed by using basic content analysis and comparing responses to the assessment questions included in Table 1.

## 4.0 DESKTOP REVIEW RESULTS

The desktop study was designed to identify and review the literature that captured Whadjuk, other Noongar and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal expressions about the significance and sense of place for the Perth area as a whole. The research for the desktop study reviewed published and unpublished documentary sources and literature, oral histories, recorded stories, narratives and commentaries. These stories, narratives and commentaries were incorporated into this Report to provide context and comparative information for the Statement of Significance.

The literature review incorporated previously recorded oral histories of Whadjuk Noongar, other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups relating to the broad area in and around East Perth and Wellington Square. It also took into account documentary sources, archival content and reports made available by the City of Perth, on the public record and in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs Heritage Register. For example, the review provided background information from published material such as Hallam's Fire and Hearth, the published work of Daisy Bates, Aboriginal Perth and Bibbulmun Biographies and Legends, Southwest Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, Aboriginal worldviews and colonisation: implications for coastal sustainability, Heartsick for County, Recording Traditional Knowledge, and Avon Catchment Council. Stories of Love, Spirit and Creation, "Introduction to Noongar History and Culture", "Noongar of the Beelias (Swan River)" Narrated by Collard. L., "Spirit of Fremantle" Narrated by Collard. Kickett, E. The Trails of the Rainbow Serpent and Tilbrook, The First South Westerners: Aborigines of Western Australia and., Collard, L. Harben, S & Van Den Berg, R., 2004, "Nidja Beelias Boodjar Noonookurt Nyinyiny: A Noongar Interpretive History Of The Use Of Boodjar (Country) In The Vicinity Of Murdoch University." The literature review also included selected nineteenth-century explorers' journals such as those compiled by Grey (1998/84 [1841]) and George Fletcher Moore in secondary form.

The desktop research revealed a large amount of information about a range of Aboriginal Sites in the proximity of Wellington Square. Information gathered about the wider Perth area also identified considerable Noongar place-name information.

The information gained from the desktop research was used to augment the knowledge and information contributed by the Whadjuk Working Party, Moodjar Consultancy stakeholders and the Park users.

## 4.1 *Nitja boodjar*: Aboriginal significance of Wellington Square

There is clear evidence that Noongar used the area now known as Wellington Square as it sits on the land that was formerly a resource rich swamp/wet area part of the broad lake system that flowed into the Swan River through the Claise Brook only metres away from the northwest boundaries of the Park. This area has a long history of being used as a camping place where Noongar lived for periods of time<sup>1</sup>.

The evidence indicates that Wellington Square sits on area that was previously part of a rich ecosystem that provided significant spiritual and physical sustenance to Whadjuk. Indeed, it sits on a major swamp area that it is a major place associated with the creation of the world for Whadjuk, a part of the interconnected movements of the *Waugyl* as carried out its task in the *nyittiny* (cold times), “making of the streams and waterways”<sup>2</sup>.

This, combined with the fact that Wellington Square sits on the former site of a permanent swamp, demonstrates that it is an area of significance. As Bates remarks, all such areas are of critical importance to Noongar:

All permanent native waters have legends attached to them, legends of the ‘dream’ time, which go back to the days when birds and animals possessed human attributes, or were human beings, or were groups of which the bird or animal was representative, or were magic animals and birds possessing the power of human speech. The natives cannot say that the ‘founders’ of the various permanent waters were altogether human, although birds or beasts, or half bird half human, but the bird or animal name only is always given in the legend never a human name<sup>3</sup>

There is also unconfirmed evidence of the use of the area as a place of burial for Noongar. This is largely driven by the discovery by a City of Perth employee in 1942 of human remains assumed to have been of an Aboriginal male, see

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<sup>1</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 3

<sup>2</sup> Laurie. M. (ed.), 2003. ‘Interview with Cedric Jacobs’, Town of Vincent Local History Collection (oral history collection), Perth, Australia.

<sup>3</sup> Bates D. 1966. *The Passing of the Aborigines*. Second Edition. William Heinemann, Melbourne and Sydney. p: 157.

Appendix 3. Council worker Allan Cockburn uncovered the remains while digging a 'slit trench' to the east of the Square. When interviewed by police he recounted that the skeleton had been buried to a depth of 5 to 6 feet about "100 yards from the eastern boundary and 15 yards from the southern boundary of the square and the position of the bones showed that the skeleton had been lying with the skull pointing in a south westerly direction". The skull of a dog was also recovered adjacent to the human remains. The Police Surgeon concluded that the 'the characteristics of the skull conformed with those of the aboriginal (sic) type". Furthermore he concluded that the bones were those of "a male aboriginal (sic), very old, height about 5' and had been buried in a well-drained area, having been there for a considerable period". It was also concluded that due to the advanced state of decomposition the body had been buried prior to the establishment of Wellington Square<sup>4</sup>. Although seeming to be based on conjecture, newspaper reporting of the remains offer additional possibilities. An article in the Daily News<sup>5</sup> posited that some local people with knowledge of Aboriginal practice claimed the area around Wellington Square was a Noongar burial ground and that it was often the custom to be buried with one's dog. However, the article was also quick to offer doubts about this theory claiming that others understood Noongar custom was to bury people in a sitting position facing east. Yet another article on the discovery claimed sources knew the man buried, calling him Poor Old Joe, a Noongar who had passed away during a 'corroboree' held on the area that was later to be named Wellington Square<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Perth CIB, 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 1942. Recovery of human bones, Wellington Square. CIB 1544/42

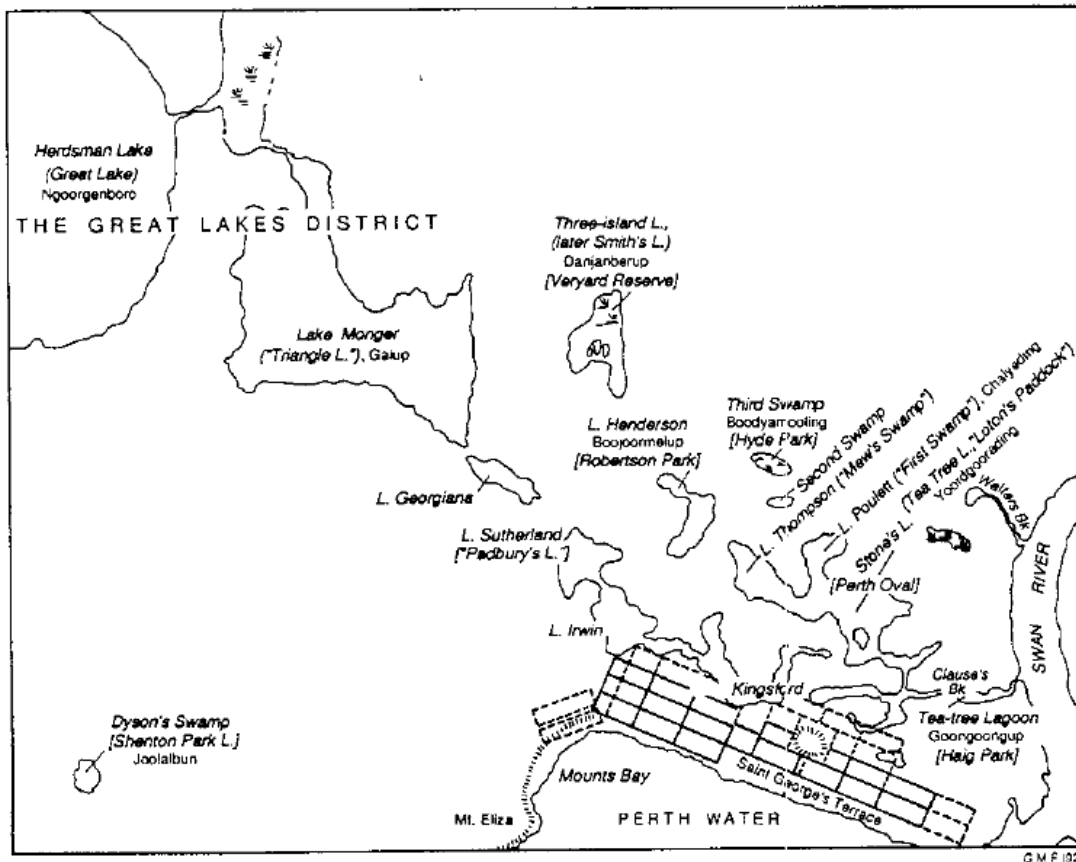
<sup>5</sup> 'Park Skeleton Mystery'. The Daily News (Perth WA: 1882-1950), Wednesday 18 February 1942. p. 4

<sup>6</sup> 'Wellington-square Skeletons', The West Australian (Perth, WA: 1879-1954), Thursday 19 February, 1942, p. 4.

FIGURE 4. THE PERTH LAKE SYSTEM WITH AN OVERLAY OF THE 1833 CITY PLAN. SOURCE: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM.



FIGURE 5. MAP OF LAKES AND THEIR RECORDED NAMES OVER TIME<sup>7</sup>. SOURCE: GENTILLI & BEKLE 1993, P. 442.



Soon after non-Aboriginal contact, and as the lakes around Perth were drained, the area began to be used for activities such as horse training, cricket and other recreational pursuits. This prompted it to be developed in the late 1800s as a public park for organised sports and passive recreation. Since 1894 there have only been slight changes to its extent and use so that today it is “mostly open, irrigated, mown grass playing fields with perimeter paths and planted trees<sup>8</sup>.”

Although consistently used for the purposes of public recreation Wellington Square has been home for a range of different buildings and facilities over the past 120 years. This includes tennis courts; pavilion, dressing rooms, a football grandstand, a caretaker's cottage, sheds, goal posts and cricket wickets have all been constructed (and often demolished) in response to changing needs and demands. However, today Wellington Square is closer to its

<sup>7</sup> Gentilli, J & Bekle, H 1993, 'History of the Perth Lakes', *Early Days: Journal of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society*, vol. 10, no. 5, pp. 442.

<sup>8</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 3-4



design and use in the early 1900s than at other times<sup>9</sup>. This is despite considerable change to its surrounding area since the massive east Perth Development in the 1990s<sup>10</sup>.

Since contact with non-Aboriginal people there is also solid evidence of continuity of use of this area by Noongar and other Aboriginal groups as a meeting place, area of social and recreational importance, as site for camping and as a place associated with health, wellbeing and 'medical' treatment<sup>11</sup>. Given its location in proximity to the East Perth homes and camps of Noongar, on the edge of the 'Prohibited area' during the 1920s to the early 1950s and close to important institutions and services (such as the East Perth Girl's Home, Native Welfare Offices, Royal Perth Hospital and Aboriginal Hostels and Perth Aboriginal Medical Service), Wellington Square has served as a place many Aboriginal people from elsewhere congregate as they await the delivery of key services and treatment, visit family who have been institutionalized, and move through as they return home from work<sup>12</sup>.

From the 1920s to the 1950s Wellington Square often went by the name of *Madison Square Gardens*. This reflected the fact that it had been the place where Aboriginal boxers such as Dom Pedro and Bob Edgill took part in informally organized street fights. This was one way these men could earn a little money, keep fit and settle disputes. The Chief Protector seriously frowned upon this. Indeed, one of the reasons that A.O. Neville established the prohibited area and including Wellington Square was to assist in banning Aboriginal people from street boxing events<sup>13</sup>.

When Neville left the position of Chief Protector in the 1940s these boxing competitions re-emerged at *Madison Square Gardens*. Although the local media and police saw these events as out of control brawls oral history accounts suggest otherwise. Darryl Ogilvie recalled memories from his youth:

We used to call them days Madison Square Gardens ... because we used to have all our fights up there which was good. Not saying that's so good in the sense of condoning violence but them days you had a fight and that's where it stayed, in that park ... You'd shake hands and walk away and if you felt you know you could have done better you'd have another fight next weekend and if you didn't do so well, well that's the end of the story ... There was rules, there was no mobbing. You were just knocked down and you'd let

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<sup>9</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 7

<sup>10</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 8

<sup>11</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 7

<sup>12</sup> Hillyer 2001 p. 45-49.

<sup>13</sup> Jebb, M. 2011. It was just like a reserve in the city: Aboriginal oral histories of East Perth around the Power Station. p. 38-62. In Layman, L. (Ed) *Powering Perth: A History of the East Perth power Station*. Perth: Black Swan. p. 54

them up. No kicking anyone while they were down and no scratching and pulling, and you abide by the rules. It was an unwritten rule but you knew the rules. And all the Nyungers would form a rung and when you had enough, you think you had enough; you'd shake the other person's hand<sup>14</sup>.

This use of Wellington Square as a place for socializing and gathering in proximity to services continued into the late 1990s when the East Perth area became the subject of 'urban renewal'. This was the time when the East Perth Development Authority acquired land and set about revamping the social, economic and built features of the area. This involved building over popular meeting places such as the 'Bull Paddock' (near Haig Park) and Millers Cave (to the east of Wellington Square) and bulldozing the East Perth Girls' Home (despite the fact that it was subject to being listed as a Registered Aboriginal site). It also included continued attempts by police and Council who, under the direction of the East Perth development Authority, sought to remove 'homeless' and 'antisocial' groups from popular spots around East Perth, Aboriginal people continued to frequent Wellington Square. The clear tactic of prohibiting certain groups of Aboriginal people from gathering in the area had some of the features of earlier social 'experiments'. For example, one welfare officer for the Noongar Alcohol and Substance Abuse Service, who was responsible for providing meals for the people in the park, described how public toilets in Wellington Square had been deliberately closed to both discourage people from gathering and, for some, leading to arrests for indecent behavior<sup>15</sup>.

As Hillyer observed, the pattern of 'prohibition' of Aboriginal people is well entrenched in the history of the redevelopment of the area around Wellington Square. Many places of critical importance to Aboriginal people have been removed or 'developed out'. For example, the Native Welfare Department on Wellington Street, the Bristle Factory where people camped in winter near the kilns, the infamous Kia Ora Wine Bar where Aboriginal people frequented, and the poorly kept houses where people rented for many years have all suffered the same treatment. What was once the only affordable place for many Aboriginal people has become inaccessible. Hillyer cites one former Noongar resident of East Perth, "In the old days all you needed was two bob in your back pocket to live in East Perth. Now you need two million dollars"<sup>16</sup>.

Discussing the failure by the East Perth Redevelopment Authority and the Aboriginal Lands Trust to protect Bennett House (formally East Perth Girls Home) Hillyer concluded that there have long been consistent features in the

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<sup>14</sup> Jebb, M. 2011 p. 56

<sup>15</sup> Hillyer 2001. p. 43.

<sup>16</sup> Hillyer 2001. p. 43-44.

planning approach taken by successive governments:

The failure ... can be seen as consistent with a continuum of past poor planning practice regarding Aboriginal heritage in East Perth<sup>17</sup>.

Today Wellington Square is still regularly used by groups of Aboriginal people as a key site for socializing, camping when in need of accommodation and a meeting place for those gathering as they seek community and health services. For some this means they have become subjected to accusations of anti-social behavior, public drinking and the interventions of police and community service organisations.

#### **4.2 Wam koorliny: non-Aboriginal significance of Wellington Square**

As mentioned earlier, Wellington Square was developed soon after non-Aboriginal contact as an open space public park to be available for recreational activities. In the early years this mostly involved use for horse training and for cricket. In the 1890s it was further developed as a place for organized sport and 'passive' or general recreation<sup>18</sup>. This makes it one of the first and longest areas to be used for organised sports such as cricket, football and horse riding<sup>19</sup>. As Thompson Palmer noted "Wellington Square has retained its overall form, purpose and function since the swamplands were drained, cleared, levelled and grassed in the early 1900s"<sup>20</sup>.

Wellington Square has also a longstanding history of being used as a place of gathering for social purposes. Indeed, for much of its history the social use of the area has often been controversial, often being assessed as a place for 'anti-social' behaviour. Consistently throughout this time non-Aboriginal people who have been homeless, destitute and subject to alcohol and mental health challenges have used the park as a place to gather, camp and seek refuge<sup>21</sup>.

In relation to its use as a place for recreation over the past one hundred and thirty years the Square has seen a number of different built facilities come and go. Facilities built include tennis courts, a pavilion, dressing rooms, a football grandstand, a caretaker's cottage, sheds, goal posts and cricket wickets. These have been constructed and

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<sup>17</sup> Hillyer 2001. p. 44.

<sup>18</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 3-4

<sup>19</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 7

<sup>20</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 7

<sup>21</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 7

demolished in response to changing community needs and the plans of the City of Perth<sup>22</sup>.

The areas around the Square has been consistently used for residential purposes, with some agricultural use to the east and close to the river and industrial use to the north and north east use, mostly associated with the East Perth Power Station, the Gasworks and various light industrial factories still in operation up to the 1960s. From the 60s through to the 80s these residences were increasingly replaced by more industrial and commercial operations. Since the 1990s more up-market residencies and retail outlets have replaced this as part of the urban renewal project called the East Perth Redevelopment<sup>23</sup>.

More recently the challenges associated with homelessness, anti-social behavior and conflict between those using Wellington Square as a meeting place (in particular alcohol use and noise) has re-emerged.

A group called the Wellington Square Action Group has been meeting with the stated objective of developing a “strategic approach to the issues that have been identified by the Action Group as requiring action in Wellington Square”.<sup>24</sup>

In 2015 the Department of Child Protection established a working group of service providers to identify accommodation options and develop recommendations on better coordination and more efficient use of existing resources made available in Wellington Square and surrounds. The Salvation Army and Mission Australia have both taken central roles in this process.

Matters of anti-social behaviour and safety issues are to be the focus of WA Police and the City of Perth. According to the group the ‘revitalisation’ of Wellington Square is central to addressing these problems suggesting “better lighting, CCTV cameras, WA Police cooperation with alcohol providers in the area and the replacement of the existing toilet blocks with modern self-cleaning units.”<sup>25</sup>

### **4.3 Kura: past Noongar use and enjoyment of the wider Perth and surrounding areas**

Prior to colonization of the areas around Perth and the southwest of WA areas were well-watered, fertile and

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<sup>22</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 7

<sup>23</sup> Thompson Palmer et al 2001, p. 8

<sup>24</sup> Evangel, E. and East Perth Community Safety Group nd. *Report on Wellington Square Issues from Eleni Evangel MLA, Member for Perth.*

<sup>25</sup> Evangel nd.

relatively densely populated by some thirteen or fourteen socio-dialectal groups who today self-identify as Noongar<sup>26</sup>, see Figure 6.

FIGURE 6. ABORIGINAL DIALECT GROUPS OF THE SOUTH WEST OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, BASED ON TINDALE (1974).  
SOURCE: METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2016



The term Noongar (man or people), as it is used today, describes those people of Indigenous Australian descent whose forebears occupied and Noongar boodjar (Noongar land). Noongar boodjar extends from approximately south of Geraldton, south, south-eastwards to Coorow, across to the small wheatbelt town of Nyoongah, towards the southern coast around Esperance<sup>27</sup>.

Knowledge of Noongar boodjar has, from time immemorial, been passed on across the generations from *deman* (the old people) to *koorlangka* (children). It is well supported by other forms of documented evidence recorded by

<sup>26</sup> Noongar elders cited in Moodjar Consultancy (2016) *Statements of Significance for the Fremantle Region and Registered Aboriginal Sites – Cantonment Hill, Rocky Bay and Swan River*. City of Fremantle.

<sup>27</sup> Collard, L. and S Harben. S. 2009 *Nidja Beeljar Boodjar Noonookurt Nyininy: A Nyoongar Interpretive History Of The Use Of Boodjar (Country) In The Vicinity Of Murdoch University*. Murdoch University.

non-Aboriginal people since their earliest times in the region. Noongar might say of these accounts: *nidja* Noongar *boodjar* were *wangkiny* (this is Noongar land and stories)<sup>28</sup>.

