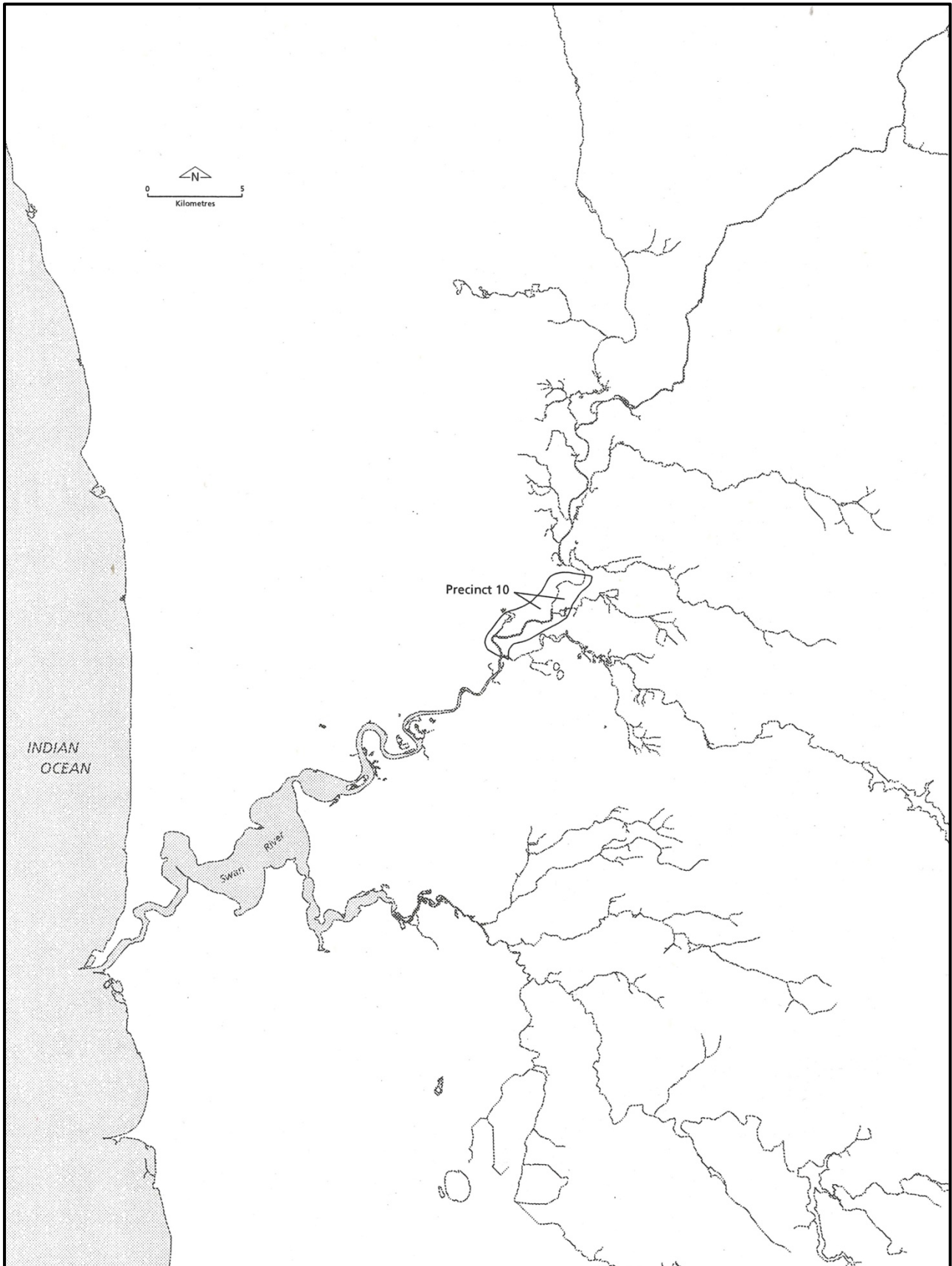


Precinct 10

Historic Guildford –
North of Helena River Confluence to Middle Swan Road



Summary

Historic Guildford – North of Helena River Confluence to Middle Swan Road

The Swan River takes several broad irregular meanders in this precinct. The river channel is relatively narrow and has several tributaries draining from the surrounding landforms. The riparian section is mainly lined with fringing vegetation including several shore rushes, paperbarks and sheoaks.

The surrounding landform ranges from steep embankments around Success Hill and Midland Brick to flat floodplains, such as those found at Viveash and Caversham foreshores. Sections of the floodplains are quite broad and it is over 50 metres from the river channel before the flat floodplain is delimited by a sharp steeply sloping embankment. The area was once covered in flooded gum woodland and isolated trees still remain along the river. Some of these trees are quite magnificent due to their maturity and form. Unfortunately, the understorey is typically exotic grasses due to historic uses as grazing land.

