

Perth Foreshore

The development currently proposed for Elizabeth Quay at the Perth Foreshore is poorly located and badly designed. Excavation of The Esplanade will result in loss of heritage-listed parkland, elimination of the venue for ANZAC Day parades and other important events, and death of many surrounding mature trees by introduction of a salt water wedge, if not removed for construction. The inlet to be created is exposed to prevailing south-westerly winds, is not conducive to river flushing and would require on-going maintenance. Surrounding multi-storey buildings would offset inlet construction costs but would overshadow tourist venues and make the area inhospitable in winter.

A much better location for Perth's connection to the river is west of William Street, primarily on land currently used for the Narrows Interchange. The area occupied by roads can be compressed, while still retaining all present traffic connections, including Riverside Drive. The land use would emphasise civic, cultural and entertainment activities, with supporting residential use.

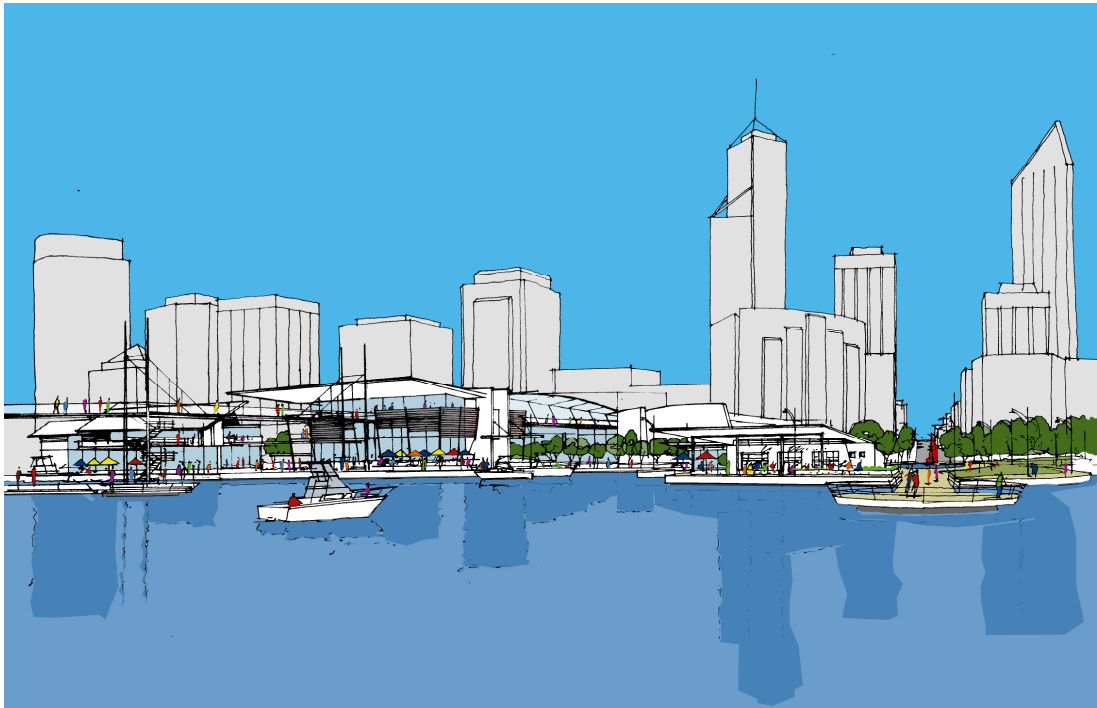
Development would be partly on piles, extending over the river. Underneath, a smooth edge to the river can be retained to aid flushing. There would be some protection from south-westerly winds in the lee of Kings Park and further amelioration from winds would result from the structure into the river to provide waterfront development with a sunny northerly aspect. There are no existing tall buildings nearby to overshadow the area and none are needed as construction costs would be much reduced. New development would be at a human scale of two to three storeys, which would help to integrate the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre and take advantage of its car parking at night and at weekends, when tourist activity is anticipated to be at its peak. The Esplanade Reserve would be untouched and could be retained for public events and recreation.

The Barnett Plan for Perth's Waterfront is less ambitious than the Carpenter Plan but is still criticised for providing too much additional commercial and office floor space in competition with the Northbridge Link project. A major disadvantage of both plans is that they cut Riverside Drive and cause significant traffic disruption. Around the inlet there will be an additional eight sets of traffic lights. Traffic will be diverted to the Graham Farmer Freeway Tunnel and Mill Point Road, with regional repercussions.

The opportunity exists to achieve a better result with a relatively small scale project on the alternative site. This can be attained without the loss of parkland and without risk to the river, at considerably less cost and lower commercial risk than with the present proposal.



Mounts Bay with alternate proposal



Foreshore west of William Street



Foreshore development from Narrows Bridge

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