To Noongar it is impossible to talk about *boodjar* (country) and people as separate entities. As Patricia Baines wrote:

To look at the land through Nyoongah eyes is to perceive personhood in all life forms. Old trees are parents and seedlings are children. Birds and animals, particularly when one of them behaves in an unusual manner or is distinguished in some way, may be a deceased ancestor. The land is seen as a huge body – most often it is recognized as the body of one’s mother. To put a trench through the ground is to scarify the mother’s back or dig into her guts<sup>29</sup>.

The late Robert Bropho expressed these sentiments when talking about the relationship between Noongar and country in an area near Goonininup (south of Kings Park). He said:

Further around the corner you’ve got the – secret women’s spring there – that’s the women’s business – the water running out of the hill – the white man says it water – but we know its all milk from the mothers’ breast in her body – you go onto the Bridge and – it’s all important there too – the footprints are under the water there – where they crossed – over to Kennedy Fountain and the Brewery they did things and went up to Kings Park<sup>30</sup>

Noongar say that Noongar *boodjar* (country), began during the *nyittiny* (cold time), when the world was flat, soft and featureless. During this time (before people) ancestral spirits dwelt and wondered. As Noel Nannup puts it, they drifted in and out of their spirit forms, into the physical and material world<sup>31</sup>.

The *Waarkal* (rainbow serpent) was the first to move from pure spirit form and become “real”. This allowed it to move across this unformed land fashioning hills and valleys, tunneling under the ground and then up again. This is

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<sup>28</sup> Collard, L. and Palmer, D. 1998. *Nidja Goordandalup! Noonookurt Nyinniny: A Noongar interpretive History of the Use of Boodjar (Country) in the Vicinity of the University of Western Australia*. Murdoch: Murdoch University. p. 14-15

<sup>29</sup> Baines, P. 1988. *A litany for land*. In Keen, I. (ed) *Being Black: Aboriginal Cultures in ‘Settled’ Australia*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies. p. 228

<sup>30</sup> Cited in Collard, L. and Palmer, D. 1998. *Nidja Goordandalup! Noonookurt Nyinniny: A Noongar interpretive History of the Use of Boodjar (Country) in the Vicinity of the University of Western Australia*. Murdoch: Murdoch University. p. 14-15

<sup>31</sup> Nannup, N, 2003 *Carers of Everything*

[http://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/documents/AboutCockburn/Sister\\_Cities/E\\_Carers\\_of\\_Everything.pdf](http://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/documents/AboutCockburn/Sister_Cities/E_Carers_of_Everything.pdf) [Accessed 24 October 2016]

how rivers, lakes, swamps and wetlands came into being<sup>32</sup>. In this way Noongar say that the Waarkal created the waterways acting as the keeper of all fresh water sources. 'Pop' Tom Bennell describes this 'old carpet snake' further:

The Waakal - that's a carpet snake and there is a dry carpet and a wet carpet snake. The old Waakal that lives in the water, they never let them touch them. Never let the children play with those. They reckon that is Noongar koorlongka warra wirrinitj warbaniny, the Waakal, you're not to play with that carpet snake, that is bad. ... Nitcha barlup Waakal marbukal nyininy - that means he is a harmless carpet snake. He lives in the bush throughout Noongar budjar. But the old water snakes; they never let them touch 'em. ... the real water snake oh, he is pretty, that carpet snake. ... the Noongar call him Waakal kierp wirrinitj. That means that carpet snake, he belongs to the water. You mustn't touch that snake; that's no good. If you kill that carpet snake noonook barminyiny that Waakal ngulla kierp uat, that means our water dries up - none. That is their history stories and very true too<sup>33</sup>.

While it is the case that the landscape of the area around Wellington Square has changed significantly since non-Aboriginal contact, for many Noongar it continues to be a place associated with the Waarkal. Whadjuk Noongar Cedric Jacobs explains how these kinds of 'water sites' continue to be spiritually and ecologically significant:

It is through the lake system. There is a water serpent down there below which is extremely important and the water on the surface is really the marks where the *Waugyl* [Waarkal] wound his way through and came up after making the streams and the waterways. It's all part of the ecological system to purify the land and the family. Once it was surrounded by waterways and if they fill them up with rubbish then the land begins to die<sup>34</sup>.

At the same time non-Aboriginal science (principally archaeological research) would say that Noongar have lived throughout the southwest for at least 40,000 years<sup>35</sup>. Both Noongar knowledge and archaeology confirm that before contact, Noongar often camped in close proximity to Waarkal sites near water. The area in an around Wellington

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<sup>32</sup> Nannup, 2003

<sup>33</sup> Bennell, T. 1978. Oral Interview. Transcribed in 2002.

<sup>34</sup> Laurie, M (ed.) 2003, 'Interview with Cedric Jacobs', Town of Vincent Local History Collection (Oral History Collection), Perth, Australia.

<sup>35</sup> Flood, J 1989, *Archaeology of the Dreamtime*, Collins Australia, Sydney.

Square and throughout the Perth wetlands was clearly one such place<sup>36</sup>. As mentioned earlier, Wellington Square is built over the footprint of a swamp system often connected to Claise Brook and close to the confluence of Claise Brook and the Swan River. This swamp system would have been were abundant with many foods such as water birds, *koolya* (frogs), *gilgies* (freshwater crayfish), *yaagan* (turtle) and a range of edible plants.

As a consequence of the routine movement between these swamps and lakes and the popularity of the area there would have been a number of key *bidi*<sup>37</sup> in the area. These *bidi* connected important places in the area called Mooro<sup>38</sup> - leading Noongar groups from their inland camps and other places of residency to this specific part of the coastal and river area - to conduct ceremonial and cultural business, hunt, camp and fish (particularly during the Noongar season<sup>39</sup> of *Kambarang*<sup>40</sup>). Noongar have long moved inland during the season of *Makuru* when cooler winds from the southwest swept across the region. Later people returned to coastal areas in *Kambarang* with the arrival of warmer weather and as rains decreased. In the 1830s George Grey, described Noongar use of these wetlands:<sup>41</sup>

...swamps producing *yun-jid*, a species of *typha*, served by well-established paths and supporting abundant populations in clusters of well built, clay plastered and turf roofed huts...these superior huts, well-marked roads, deeply sunk wells and extensive *warran* grounds all spoke of a large and comparatively speaking settled resident population.

Over the hot season of *Birak*, controlled burning ensured that the bush had been regenerated so that with the arrival of the season of *Djilba* milder conditions promoted growth<sup>42</sup>.

This means the area around Wellington Square would have been adjacent to one of most important 'bidi' connecting Noongar to other *moort* (family) throughout Whadjuk Noongar boodja (country). This is partly because of

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<sup>36</sup> see Figure 4

<sup>37</sup> Noongar word for track or trail.

<sup>38</sup> Green, N. 1981 "Aborigines and White Settlers," in *A New History of Western Australia*, ed. CT Stannage. Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press.

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/nyoongar/kambarang.shtml>

<sup>40</sup> During the *Kambarang* season (October/November) we see an abundance of colours and flowers exploding all around us. The yellows of many of the Acacias continue to abound, along with some of the Banksias and many other smaller delicate flowering plants including the Kangaroo Paw and Orchids. Also during this time the Balgas will also start to flower, especially if they've been burnt in the past year or closely shaved. One of the most striking displays of flowers to be seen during this season will be the "Moodja", or Australian Christmas Tree (*Nuytsia*). The bright orang/yellow flowers serve to signal the heat is on its way.

<sup>41</sup> Grey, G. 1841 *Expeditions in Western Australia 1837-1839*. Perth Hesperian. pp. 12-38

<sup>42</sup> See City of Perth (2012) *Boodjargabbeelup – Point Fraser Noongar Cultural Interpretation*. Brochure.



the importance of the area as a food source for Noongar *maam* (men), *yorgka* (women) and *kullungar* (children). Indeed at the time of colonization the largest hunting ground in proximity to the Swan existed just to the north of the river<sup>43</sup>.

There is ample evidence that Noongar were highly proficient in collecting food from the *beelya* (river), displaying sophisticated land management skills to ensure the sustainability of these resources. They used *gidgees* (spears), netting and hand seizing as techniques used to collect food such as birds, eggs, fish, frogs, gilgee, coonacs, marron and tortoise<sup>44</sup>. Yok (women) were central to this. To catch *djildjit* (fish) Noongar yok would drive them into shallow water. Two or three would watch the shoal from the shoreline, keeping opposite to it, while twenty or thirty men and women would take boughs and form a semi-circle out in the shallow bay areas. Gradually closing in, they would hedge the *djildjit* up in a small space close to the shore, while a few others got into the water to throw them out with their hands<sup>45</sup>.

Noongar sometimes cooked the *djildjit* by simply broiling them on the fire. At other times they chose a thick, tender piece of paperbark, tore it into an oblong shape and wrapped the *djildjit* into it. Strings from string bark or grass was then tightly wound around the bark and then the meal was slowly baked in the hot sand, covered with ashes. This 'tying up cooking'<sup>46</sup> allowed for the food to be cooked with the paperbark then peeled back and used a serving dish. *Djildjit* cooked in this way produces a succulent juice and gravy<sup>47</sup>.

The areas in proximity to the Wellington Square swampland would have been abundant in marine life readily available to those using *gidgee* (spears). Armstrong describes the use of this Noongar technology:

The spear is their (Noongar) great instrument in fishing, as well as in the chase. They use baits, such as crabs broken small and thrown in as ground baits ... In fishing for fresh water fish called cobbler, they fix a muscle on the end of a pointed stick, which they present before some hole ... where the fish are known to lurk, and as soon as the cobbler, lured from his retreat, approaches the bait, the native makes certain prey

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<sup>43</sup> Williams, A.E. 1984. *From Campsite to City*. Nedlands: City of Nedlands.

<sup>44</sup> See City of Perth (2012)

<sup>45</sup> Hallam, S. 1987. Aboriginal resource usage along the Swan River. In John, J. (Ed) *The Swan River Estuary: Ecology and Management*. Bentley: Curtin University. p. 27. Hallam, S.J. 1975 *Fire and Hearth*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. Meager S.J. & Ride, W.D.L. 1980. Use of natural resources by the Aborigines of South-western Australia. In Berndt R.M. & Berndt, C.H. (Eds.). *Aborigines of the West: Their Past and Their Present*. 2nd. ed. p. 66-80. W.A.: University of Western Australian Press.

<sup>46</sup> Grey 1841, p. 275-6

<sup>47</sup> Hallam, S. 1987 p. 27.

of him. Indeed the skills of the coast tribe in spearing under water is truly surprising<sup>48</sup>.

The area would also been rich in koolya (frog) and yaargin (tortoise). Frogs were cooked on a slow fire of wood ashes. Yorga (women) prepared them for eating, holding them in one hand by the hind legs and with an adept pinch of a finger and thumb, remove the lower part of the frog intestine. The rest of the frog was then eaten bit by bit from the head to the toes<sup>49</sup>.

Yorga also possessed the skill and expertise to find and catch freshwater tortoise available in the dried up swamps and waterways of the area. Yorga walked through these areas using their toes to detect the breathing holes where the animals lay. Grey<sup>50</sup> describes yorga working the dried waterways close to the area:

The season of the year in which the natives catch the greatest quantity of frogs and freshwater shellfish, is when the swamps are nearly dried up; these animals then bury themselves in holes in the mud, and the native women with their long sticks, and their long thin arms, which they plunge up to the shoulder in the slime, manage to drag them out; at all seasons however they catch some of these animals, but in summer a whole troop of native women may be seen paddling about in a swamp, slapping themselves to kill the mosquitoes and sandflies, and every now and then plunge their arms down into the mud and dragging firth their prey. I have often seen them with ten or twelve pound weight of frogs in their bag.

Noongar also extensively used flora and fauna resources in areas like the swamplands around Wellington Square, carefully following well established laws and customs to ensure stocks were sustained. Flora and fauna were not only eaten, Noongar also used them for clothing, tool production, for ceremony and in health maintenance. Clothing such as booka (cloak) and choota (bags) were made from yonka (kangaroo skins) and held together with bone and sinew. At ceremony time, people were painted up with wilga (ochre) and wore headdresses adorned with koomal (possum skin) and feathers from emu and cockatoo<sup>51</sup>.

Commenting on Noongar use of the array of resources George Grey said they knew:

Exactly what it produces, the proper time at which several articles are in season. According to these

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<sup>48</sup> Armstrong, F. 1836. Manners and Habits of the Aborigines of Western Australia. *Perth Gazette, October 1836*. Moore, G.F. 1884. *Diary of ten years eventful life of an early settler in Western Australia, and also a descriptive vocabulary of the language of the Aborigines*. London: Walbrook.

<sup>49</sup> Hallam, S. 1980. Aboriginal women as providers: the 1830s on the Swan. *Aboriginal History, Vol 12-15*. p. 46

<sup>50</sup> Grey 1841 p. 276.

<sup>51</sup> Dale, 1834

circumstances he (sic) regulates his (sic) visits to the different portions of his (sic) hunting ground<sup>52</sup>.

The area 'underneath' Wellington Square place is also connected to other significant sites in close proximity such as women's birthing sites at Matagarup (Heirisson Island) hunting and ceremonial sites at Kaarta Gar-up, Kaarta Koomba, or Mooro Katta (Kings Park), and the a men's ceremonial ground in the Reabold Hill area<sup>53</sup>.

Not far is a significant woman's business site due to the presence of a *wilgi garup* (ochre deposit) in the vicinity of the Perth Railway Station. Noongar women were responsible for the *wilgi garup*<sup>54</sup>. *Wilgi* is a seriously important trading commodity for Noongar and other Aboriginal groups. Indeed there is evidence that *wilgi* from Perth has travelled as far as the Yankunytjatjara Pitjantjatjara country crosses the border into South Australia and the Northern territory<sup>55</sup>.

The general Perth area is acknowledged by Whadjuk Noongar as "a place where 'fair or place of trade occurs'; where families of people gather for kinship and in-law making; where mothers, fathers, and old people get together; and where young men and women whom have 'come of age' meet future husbands and wives. It was that part of the boodja (land) around the Wardanup - foreshore where Whadjuk Noongar and others gathered to undertake cultural and ceremonial business. Trade took place before the settlers actually came to this country. So trade in Noongar country stretches back thousands of years<sup>56</sup>.

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<sup>52</sup> Grey 1841.

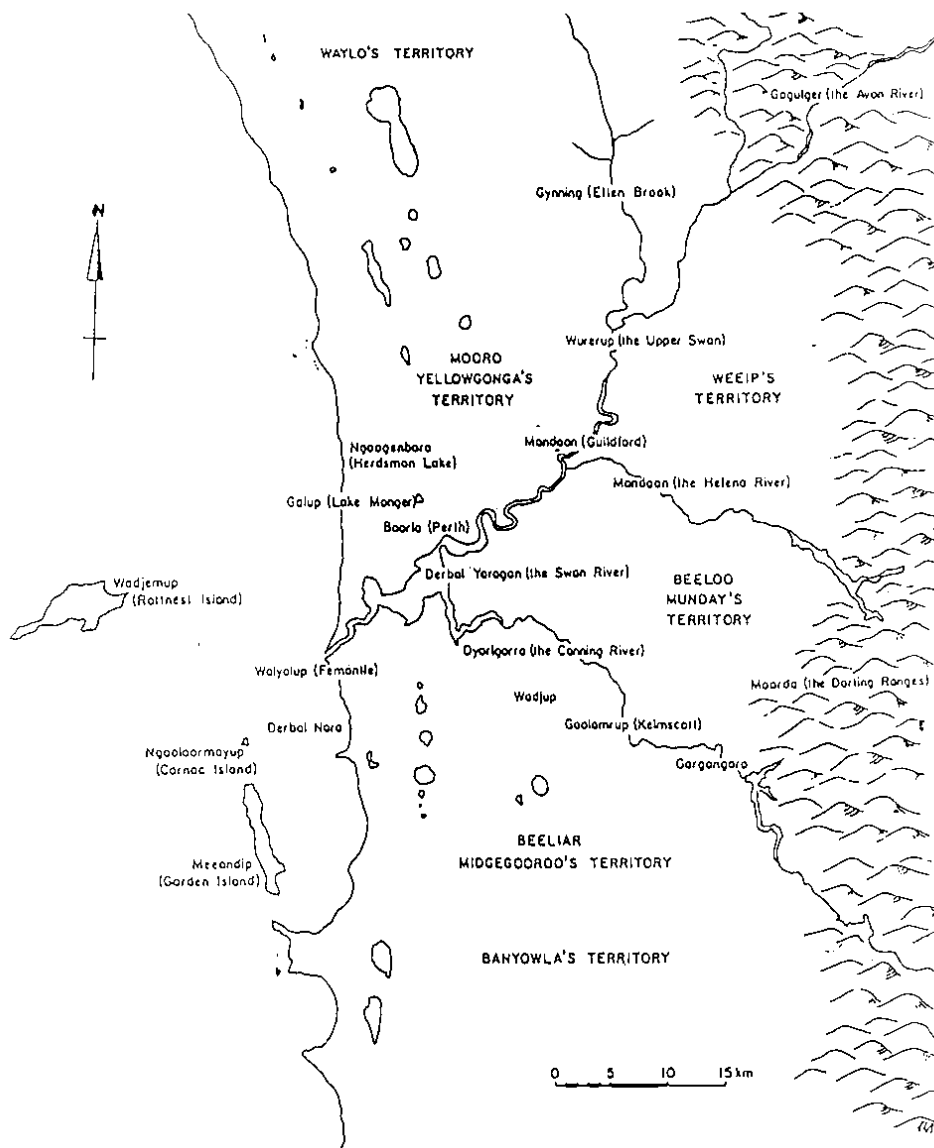
<sup>53</sup> Jacobs cited in Busher, N. 2016 *Yagan Square Cultural Heritage Management Plan*. University of WA.

<sup>54</sup> Jacobs cited in Busher, N. 2016.

<sup>55</sup> Collard, L. and Jones, T. 2014 *Karla Yarning: This City is Whadjuk Country*, City of Perth.

<sup>56</sup> Harben, S. Collard, L. Stasiuk, G. Nelson, D. nd. *Recording Traditional Knowledge*, Avon Catchment Council.

FIGURE 7. MIDGEGOOROO'S LAND WHICH INCLUDES PERTH<sup>57</sup>



Nyungar Place Names and Territories: Swan River Coastal Plain  
(As told to Robert Lyon by Yagan in 1832)  
Source: N. Green, *Broken Spears*, Focus Education Services Perth, 1984, p.50

<sup>57</sup> Green, N. 1984. *Broken Spears: Aborigines and Europeans in the Southwest of Australia*, Cottesloe. 1984, p.50

#### 4.4 *Ngulla ngoorn koorliny: Noongar, restrictions and East Perth*

The impact of colonization on the Perth area was monumental. Noongar use and enjoyment of their *boodjar* was immediately struck a severe blow. From the earliest of days Noongar movement through the Perth area was severely restricted and Noongar heavily governed. In 1840, Governor Hutt appointed a special town constable and official 'native' interpreter, Francis Armstrong. Armstrong's role was specifically designed to manage the behavior of Noongar, seeing that they "covered their nakedness when approaching Europeans," set their spears aside before entering the area, not fight in Perth, and did not 'put up camps or light fires on the roads or paths into the town'<sup>58</sup>.

Regimes of control continued, and were felt most intensely in and around the central areas of Perth. From the late nineteenth to the mid twentieth centuries, laws specifically targeting Aboriginal people's rights either forced people away from their traditional lands or placed restrictive conditions on those visiting from other areas<sup>59</sup>. For example, only non-Aboriginal people could buy alcohol, move about freely, take on work where they could find it, live unencumbered and where they wanted, and care for their children with relatively little imposition. From the late nineteenth century laws were specifically enacted to regulate these same elements of Noongar and other Aboriginal people<sup>60</sup>.

The greatest imposition came with the passing of the *Aborigines Act, 1905* and the subsequent *Native Administration Act, 1905–1936*<sup>61</sup>. These laws restricted many aspects of Aboriginal people's lives in towns, on pastoral properties and around camps adjacent to towns and Perth. Indeed those subject to this legislation could not marry, move, live freely and travel to see family without the express permission of the Chief Protector or his delegate<sup>62</sup>.