Man-made riparian features include several traffic and rail bridges as well as smaller wooden jetties. At Success Hill, the spring has been diverted down a concrete lined waterfall and the toilet block placed in the middle of the viewscape. Other more attractive recreational areas include Lilac Hill and Fish Market Reserve, both which have more indigenous vegetation than at Success Hill. The vineyards in the area provide a distinctive landscape feature and the changes in the vine foliage colour give the landscape an obvious seasonality which is less apparent with the indigenous flora. There are several historic and interesting buildings along the foreshore which are important landscape features in creating the precinct's identity.

Biophysical Processes

Geological Processes

The area is predominantly the Guildford Association with some sandy clays to clayey sands including other alluvium and colluviums (DCE, 1980). Most of the unit is of fluvial origin, however does include estuarine and shallow marine intercalations.

The dominant soil type in the area is the Swan alluvial terraces with red earths and duplex soils. Some distance from the river channel on the western bank the soil is the Guildford fluvial deposits which form a flat plain with medium textured yellow duplex soils (McArthur and Bettenay, 1974). On the southern side of the river, the Southern River sand plain is a series of aeolian deposited low dunes with some intervening swamps, iron and humus podzols, peats and clays.

Topography

The precinct is part of the Pinjarra Plain geomorphic unit which is flat to gently undulating. The unit consists of fluvial deposited sediments from the Darling Range streams which drop their sediment as they reach the flat plain. As a result wide alluvial fans have formed at the base of the Darling Range. Around the Swan River and tributaries, the unit has been modified by fluvial processes (Seddon, 1972). The flat flood plains are contrasted by the opposite embankments which are quite steep and up to 5 metres high. In many cases the flood plain is particularly broad and the edge is delineated by an embankment up to 50 metres away from the river channel.

Hydrological Processes

Water features

The river channel is relatively narrow around 10 metres in cross section and becoming increasingly narrower upstream, although visually it appears to be a relatively even width for the entire precinct. The river has a low sinuosity and consequently meanders irregularly on the Pinjarra Plain. The river banks range from less than 2 metres in height up to an embankment of around 15 metres at Success Hill. The lower flood plains have rich clayey deposits while the higher banks are mainly sandy.

Bathymetry

The river is shallow in the upper estuary and is only approximately 2 to 3 metres deep. The daily astronomical tidal range at Guildford is less than 80% of that at Fremantle. Dredging has occurred both north and south of the Helena River.

Flooding

The Guildford area is renowned for its flooding and throughout recorded history the low lying sections of the town have often been inundated. One of the earliest floods recorded in the area was May 1830 and there was a second great flood at Guildford in 1872. The flood plain stretches in broad flat plains up to 1 km wide below Middle Swan Bridge and Viveash as well as being very broad between Bennett Brook and West Swan Road.

Erosion and accretion

There are isolated areas of bank erosion all along the precinct, particularly in places where fringing vegetation such as reeds is not present. Areas of particular note are a small area near Fish Market Reserve boat ramp, Success Hill embankment and the steep embankment near Midland Brick.

Vegetation Communities

Native

Swan Complex

The Swan Complex edges the entire foreshore of this precinct. The vegetation ranges from fringing woodland of flooded gum (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) with localised occurrence of low open forest of sheoak (*Casuarina obesa*) and saltwater paperbark (*Melaleuca cuticularis*). Along the very fringe of the river the emergent shore rush (*Juncus kraussii*) and pale rush (*Juncus pallidus*) form a closed sedge land.

In some areas there is a remnant woodland of flooded gum (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*). The emergent species in the precinct include marsh club rush (*Bolboschoenus caldwellii*) and lake club rush (*Schoenoplectus validus*) and are often associated with the casuarina-melaleuca complex and the flooded gum communities which occur along the riverbank.

There are small sections of swamp sheoak (*Casuarina obesa*) and swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) and some understorey of shore rush (*Juncus kraussii*) at Bennett Brook confluence and in small nodes further upstream.

Along the river floodplains, flooded gum (*Eucalyptus rudis*), and swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) woodland occurs throughout the precinct although all of the communities are remnants and are quite degraded. Prior to clearing the flooded gum open woodland would have consisted of understorey including coojong (*Acacia saligna*), grey stinkwood (*Jacksonia*

furcellata), spearwood (*Kunzea ericifolia*), harsh hakea (*Hakea prostrata*), woolly bush (*Adenanthos cygnorum*), woody pear (*Xylomelum occidentale*), blackboy (*Xanthorrhoea preissii*), zamia (*Macrozamia reidleyi*).

Guildford Complex

Behind the Swan Complex at Midland and Middle Swan vegetation changes to the Guildford Complex (DCE, 1980). Small patches of this complex are present at West Guildford inland from the Swan Complex. The complex ranges from a mixture of open to tall open forest of marri (*Eucalyptus calophylla*), wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) and jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*). The understorey species include bull banksia (*Banksia grandis*), slender banksia (*Banksia attenuata*) and firewood banksia (*Banksia menziesii*), black gin (*Kingia australis*), blackboy (*Xanthorrhoea preissii*), prickly mosses (*Acacia pulchella*), white myrtle (*Hypocalymma angustifolium*), Swan River myrtle (*Hypocalymma robustum*), common hovea (*Hovea trisperma*) and buttercup (*Hibbertia hyp eric oides*). Remnant marri (*Eucalyptus calophylla*) woodland communities occur on the sandy hills of the Bennett Brook confluence. The disturbed understorey consists of bracken fern (*Pteridium esculentum*) and exotic grasses.

Southern River Complex

The Southern River Complex occurs on the higher land at South Guildford and adjoining the Swan Complex at the Bennett Brook area (DCE, 1980). The complex is identified as being jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*), marri (*Eucalyptus calophylla*) and various banksia species. Along the various drainage lines there is a fringing woodland of flooded gum (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) along the creek bedlines. Remnant marri (*Eucalyptus calophylla*), banksia (*Banksia attenuata* and *B.menziesii*) woodland communities occur on the sandy hills of Bennett Brook. The disturbed understorey consists of bracken fern (*Pteridium esculentum*) and exotic grasses.

In the relatively undisturbed areas of Bennett Brook the native bulrush (*Typha domingensis*) and the introduced species (**Typha orientalis*) fringe sand pits created by the local roof tile manufacturer. Other species along the brook include pale shore rush (*Juncus pallidus*), marsh club rush (*Bulboschoenus caldwellii*), samphire (*Halosarcia*), the triangle leaf native herb (*Chenopodium glaucum*), saltwater sheoak (*Casuarina obesa*), swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) and saltwater paperbark (*Melaleuca cuticularis*). The bracken fern (*Pteridium esculentum*) lines tributaries into the brook.

Exotic

South of Success Hill Reserve has been overrun by giant reed (**Arundo donax*). Modified woodland of Success Hill Reserve there is **Ficus* sp, couch grass (**Cynodon dactylon*), buffalo grass (**Stenotaphrum secundatum*), morning glory (**Ipomoea indica*), and nasturtiums (**Tropaeolum majus*). Other weeds south of Middle Swan Road, include curled dock (**Rumex crispus*), couch (**Paspalum dilatatum*) and blackberry (**Rubus fruticosus*).

Historical Land use and Resulting Environmental Changes

Guildford was established in 1829 as an early settlement of WA. The town was central to the best available farmlands and served as an administrative centre, market town for local produce and inland port. The rich alluvial soils of the area appeared attractive to the settlers who assumed that the land was similar to the English environment. Like their counterparts on the Canning River, early crops were a failure, and it was not until 1831 that the first crops were harvested, and even then most food was imported from Asian based colonies (Carter, 1986). Development of the town was constrained at an early stage by the extensive floodplains of the Swan and Helena Rivers and consequently the houses were built on the higher embankments of the area.

Captain Stirling chose a property in Guildford to build a small cottage and named the home after his wife Ellen Mangles' home Woodbridge, Guildford, Surrey, England (Moss, undated).

William Tanner who arrived at Swan River in 1831 owned the greater portion of the Bassendean area (Carter, 1986). As he owned several properties in England, he was able to finance the Swan River properties without the struggle which plagued most land holders. Tanner named his property Baskerville and later gained Lieutenant Preston's land adjacent to Success Spring, known as Lockridge. Tanner never lived on the properties; however he leased the Woodbridge Cottage from Captain Stirling as well as several Guildford homes. Adjacent was the Pyrton property between Bennett Brook and Riverbank which was owned by the Hamersley family. One of the hardships endured by the family was having most of their land and homestead destroyed in the great flood of 1872. A similar fate occurred at the low lying Lilac Hill Park which was originally cleared for farming and was known as the Preston Flats Farm (Bourke, 1987).

Typical of the middle class settlers who were lured to the colony by the prospects of cheap land was William Byrne. He and his family settled at West Guildford and were one time residents at

Baskerville; however by 1837 Matilda Byrne, who was overwhelmingly homesick and had lost two daughters to dysentery, returned to England with her four remaining daughters (Bourke, 1987). William followed his family in the following year. One of the landmarks of the West Guildford area was Cleikum Inn built by James Dodds and his family (Carter, 1986). The first home built by the family was flooded in winter destroying all their possessions; however the family started again this time building on the higher ground. The building is now used as the Saint Vincent's Hospital and Aged Peoples Home.