The 1905 and 1936 *Acts* also established a form of apartheid, restricting relationships between Noongar and non-Aboriginal people. Indeed, under the Act non-Aboriginal people could not be within 100 metres of a reserve or Aboriginal camp. Elements of this kind of law were later to be used against Noongar if they were seen 'fraternising'

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<sup>58</sup> Colonial Secretary's Office 1840, 83/20 cited in Cook, D. 2016. *"That Was My Home" Voices from the Noongar Camps in Perth's Western Suburbs*. Unpublished PhD, Murdoch University.

<sup>59</sup> Haebich, A. 2011. "Forgetting Indigenous Histories: Cases from the History of Australia's Stolen Generations," *Journal of Social History* 44,4, p. 1036.

<sup>60</sup> See Haebich, A. 1988 'For Their Own Good': *Aborigines and Government in the South West of Western Australia, 1900–1940*. Nedlands: University of Western Australia.

<sup>61</sup> Haebich 1988

<sup>62</sup> Hasluck, P. 1970. *Black Australians: A Survey of Native Policy in Western Australia*. Carlton: Melbourne University.

or 'consorting' with non-Aboriginal friends<sup>63</sup>. Accounts of living in Perth during this period include the imposition of "segregated seating on public transport, of 'blacks only' train carriages, of laws preventing sexual relations between blacks and whites, of racially segregated schools and milk bars refusing to serve "black' customers, of night time curfews and men and women being forced to carry permits to pass through the city streets after o'clock."<sup>64</sup> According to Haebich and Marsh the closer Aboriginal people were to the Department of Native welfare the more likely you were to experience surveillance, control and the network of police and departmental enforcement<sup>65</sup>.

During the turn of the twentieth century and into the 1920s many Noongar found a way to survive by working in the rural economy or on the edges of towns clearing the land, building fences, cutting wood props and selling them for clothes lines, shearing, shepherding and running rural households<sup>66</sup>. The Depression and collapse of the rural economy made it impossible for many Noongar to continue in this regard. Like their poor non-Aboriginal counterparts, many Noongar were forced to move from the country to Perth in search of work or follow members of their family for health and welfare needs. This prompted a significant 'urban migration' with many families settling in and around East Perth. Aboriginal people living in and around Perth had different opportunities. For a time employment for men included laboring, work in factories, in the railways and cutting and selling wood props for washing lines. Young women and married women got work in domestic service, kitchen and laundry work in hospitals and some jobs in hospitality. There was some 'housing' available with young service workers living in the homes of their non-Aboriginal bosses, some boarding in the East Perth Girls Home, some students boarding at institutions such as sister Kates of Alvan House and MacDonald House, families renting in cheap inner city housing in East Perth, North Perth and along the railway line in West Perth, or in camps set up on the fringes of suburbs<sup>67</sup>.

Prompted by complaints from non-Aboriginal people and his own desire to impose order on the lives of Aboriginal people in the 1920s, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, A. O. Neville, used provisions available under the 1905 Aborigines Act, to declare the city of Perth a Prohibited Area, see Figure 6. This meant that it became an offence for Aboriginal people to enter the city between the hours of 6 pm and 6 am unless they were in "lawful employment"<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> *Aborigines Act*, 1905, Section 14, 36 and 43k *Native Administration Act*, 1936, Section 14, 39 and 46. ¶

<sup>64</sup> Haebich, A. and Marsh, L. 2008. Living the dream. In Haebich, A. *Spinning the Dream: Assimilation in Australia 1950-1970*. Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre. p. 280.

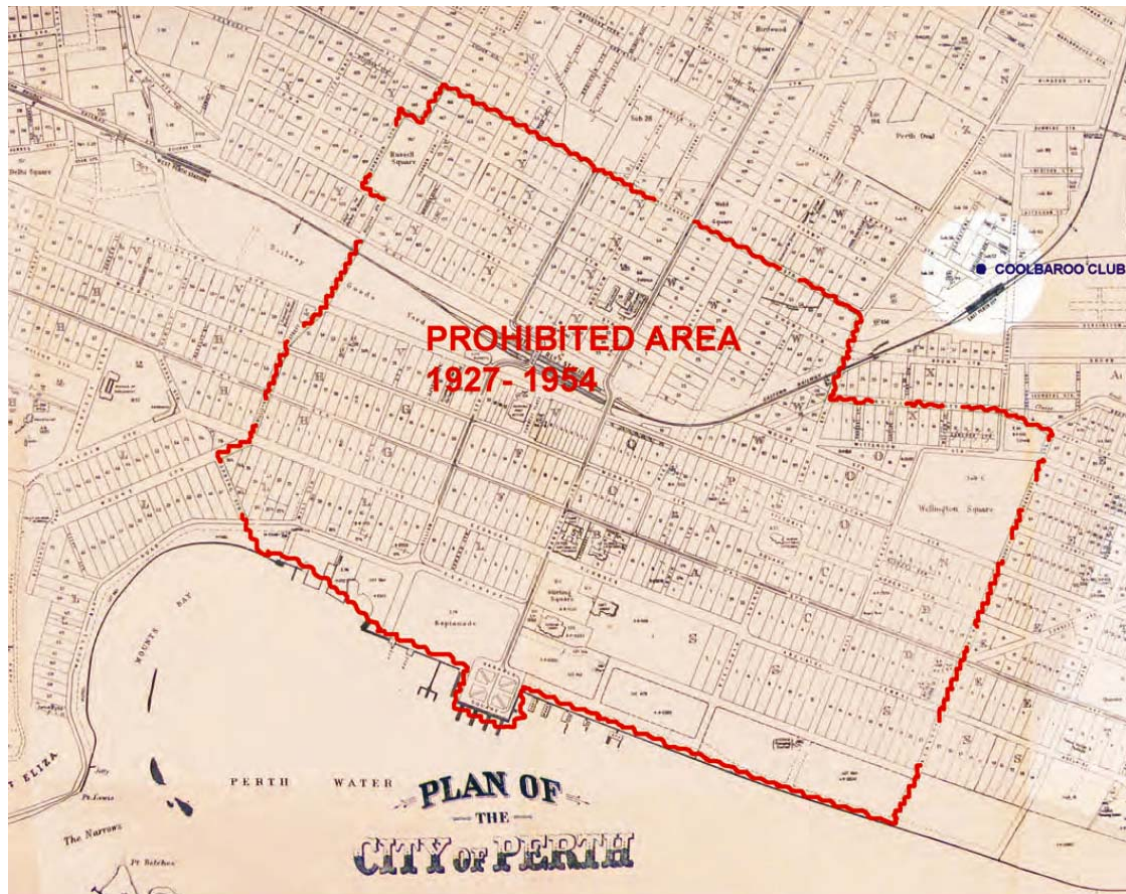
<sup>65</sup> Haebich, A. and Marsh, L. 2008. p. 278-279.

<sup>66</sup> Haebich 1988

<sup>67</sup> Haebich, A. and Marsh, L. 2008. p. 276-277; Cook, D. 2016. *"That Was My Home" Voices from the Noongar Camps in Perth's Western Suburbs*. Unpublished PhD, Murdoch University.

<sup>68</sup> Kinnane, S. 2003. *Shadow Lines*. Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press.

FIGURE 8. THE PERTH PROHIBITED AREA 1927-1954<sup>69</sup>



The boundaries of the Prohibited Area stretched 1.3 kilometres from the Swan River to Newcastle Street in Northbridge, and 2 kilometres from Bennett Street in East Perth to Milligan Street in West Perth<sup>70</sup>. These restrictions continued from 1927 until 1954 so that any Aboriginal person needed a permit to enter the city and Aboriginal employees would be arrested if they were without their permit after the 6 pm curfew. This Prohibited Area created serious problems for Aboriginal people looking for work, travelling to and from home or having to care for family who were sick. Irwin Lewis was employed in the city in the 1950s working in what we would call 'Aboriginal Affairs'. He recalled:

I had to leave work before 5.30pm. It's not like we are talking about the 1800s or 1700s. This was 1950. It

<sup>69</sup> Darbyshire, J. 2010. The Coolbaroo Club and the Coffee Pot, two extraordinary places in 1950s Perth. Catalogue from the exhibition, Perth Town Hall, 20 October – 5 November 2010. Perth: City of Perth. p4.

<sup>70</sup> City of Perth n.d. *Fighting for Family, Country, Rights and Recognition: Aboriginal Heritage in the City of Perth after 1829*. Pamphlet.

was quite common to see Aboriginal people being taken across the railway line to the local police station<sup>71</sup>.

A consequence of the establishment of the Prohibited Area in the 1920s was that areas along the river in East Perth became a refuge. Many were forced to find camps or take cheap accommodation in reasonable proximity to the boundaries: 1) in order to pass in and out of the Prohibited Area after work in good time, 2) because available housing was cheap, 3) because of the cheaper rates in the old 'slums' or camps on the southern sides of East Perth, and 4) because labouring jobs were more available on this side of the city. One popular site was an empty paddock near the East Perth Railway Station known as the "bull paddock" and Miller's Cave, which had been part of the old Miller's timber yard<sup>72</sup>.

Another important part of the story of Aboriginal people and East Perth was the formation of the Coolbaroo League in 1946. During this period of intense state control over the lives of Aboriginal people, particularly during the time when the official policy approach was to encourage their 'assimilation' some attempted to mobilise and move to address the lack of political and civil rights. The Coolbaroo League was one element in this regard<sup>73</sup>.

Prompted by the needs of local Aboriginal people for support, social connections and fun northwest Aboriginal woman Helena Clarke, Yamatji brothers George and Jack Poland, and wedjela man George Marcus set up the Coolbaroo League. One of the early activities arranged by the League was a dance called the Coolbaroo Club. Starting in 1946 the League initiated Club dances in a number of locations close to Wellington Square in East Perth. In January 1947, because of problems associated with having the first dance inside the Prohibited Area the League shifted the dance club to the Edward Street 'Pensioners Hall' near the East Perth Railway station. The dances, called the Coolbaroo Club, were held every Friday night and became very popular with some dances attracting up to 600 people<sup>74</sup>. The dances were principally for the entertainment of Aboriginal people with a few non-Aboriginal people permitted by invitation<sup>75</sup>.

As it became better established beauty pageants and dance competitions were arranged. The first Miss Coolbaroo in 1947 was 14 year old Lorna Deeble. Subsequently women active in the Club or needing support and encouragement were given the time. For example, in 1953 Gladys Bropho was crowned Coolbaroo League Queen

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<sup>71</sup> City of Perth n.d. *Fighting for Family, Country, Rights and Recognition: Aboriginal Heritage in the City of Perth after 1829*. Pamphlet.

<sup>72</sup> Kinnane 2003.

<sup>73</sup> Haebich, A. and Marsh, L. 2008. p. 283-299

<sup>74</sup> City of Perth n.d.

<sup>75</sup> Kinnane 2003



for her work in raising money for a youth hostel fund. Monica Jones recounts her time with the Coolbaroo Club.

My name is Monica Jones now. I was born Monica Ingram in Black Point in Geraldton in the year 1936.

The Coolbaroo Club was where everything started. That was a fantastic place. There used to be a dance every Friday and it cost 10 shillings. Everybody used to save their money.

There used to be a lot of bathing beauty competitions going on around Perth at that time. Anyway, the Aboriginal people decided to have one of their own. And so all the girls entered. I got the first prize. It was through that that they chose me for this Ball.

That was June 5th, 1954. I'd just turned 17. And I was invited to this ball at Government House. I had no idea what I was getting myself in for...Well, it was the first time that an Aboriginal person had ever been invited to a place like this.

The women there, you know, they had daughters my age and they found out that young Aboriginal women were not different than their own children. And they were really amazed to find that I could converse, you know, and speak in their own language, sort of thing, and conduct myself the same way that their own children did. They didn't really expect to see something like that. We weren't the gibberish, talking monkeys that they thought we were.

I didn't let our people down. I did my best to show them in a different light than what they were seen in before. I like to think I did.

It was a really magical night, to tell you the truth. I was not without a partner all night. It was just one dance after another. I never expected it to be like that. I thought I'd just have the one partner all night long, you know ... that they'd be afraid to come near me because I was black. But it was different to what I expected it to be altogether. Yeah, it was really something<sup>76</sup>.

The League also set about other organizing political events, hosting meetings to plan support for a youth group, mobilised a campaign to get rid of the Prohibited Area, set up housing projects, change the regressive 'native welfare' laws and open a retail shop for the sale of art produced by local people and produce a newspaper (the

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<sup>76</sup> Darbyshire, J. 2010. *The Coolbaroo Club 1947-1960*. Perth: City of Perth.

'Westralian Aborigine')<sup>77</sup>.

During the 1960s there were between 175 and 200 Aboriginal people living in East Perth<sup>78</sup>. As a consequence there was a strong sense of community amongst those Aboriginal people living there. At the same time the continuation of restrictions to the movement of Aboriginal people (albeit under various vagrancy and anti-social provisions used by police) made East Perth like a reserve. Helena Pell Pritchard described growing up in the area: 'It was just like a reserve in the city'<sup>79</sup>.

At this time various church and non-government welfare organisations started providing support and setting up operations in the area. In the 1960's the Anglican Church established a unique endeavor. Mary Elliott and May Street, two trained English Social Workers, arrived in WA initially to set up in around rural reserves, instead began working with increasing numbers of Aboriginal people moving into Perth and living in squalid conditions in and around East Perth. They were offered a place on Norbett Street to set up a Family Centre to provide baths for children and others. These two women worked closely with the Aboriginal community in East Perth<sup>80</sup>. A report from the period noted:

The threatened eviction of several families from houses in East Perth, and the fact that one whole family is living in the backyard of another house rented by a large family has made obvious the need for a concerted effort for housing for the coloured people<sup>81</sup>.

In the 1960s many Aboriginal families lived in the East Perth area. A 1966 housing survey of East Perth showed about 30 Aboriginal families living in an area close to Wellington Square in and around Brown and Norbett Streets and "the area around the Anglican Op Shop, the East Perth School, the East Perth Girls Home and the Kia Ora liquor shop"<sup>82</sup>.

In 1967 Michael Robinson carried out an Aboriginal housing survey of the area after the area had attracted considerable media and been labeled as a 'black slum'. He found an estimated 50 Aboriginal households and 1500 people living in institutions and camping as 'itinerants'. Many of these people lived in poorly maintained houses

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<sup>77</sup> Haebich, A. and Marsh, L. 2008. p. 296-297

<sup>78</sup> WA Housing Hub. (1966) A history of housing and tenancy advocacy: Aboriginal housing in town reserves and East Perth. [http://wahousinghub.org.au/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=17695056#\\_ednref2](http://wahousinghub.org.au/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=17695056#_ednref2) [accessed 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016]

<sup>79</sup> Jebb 2011, p. 52

<sup>80</sup> Jebb 2011, p. 52

<sup>81</sup> cited in WA Housing Hub. (1966)

<sup>82</sup> Jebb 2011, p. 52

along Wellington, Royal, Brown, Claisebrook and Wickham streets with up to 30 people living in some dwellings. This prompted authorities to start moving people into other areas such as Coolbellup, Lockridge, Gosnells and Balga and the Perth City Council condemning housing and ordering demolitions. In 1967 there were 76 Aboriginal families removed from East Perth<sup>83</sup>.

The various pieces of 'native welfare' legislation were amended and reconfigured many times but not technically repealed until the early 1970s<sup>84</sup>. As a consequence until the 1980s, and sometimes later, many Noongar had little choice but to live in poorly kept rental accommodation or camps in and around places like East Perth, on the fringes of their traditional boodjar<sup>85</sup>.

#### 4.5 Ngulla boodjarup: Some important local places, names and meanings in the area

Noongar language is central to Noongar identity, culture and land use. One of the features of the southwest of Western Australia is that Noongar place names act as significant markers of their use and history. These names remain as a way for people to keep connected to their country and heritage and give them a sense of belonging, their obligations and relationships. Indeed arguably the "language of the land" (Noongar place names) connects all Western Australians to their cultural heritage. Place names tells us if a place is sacred (such as the Waugal<sup>86</sup> Hill in Fremantle, or Goonininup below Kings Park, or Garrungup<sup>87</sup>), how we should conduct ourselves (such as introducing ourselves and seeking permission to pass through other people's country) and the existence of food resources (such as Karrakatta<sup>88</sup> or Mandyuranup<sup>89</sup> at Point Resolution 'fish'). Table 3 summarizes some important places, names and meanings within proximity of Wellington Square, see also Figure 7 and 8. It should be noted with regards to the locations of these places, Noongar people do not always want to disclose the exact location in order to prevent potential degradation or vandalism. Thus the locations should be regarded as *indicative only*.

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<sup>83</sup> cited in Jebb 2011, p. 53

<sup>84</sup> See Australian Human Rights Commission, "The Laws – Western Australia" (Sydney: Australian Human Rights Commission, n.d.) <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/site5navigation5> (accessed 25 October 2016).

<sup>85</sup> Cook 2016, p. 1.

<sup>86</sup> Noongar Rainbow Serpent – Waugal, Waakal, Wargle, Woggal – spellings all refer to the one and same mythological being

<sup>87</sup> name of the Waugal cave and meaning "place of anger"

<sup>88</sup> means place of the crabs

<sup>89</sup> a place to catch fish

TABLE 3. IMPORTANT PLACES IN PROXIMITY TO WELLINGTON SQUARE 90

Place name	Noongar place name	Meaning
Near the rise of Kings Park Kings Park	Byerup Yogarin	Place of Zamia plants and its nuts Place for catching kangaroo
Perth Water	Buneenboro	Between Narrows and Causeway
Heirison Island	Matagarup Kakaroomup Boodjar-Gorden	Place where the river is only leg deep Where Balbuk's mother was born Statue of Yagan
Lake Henderson	Danjanberu Goongarnula Yarreenup	Shallow lake where zamias grow Place of stinking spring with moss
Hyde Park	Boodjamooling	Men's place for initiation
North bank of Perth Water	Booneenboro Gabee darbal	Very big water
Point Fraser	Beeabboolup	Place of many fish
Eliza Bay	Goodroo	
Meeting area Kings Park	Wandaraguttagurrup	Place where holes towards the ocean
Statue of Queen Victoria	Gabbikalga	Once an old hollow tree that collected water
Near Esplanade	Dyeedyallup	Campsite near Burt Way
Near Pt Fraser	Beeabboolup	Place of many fish
Government House	Kooraree	Fanny Bulbuk's grandmother buried here
Foreshore between William and Barrack	Gumap	Fishing area
Perth City – West End	Gooninup	Camping spot of Yellagonga
Claisebrook	Mandalup	Place of small marsupial

<sup>90</sup> Hughes-Hallett, D. 2010. Indigenous History of the Swan and Canning Rivers. Student work placement: Swan River Trust.

FIGURE 9. LOCATION OF IMPORTANT PLACES WITHIN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO WELLINGTON SQUARE

FIGURE 10. LOCATION OF IMPORTANT PLACES WITHIN THE BROADER CITY OF PERTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

#### 4.5.1 Beeliar – Swan River

The Beeliar<sup>91</sup> - Swan River is an iconic Noongar 'site'. Whadjuk Noongar people associate the river as the home of the Waugal and other important creation Stories. The foreshore was referred to [by Tom Bennell] as Wardanup<sup>35</sup>. The Wardan and Beeliar were places the Noongar people traversed often for hunting and gathering food, to collect freshwater from the nearby springs, trade and other matters of ceremonial and cultural importance.

Throughout the boodja (area), there were and continue to be important waterways interconnected with the old tracks of other ancestral spirits who travelled across the country. These ancestral spirits encountered each other and in the course of these encounters created the features of the landscape such as hills, lakes, swamps and the stars<sup>92</sup>.