Prior to the building of the causeway at Burswood, the main route from Perth to Guildford crossed near Dodds' property. A ferry ran at this point between 1831 and 1881 after which the ferry fell into disrepair and sank in the river (Bourke, 1987). Moulton's Landing was the site of the town wharves when Guildford was the junction of road and river transport. Barkers Bridge was built in 1833 and the present West Swan Bridge is the third bridge at this site (Shire of Swan, 1993). To improve river transport, the river was dredged in 1895 to 1896 from Guildford all the way to Claise Brook.

In 1850 convicts were brought to Western Australia to provide the much needed labour under the supervision of Controller General Capt Henderson RE (Carter, 1986). With them arrived the pensioner guards and their families who were given land to build their homes. The guards were responsible for the hiring of convicts and a hire depot was built in Guildford in 1851. Two convicts were employed to be ferrymen between West Guildford and Guildford. Once their sentence expired or was pardoned, most convicts managed to purchase lots in the colony. In 1868 a group of Irish political prisoners (Fenians) worked at the stone quarry near Preston's Creek (Bennett Brook). The stones were used to make the Guildford roads. One of the more notable ex convicts was Malachi Meagher who became a prominent Guildford citizen leasing the Bassendean Estate and later the Sandalford vineyard from John Septimus Roe as well as becoming, among other positions, a councillor of the Guildford Municipal Council.

At the turn of the century, several small industries operated along the Guildford section of the Swan River including a timber mill and a gas powered flour mill. One of the earlier industries which still exists today is the Whiteman Brickworks which were established in 1886 by a Mr Lew. Originally, clay from the river was excavated for brick manufacture by Whitemans at Middle Swan. Midland Brick also excavated clay at this section of the river (Shire of Swan, 1976).

One of the areas which were drained in an effort to establish a wealthy urban suburb was Hay's Swamp which became the site of the Bassendean Oval in the early 1920s.

The cost was a particular burden to an area which was suffering the effects of the Depression years. Prior to the infilling, the swamp would occasionally flood surrounding houses but was also the spot for children to play canoes in relative safety.

The river at Success Hill was a popular swimming area for the youths of the district. However there were a number of tragic accidents with children dying as a result of meningitis or head injuries. The Aboriginal children would refuse to swim at Devils Elbow where they would say there was a great feathered serpent called the Waugal and it was too dangerous to swim in the murky waters (Carter, 1986).

Present Land Use and Social Patterns

Guildford Grammar and Preparatory School is one of the major land owners of this section. The current site was developed in 1900 and includes low lying land adjacent to the river. A management plan was entered into with the Swan River Trust in 1991, with funds provided by the Trust for the school and other groups to implement the plan. This included foreshore stabilisation with indigenous vegetation, tree planting and preventing livestock from damaging the river banks and vegetation.

Several other schools occur near the Swan River including, Governor Stirling High School, La Salle College and Guildford Primary School. In 1970, as part of flood control techniques the South Guildford foreshore was dredged and the spoil was used to build the Guildford Primary School fields on the opposite banks. Other community amenities in this area include the Swan Districts Hospital, Bennett Brook housing area for disabled people, the Swan Valley Nyungah Community, and Disability Services Commission. The land on the eastern side of Bennett Brook was designated for a hospital a couple of decades ago, however this has not eventuated.

The historic precinct of the town of Guildford is a popular day trip for tourists due to its several colonial buildings and wineries. Several facilities exist for tourists, such as the Mulberry Farm Convention Centre, Woodbridge afternoon teas and small vineyard sheds/produce stalls. The northern banks of this precinct have a number of vineyards which stretch across the cleared plains and include some well reputed vineyards such as Sandalford and Bendara. Other rural activities include a few citrus orchards and small market garden areas, stock grazing, horse agistments and an animal hospital.

Whiteman's Midland Brick is a dominant land use in the area with the pits and brick construction site taking up almost half the Viveash foreshore. Brickworks also occur adjacent to Bennett Brook.

Silica mining took place at Fish Market Reserve in the mid 1960s. The area between Governor Stirling Senior High School and Blackadder Creek was used for landfill for twenty years. Several plans were made for the area in the late 1970s including a sports complex and bird sanctuary. After much controversy, it was decided to divert Blackadder Creek and not form a lake in the low lying land. There are three wooden road traffic bridges within this precinct; these are the Guildford Road Bridge, the West Swan Road Bridge and the Middle Swan Bridge at the northern boundary of this zone. Other crossings are the two steel railway bridges approximately 100 m upstream of Bridge Street. A water pipe line crosses the river approximately 700 m upstream of Bridge Street.