FIGURE 11. DEPICTION OF WAUGAL BY THE LATE SHANE PICKETT



As mentioned earlier Noongar offer accounts of how the Waugal created the Beeliar (river) by “making its way down the river, creating the bends at Belmont and Maylands before emerging through the Narrows into Perth Water to

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<sup>91</sup> Beeliar, Beelya or Bilya are also often used. Many Noongar also use Darbal Yaragan to refer to the Swan River. This term is more likely to literally translate to the estuarine sections of the river.

<sup>92</sup> Stocker, L. Collard, L & Rooney, A. 2016) Aboriginal world views and colonisation: implications for coastal sustainability, *Local Environment*, 21:7, 844-865; Vinnicombe, P. 1989 p. 19.

create the large expanse of downstream water”<sup>93</sup>. Vinnicombe<sup>94</sup> and Bates<sup>95</sup> both observe that the Waugal is also believed to have created permanent water sources at places where it rested, and a number of these locations subsequently became important centres for trade and exchange<sup>96</sup>.

Wellington Square sits within an area central to Waugal narratives. Whadjuk Noongar people believe that the Waugal can be a destructive force if not respected or if its resting place is disturbed and if this happens all the water will dry up<sup>97</sup>.

Whadjuk/Balardong Elder Dorothy Winmar recounts:

They reckon without the Waakal around they would have no water. They would not let the kids go and torment the Waakal. They (Noongar) would drive them away. There is a Waakal in the Swan River and he very rarely shows himself. If the water was muddy, the old grannies used to say don't swim in there, because he is having a feed. Don't swim (warra wirrin or bad spirit); wait until the water is clear then you can go and jump in (kwop wirrin or good spirit). He was very important to their lives, because they believed in having fresh water. They wanted the water, so they wanted the snake to stay alive<sup>98</sup>.

The effect of disturbing areas important to Waugal can be devastating to people's health and the future of a place<sup>99</sup>. For example, Whadjuk Noongar Elders report that “when C.Y. O'Connor wanted to create Fremantle Port, he used explosives to blow up the [sand] bar [Yondock's tail] across the Swan River. This created a salt-water environment in what was once a fresh water environment and caused great distress to the Noongars at the time”<sup>100</sup>. Some suggest that Noongar then put a curse on him causing him to suffer enormously from poor mental health, eventually causing him to ride into the water near Robb's Jetty and shoot himself<sup>101</sup>.

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<sup>93</sup> Australian Interaction Consultants (AIC) Report – City of Fremantle.

<sup>94</sup> Vinnicombe 1989, p. 17.

<sup>95</sup> Bates 1966

<sup>96</sup> Hammond, J.E. 1933 *Winjan's People: The Story of the South West Australian Aborigines*. Perth: Imperial Printing.

<sup>97</sup> Armstrong, F.F. 1836. Manners and habits of the Aborigines of Western Australia. *Perth Gazette 1836*. Bates, D. 1985. (Ed. White, I). *The Native Tribes of Western Australia*. Canberra: National Library.

<sup>98</sup> Winmar, Dorothy. 2002. Oral Interview. Transcribed in 2002. Cited in Nidja Beeliar Boodjar Noonookurt Nyininy: A Nyoongar Interpretive History Of The Use Of Boodjar (Country) In The Vicinity Of Murdoch University. L Collard, S Harben. Murdoch University.

<sup>99</sup> Palmer, Kingsley (1976). Aboriginal oral tradition from the south west of Western Australia. *Folklore, No. 87*. pp. 76-80.

<sup>100</sup> Collard, L., L. Stocker, and A. Rooney. 2013. *Nyoongar Wardan Katitjin Bidi - Derbal Nara*. Australia: City of Cockburn and Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute.

<sup>101</sup> Len Collard, personal communication, February 17 2016.



The Beelias around Perth was also very important to Noongar as a major source of fresh water, food and other resources. The foreshores of the Beelias - referred to as Wardanup by Whadjuk Noongar Elder Tom Bennell<sup>102</sup> - contained numerous freshwater springs and an abundance of plant and animal resources. Many campsites are known to have been located near these food and water sources and Drake and Kennealy refer to Noongar camping and fishing along the coast and hunted for other wildlife that lived in the vicinity of the swamps<sup>103</sup>. Clearly the swamp area that 'sits' under Wellington Square is one such area.

The foreshores and the former sandbars at places close to Wellington Square also facilitated Noongar travel for hunting and gathering food, collecting freshwater from the nearby springs, trade and other matters of ceremonial and cultural importance. For example, the former sandbars around *Boodjargabbeelup* - Point Fraser was a significant crossing point, which facilitated the seasonal clockwise movement of Noongar along the *bidi*. The destruction of the sandbar significantly impacted and disrupted these runs, which had long lasting detrimental effects on Noongar social, cultural and spiritual life<sup>104</sup>.

Talking about the river areas one Whadjuk Noongar Elder recalled what life would have been like before colonization. She said:

What my Grandmother told me, the way she told it to me, it sounded like it was paradise. They [Noongar] didn't want for anything. They lived off the land and the fish from the water. They got the kangaroo skins pegged out and cut them up to dry them and sewed them to make coats; yongka booka, or kangaroo coats, choota bags out of them, rugs to sit in. They were quite contented with their lives. Yes, they used to catch their fish with spears (gidjees). They used to hunt with spears, catch possums and all sorts of animals with fur on them to make the kids clothes out of them; those bookas. Without the booka, it was very cold in the winter. They even made shoes out of fur. They were very clever people; we are still clever. They [Noongar] hunted for their living and lived off their land ... wedjelas [white people] took over and our Elders cannot teach our young people to go out to hunting and fishing. We can't hunt near the Swan River or fish. We have to have a license. We can't hunt anymore because we no land left. We have to have a license to go

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<sup>102</sup> Video of Tom Bennell oral histories at Boyagin Rock in 1986. (Private collection of Len Collard)

<sup>103</sup> Drake, Cathy, and Shona Kennealy. 1995. *Recollections of the Beelias Wetlands*. Melville, WA: Publisher Unknown.

<sup>104</sup> Collard, L. Winfield, C. 2012. *Boodjargabbeelup/Point Fraser*. Noongar Cultural Interpretation. City of Perth.

on properties now<sup>105</sup>.

#### **4.5.2 Boodjargabbeelup – Point Fraser**

Noongar have a long association with the area now known as Point Fraser. *Boodjargabbeelup* or the place where the water meets the land was one of the main crossing points to the eastern side of the *beelya* or river. This area included shallow water and exposed mud flats making it important for both fishing and moving from north to south<sup>106</sup>. The City of Perth have produced a brochure to accompany interpretive public art work created in this area<sup>107</sup>.

#### **4.5.3 Goongoongup – Claisebrook**

Claisebrook is the water source that allowed for the Perth lakes' and swamp system to flow into the Swan River. There is also evidence of fresh springs in this area. References to this place (and its richness to local people by non-Aboriginal people) date back to the first party who visited the area. Mr. Fraser of Captain Stirling's exploration party made references to a spring of "delicious fresh water" at or near Claise Brook<sup>108</sup>.

Claise Brook is also listed under the Aboriginal Heritage Act as a significant site and it was important because: 1) it linked freshwater springs, lakes and swamps (and their associated rich ecologies) to the Swan River, 2) it continued to be a source of food (such as gilgie) for Aboriginal people into the 1960s and 3) it was an important camping place for Aboriginal people until the areas redevelopment in the 1990s<sup>109</sup>.

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<sup>105</sup> Winmar, Dorothy. 2002. Oral Interview. Cited in *Nidja Beeljar Boodjar Noonookurt Nyinyiny: A Nyoongar Interpretive History Of The Use Of Boodjar (Country) In The Vicinity Of Murdoch University*. L Collard, S Harben. Murdoch University.

<sup>106</sup> Collard and Winfield 2012

<sup>107</sup> Collard and Winfield 2012

<sup>108</sup> Hillyer 2001 p. 42.

<sup>109</sup> See Jebb 2011. p. 54

FIGURE 12. RECONSTRUCTED VIEW OF PERTH IN 1827 (LOOKING WEST FROM THE CLAISE BROOK ENTRY TO THE SWAN RIVER ACROSS THE LAKES OF CENTRAL PERTH) SOURCE: EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY 2014©.



#### 4.5.4 *Ma'ta-garup* – Heirison Island

The name of this place literally means “leg deep” in reference to the shallowness of the water at this point of the river. Importantly this area was an old Noongar fording place, one of a number of places where people crossed from one side of the river to the next. No surprisingly with the arrival of non-Aboriginal people this place retained its strategic importance as a place where traffic moved from one side of Perth to the other, eventually becoming the Causeway.<sup>110</sup>

#### 4.5.5 East Perth Girls' Home – Bennett House

The "East Perth Half-Caste Girls Home" (also known as the "Native and Half Caste Girls Home") was opened in 1931 by A.O. Neville, the Chief Protector of Aborigines.

Neville was keen on setting up a place to house around twenty 'girls' (the name he used for women aged from their teens into their mature years) who were working in and around Perth as domestic servants. He chose the run-down

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<sup>110</sup> Bates D. 1966

former headmaster's quarters of the East Perth State School as it was free and no longer in use because of its poor condition. In a pattern that was to become familiar there was considerable opposition to the opening of the home as people claimed that accommodating Aboriginal young women in East Perth would bring "a bad element to the area"<sup>111</sup>.

Each year hundreds Aboriginal young women passed through the home, coming from government settlements such as the Moore River Mission to complete "domestic training" and become servants for white people or moving between other institutions. As it was located close to Royal Perth Hospital the home was also the main destination for Aboriginal women who had become pregnant to white station owners, homesteaders and labourers. These women were sent from 'Native' Reserves, mission homes, settlements, townships and stations from as far away as the Kimberley to have their babies. Many of these children were then removed from their mothers, sent other institutions and white foster homes. Often the cycle would continue with them returning to when they too were old enough to train for domestic service, go out to work or have their own babies<sup>112</sup>.

In 1952 East Perth Girls' Home was renamed Bennett House, the purpose of which was to become a 'home for transient and outpatient native women and children'. Until 1963, those taking on the responsibility of Commissioner of Native Affairs and Native Welfare were the guardians of children and young people placed at Bennett House. In 1972, the Department for Community Welfare took over these responsibilities and continued to run Bennett House as a hostel. In 1981, full responsibility for Bennett House was transferred to Aboriginal Hostels Ltd. In the early hours of Sunday morning, October 25, 1998 Bennett House was demolished by order of the East Perth Redevelopment Authority<sup>113</sup>.

Before its demolition Bennett House had been list as an Aboriginal Site with the Department of Aboriginal Sites of the WA Museum, and was listed with the Aboriginal Affairs Department as Ethnographic site No. S02793, type camp/reserve.

In 1996 Kevin Pallas Architects, assessed that the former Teachers Quarters and Infants School (this included Bennett House and Jack Davis Hostel) to be significant to the Aboriginal community of Perth and provided an example of a "rare, uncommon or endangered aspect [s] of the cultural heritage of Western Australia," for its history

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<sup>111</sup> Hillyer 2001 p. 42.

<sup>112</sup> Hillyer 2001 p. 48

<sup>113</sup> Hillyer 2001 p. 43

as a hostel providing accommodation to country Aboriginal medical transit patients from the 1930s to the recent past<sup>114</sup>.

#### **4.5.6 The 'Bull Paddock' – East Perth**

This was an open space just to the south of Claise Brook often used by Aboriginal people camping and socializing in and around East Perth throughout the twentieth century until the East Perth redevelopment work. According to Helena Pell Pritchard, an Aboriginal woman raised in East Perth, this was the 'Aboriginal reserve in the city'.

The Bull Paddock is thought to have got its name from its very early colonial use as the area with the Claise Brook and the Swan as its northern and eastern boundaries where bulls were separated from cows by a little fencing. According to Jebb this history served its name well, later being used as a euphemistic description for an area perfectly suited for 'socialising' in the reeds and bushes slightly out of the gaze of officials. Two Aboriginal people interviewed by Jebb separately claimed that the Bull Paddock was a place "where many of the nieces and nephews were conceived"<sup>115</sup>.

This and adjacent areas were also important places where Aboriginal people camped when they had missed their trains home to their camps and homes out in places such as Bassendean and Bayswater. Ken Colbung recounted:

In amongst all the reeds and rushes was where the Aboriginal people had camped for thousands of years; they were still camping, because there was a little bit of water that used to get away (from springs). Then there was the lagoon that came from Claise Brook fresh water, and that's what they used to use ... They used to campy there overnight to get back to Bayswater and the other places where the big camps were<sup>116</sup>.

#### **4.5.7 The 'Bunna' – East Perth**

The 'Bunna' was the abbreviation for the Bunbury Railway Bridge. In and around the bridge was a favourite place for children to swim and Aboriginal people to camp. From the 1940s to the 1970s a pipe from the power station poured out warm water to the Swan River, making it ideal for swimming. As Mr Ray Blackwood<sup>117</sup> recounted, the

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<sup>114</sup> Hillyer 2001 p. 50. Note: During the 1950s the Infants School wing of the former East Perth State School was structurally connected to Bennett House. This was later to become Jack Davis Hostel and was used as a hostel facility for Aboriginal people from all over Western Australia who required medical treatment at Royal Perth Hospital.

<sup>115</sup> Jebb 2011, p. 54

<sup>116</sup> Colbung cited in Jebb 2011, p. 54

<sup>117</sup> cited in Jebb 2011, p. 57

Bridge and the warm pipe from the power station made an ideal location for Aboriginal families:

Our main swimming area was the actual Bridge, and the *bunna*, the pipe coming out of the power station – it used to be the cooling system, we used to call it ‘the boiler’ ... we’d jump in and we’d get washed down the river ... (laughs) cause it was all this warm water coming out, just gushing up, and you’d jump in there and you’d get pushed up to the surface and you’d get washed down the river a bit. We lived pretty dangerous because there were old bridges there for years and we knew where the pylons were under the water, and we had to be careful we didn’t dive on them or .. that was part of the fun.

#### **4.5.8 Miller’s Cave – East Perth**

Prior to the East Perth redevelopment project another place Aboriginal people frequented and often camped was known as Miller’s Cave. This area was situated near the Lord Street railway crossing, near Brown and Royal Streets. Darryl Ogilvie<sup>118</sup> described Miller’s Cave and its use in the following way:

Miller’s Cave was initially the Miller’s Timber Yard area. They bulldozed that area down and they left a lot of the concrete slabs there. They were the big pylons. And they were structured for them to lay where you could get shelter under them. And Noongars woke up to that; they could go and sit under those shelters and a drink there. And they could build little fires around. I think at the time – this is coincidental – Charley Pride was on then ... he was the main man them days and he was singing that song ‘Miller’s Cave’, and that sort of took off from singing with him. And it’s still called Miller’s Cave today even though it’s a car park.

## **4.6 Whajuk boordier: important Noongar people for the area**

### **4.6.1 Yagan and Midgegooroo**

Yagan and Midgegooroo were two important men for the broader Perth area at the time of contact. According to Balardong/Wiilman Janet Hayden: “We have always said that this is Yagan and Midgegooroo’s country. This is the foundation of Midgegooroo and Yagan’s family... this is his tribal country right here. You could say this is Yagan’s country ... and Bennell’s too.”<sup>119</sup>

The locality most frequented by Midgegooroo and his group lay south of the Swan Estuary and the Canning River,

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<sup>118</sup> Ogilvie cited in Jebb 2011, p. 55

<sup>119</sup> Hayden cited in Collard, L. and Harben, S. 2002 *Nidja Beeljar Boodjar Noonookurt Nyininy: A Nyoongar Interpretive History Of The Use Of Boodjar (Country) In The Vicinity Of Murdoch University*. Murdoch University.

stretching down to Mangles Bay, half-way towards the Murray River . . . the area to which he and his family had customary usage rights extended west to the mouth of the [Swan] river [Fremantle], and also further north of the Swan estuary to Lake Monger, and north east to the Helena River. While his son Yagan moved freely into the area north of the Swan estuary from the crossing at 'the Flats' [Heirisson Island, just east of Perth city centre] to the lakes behind Perth and yet further north to Upper Swan<sup>120</sup>. Each Noongar moort (family) had their own land for hunting and gathering purposes and regarded the incursion of others onto it as trespass, although resources were shared freely with neighbours<sup>121</sup>.

Midgegooroo's family were forced off their lands and moved to Lake Monger, three kilometres to the north of their traditional beelya karla (river camping grounds).

Many non-Indigenous people described Yagan, who was a Whadjuk boordier and patriot who defended Whadjuk Noongar boodja in the early days of colonisation, as a "native savage". However, his moort and other Noongar know him as Whadjuk boordier (landowner, patriot, warrior and defender of Noongar boodja, moort and kaartadjin)<sup>122</sup>.

#### **4.6.2 Fanny Balbuk (Yooreel)**

*Balbuk*, also known as Fanny, was a Noongar *yorgka boordier* or important and leading Noongar woman who was born on *Kakaroomup* or Heirisson Island at or before the time of first contact. She is particularly famous for her strength and insistence that Noongar rights to country had been seriously breached. Her *karleep* (where her home fires burned) included the area in and around Wellington Square<sup>123</sup>.

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<sup>120</sup> Hallam, Sylvia J., and Lois Tilbrook. eds. 1990. *Aborigines of the Southwest Region, 1829-1840. The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians. Vol. 8.* Nedlands, Western Australia: University of Western Australia Press.

<sup>121</sup> Harben, S. Collard, L. Stasiuk, G. Nelson, D. nd. Recording Traditional Knowledge, Avon Catchment Council.

<sup>122</sup> Green, N 1981 Broken Spears: Aborigines and Europeans in the southwest of Australia, Perth p. 79.

<sup>123</sup> Bates, D 2004. My natives and I. Hesperian Press. p. 65.

FIGURE 13. GROUP OF ABORIGINAL WOMEN AT PERTH, INCLUDING FANNY BALBUK (FAR RIGHT). SOURCE: STATE LIBRARY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA© 25341P



After the Perth Railway Station was built, the Perth Lakes drained and other places were built along her bidi (track), Fanny Balbuk would break down any fence, walk through any house, yard or building to continue her journey through her country, maintaining her rights to boodjar by walking through and across the properties of the newcomers.

*"... from there (between the lakes and Herisson Island), a straight track had led to the place where once she had gathered jilgies and vegetable food with other women [Noongar yorgkas]... [climbing] over fences and walking through [the property of Wedjelas]. When a house was built in the way, she broke its fence-palings with her digging stick [wanna] and harged up the steps and through the rooms ..."<sup>124</sup>*

Daisy Bates<sup>125</sup> wrote at the time:

To the end of her life she raged and stormed at the usurping of her beloved home ground. .... Through fences and over them, Balbuk took the straight track to the end. When a house was built in the way, she broke its fence-palings with her digging stick and charged up the steps and through the rooms.

Fanny Balbuk also famously took her protests about the occupation of Noongar boodja to the government of the

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<sup>124</sup> Collard, L., Palmer, D. (1998) *A Noongar Interpretive History of the use of Boodjar in the Vicinity of the UWA*. Aboriginal and Islander Studies, WA: Murdoch University.

<sup>125</sup> Bates, D 1938 'Last of the Bibbulmun Race', in *The Passing of the Aborigines: A Lifetime Spent Among the Natives of Australia*, John Murray: London.



time:

One of her favourite annoyances was to stand at the gates of Government House, reviling all who dwelt within, in that the stone gates guarded by a sentry enclosed her grandmother's burial ground<sup>126</sup>.

The freshwater spring that fed Claisebrook was clearly part of Fanny Balbuk's 'run'. She is said to have regularly caught gilgies from the area<sup>127</sup>.