Recreation nodes

There are several recreation areas along the river foreshore. At Kings Meadow Oval there is some play equipment, change rooms and picnic areas. Jetties allow for swimming and fishing. There is a boat launch ramp at Fish Market Reserve which also has a number of picnic tables. Opposite at Success Hill Reserve, there are several barbecue and picnic areas, as well as play equipment and a small jetty. Lilac Hill has a formal oval and picnic areas and is a popular fishing spot. Marshall Park has a swimming area between two jetties and a small school boatshed. Guildford Grammar Rowing Club is situated on the river foreshore adjacent to Woodbridge. Reg Bond Reserve has a small jetty and is the end point for a river trail from Marshall Park. Several small jetties occur along the river for fishing such as the jetty adjacent to Caversham Avenue.

Public access

There are several areas where private property or high embankments make access to the foreshore difficult. However there are some recreation points along the river which allow for informal and organised recreation. Marshall Park to Reg Bond Reserve is a river trail which allows pedestrians to view quite an attractive stretch of river.

Sites of Nyungar & Wider Australian Community Significance

Nyungar significance

At the time of colonisation, Mooro Nyungars considered the western section of the precinct part of their *boodjar* or country. Beeloo Nyungar considered the eastern banks of the Swan River and the Helena River as part of their *boodjar* or country. It is believed that at the time of colonisation, the land from Mount Eliza to just past Broun's farm was the land of Munday's family. From Bassendean to the head of the Swan was considered to be

the province of Wiap.

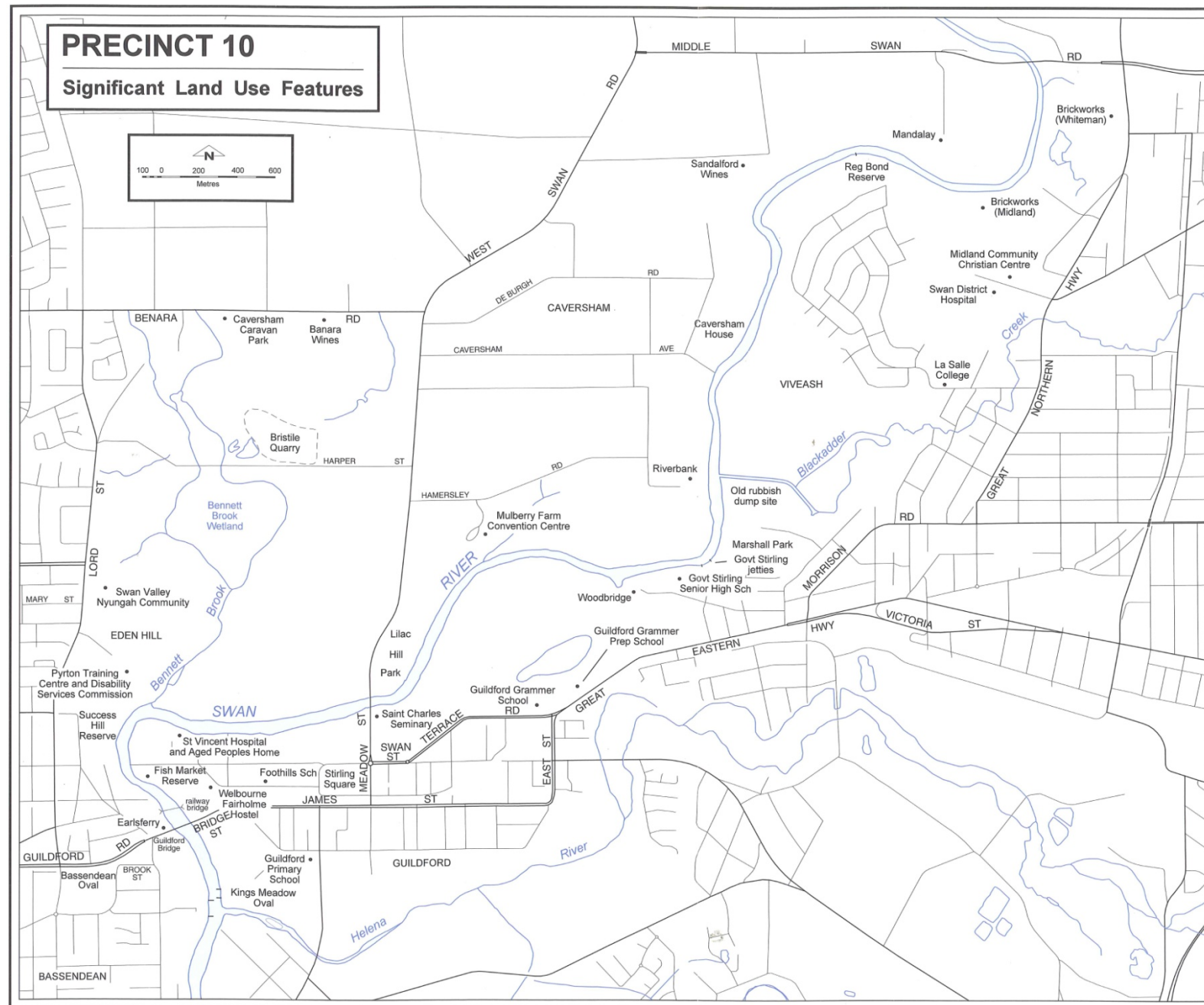
Nyungars believe the Waugal is present at the section where Bennett Brook enters the Swan River below Success Hill. This area was known locally as Devil's Elbow by the early colonists (Bourke, 1987). Many local Nyungars are particularly wary of the location and practice certain rituals before entering the site. It is believed that Success Hill or a location nearby was a meeting ground for Nyungars.

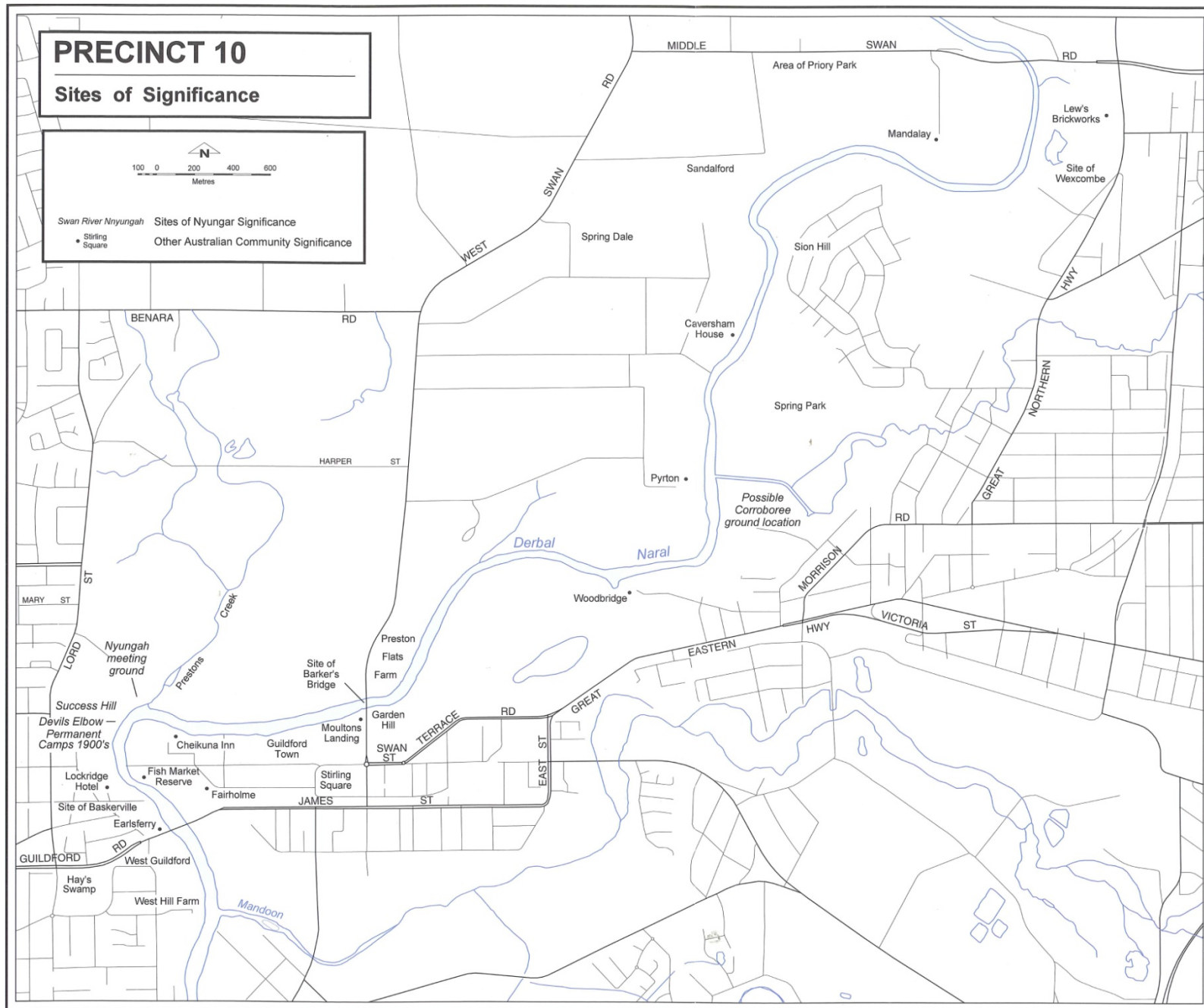
Nyungar believe that Blackadder Creek was formed through the creative activity of the Waugal who still lives there. A corroboree ground was located on the eastern bank of the Swan River near its junction with Blackadder Creek. The exact location of the site is not known and the area has been dramatically altered and the creek diverted several times.