**FIGURE 14. FANNY BALBUK'S TRACK. THE POSSIBLE ROUTE OF FANNY BALBUK'S TRACK WAS DRAWN FROM HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS AND SUPERIMPOSED ON A RECONSTRUCTED IMAGE OF CENTRAL PERTH AS IT WOULD HAVE APPEARED AT SETTLEMENT. SOURCE: EDITH COWAN UNIVERISTY 2014**



#### 4.6.3 Jubaitch

Jubaitch was a Noongar man described by Daisy Bates as "among the earliest of the dispossessed". He was a small child when non-Aboriginal people first arrived. Bates claims that Jubaitch and his family did not enter into immediate conflict with the newcomers because they were believed to be the spirits of their own ancestors, returned to country to join their family. Bates provides a generous, albeit highly romantic, account of first contact with Jubaitch and his family offering social support, food and comfort to the newcomers. He is said to have grew up

<sup>126</sup> Bates 1938.

<sup>127</sup> Jebb, M. 2011. It was just like a reserve in the city: Aboriginal oral histories of East Perth around the Power Station. p. 38-62. In Layman, L. (Ed) Powering Perth: A History of the East Perth power Station. Perth: Black Swan.

among the wam (strangers), “keeping to his laws but also becoming familiar with the European ways”<sup>128</sup>.

Early authorities made him a kind of police official, largely due to his ability to track and catch convicts and act as a conciliator with other Noongar. He settled on Maamba Native Reserve near the Darling Range in the early 1900s and made himself available to Bates to record elements of Noongar culture and law. Jubaitch, died in 1907 and was buried in Guildford<sup>129</sup>.

#### 4.6.4 Windan

Windan was one of two wives of the Noongar boordier (leader) Yellagonga. This meant that Windan had rights and obligations in relation to the district often referred to as Mooro. This included areas on the north side of the Swan River such as what is now called Claise Brook and the broad East Perth area<sup>130</sup>. It is believed that she passed away in the mid 1800s and was buried just to the north of Claise Brook, in the vicinity of what was often referred to as the Old Bunbury Railway Bridge. Although no remains have been subsequently found during the works for the new railway bridge a plaque and the naming of the new bridge commemorates her life<sup>131</sup>.

TABLE 4. KEY INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES LIVING IN EAST PERTH FROM 1920S TO 1970S<sup>132</sup>

Harris family	Ogilvie family	Stacey family
Bodney family	Isaacs family	Pell family/John Pell
Garlett family	Mippy family	Ford family
Bertha Isaacs	Richard Wilkes	Jimmy Garlett
Jessie Argyle	Ken Colbung	Jacky Layland
Edward Brown	Helena Pell Pritchard	Peter Stacey
Raymond Blackwood	Anna Fielder	Dom Pedro
Alf Mippy	Tommie Bropho	Charlie Pell
Helena Pell Pritchard	Helena Clarke	John Froome
Neville Bartlett	Dolly Wheeler	Bob Edgill
Edward Ford	Ida Colbung	Darryl Ogilvie

<sup>128</sup> Bates, D. Series 2, 10 - Jubaitch. Typescript. Daisy Bates digital archive. 6p. + typescript draft, with ms. corrections. <https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/handle/2440/89394> accessed 5 November 2016.

<sup>129</sup> Bates, D. Series 2, 10 - Jubaitch. Typescript. Daisy Bates digital archive. 6p. + typescript draft, with ms. corrections. <https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/handle/2440/89394> accessed 5 November 2016.

<sup>130</sup> Richard Wilkes, *Preliminary Report on Nyoongar Sites of Significance and the Past Nyoongar Occupation of the Swan River Foreshore* (for Capital City Development, 1996). Note: According to Grey(1838), Yellagonga was a Didaroke from a hills family. This meant that he possibly held land through his wives who were from the coastal plains. See Sylvia Hallam and Lois Tilbrook, *Aborigines of the S.W. Region 1829-1840: A Bicentennial Dictionary of WA*, vol. III, 348-53, and 320.

<sup>131</sup> MRD, telephone interview, Dec.1999. Also, the site was not registered as a burial site with AAD, only within the "camping site" (Bunbury Bridge/Powerhouse). Telephone interview with Heritage and Culture section, AAD, Dec. 1999. Cited in Hillyer, V. 2001. Bennett House: Aboriginal heritage as real estate in East Perth. *Balayi: Culture, Law and Colonialism. Vol 2(1)* p. 41-72.

<sup>132</sup> Mostly featured in Jebb 2011

## 4.7 Existing Registered Aboriginal Sites in proximity to Wellington Square

A search was undertaken of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System (AHIS), which identified a number of Registered Aboriginal Sites and Other Heritage Places within the City of Perth Local Government Area (LGA) boundary, see Appendix 2. There are ten Registered Aboriginal Sites within a 1 km radius of Wellington Square<sup>133</sup>, see Table 5 and Figure 15. These sites are protected under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (the AHA). Of these ten sites, the boundaries of one site, DAA 29278 Midgegooroo's execution and burial, cover Wellington Square.

**TABLE 5. SUMMARY OF REGISTERED ABORIGINAL SITES LOCATED WITHIN A 1 KM RADIUS OF WELLINGTON SQUARE (SOURCE: DAA'S AHIS, NOVEMBER 2016)**

DAA Site Id	Site Name	Site Type
3536	Swan River	Mythological
3589	Heirisson Island	Mythological, camp, hunting place, meeting place, plant resource
3694	Claisebrook camp	Camp, water source
3767	East Perth Power Station	Camp, meeting place, other
3798	Government House	Skeletal material/burial, camp, water source
3799	Victoria Square	Skeletal material/burial
15915	Burswood Island camp	Camp
17848	Weld Square	Meeting place, other: major activity area
21621	Kilang Minangaldjka	Water source
29278	Midgegooroo's execution and burial	Historical, Skeletal material/burial

Fifteen Other Heritage Places were also identified within a 1 km radius of Wellington Square, see Table 6. None of the Other Heritage Places are located within Wellington Square.

**TABLE 6. SUMMARY OF OTHER HERITAGE PLACES LOCATED WITHIN A 1 KM RADIUS OF WELLINGTON SQUARE (SOURCE: DAA'S AHIS, NOVEMBER 2016)**

DAA Site Id	Place Name	Site Type	Status
3408	East Perth: Bennett House	Camp, Other: Reserve	Lodged
3584	Dyeedyallalup	Camp, Ochre, Water Source, Other	Stored data /Not a site
3586	Perth Gazette	Camp	Stored data /Not a site
3587	Barracks Arch	Camp	Stored data /Not a site
3697	Haig Park	Camp, Other	Stored data /Not a site
3702	Esplanade	Camp, Hunting place	Stored data /Not a site
3737	Perth central railway station	Mythological, Hunting place	Stored data /Not a site
3765	George and Hay Streets	Camp	Stored data /Not a site
3790	Perth Technical College	Camp, Water source	Stored data /Not a site
3800	Gabbi-kalga Kings Park	Skeletal material/Burial, Named place, Water source	Stored data /Not a site

<sup>133</sup> Note that sites DAA 17848 Weld Square and DAA 15915 Burswood Island camp are not located within the City of Perth Local Government Area.

18936	Kings Park	Ceremonial, Historical, Mythological	Stored data /Not a site
21409	Point Lewis Roundabout		Stored data /Not a site
21440	Mounts Bay River Walling		Stored data /Not a site
21535	East Bridge Precinct	Camp	Stored data /Not a site
21536	Trafalgar Precinct	Camp	Stored data /Not a site

#### 4.8 Places on the State Heritage Register in proximity to Wellington Square

A search was also undertaken of the Western Australian State Heritage Office's (SHO) State Heritage Register, (InHerit). Three heritage places within the immediate vicinity of Wellington Square have been listed on the State Heritage Register, see Table 7. Wellington Square is not listed on the State Heritage Register.

**TABLE 7. PLACES ON THE STATE HERITAGE REGISTER WITHIN THE VICINITY OF WELLINGTON SQUARE.**

Place No.	Place Name	Address
2173	Perth Girls School (former) (Police Traffic Branch, Police Traffic Dept)	2 Wellington Street, East Perth
4331	House 33 Wellington Street	33 Wellington Street, East Perth
2174	East Perth Primary School (former) (Jack Davis House – Infant School (former))	76 Wittenoom Street, East Perth

FIGURE 15. LOCATION OF REGISTERED ABORIGINAL SITES WITHIN 1 KM RADIUS OF WELLINGTON SQUARE (SOURCE: DAA AHIS, NOVEMBER 2016)

## 4.9 Archaeological potential of Wellington Square

As part of their 2001 Wellington Square cultural heritage assessment, Thompson Palmer engaged archaeologist Gaye Nayton to conduct an assessment of the archaeological potential of Wellington Square. Nayton undertook a detailed review and analysis of historic, photographic and archaeological evidence. She found that the historical evidence indicated that there were several structures and activity areas within Wellington Square, whilst the aerial photography and archaeological evidence suggested that the sites of these features and areas have been buried rather than destroyed. Nayton concluded that Wellington Square has significant subsurface archaeological potential and contains a series of sites, mostly buried to a depth greater than 25 cm below the turf level.

Nayton characterises the subsurface archaeology of Wellington Square as including a range of Aboriginal sites from pre-European to historic times as well as materials associated mainly with sporting and leisure activities which includes the post-contact use of the space by Aboriginal people as a meeting place. Specifically, she states that the evidence suggests that:

- The site of the caretaker's hours and garden still exist as archaeological sites under and around the mound in the north western corner of the square.
- The 1906 toilet site is underneath the present toilets. The current building is likely to have impacted the older site.
- The features to the east of the toilets and caretaker's site are associated with the 1902 cricket grandstand and perhaps the later shed.
- The 1906 tennis court, tennis pavilion and dressing rooms in the north eastern corner of the square still exist as archaeological sites.
- The children's playgrounds are still discernible as archaeological sites.
- There were at least two air raid shelters built in the square.
- There are two unidentified areas of features that date to at least 1948 in the northern half of the square that are visible today as areas of stressed grass. It cannot be determined on the available evidence if these features are also caused by the presence of former air raid shelters or whether they are the result of unidentified former features within the park.
- All the historic features noted above are buried below c. 25 cm but exist above the 1845 fill used to reclaim the swampy ground.

- The edges of the park shaded by trees are utilised for gathering groups of people which has left a scatter of relatively modern material in the upper c. 25 cm of soil.
- Evidence of pre-contact or early post-contact Aboriginal usage of the swamps or any early colonial use of the swampy area is deeply buried and located under a defining layer of 1845 fill.

Nayton established through her research that the majority of historic sites and activities likely to leave an archaeological signature are located within the northern half of the park with the exception of the two air raid shelters which have been identified in the southern half. Further, evidence of the use of the park by Aboriginal people in historic times may extend around all shaded edges of the park. See Figure 16.

FIGURE 16. AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL (SOURCE: CITY OF PERTH)



**Archaeological Evidence**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b> Caretaker house + garden 1913-14</p> <p><b>2</b> Cricket grandstand + dressing rooms (1902-6), and public toilets to west</p> <p><b>3</b> Approx area currently known to be used by Aboriginal people</p> | <p><b>4</b> Camping along swamp and lakes</p> <p><b>5</b> Playground</p> <p><b>6</b> Tennis courts, pavilion + dressing room (1906)</p> <p><b>7</b> Perimeter trees c.1900's</p> |
|---|--|

**Graded Zones of Significance**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>8</b> Approx location of Aboriginal burial site and potential Corroboree site (discovered by COP employees 1942.)</p> | <p><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Considerable</p> <p><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Some</p> <p><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Aboriginal heritage - awaiting assessment</p> |
|---|--|

## 5.0 ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY

An ethnographic survey was conducted by Moodjar Consultancy with Whadjuk traditional owners on Saturday 8 April 2017. The survey included a site visit to Wellington Square followed by a bus tour around East Perth with Whadjuk Working Party stakeholders Mrs Rona Woods, Mrs June Della Bona and Mr Nick Abraham. The site visit was followed by lunch and further consultation at the City Farm, East Perth. The results of the desktop survey were presented to the stakeholders. The site visit started at 10:00am and concluded at 2:00pm. Further consultation about Wellington Square was undertaken by Moodjar Consultancy with stakeholders Mr Don Collard and Mrs Sylvia Collard (Ninyette) in Kondinin, on the 18 and 19 April 2017, and Mr Steve Kinnane and Mrs Kinnane in Hilton Park on 26 April 2017.

### 5.1 Objectives of the ethnographic survey

The specific objectives of the ethnographic survey were to:

1. Conduct an ethnographic survey, consultation and assessment of Wellington Square to identify and record any Aboriginal ethnographic sites as defined under sections 5 and 39 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972;
2. Consult with Whadjuk Traditional Owners about cultural values associated with Wellington Square; and
3. Consult with Whadjuk Traditional Owners to document relevant local knowledge including stories, traditional practise, seasons, people, families, language, connection to place and country and history of Wellington Square.

### 5.2 Ethnographic background

#### 5.2.1 Previous ethnographic surveys

According to the DAA's AHIS, seventeen heritage surveys have been conducted within a 500 m radius of Wellington Square, see Appendix 2. Of these surveys, fifteen have comprised ethnographic surveys and four have incorporated Wellington Square into their survey areas, see Table 8. It should be noted that none of the four surveys that cover the project area specifically address Wellington Square.

TABLE 8. PREVIOUS ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEYS COVERING WELLINGTON SQUARE (SOURCE: DAA AHIS)

DAA Report No.	Author	Project	Findings
21088	Makin, C.	Socio-economic anthropological study of people of Aboriginal descent in the Metropolitan region of Perth, WA	
21817	Machin, B.	Ballaruk (traditional owners) Aboriginal site recording project	
21909	McDonald, E.	Study of groundwater-related Aboriginal cultural values on the Gngarara Mound, Western Australia	
102670	O'Connor, R.	Survey of Aboriginal areas of significance in the Perth metropolitan and Murray River regions.	



### 5.2.2 Existing ethnographic sites

As identified in section 4.7 above, a search was undertaken of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System (AHIS), which identified a number of Registered Aboriginal Sites and Other Heritage Places within the City of Perth Local Government Area (LGA) boundary, see Appendix 2. There are ten Registered Aboriginal Sites within a 1 km radius of Wellington Square<sup>134</sup>, see Table 5 and Figure 15. These sites are protected under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (the AHA). Of these ten sites, the boundaries of one site (DAA 29278 Midgegooroo's execution and burial) cover Wellington Square.

## 5.3 Ethnographic survey results

The Whadjuk stakeholders confirmed that they each had personal and familial connections to Wellington Square. They provided knowledge about Wellington Square, additional to the information included in the desktop review. Specifically, they talked about their personal experiences at Wellington Square, stories of childhood experiences living in East Perth, the key Noongar families who lived within the local area and places of importance within the East Perth area. They also discussed Wellington Square's sense of place and they articulated an individual and collective sense of identity, history and connection to the site (see Appendix 6 for details).

### 5.3.1 Personal experiences and the importance of Wellington Square to Noongar people, families and community

The stakeholders reported personal connections, experiences and childhood memories from Wellington Square. Childhood memories focused around Wellington Square as a playground and source of fun. Memories of adult socialisation were focused around Wellington Square as a central meeting place where people came to socialise, meet people, share news and find out important information. The stakeholders emphasised that there is still a sense of belonging at Wellington Square, the place is still an important meeting place for Aboriginal people today, and the whole park is important to them, see Table 9 for a summary. They also identified the 'Kids Tree' as being of particular importance to them. The Kids Tree comprises a large Moreton Bay Fig Tree (*Ficus macrophylla*) located along the northern boundary of the park at the approximate location 393479 mE, 6464176 mN, see Figure 17 and Figure 18.

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<sup>134</sup> Note that sites DAA 17848 Weld Square and DAA 15915 Burswood Island camp are not located within the City of Perth Local Government Area.

FIGURE 17. THE 'KIDS TREE', WELLINGTON SQUARE



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There was this tree, known as the 'Kids Tree' (big old Moreton bay fig tree) at Wellington Square

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FIGURE 18. LOCATION OF THE 'KIDS TREE', WELLINGTON SQUARE



TABLE 9. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF WELLINGTON SQUARE TO NOONGAR PEOPLE

Overall importance of Wellington Square	Memories of adult social activities	Memories from childhood
It was absolutely a central meeting place for all of the social activities for Noongar people coming in to the City. This is a place central to all the different areas. (ie Other Aboriginal people travelling to Perth)	It was a meeting/drinking place for the adults.	Playground. Used to run under sprinklers, it was a play area for kids, the trees were cubby houses and there was a rope swing.
This was and still is Noongar territory.	The different Noongar who would do work around the different places like grape picking in Midland, Noongars would come to Wellington Square after their shearing pay day on the weekend.	We used to do tarzan swings from the big tree. We would have spent about 90 % of our time in Wellington Square as kids. We would eat and sleep at home but spend the rest of the time in the park.
It was a central meeting place for all Noongar and other Aboriginal people to travel to.	That is how there was a lot of people because they knew someone would be coming in with money to buy drinks. You did not have to make arrangements to meet, everybody just knew to go to Wellington Square. They never had a phone but they just knew to go there. They would meet their new boyfriend or girlfriend. It was also the place that wedjellas would go to have a drink and meet as a pickup place for the women.	All the kids used to play around this area of Wellington Square. Fun place.
Places there are very spiritual. Noongar people lived there and camped there long before the white people come here. Our Dreaming runs through all of this area. We lived near the Swan River and the Waugal lives there. He is important to us.	If other Aboriginal people like the Wongi's travelling to Perth they knew to come to Wellington Square because they knew this was the place that all the Aboriginal people would meet.	There was an old toilet block on corner of Royal and Wittenoom Streets before the new block was built.
Place of belonging.	Never had any trouble with the police.	There was this tree, known as the 'Kids Tree' (big old Moreton bay fig tree) at Wellington Square.
Meeting place for all the Aboriginal people.	It was one of the places where Aboriginal people could go out of the gaze of the Wadgellas. It was public but there was safety for them.	Wellington Square – kids played football and kick a ball around
Aboriginal people have always sat around in the park (Wellington Square).	Information centre for Noongars to find people, find out information etc.	Used to play at the old toilet block in the northeast corner of Wellington Square. The toilet block was covered in vines and they used to make cubbies.
It is a meeting place.	The area fitted everything like a glove it was close to	Rona, June and Nick talked about guy fawkes night when

Still a sense of belonging.	everything.	they were kids and the fire cracker shop in Mt Lawley is still there.
Whole park - a big playground.	It was a place where my mother grew up as an Aboriginal woman around Hyde Park in the 1930s Betty Smith (Kinnane). My mother Jessie Argyle was a domestic servant in 1920-30. She worked at Dilhorne on the corner of Bulwer and Lord Street. She also lived in Moore River and got to meet a lot of other Aboriginal people from Perth. On her one day off she would meet up with other woman who worked as domestic servants and they would meet at a range of places, Government Gardens, White City (down on foreshore near new busport, run by the Ugly Men's Society) including Wellington Square. A lot of the Aboriginal women would go to Anna Fielder's place in Saunder's Street to stay on their visits to Perth from Moore River.	Stanley's butcher shop was on the far side of Wellington Square.
A meeting place for Aboriginal people and still is today.	The Noongar women would sit around and we would listen to them and they would say the "kids all gone	Cemetery at the top of the hill near Hyde Park – sometimes would play there. Some Noongar graves located in the graveyard. John Monger Snr is buried in the graveyard in Plain Street.
	When I was growing up there was not many kids because they were taken away to Moore River. They took a lot of the children from there. I lived around there in the mid-1940's.	Hague Park was on the south side of Claisebrook/River. It used to be hilly, as kids we used to slide down the hills. The hills have now been taken out and it's been built on. There were a few houses in this area. As kids we used to use the swimming pool in the motel (Baileys Motel Hotel) on the corner of Wickham and Bennett Street. Pool is still there but has been made bigger.
		Everyone got on really well in East Perth. Everyone was close, all family.
		My mum would go to the East Perth girls home to catch up with the women to find out where the kids were ie Sister Kates and then she Jessie Argyle (my grandmother) would go to Sister Kates and ask about the kids and the report back to the mothers about their kids.
		Central to kids to meet and play.
		Family and extended family.

### 5.3.2 Key Noongar families who lived in East Perth

During the consultation process the stakeholders identified a number of key Noongar families who were either housed, camped or frequented East Perth from the 1940's onwards. It was reiterated by the stakeholders that there are other families who might have lived in the area but could not be named by them due to the length of time elapsed.

TABLE 10. KEY NOONGAR FAMILIES FROM EAST PERTH

Noongar families – past residents of East Perth	Noongar people camping or frequenting East Perth
Carmen Stacey, Wickham Street	Bropho family
Margaret Abraham, Wickham Street	Don Collard and Sylvia Collard (every 2 weeks to visit his kids at Sister Kates)
Alf and Dory Mippy	Mervyn Collard
Rona Woods, Charles Street and Claisebrook Road	Syd Collard and Pauline Hill
'Old' Suzie, lived near the cemetery	Rosie Ford (Nebro), Royal Street
Uncle Barkley, Royal Street	Arty Collard
Rona Woods, Royal Street	Syd Collard
Nick Abraham, Royal Street	Calyun family
Percy and Alma Garlett, Royal Street	Quartermaine family, Trafalgar Street
Kathy Jones, Brown Street	Peter and Margaret Stacey, Trafalgar Street
Sylvia Collard (Ninyette), 86 Brown Street	Bonnie Morrison, Brown Street or Kensington Street
Pop Butters, 86 Brown Street	Margaret Binder, Brown Street or Kensington Street
Pryor family	Kathy Penny, 127 Kensington Street
Sporty (Charlie) Jones, lived with the Ford family in Royal Street	Nummy Phillips, Brown Street
Dodd family, Norbert Street	Pryor family (Maree, Sylvia (Garlett) and Clifton Pryor, Brown Street
Mrs Pell, Norbert Street	Woods family, Brown Street
Mr Abraham (Grandfather), Wickham Street	Olly and Tiny Kickett, Brown Street

### 5.3.3 Areas of cultural and spiritual significance in proximity to Wellington Square

Listed below are a number of key areas of significance for Whadjuk Noongar people identified both in the desktop review and by the key stakeholders during the consultation process. The areas specifically identified by the stakeholders included the 'Bull Paddock' East Perth, Miller's Cave East Perth, East Perth Girl's Home (Bennett House) and the 'Bunna'.

*'our grandparents used to camp all around the East Perth area' (Woods & Abraham).*

### THE 'BULL PADDOCK' EAST PERTH

This was an open space just to the south of Claise Brook often used by Aboriginal people camping and socializing in and around East Perth throughout the twentieth century until the East Perth redevelopment work. According to Helena Pell Pritchard, an Aboriginal woman raised in East Perth, this was the 'Aboriginal reserve in the city'. This and adjacent areas were also important places where Aboriginal people camped when they had missed their trains home to their camps and homes out in places such as Bassendean and Bayswater. Ken Colbung recounted: In amongst all the reeds and rushes was where the Aboriginal people had camped for thousands of years; they were still camping, because there was a little bit of water that used to get away (from springs). Then there was the lagoon that came from Claise Brook fresh water, and that's what they used to use ... They used to camp there overnight to get back to Bayswater and the other places where the big camps were.

FIGURE 19. BULL PADDOCK SITE



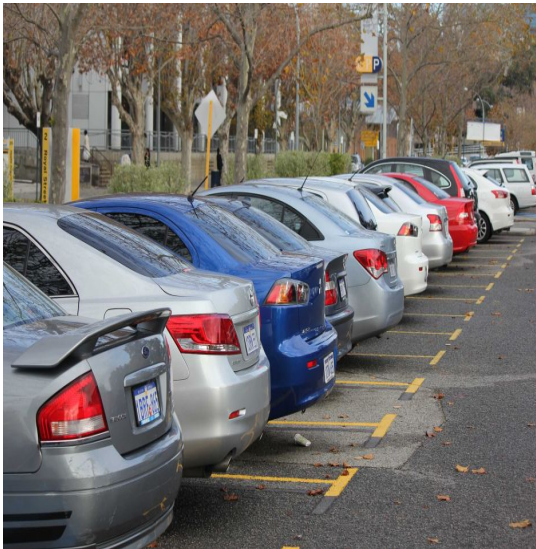
*Places there are very spiritual. Noongar people lived there and camped there long before the white people come here. Our Dreaming runs through all of this area. We lived near the Swan River and the Waugal lives there. He is important to us.*

*(Collard, S)*

### MILLER'S CAVE – EAST PERTH

Prior to the East Perth redevelopment project another place Aboriginal people frequented and often camped was known as Miller's Cave. This area was situated near the Lord Street railway crossing.

FIGURE 20. THE AREA OF MILLERS CAVE TODAY



*When the Noongars were sitting around at this site, Charley Pride was very popular and he had a song called Miller's Cave and this is how the site got its name from the Noongars". (Collard, D)*

#### 5.3.4 Language and identity

Noongar language is central to our identity; all throughout the southwest there are Noongar place names, significant sites and landmarks. These connect us to our sense of place and give us a sense of belonging. The “language of the land” (Noongar place names) connects all Noongar to their cultural heritage. The language also tells us if a place is sacred such as Waugal Mia (the Waugal<sup>135</sup> Hill), Garrungup (name of the Waugal cave and meaning “place of anger”), and the language can tell us where we can and cannot go, it tells us where food resources are such as Karrakatta which means place of the crabs. Mandyuranup – Point Resolution ‘a place to catch fish’. Blackwall Reach is known as Jenalup – place where the feet make a track and Rocky Bay is the location of the Waugal Cave where it resides. Noongar say it is a “sacred’ rock, it is the resting place of the Waugal.”

The City of Perth Project Team acknowledges that language and their meanings is a very important consideration when undertaking projects that require knowledge and interpretation of stories when it incorporates “the first language” in this case the language of the Noongar people.

Language and identity supports the vision and aspiration of the stakeholders to give Noongar place names and meanings in Whadjuk Noongar boodja - country.

<sup>135</sup> Noongar Rainbow Serpent – Waugal, Waakal, Wargle, Woggal – spellings all refer to the one and same Mythological being



*Wellington Square should be known by a Noongar name*

## 5.4 Findings

The results of the ethnographic survey indicate that Wellington Square is of importance and significance to the stakeholders because of its continuing role as a meeting place, an area of social and recreational importance, as site for camping and as a place associated with health, wellbeing and 'medical' treatment. It has functioned continuously as a central meeting and camping place since before colonization, when Wellington Square was part of the lake and swamp system which flowed into the Swan River through the Claise Brook, right up until current times. This swamp area is a highly important place associated with the creation of the world for Whadjuk, a part of the interconnected movements of the *Waugyl* as carried out its task in the *nyittiny* (cold times), "making of the streams and waterways"<sup>136</sup>. Wellington Square is thus situated in an area central to Waugal narratives and it inherently connected to other significant places including the women's birthing sites at Matagarup (Heirisson Island) hunting and ceremonial sites at Kaarta Gar-up, Kaarta Koomba, or Mooro Katta (Kings Park), and the a men's ceremonial ground in the Reabold Hill area<sup>137</sup>.

Based upon the stakeholder consultations and desktop research, there is a strong case that Wellington Square

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<sup>136</sup> Laurie. M. (ed.), 2003. 'Interview with Cedric Jacobs', Town of Vincent Local History Collection (oral history collection), Perth, Australia.

<sup>137</sup> Jacobs cited in Busher, N. 2016 *Yagan Square Cultural Heritage Management Plan*. University of WA.



could constitute an Aboriginal Site under section 5b of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972. Based on Nayton's (2001) assessment of the subsurface archaeological potential of the park there is also the potential that section 5a may also apply to Wellington Square.

The stakeholders also confirmed that whilst the DAA AHIS indicates that Wellington Square is located within the boundary of Registered Aboriginal Site DAA 29278 Midgegooroo's execution and burial, the site is not located at Wellington Square. Therefore, any developments undertaken within Wellington Square would not impact upon DAA 29278 Midgegooroo's execution and burial.

### 5.5 Recommendations from the Ethnographic survey

The City of Perth is advised that the ethnographic survey and consultation for Wellington Square is now complete.

Based upon the findings from the ethnographic and desktop surveys, it is recommended that:

- Wellington Square may meet the requirements of section 5b and 5a of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and therefore should not be impacted upon in any way without Ministerial consent under section 18 of the AHA;
- The City of Perth consults with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs regarding the potential for Wellington Square to meet sections 5b and 5a of the AHA;
- Should the City of Perth wish to undertake works that will impact upon Wellington Square, an application is made for consent to use the land under section 18 of the AHA;
- The City of Perth consult further with SWALSC, the Whadjuk Working Party, Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders and other interested Aboriginal parties about any proposed section 18 application, mitigation and salvage strategies and the management of salvaged materials; and
- Any developments undertaken by the City of Perth do not have any deleterious effect upon the cultural values or significance of Wellington Place, or disrupt the continuity of the role of Wellington Square as a meeting place for Aboriginal people, families and community.

## 6.0 CULTURAL VALUES ASSESSMENT

The following cultural values assessment has been undertaken based upon the information gained through the desktop review, ethnographic survey, stakeholder interviews, cultural values workshop held with the Whadjuk stakeholders at the City Farm on 22 April 2017 and survey of random users of the park in early May 2017. The field work process enabled the stakeholders and other interested parties to share why Wellington Square is culturally important and significant. Many of the Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders articulated an individual and collective sense of identity, history and connection to Wellington Square.

### 6.1 Previous Statement of Significance

The following Statement of Significance for Wellington Square was developed by Thompson Palmer during their 2001 cultural heritage assessment<sup>138</sup>.

*Wellington Square* as a whole is of some cultural heritage significance, exhibiting aesthetic, historic, social and scientific values. It is rare in the City of Perth as an example of the earliest allocation and development of open space for recreation. It retains its original site and the principle landscape elements of open grass and perimeter trees.

*Wellington Square* is valued for the aesthetic quality of the mature perimeter planting within the Square and for its contribution to the surrounding streetscape.

*Wellington Square* has been valued by the community as a venue for different sporting activities since the beginnings of the Perth town, including the first official game of Australian Rules Football to be held in Perth.

*Wellington Square* is valued by Aboriginal people, and members of the non-Aboriginal community, as a place to gather and make contact.

*Wellington Square* is of importance for its use by the Aboriginal people prior to European settlement as a camping/living area and is likely to have spiritual significance.

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<sup>138</sup> Thompson Palmer Pty Ltd, 2001. *Heritage Assessment of Wellington Square, Perth. Part One: Cultural Significance*. Prepared for the City of Perth, March 2001, p. 55.

The Thompson Palmer report did, however, note some limitations with regards to consultation with Aboriginal groups. Whilst they make reference to the general valuing of Wellington Square, they state that more detailed consultation is required to gain a more specific understanding and articulation of the Aboriginal cultural significance of the place. The current assessment has aimed to address these gaps.

## 6.2 Results of the cultural values workshop and interviews

The information gathered about the value, importance and significance of Wellington Square from the cultural values workshop and interviews was guided by the following questions:

- Why is Wellington Square important to you?
- What is important about Wellington Square?
- Which parts of Wellington Square are important to you?

The detailed stakeholder responses are included in Appendix 7.

### 6.2.1 Why is Wellington Square important?

Several key themes emerged about why Wellington Square is important to the Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders including Wellington Square's sense of place; the sense of belonging associated with it; its key roles as an important social space for families and a central information centre; and its role as a playground for Noongar children and families. The stakeholders reported fond and positive childhood memories of Wellington Square as a fun and comfortable place of belonging. Prior to the East Perth development in the 1990s, Wellington Square was one of the few places where Aboriginal people could go and be out of the gaze of the *Wadgellas*. It was public but there was safety there for them. One of the stakeholders also remarked that Wellington Square was like a little bit of bush in the middle of the city which comforted Aboriginal people and provided them with a sense of connection to country and well being.

IT WAS ABSOLUTELY A  
CENTRAL MEETING PLACE  
FOR ALL THE SOCIAL  
ACTIVITIES FOR  
NOONGAR PEOPLE  
COMING IN TO THE CITY.

### 6.2.2 What is important about Wellington Square?

The stakeholders reported several aspects of Wellington Square as being of particular importance to them including the sense of belonging in the park; the ability of the park to act as 'a big playground' where children would play in the 'Kids Tree' and other trees and vines, using them as their cubby houses, run through the sprinklers, balance on the park railing and play on the rope swing. The fact that Wellington Square was and continues to be a key meeting place was also identified as an important aspect.

*It was a place where my mother grew up as an Aboriginal woman around Hyde Park in the 1930s Betty Smith (Kinnane). My mother Jessie Argyle was a domestic servant in 1920-30. She worked at Dilhorne on the corner of Bulwer and Lord Street. She also lived in Moore River and got to meet a lot of other Aboriginal people from Perth. On her one day off she would meet up with other woman who worked as domestic servants and they would meet at a range of places, Government Gardens, White City (down on foreshore near new busport, run by the Ugly Men's Society) including Wellington Square. A lot of the Aboriginal women would go to Anna Fielder's place in Saunder's Street to stay on their visits to Perth from Moore River.*

### 6.2.3 Which parts of Wellington Square are important?

The whole park was identified as being of importance to the stakeholders. A number of important features were specifically noted during the consultation including the open green space; the 'Kids Tree', trees in general and the vines over the old toilet block which all functioned as cubby houses and places to play. The old railing that went around the park was also identified as a source of challenge for children who used to compete with each other to see who could go the furthest balancing on it.

## 6.3 Results of the Park Users survey

Feedback from the Park Users survey indicated that a number of features and characteristics of Wellington Square were particularly valued by its users (see Appendix 10 for full details of park user responses). These aspects included:

- Green space: The mature trees, shade, birds, grass and general green environment are valued, particularly as Wellington Square is viewed as one of the few green spaces with facilities in the CBD.

Wellington Square's green space was also seen to be associated with a sense of relaxation and release within the frenetic business of the city.

- Large, open space: The size and layout of the park is valued as it enabled users to play sports and undertake other activities such as teaching surveying which required a large open space. Users also valued the sense of space and its associated feelings of 'breathing space'.
- Shared space: Park users valued the flexibility of the space and the ability for different users to share the park side by side.
- Facilities: Park users reported that the walking paths, public toilets and well maintained cricket pitch were valued.
- Aboriginal meeting place: Two users identified the significance of Wellington Square as a historic meeting place for Aboriginal people as being important and emphasized that it was important for this to be considered in future planning for the park.
- Economic opportunities: Park users considered the economic opportunities within Wellington Square for small businesses such as food vans to be important<sup>139</sup>.

## 6.4 Cultural values analysis

### 6.4.1 Primary values

#### AESTHETIC VALUES

Wellington Square is valued for its distinctive open green space situated within, and contrasting to, the surrounding urbanised central business district of Perth. The mature trees, shade, bird life, grass and sense of space within the park are valued by all who use, live or work adjacent to, or are associated with the park. The size and openness of the park are valued by its users because it allows the flexibility to 'share the space' and undertake recreational, sporting and social activities side by side.

Wellington Square's green space also has significant qualities and a sense of place which evoke feelings of well being, freedom, relaxation, release and connection to nature within a frenetic urbanised environment. Wellington Square also evokes a sense of belonging for Noongar people who have historically been excluded from other parts

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<sup>139</sup> Although the Burra Charter 2013 explicitly excludes economic value from the consideration of cultural heritage significance, other schemes such as that developed by Darvill 1995 and used by English Heritage consider economic value to constitute a key part of the 'use value' of a heritage place.

of their country, and for other Aboriginal people who travel to Perth City seeking services such as medical treatment.

#### HISTORIC VALUES

Wellington Square has a deep history spanning from the *nyittiny* (cold times) to the current day. The park has a long history of being used as a camping place where Noongar people lived for periods of time. The location of Wellington Square was part of a previously rich ecosystem that provided significant spiritual and physical sustenance to Whadjuk Noongar and formed part of *Beerit* (Perth), which was a significant place of meeting, travel, business and trade. Wellington Square's historic role as a meeting place, area of social and recreational importance, as site for camping and as a place associated with health, wellbeing and 'medical' treatment has continued to present times. This depth and continuity of history is highly valued by Whadjuk Noongar people.

Wellington Square has historic importance for its role in the development of Perth, both as Noongar capital *Beerit* and post-contact city of Perth and the 'renewal' of East Perth. Wellington Square has the potential to address a number of important historic themes including the impacts of colonization including regimes of control, prohibition, exclusion and survival of Aboriginal people; the urban migration of Aboriginal families in the twentieth century; twentieth century childhood experiences in East Perth; and mid-nineteenth century social movements to create green belts and parklands in the interests of public health and welfare.

Wellington Square is also of historic importance as one of the first declared public parks in the City of Perth in 1845, allocated as open space for the purpose of recreation. It is also notably the location of the first official game of Australian Rules Football (AFL) in Perth in 1885. Wellington Square is one of the earliest and longest running areas in Perth to be used for organised sports such as cricket, football and horse riding.

Wellington Square is valued for its association with several significant historic figures including Fanny Bulbuk, Windan and John Hutt. Fanny Bulbuk was a Noongar *yorgka boordier*, an important and leading Noongar woman, who was born on *Kakaroomup* (Heirisson Island) at or before the time of first contact. She is particularly famous for her strength and insistence that Noongar rights to country had been seriously breached. Her *karleep* (where her home fires burned) included the area in and around Wellington Square. Wellington Square is also associated with Windan, who was one of two wives of the Noongar boordier (leader) Yellagonga. This meant that Windan had rights and obligations in relation to the district often referred to as Mooro. This included areas on the north side of the Swan River such as what is now called Claise Brook and the broader East Perth area. The park is also associated with Governor John Hutt, who allocated the land in East Perth for public recreation in 1845.

#### SCIENTIFIC VALUES

Wellington Square has scientific value for its potential to contain significant and intact pre- and post-1845 subsurface archaeological material and sites. These archaeological sites have the potential to reveal substantial new information about a number of research questions relating to the life ways, people, culture and activities of Whadjuk Noongar ancestors prior to 1845; the physical development of Wellington Square since 1845; and the social, recreational and activities of park users since 1845.

#### SOCIAL VALUES

Wellington Square is highly valued for its role as an important social and recreational space for numerous community, cultural and sporting groups.

The park is important to Whadjuk Noongars as well as other Aboriginal people from across Western Australia for its role as a key place for meeting, camping and sourcing information and resources. It is also important to Whadjuk Noongars and other Aboriginal people for its associations with health, well being and 'medical treatment'. Whadjuk Noongar people identify Wellington Square as having an important role in their identity because of its meanings developed out of their long association and use of the space.

Importantly, Whadjuk Noongars and other Aboriginal people highly value the park for its 'sense of belonging'. Prior to the East Perth development in the 1990s, Wellington Square was one of the few places where Aboriginal people could go and 'be out of the gaze of the *Wadgellas*'. The park provided refuge and safety for Aboriginal people.

Wellington Square is also valued because of its role as a key location for children to play in East Perth. The 'Kids Tree' located along the northern boundary of the park was identified as being of particular value to the Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders.

The ability of Wellington Square to host a variety of social and recreational activities and events is valued by its many users. The capacity and flexibility of Wellington Square to be shared, relatively unencumbered, by a variety of users and social groups side by side is also viewed as an important element of Wellington Square's social value.

#### SPIRITUAL VALUES

Wellington Square has significant spiritual value to Whadjuk Noongar people. The park sites within an area which is central to Waugal narratives, which are associated with the creation of the world for Whadjuk, and thus is an important part of the spiritual identity of Whadjuk Noongars. As a 'bit of bush in the CBD', Wellington Square is also important for maintaining Whadjuk Noongar and other Aboriginal people's spiritual health and wellbeing.

#### 6.4.2 Comparative values

##### RARITY

Wellington Square has been identified as one of the few remaining open green spaces with facilities for organised sport in the City of Perth. It is one of the few remaining places of importance to Aboriginal people in East Perth as many other places were demolished or developed during the 1990s renewal of East Perth. Wellington Park is also one of the few places within East Perth where Aboriginal people still feel a sense of belonging, comfort and safety.