During the early years of colonisation, a number of pastoralists relied on Nyungar labour to supplement paid workers on their farms. Last century, many Nyungar and other Aboriginal families were brought to Guildford by colonists as were they lived on Pyrtton and Lockridge had been set up as Aboriginal reserves' (Bourke, 1987). Other families who were unable to sustain their traditional life set up permanent camps around the Success Hill area. In 1901, to celebrate the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, 110 Aborigines were brought from all parts of the south-west to be housed in specially erected iron roofed shelters at Success Hill (Carter, 1986). For many years after the site remained an Aboriginal Reserve.

In 1905, the Aborigines Act gave the Chief Protector of Aborigines the power to place many Aboriginals, in particular part-Aboriginal children, on settlements such as Carrolup (near Katanning) and Mogumber (Moore River). The effect the separation policies on the Swan Valley Nyungars during the 1940s is recounted in *Idjhl* by Helen Bell. The background information for the story was provided by Cedric Jacob, a Swan Valley Nyungar Elder and it provides an excellent insight into Nyungar family life at this time.

By the 1940s, there was concern by local white residents of Bassendean that there were too many Nyungar families living on the outskirts of the area (Carter, 1986). Many white people believed that the Aboriginal camps and houses were responsible for many of the infectious diseases in the area and voiced their disapproval. However despite opposition by many white residents, the Nyungar families continued to live at Eden Hill as this was the only section of their *boodjar* where they were allowed to remain. The Hamersley family who had purchased the Bennett Brook property allowed Nyungar families to live on their traditional camping grounds around Success Hill and Bennett Brook.





This private arrangement continued despite opposition by the Bassendean Road Board. In addition to the already crowded conditions, Nyungar families who had established camping grounds at South Guildford in the mid 1930s were forcibly moved to the Bassendean area when an army camp was established at Beavis Street, South Guildford.

A number of large blocks around Mary Street, Eden Hill were mainly owned by Nyungar women in the early 1950s. Many of the families lived in what was considered by the authorities as 'unconventional' housing and this was often a cause of conviction. In the 1950s, the government purchased most of the blocks for State Housing for migrants to Western Australia. A number of houses were made available for the Nyungar families. However the houses were designed for nuclear families and this made it difficult for many families who were larger in size (Carter, 1986). Today many Nyungars, including the Swan Valley Nyungar Corporation, still continue to live in the area. The corporation has a block on the western bank of Bennett Brook where they have a residential area built to the specifications of Nyungars.

In 1981, near Midland Brick, stone artefacts were found which are believed to be around 40 000 years old (Pearce and Barbetti, 1981; Bourke, 1987). At the time it was considered to be one of the oldest Aboriginal archaeological sites in Australia. The site held over one hundred stone artefacts of different materials including chert and dolerite. The artefacts are believed to have been hand held implements including scrapers and other tools (Pearce and Barbetti, 1981).

Other significance

The town of Guildford was declared to be a Historic Town due to its unique historic architectural forms and noticeable concentrations of historic buildings around Meadow Street. Many of the older homes in the town have an attractive charm and the architectural form is generally consistent with Victorian domestic architecture. The Meadow Street conservation area was classified by the National Trust as an historic precinct and is on the National Estate Register (Carter, 1986) The Historic Guildford District contains 19 features classified or registered with the National Trust and many date back to 1840- 1850s.

Fish Market Reserve was designated on the original town plan by Henry Charles Sutherland as an area for the sale of cattle, sheep and other produce from the surrounding regions. However the reserve was solely used as a fish market during the early days of settlement and its designated purpose was never realised.

There are several stories of how the narrow beach on the river meander curve was named Success Hill (Bourke, 1987). Some suggest that Stirling camped the night there and named the spring Success, after his ship. There are no records of Stirling landing or camping on the embankment and it is believed that it would have been unlikely as he usually camped on flat land well away from cliffs or hills where he was less likely to be attacked. Some beliefs suggested that Stirling named the site Success Hill when successfully discovering a freshwater spring from which he refilled his water barrels; however this myth was created around the 1929 centenary in the enthusiasm to be part of the State celebrations.