##### REPRESENTATIVENESS

Wellington Square is an excellent example of a continually used social and recreational space, particularly within an increasingly urbanised setting.

##### INTEGRITY

The integrity and condition of Wellington Square is currently fair. It has retained a high integrity as a public reserve since 1845. Despite the considerable amount of change to the area surrounding the park during the 1990s East Perth renewal development program, Wellington Square has retained a similar form, design and use since the early 1900s. As Thompson Palmer<sup>140</sup> notes, many of the early structures including the grandstand, tennis courts, pavilion, dressing room and caretaker's cottage have been demolished.

##### CONNECTEDNESS

Wellington Square's connectedness with other important places in Perth enhances its overall value and significance. The park is situated within an area known as *Beerit*, which is acknowledged by Whadjuk Noongar as a very important place where 'fair or place of trade occurs'; where families of people gather for kinship and in-law making; where mothers, fathers, and old people get together; and where young men and women whom have 'come of age' meet future husbands and wives; and where Whadjuk Noongar and others gathered to undertake cultural and ceremonial business. Wellington Square is also connected to other significant sites in close proximity such as women's birthing sites at *Matagarup* (Heirisson Island), hunting and ceremonial sites at *Kaarta Gar-up*, *Kaarta Koomba*, or *Mooro Katta* (Kings Park), and the a men's ceremonial ground in the Reabold Hill area<sup>141</sup>.

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<sup>140</sup> 2001, p. 53.

<sup>141</sup> Jacobs cited in Busher, N. 2016 *Yagan Square Cultural Heritage Management Plan*. University of WA.



## INTERPRETIVE CAPACITY

Wellington Square has an extensive interpretive capacity, as there are a large number of themes, stories, events and senses that can be interpreted for the park users, visitors, tourists and general public. Themes such as family, childhood, sporting history, AFL history, Waakal narratives, healing and well being, and 'water, fire, yarning' are some examples of the broad width of potential interpretive ideas (refer also to section 7.6 below).

### 6.5 Statement of Significance

Wellington Square is one of the few open green spaces within the City of Perth. It is a flat, open grassed area lined by mature trees, large enough to host organised sporting, educational and cultural events. It is located in East Perth over an area which once comprised a series of interconnected swamps and lakes – a rich ecosystem that provided significant spiritual and physical sustenance to Whadjuk Noongar people. Wellington Square is an important place to Whadjuk Noongar people, Aboriginal people from other parts of the state, local residents and users of the park. It has social, spiritual, historic, aesthetic and scientific values, which are further enhanced by its rarity, representativeness, integrity, connectedness to other important places in Perth and its interpretive capacity.

Wellington Square is of high social significance to Whadjuk Noongar people for its central and ongoing role as a place for meeting, camping and sourcing information and resources. It is an important place for family and children and plays a key role in Whadjuk Noongar identity. The park is valued by Whadjuk Noongar and other Aboriginal people for its association with spiritual health, healing and well being. Importantly, Whadjuk Noongar and other Aboriginal people highly value the park's 'sense of belonging'. Wellington Square also holds social significance for numerous community, cultural and sporting groups because of its capacity to not only host a variety of social, recreational and sporting activities and events, but its ability for different users to share the space relatively unencumbered.

Wellington Square holds spiritual significance for Whadjuk Noongar people as it sits within an area central to Waakal narratives, which are associated with the creation of the world for Whadjuk, and thus is an important part of the spiritual identity of Whadjuk Noongars.

Wellington Square also has notable historic significance because of its deep and continuous history spanning from the *nyittiny* (cold times) to the current day. The park has a long history of being used as a Noongar camping and meeting place which continues today. Wellington Square is of historic importance for its place in the development of Perth, both in the times of the Noongar capital *Beerit* and post-contact city of Perth. Wellington

Square is also of historic importance because it was one of the first declared public parks in the City of Perth, it is one of the longest running spaces in Perth for organised sports and was the location of the first official game of Australian Rules Football (AFL) in Perth in 1885. Wellington Square's is further valued for its association with significant historic figures Fanny Bulbuk, Windan and Governor John Hutt.

Wellington Square possesses aesthetic significance as its distinctive open green space is valued within the surrounding context of a heavily urbanised central business district. Wellington Square's green space also has significant qualities and a sense of place that evoke feelings of well being, freedom, relaxation, release and connection to nature within a frenetic urbanised environment.

Wellington Square has scientific value for its potential to contain significant and intact pre- and post-1845 subsurface archaeological material and sites which may reveal substantial new information about the history of Wellington Square.

The primary values and significance of Wellington Square are further enhanced by its rarity, connectedness to other important places and its interpretive potential. Wellington Square is rare because it is one of the few remaining open green spaces in the City Perth with facilities for organised sport, one of the remaining places of importance to Aboriginal people in East Perth, and one of the few places where Aboriginal people still feel a sense of belonging, comfort and safety within the City of Perth. The connectedness of Wellington Square through its associated Waarkal narratives to other Noongar places of importance such as *Beerit*, *Matagarup* (Heirisson Island), *Kaarta Gar-up*, *Kaarta Koomba*, or *Mooro Katta* (Kings Park) further enhance its cultural value. Wellington Square holds good interpretive capacity because of its open aspect and the broad number of potential interpretive themes.

## 7.0 VISIONS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR WELLINGTON SQUARE

There are some important ways that the cultural values of Wellington Square can be incorporated into, and inform, the City of Perth's rejuvenation project. Specifically, the cultural values can be used to inform the aspirational 'sense of place' for the Wellington Square; what facilities and infrastructure should be included in the park; the layout and design of space within the park; the kinds of events and activities to be encouraged within the park; and interpretive approaches.

During the cultural values workshops and interviews, the stakeholders were asked about their aspirations and visions for Wellington Square and their ideas for incorporating the significance of Wellington Square into the design and interpretation strategies for the park. Their responses are summarised below and the detailed responses are included in Appendix 8.

### 7.1 Aspirations for Wellington Square

The Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders related a number of aspirations for Wellington Square, including:

- Acknowledgement of Noongar Country and public recognition that Wellington Square is Whadjuk Noongar country;
- Acknowledgement that Wellington Square is used by people from other Aboriginal countries and they still congregate there now;
- Wellington Square is still used for the same purpose that it has been for over 80 years – as an important meeting place – and it should continue its role as that;
- Wellington Square is an inclusive place;
- Wellington Square's significance, connection to families and other special places should be interpreted;
- For Noongar people to be involved in the design of the park, to decide what to do with the park and what should go where;
- For Noongar people to be involved in the interpretation planning and implementation to ensure that it includes authentic Whadjuk Noongar voices;
- New facilities including new toilets, a play ground and play area for the kids, trees to climb;
- Remain as open green space;

- Wellington Square is a place to practice culture in an urban setting;
- Wellington Square as water and healing space.

## 7.2 What would you like to happen at Wellington Square?

The stakeholders stated that they would like to see more events held at Wellington Square that have Noongar people in an organising role and involved from the conceptual stage. They would like such events to facilitate employment and participation of Noongar people. Examples discussed included NAIDOC events, opening events and PIAF events like the sleeping giant.

FIGURE 21. PRACTICING CULTURE IN AN URBAN SETTING



FIGURE 22. NAIDOC 2016



## 7.3 What would you like to be changed at Wellington Square?

There were several things identified by both the Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders and other park users that they would like changed. These included:

- A focus on safety and access for all users of the park, for example restructuring road directions around the square to make it safer to cross the adjacent roads;
- Public acknowledgement and recognition that Wellington Square is Noongar Boodjar;
- Public recognition of the long term history and significance of Wellington Square and East Perth for Noongar people and its continuing historical and social significance;
- Maintain the integrity of Wellington Square as a meeting place and Noongar people's connections with it;
- Become a space where Aboriginal people can connect with Boodjar;

- Recognition of the Noongar people and families who have lived in the East Perth area;
- Wellington Square to become a welcome space – not just a place where people are tolerated but a place that welcomes them;
- Give Aboriginal people a real stake in the place – if people have a stake in a place the more likely they are to respect and behave responsibly;
- Give Wellington Square a Noongar name with the English name underneath;
- Upgrade facilities including more toilets, install more benches and seating around the park in appropriate places according to seasons, for example, more shady places for summer, warmer places for winter.
- Provide better facilities for people in transition and find ways to accommodate other groups of Aboriginal people within the space;
- Remove the path from the middle of the park. This park currently divides the space. Would be better to see what's happening in the middle of the park.

The park users also reported similar feedback: that the public toilets are of a low standard and need to be upgraded, there should be a children's playground installed, the lack of seating should be addressed. Some park users also commented that they felt uncomfortable or unsafe in the park, particularly in the afternoons, and that some people can make it dangerous to use the park at times due to fighting and drinking. They stated that they would like to see this changed.

WELLINGTON SQUARE IS A  
BLACK SPACE IN A WHITE  
CITY. IT IS A SAFE PLACE  
FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE  
AND HAS BEEN FOR MANY  
YEARS.

#### 7.4 What do you not want changed about Wellington Square?

The Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders expressed concern that Wellington Square could become an exclusion zone like Elizabeth Quay where Noongars and other Aboriginal people did not feel welcome. They would like Wellington Square to remain a place of freedom. They also stated that they do not want the place to become commercialised or developed with buildings.

#### 7.5 What are your priorities for Wellington Square?

The stakeholders identified a number of key priorities for the rejuvenation of Wellington Square:

- Maintain Wellington Square's integrity as a social and meeting place;

- Recognition of Noongar Boodjar;
- Recognition of cultural significance of the place: meeting place, kids tree;
- Recognition of Noongar people's long history and association with the area;
- Improve facilities for visiting groups/people including installation of new toilets, better seating and tables, BBQ area, kids playground:
  - Install a Noongar appropriate area where people can sit and meet,
  - Install a fireplace for people who may want to sit around it,
  - Install welcome seating and landscaping including some form of open space with shelter from the weather and an open but covered place to sit when it is raining
- Improve access and safety;
- Give Wellington Square and areas within it Noongar names.

*It is the yarning place. Call it Nimungs area. Nimungs was Arthur Ninyette. He was the best yarn man. The Noongar people loved listening to him. They would go and pick him up.*

## 7.6 Interpretation

Several themes and stories were identified by the stakeholders and recommended for inclusion in the public interpretation of Wellington Square; see Appendix 9 for full details of stakeholder responses. Please note that these suggestions are neither exhaustive nor definitive, and Moodjar Consultants strongly recommend that a formalised Interpretation Plan be compiled for Wellington Square with the full involvement and collaboration of Whadjuk Noongar people.

### 7.6.1 Key stories for interpretation

The stakeholders recommended that the following themes and stories be incorporated into the public interpretation for Wellington Square:

- Wellington Square is a 'water, fire and yarning' place. It is a place of water and healing and is connected to the Waugal and swamp areas;
- Wellington Square is a place of families coming together;
- Recognition of Noongar people, their history and ongoing connections to Wellington Square and Noongar Boodjar today;
- Generic stories about Noongar people, rather than stories about specific people;
- Stories about Noongar Boodjar.

*Water, fire, yarning*



*A place of healing*



### **7.6.2 Interpretive methods**

Several interpretive methods were suggested by the stakeholders for implementation at Wellington Square:

- An interpretive walking trail connecting places of importance and significance for Noongar people around East Perth;
- Story walls: themes and stories sculpted into landscaping walls;
- A sign/compass showing directions and names of Noongar places;
- Plaques and signs telling Noongar stories and history, and specifically including a plaque recognising that “this place is of cultural, historical and spiritual significance for the Whadjuk Noongar people. It is the central meeting place of Noongar and Aboriginal people of Perth” (see Figure 26 for example);
- Noongar names for the park and different areas within the park;
- Statue of Yellagonga;

- Audio facilities playing of Noongar stories out of speakers (see Figure 23 for examples);
- Projection and lighting: lighting to create water and fire effects, light up the 'Kids Tree' (see Figure 25 for examples);
- Internet and Smartphone Apps.

### **7.6.3 Interpretive design elements and devices**

The stakeholders also recommended the following elements be incorporated into the design of the park:

- Use of native plants such as Balga trees and bulrushes around water features;
- Water features or water park play area;
- Space to sit around together, including 'yarning pits' or fire pits to sit around, curved benches arranged in a circular shape to encourage group interaction (see Figure 24 for examples);
- Curved benches around the edges of the park looking into the centre;
- Use of materials that reflect local features of East Perth, e.g. limestone.



**FIGURE 23. AUDIO SIGNAGE AND SEATING IN SMITHS LAKE, NORTH PERTH. DESCRIPTION: SCITECH PRODUCED SOUND EQUIPMENT IN THIS ROCK, WHICH HAS A SPEAKER BUILT IN AND SIX PUSH BUTTONS. EACH TELLS STORIES OF THE SITE IN ENGLISH, MANDARIN AND NYOONGAR (SPOKEN BY DOOLAN LEISHA EATTS). SOURCE: [HTTP://USERS.TPG.COM.AU/RICHMOB2/NGARDARB/SCULPTURE.HTM](http://users.tpg.com.au/richmob2/ngardarb/sculpture.htm)**



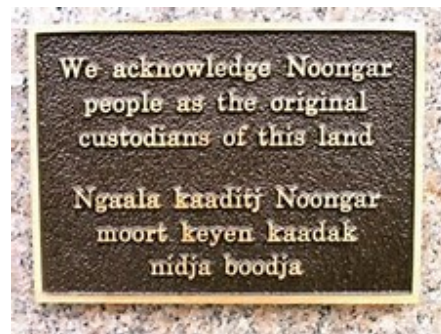
**FIGURE 24. IMAGES FROM LEFT: ROUND FIRE PIT DESIGN, SOURCE: HZCDN.COM; FIRE PIT AT NIGHT, SOURCE: KLIENSLANDSCAPING.COM**



FIGURE 25. IMAGE: AMSTERDAM LIGHT FESTIVAL, 2014-15, SOURCE: AMSTERDAM LIGHT FESTIVAL; FLAME PROJECTION ON BUILDING, SOURCE: SCRIBBLER IS SEVILLE



FIGURE 26. EXAMPLE OF RECOGNITION PLAQUE



*Noongar language is central to our identity*

## 8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Perth is advised that:

- The Stage One – cultural heritage assessment for Wellington Square is now complete.
- Noongar stakeholders have been engaged and consulted with regarding their knowledge of Wellington Square and surrounding East Perth, their future vision for Wellington Square. This included:
  - An ethnographic survey, conducted on 8 April 2017 with key Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders nominated by the Whadjuk Working Party,
  - A cultural values workshop undertaken on 22 April 2017 with key Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders nominated by the Whadjuk Working Party,
  - Additional interviews with other Noongar stakeholders with strong associations with East Perth on 18-19 April and 26 April 2017, and
  - A survey of a small sample of current park users in Wellington Square during the week of 1-7 May 2017.
- An assessment of the cultural values of Wellington Square has been completed and an updated Statement of Significance prepared.
- The Noongar stakeholders have outlined their vision and aspirations for Wellington Square and have suggested some initial interpretive themes and methods for incorporation into the Master Plan.

Based on the findings of the cultural heritage assessment, it is recommended that:

- Wellington Square may meet the requirements of section 5b and 5a of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and therefore should not be impacted upon in any way without Ministerial consent under section 18 of the AHA;
- The City of Perth consults with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs regarding the potential for Wellington Square to meet sections 5b and 5a of the AHA;
- Should the City of Perth wish to undertake works that will impact upon Wellington Square, an application is made for consent to use the land under section 18 of the AHA;

- The City of Perth consult further with SWALSC, the Whadjuk Working Party, Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders and other interested Aboriginal parties about any proposed section 18 application, mitigation and salvage strategies and the management of salvaged materials;
- The City of Perth ensures that any developments undertaken in Wellington Square do not have any deleterious effect upon the cultural values or significance of Wellington Place. Specifically, they should ensure that proposed works do not disrupt the continuity of the role of Wellington Square as a meeting place and camping for Aboriginal people, families and community, nor negatively impact Wellington Square's 'sense of belonging' for Aboriginal people.
- The Moreton Bay Fig Tree known as the 'Kids Tree', located along the northern side of Wellington Square, should be avoided and measures put in place to ensure that its root system is not inadvertently impacted upon during any ground disturbing works.
- The cultural values of Wellington Square are considered and incorporated into the Master Plan and Whadjuk Noongar stakeholders are further consulted about design plans for the rejuvenation project.
- The Noongar stakeholder's visions and aspirations for Wellington Square are considered and incorporated into the Master Plan for Wellington Square.
- An interpretation plan for Wellington Square is developed in collaboration with, and under the guidance of, the Whadjuk Working Party.

## 9.0 APPENDICES

### **Appendix 1 – Stakeholder analysis**

## Appendix 2 – Department of Aboriginal Affairs Aboriginal Heritage Information System (AHIS) search results

## Appendix 3 – Archival information on Old Joe's burial

## Appendix 4 – Guiding questions for the workshops and interviews

### Site visit questions

*In response to presentation of results of desktop survey:*

- Are there any gaps in our information that we found during the desk top research?
- Are any of the sites we found in the desktop in the wrong location?

*Site visit questions:*

- Are there any stories, memories or feelings you would like to share about Wellington Square?
- Are there any stories, memories or feelings you would like to share about East Perth/area surrounding Wellington Square?
- What traditional sites do you know of around Wellington Square?
- What historical sites do you know of around Wellington Square?
- Are there any important people associated with the area?
- Are there any important events that have taken place here?

*If there are specific sites located within or in close proximity to Wellington Square:*

- How important is this place to you? Why is it important? What specifically is important about this place to you (i.e. particular features)?

*Other general questions:*

- Names for locations in general vicinity?
- Is there anyone else you think we should talk to? Is there someone that has special knowledge of this place?

### Cultural values workshop questions

*Values:*

[Activity: Values brainstorm. Resources: Sticky notes, textas, Butcher's Paper, bluetack/sticky tape. Instructions: Place three pieces of butchers paper on the wall. Each piece to have the following questions on them. Participants look at each question then write thoughts on sticky notes. Place sticky notes on the relevant piece of paper].

- Why is Wellington Square important to you?



- What is important about Wellington Square?
- Which parts of Wellington Square are important to you?

*Vision and aspirations:*

If it works, can use same method with sticky notes as above for following question, or can white-board it.

- What are your hopes for Wellington Square?
- What would you like to happen at Wellington Square? E.g. events, amenities etc.
- What would you like to be changed at Wellington Square?
- What would like to be added or removed from Wellington Square?
- What do you not want to happen at Wellington Square?
- What do you not want changed about Wellington Square?
- What are your priorities (i.e. prioritise those things identified as wanting to be done, changed, added etc. Which ones are most important?)
- Are there any special things that need to be done to retain the importance of the place?

*Interpretation:*

- What stories would you like told about Wellington Square?
- How would you like these stories to be told?
- How should the importance of Wellington Square be told to the public?
- What kind of interpretive methods...? E.g. signs, sculptures etc.

## Appendix 5 – Users of the park questionnaire

## Appendix 6 – Ethnographic survey stakeholder responses

- We used to play at Wellington Square all the time, night and day.
- We used to play at Wellington Square all the time, night and day. We used to do tarzan swings from the big tree. We would have spent about 90 % of our time in Wellington Square as kids. We would eat and sleep at home but spend the rest of the time in the park.
- All the kids used to play around this area of Wellington Square.
- There was an old toilet block on corner of Royal and Wittenoom Streets before the new block was built.
- It was a meeting/drinking place for the adults.
- Wellington Square would be the most important place in Perth.
- That is how there was a lot of people because they knew someone would be coming in with money to buy drinks. You did not have to make arrangements to meet, everybody just knew to go to Wellington Square. They never had a phone but they just knew to go there. They would meet their new boyfriend or girlfriend. It was also the place that wedjellas would go to have a drink and meet as a pickup place for the women. It was absolutely a central meeting place for all of the social activities for Noongar people coming in to the City. This is a place central to all the different areas. The different Noongar who would do work around the different places like grape picking in Midland, Noongars would come after their shearing pay day on the weekend. This was Noongars territory.

*If other Aboriginal people like the Wongi's travelling to Perth they knew to come to Wellington Square because they knew this was the place that all the Aboriginal people would meet*

- It was a central meeting place for all Noongar and other Aboriginal people to travel to.
- The area fitted everything like a glove it was close to everything. Never had any trouble with the police.
- There was this tree, known as the 'Kids Tree' (big old Moreton bay fig tree) at Wellington Square.
- June and Rona referred to the tree as the "Kids Tree".
- Used to play at the old toilet block in the northeast corner of Wellington Square. The toilet block was covered in vines and they used to make cubbies.
- Wellington Square – kids played football and kick a ball around.
- Norbert Street – Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service location. Dodds lived in a 2 storey house on Norbert St.

- Noongar hostel – remembered going there after school. Run by two old Christian ladies, possibly nuns or sisters. They used to charge 5c for cordial and biscuits and charge money to have a shower there. Later turned into an Aboriginal hostel (Norbert St House).
- Sandra remembered a single story house in Norbert Street it was the New Era Aboriginal Fellowship (NEAF).
- June said the Mrs Pell used to live next door to NEAF.
- June Della Bona lived in Claisebrook Road. June lived on the corner of Fielder (Claisebrook and Brown St). The name of that part of Claisebrook Rd has been changed to Fielder Street.
- Stacey family lived in Wickham Street.
- Rona Woods and Nick Abrahams old grandfather lived in Wickham Street.
- 'Old Bones' (pool) at the corner of Brown Street and Claisebrook Rd.
- Rona and Nick's mum and grandparents lived in houses on Royal St, Wickham St and Brown St.

*Noongars camped on the north side of Claisebrook/River. People would camp on north side to the left (west) of footbridge.*

- Part of Brown St has been cut off it is now under buildings. Noongar families lived there.
- Aunty Bonnie Morrison and Aunty Margaret Binder – lived on Brown St or Kensington St. Aunty Cathy lived at a house around 127 Kensington Street.
- Brown Street families included: Nummy Phillips, Prior family (Maree and Clifton Prior, Silvia Prior née Garlett), Woods, Kicketts (Uncle Ollie Kickett, Aunty Tiny Kickett. Houses are all gone now on right side of road, some old houses still on left side of road, Wadjella's (non Noongar people) lived in these houses.
- Rona and Nicks grandma used to camp all around the East Perth area. There was a little creek that ran from Hyde Park to Hague Park. There was a swamp where the Perth train station is now. The creek has been cut off now. Their great great great great Grandfather used to camp at the swamp where the train station is now.
- Cathy Jones used to live on the other side of Brown Street which is now gone (built over).
- Rona, June and Nick talked about guy fawkes night when they were kids and the fire cracker shop in Mt Lawley is still there.
- Stanley's butcher shop was on the far side of Wellington Square.

- Spoke about Mr Burton from Wembley who used to pick up the Noongar kids for Sunday School that was held at the Aboriginal Advancement Council.
- Noongars camped on the north side of Claisebrook/River. People would camp on north side to the left (west) of footbridge.
- Bull Paddock is on the south side, people camped on the north side.
- Hague Park was on the south side of Claisebrook/River. It used to be hilly, as kids we used to slide down the hills. The hills have now been taken out and it's been built on. There were a few houses in this area.
- Claisebrook water didn't come in quite so far before, it used to be a creek. It has all changed.
- Quartermaines lived on Trafalgar Street as did Peter and Margaret Stacey.
- Cemetery at the top of the hill near Hyde Park – sometimes would play there. Some Noongar graves located in the graveyard. John Monger Snr is buried in the graveyard in Plain Street
- 'Old Shockers' near Hyde Park.
- Miller's Cave is located where car park is on Royal Street opposite Norbert Street. Here is one story that seems to account for its name – *"When the Noongars were sitting around at this site, Charley Pride was very popular and he had a song called Miller's Cave and this is how the site got its name from the Noongars". (Collard, D)*
- Carmen Stacey lived on Wickham Street.
- Wickham Street: 2nd house along lived Margaret Abraham, next door lived Alf and Dory Mippy. All lived next door to each other, houses are all now gone.
- Wadjellas lived on left side of street, houses are still there.
- Rona lived in Charles Street and Claisebrook Road.
- As kids we used to use the swimming pool in the motel (Baileys Motel Hotel) on the corner of Wickham and Bennett Street. Pool is still there but has been made bigger.
- Old Suzie lived near the cemetery.
- Other Aboriginal people have always sat around in the park (Wellington Square).
- Aboriginal Legal Service is built on turtle flats. Noongar people used to camp on vacant blocks all around there.

*'a lot of Noongars would go into Bull Paddock and camp there' (Collard D)*

- There was a shed around the corner from Norbert St on Royal Street which used to be a mechanics shed. When the mechanic shop was shutdown, it was given to the Noongar people who got old hospital beds and other furniture to furnish it and lived there.
- Along Royal Street: there used to be a bakery, families lived on Royal: Uncle Barkley, Percy and Alma Garlett, Nick and Rona both used to live on Royal.
- Bennett House was on Royal Street (girls' hostel) – Bonny Morrison used to work there.
- Cathy Jones lived on Brown Street across from shop.
- June's future husband Laurie, grew up there with his mum and dad, they lived at the top of Bronte Street.
- June and Rona said that everyone got on really well in East Perth. Everyone was close, all family.
- Reported that Beaufort Park was the place to sort issues out. Did not know Wellington Square as “Madison Square Gardens”.
- Places there are very spiritual. Noongar people lived there and camped there long before the white people come here. Our Dreaming runs through all of this area. We lived near the Swan River and the Waugal lives there. He is important to us.
- I went to live in East Perth when the war was just finishing. We stopped with Pop Butters at 86 Brown Street, East Perth. I was about 12 years old.
- Rosie Ford (Nebro), Verna Ford they lived in Royal Street. The Fords lived there.

*Bull Paddock was a camping place for old Noongars, because they had nowhere else to go.*

- Bropho's would call in and camp around the area.

## BULL PADDOCK SITE

*Bull Paddock was a camping place for old Noongars...*

*They had their mattress and billy's and their blankets.*



*'a lot of Noongars would go into Bull Paddock and camp there' (Collard D)*

- We used to come down from Brookton and we used to call into East Perth and we would stay two or three weeks picking grapes in Midland and we were told a lot of Noongars would go into Bull Paddock and camp there when we went to visit the kids at Sister Kates
- Bull Paddock was a camping place for old Noongars, because they had nowhere else to go. They had their mattress and billy's and their blankets.
- Ninnyettes, Collards and Fords lived here.
- When I was growing up there was not many kids because they were taken away to Moore River. They took a lot of the children from there. I lived around there in the mid-1940's.
- The Noongar women would sit around and we would listen to them and they would say the "kids all gone".
- Uncle Syd Collard and Uncle Arty Collard they lived in East Perth in 60s.
- Calyun's family.
- We went to the Coolabaroo Club and we went with some other ladies and that was the night that Ronnie Kickett passed away and we were waiting for it to open.
- Sylvia stayed with the Zorinich family we used to call him Pop Zonich this was at Red Hill.
- Grandmother Louise Hayden (Humphries) married Tom Hayden. The children were Reggie Hayden, Tom, Edward, Auntie Tottie, Adeline and Aunty Bessie. Nan had a block in Midland.
- Syd Collard they used to catch the turtles and cooked them. They used to catch them in the river and get all the mullet and other fish.
- Noongar people never caught buses and that they walked everywhere so that is how all the Noongars knew each other and they knew where they camped all around.
- The Noongars used to cut (Herbert Dyson) and sell the props for clothes line.
- Midland was a place where we spent a lot of time and we would move up and down the lakes and swamps and the river, up and down to catch fish in a little boat.
- Bennett House – all the girls would be put there and they would find them jobs. If the house was full the girls would go to Moore River because there was no room.
- My mum would go to the East Perth girls home to catch up with the women to find out where the kids were ie Sister Kates and then she Jessie Argyle (my grandmother) would go to Sister Kates and ask about the kids and the report back to the mothers about their kids.
- Sporty Jones (Charlie) he worked at the Gas Works for over 20 years. He lived with the Fords in Royal Street, East Perth. He was there in the 1940s. Around 1946-48.

FIGURE 27. EAST PERTH IN THE 1960S ... WAS MOSTLY POPULATED BY ABORIGINAL FAMILIES. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WEST AUSTRALIAN CENTENARY ABORIGINAL HOUSING HISTORY





## Appendix 7 – Cultural values responses

Stakeholder responses to the key questions included:

*Why is Wellington Square important to you?*

- Place of belonging
- Where we felt comfortable
- Playground
- Fun place
- Meeting place
- Central to kids to meet and play
- A meeting place for Noongar family
- Childhood memories
- Family and extended family
- Information centre for Noongars to find people, find out information etc

*What is important about Wellington Square?*

- Run under sprinklers
- Play area for kids
- Sense of belonging
- Kids tree (big tree)
- Trees were cubby houses
- Rope swing
- Meeting place Location
- Still remains a meeting place
- Still a sense of belonging
- Whole park - a big playground

*Which parts of Wellington Square are important to you?*

- Railing that went right around park.
- It was a place where my mother grew up as an Aboriginal woman around Hyde Park in the 1930s Betty Smith (Kinnane). My mother Jessie Argyle was a domestic servant in 1920-30. She worked at Dilhorne on

the corner of Bulwer and Lord Street. She also lived in Moore River and got to meet a lot of other Aboriginal people from Perth. On her one day off she would meet up with other woman who worked as domestic servants and they would meet at a range of places, Government Gardens, White City (down on foreshore near new busport, run by the Ugly Men's Society) including Wellington Square. A lot of the Aboriginal women would go to Anna Fielder's place in Saunder's Street to stay on their visits to Perth from Moore River.

- Key Noongar families lived in East Perth at the time. For instance the Deebles (Joan Penny and Lorna Hume) in the 40's. Bill Bodney lived around there.
- Bropho's were camping and living around the area. Frank, Robert, Ruth, Gladys, Thomas Jnr and Dorothy.
- Camping at the cemetary to escape the police
- It was one of the places where Aboriginal people could go out of the gaze of the Wadgellas. It was public but there was safety for them.
- It was a meeting place.

## Appendix 8 – Visions and aspirations responses

*What are your hopes for Wellington Square?*

- They know if you go there they can catch up with mob but these people need to acknowledge this is Noongar country
- Meeting space
- Something to represent special places and connections
- Language renewal
- An inclusive place
- New toilets
- For Noongar people to decide what to do with this site and what goes where.
- Important to acknowledge that it is used by people from other country and they still congregate there now. It is still used for the same purpose as it has been for over 80 years - as an ongoing meeting place
- Even today, Aboriginal people from any of those Aboriginal hostels around the metropolitan area know to go to Wellington Square where you might be able to borrow some money or catch up with family or leave messages for other people. This is not going to change.
- Water and healing space
- Play area
- Fun for the kids, playgrounds
- Trees to climb
- Green space
- A place to practice culture in an urban setting

*What would you like to happen at Wellington Square? E.g. events, amenities etc.*

- NAIDOC events
- Opening events
- PIAF events, e.g. sleeping giant
- Events where Noongar people have an organising role
- Noongar people to be involved from concept stage
- Employment and participation of Noongar people

*What would you like to be changed at Wellington Square?*

- Safety and access for users of the park
- Restructure road directions around square to make safer to cross roads
- Plaques of people who lived in area
- Recognition that this is Noongar Boodjar
- Love to see some recognition of its long term history and its significance for Noongar people As a *Norwester* it would be great to have it recognized as a place of continuing historical and social significance of its use. Wellington Square is a *black space in a white city*. It is a safe place for Aboriginal people and has been for many years.
- If people have a stake in a place the more likely they are to respect and behave responsibly ie issues of domestic violence and lateral violence would more likely be reduced if they see the Square is significant to Noongar people.
- It should be a WELCOME SPACE. People will respect it. Not a place where people are tolerated but a place that welcomes them.
- Noongar name for the space/park, Noongar names with English underneath
- Take path out of middle – no division of park
- Put more seats in appropriate places, according to seasons. E.g. More shady places to sit in summer, warmer places for winter.
- More toilets
- Maintain the integrity of meeting place and connections
- Better facilities for people in transition
- Space to connect with Boodjar
- Be able to see what's happening in the middle of the park
- Slow the traffic around the park
- Find ways to accommodate other groups/mobs in the space

*What do you not want changed about Wellington Square?*

- No buildings
- No commercialisation
- Don't become an exclusion zone like Elizabeth Quay

- Remain a place of freedom

*What are your priorities (i.e. prioritise those things identified as wanting to be done, changed, added etc. Which ones are most important?)*

- Maintain integrity of place
- Recognition of cultural significance of the place: meeting place, kids tree
- Improving facilities for visiting groups/people
- Access and safety
- City of Perth need to change the name back to Claisebrook Road.
- Leave the place as it is. Should not be touched.
- Have an area where the Noongar people can sit and meet. Make it Noongar appropriate.
- BBQ area (gas)
- Fireplace should be erected for the people who might want to sit around.
- Wellington Square should be known by a Noongar name.
- Kids playground
- Welcome seating and landscaping, some form of open but shelter from the weather, a place to sit when it is raining, not a closed space but an open space.
- Would love to see something that represents its history ie photographs of Aboriginal people using the site. Use contemporary photos and other photos from over the decades. This gives a sense of that long continued occupation and use. Symbolism is important but photographic evidence exists, it is a form of recognition and putting your face in the place can make a huge difference.
- Bench seats and tables
- It is the yarning place. Call it Nimungs area. Nimungs was Arthur Ninyette. He was the best yarn man. The Noongar people loved listening to him. They would go and pick him up.
- Plaque on a wall recognizing that “this place is of cultural, historical and spiritual significance for the Whadjuk Noongar people. It is the central meeting place of Noongar and Aboriginal people of Perth”.
- Needs to have some Noongar names in the area.
- Noongar people need recognition they have a long history and association with the area.

## Appendix 9 – Interpretation responses

*What stories would you like told about Wellington Square?*

- Noongar people still have connections to the place and Boodjar today
- Recognition of Noongar people
- Story wall – themes and stories sculpted into wall
- Generic stories about Noongar people, rather than about specific people
- Space to sit around together
- Water and healing place
- Water, Fire, Yarning
- Family coming together
- Native plants, e.g. Balga trees
- Benches (curved) around edges of park to look in from
- Healing
- Yarning pits to sit around
- Water theme: Waugal, swamp areas
- Benches in a circle
- Signs, compass with Noongar names for places
- Walking trail connecting places of importance in East Perth,
- Signs (wheel) to show directions to places
- Wellington Square to have a Noongar name
- Meeting space
- A place to represent special places and connections for Aboriginal people
- An inclusive place
- A place to practice culture in an urban setting
- Water, Fire, Yarning place
- Signs (wheel) to show directions to places
- Interpretive trail connecting all the significance places for Noongar people around East Perth

- Light up kids tree – fire, water
- Lighting to create water, fire effects
- Space to sit around together
- Bullrushes around water
- Connecting with family, extended family and friends
- Noongar names
- Interpretive trail
- Materials to include local features of East Perth

*What kind of interpretive methods? e.g. signs, sculptures etc.*

- Plaques and signs
- Statue of Yellagonga
- Playing of Noongar stories out of speakers
- Projection and lighting
- Heritage interpretation and signage. Something that tells the story and for those still using to reconnect with its history. Have the Noongar story so that other Aboriginal people respect this.
- An APP – they get a text that says you are walking past an important Aboriginal site. People become aware through their phones.

## Appendix 10 – Park user survey responses

### Use of Park

1. *What do you use the park for?*

- I bring my food van here
- A place to rest
  - From the hectic lifestyle
- Transient
  - Dialysing at RPH
  - No home for father, daughter and children
- Football
  - Exercise
  - Bring the kids
- Walk around the park for exercise
- Play some organized sports through work ie volleyball
- First time use of food van – walk to get fresh air and break from work
- We are from TAFE. Use park for surveying and teaching students about surveying
- Work here, walk across to bus stop
  - Do not use the site
  - Make calls out of the office environment

2. *When do you use the park?*

- Lunchtime
- Early morning, morning, lunch, afternoon
- Lunch
- Morning or evening
- Early morning, Lunch and Afternoon
- Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday
- Lunch
- Working
- All times



3. How often do you use the park?

- Occasionally
- Occasionally
- Frequently
- Moderate
- Frequently 4 times a week
- Frequently. Every day morning, noon and night
- Three times a week with my food van
- Three times a week
- Also weekends I come with my friends to play cricket or socialise

Values

4. What do you like about the park? What is important to you?

- Trees, shade the birds
- General layout, good trees
- I am a small business so I bring my food van here
- Play sport here
- Nice place, the big open space
- Public toilets
- Open area
- Cricket pitch
- Toilets
- One of the very few facilities on the east side of town in the central business district.
- Love the greenness of the park
- Well maintained
- Trees
- Nice environment
- Grass and trees. Greenness somewhere in the CBD
- Walking path to walk along at lunch. Feel safe. Need to take Indigenous people and meeting place into account in planning

- Clear open site for teaching
- Size of park is good
- Other park uses – can share uses of park
- Lots of mature trees
- Open space in CBD
  - Look out and view of greenery

5. *What do you not like about the park? What's not so good about the park?*

- Public toilets are a low standard
- Needs upgrading
- Sometimes anti-social behavior and fighting and drinking
- Parties – uncomfortable environment
- No kids playground
- Lack of chairs, not enough shade in summer
- Social disturbances and violence
- No facilities for kids
- Feel very unsafe, particularly in afternoons.
- Some people can make it dangerous to use the park at times.

#### Aspirations

6. *What would you like to improve about the park?*

- Toilets
- A place to hold festivals
- Have a place for food vans, like a marketplace
- Leave an open green space
- More food trucks
- Love trees, would like more nooks and crannies and intimate places.
- More creative landscaping.
- Areas for people to sit together and socialize.
- Add coffee shop/facilities.
- Balance safety.

- Vans are good – at key times.
- I think the park is pretty good now. There has been a lot of improvement from its early days. They have planted some trees, footpaths in and divided the park up
- Kids playground
- More seating and shaded areas, especially on southside.
- Weeding of grass

7. *What do you think shouldn't be changed?*

- The general layout
- The Park transients – they are not an issue for me
- The sporting arrangements
- Keep same layout
- Don't fence the park
- Don't want to lower safety
  - Keep place that allows for both people sitting down and sport
  - Cater for all uses like it currently does
- Recreational location
  - Good for lots of different users, eg lunch breaks, sports etc.

#### Demographic information

The following information was collected to help analyse the results of this survey.

8. *Interviewee:*

Individual x x x x x  Group x2 x3

9. *What is your cultural background?*

- Australian
- Indian
- Australian
- Scottish
- Colombia

- Aboriginal (Central Desert)
- Malaysian
- Australian

10. *Where are you from? Where do you live normally?*

- East Perth but live in the Perth metro
- Perth metro x 3
- East Perth
- Warburton/Goldfields-Esperance
- Stirling

11. *What is your age?*

- |                                       |  |                                   |                                   |                                |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19 and under | <input type="checkbox"/> 20-24         | <input type="checkbox"/> x 25-29  | <input type="checkbox"/> xx 30-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 35-39 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> x 40-44      | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-49         | <input type="checkbox"/> xx 50-54 | <input type="checkbox"/> x 55-59  | <input type="checkbox"/> 60-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 65-69        | <input type="checkbox"/> x 70 and over |                                   |                                   |                                |

12. *What is your gender?*

x Female x 4

x Male x 5

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<sup>i</sup> Pearson and Sullivan 1995:130, 176