Earlsferry House on Nurstead Avenue Bassendean was built in 1902 for John T. Short who was chief commissioner of Railways and who named it *Briarsleigh*. The building is between the railway and Guildford Road. It remains substantially unaltered apart from the removal of the original wooden valances above the windows, removal of the balustrade along the veranda and the wrought iron finials on the roof and tower. The property was renamed *Earlsferry* around 1945 with the change of owners. In 1950s the property was purchased by Nathaniel Harper who converted the house for mentally retarded girls under the supervision of the Mental Health Services Board. He also purchased *Fairholme* (1870s -1990s) in Market Street on the opposite bank for a mental health home. Earlsferry is now privately owned while the Fairholme building and the adjoining Welbourne's house (1840s) are used as the Welbourne Fairholme Hostel.

On the corner of Anzac Terrace and River Street the Lockridge Hotel was opened in October 1896 by Mr C. Pressentin. The hotel was a popular resort for holiday makers up the river and gained a reputation as a favoured venue for honeymooners. The proprietor had an arrangement with the railways to stop on Sundays at a nearby point so that patrons would not have to walk from the Guildford Station. The building has been used as a hospital, a Salvation Army Old People's home and the Guildford Girls High School (Carter, 1986). The school catered for the daughters of the middle class and accommodated 30 boarders and approximately the same number of day girls until its closure in 1910. At present, the building is used as the Riverside Lodge.

The Guildford Bridge was the site of the ferry stop until 1885 when the first bridge was built and was referred to as Barkers Bridge (1854) after a Mr Barker who had a warehouse on the corner of West Swan Road and Swan Street. Adjacent to the bridge was Moulton's landing and house (1842) and the house is still used as a private residence. Middle Swan Bridge was built in 1897 (Shire of Swan, 1993).

The Saint Charles Seminary was originally known as Garden Hill. The land was first owned by Alfred Waylen in 1837. His son inherited the estate and built the handsome Meadow Street bungalow in 1895. Several owners used the property as their private residence until 1942 when the Catholic Church bought the homestead and some surrounding land. The house is now part of the Seminary.

The Woodbridge homestead was built in 1885 and is now owned and classified by the National Trust and is also on the National Estate Register. The Woodbridge property was owned by Sir James Stirling, and then Henry Brockman. Charles Harper the next owner built the fine Victorian house at great expense. It overlooks the site of Stirling's original mud cottage. Guildford Grammar School began as a class started by Harper in the billiard room of the house and it later became Woodbridge House Preparatory School for Boys. The building has also been used as a Women's Hostel and classrooms for Governor Stirling High School. The National Trust completed its restoration in 1970. The original iron lace was removed during the mid 1940s and the present lace is from the old Federal Hotel, Perth, which was demolished in 1969.

At the site of the Riverbank institution was the Hamersley family's home Pyrton which remained until 1960s when it was demolished for the institution.

St Winnols was bought in 1881 and the house was built in 1898 (Bourke, 1987). The house is registered by the National Trust and is on Caversham Avenue. Further down the road is the Caversham homestead which was owned by the de Burgh family and was built in 1851 and later bought by Mr Fred Roe (Battye, 1912).

North of this was the Sandalford property established in 1830s, which was the estate of Captain John Septimus Roe. The Sandalford vineyards is one of the States finest wine producers although in the past it was used for citrus fruit production as well as grapes. Adjacent to Sandalford is a private residence of historical significance which is called Mandalay (1830s). Mr Thomas Brodie Pow owned the Walland vineyard at West Swan which included part of the Priory Park estate at West Swan. On the eastern bank was Samuel Henry Viveash's property of 'Wexcombe' which is now the present site of the Viveash subdivision (Battye, 1912). The homestead was originally built by Mr Tanner in 1840. The Viveash family bought the adjoining property of Ashby.

Conservation Areas

Wetlands

System 6

M41 Bennett Brook

The recommended area extends along the streamline from Harrow Street to the confluence with the Swan River. The brook and tributaries are seasonal streams which are partly interrupted by agricultural activities. However they retain fringing vegetation of paperbark and flooded gum. The area between Benara Road and Harper Street has been modified by grazing, excavation for clay and damming of the stream, and contains permanent pools which are fringed by paperbark and flooded gum. South of Harper Street the stream spreads out into a swamp approximately 800 metres wide containing a diversity of vegetation, including swamp paperbark and sedge which provide a feeding and breeding ground for birds and frogs. The conservation and recreation values of the area are high and several management recommendations were made.

M19 Swan River - Guildford to Walyunga National Park

The recommended area extends along the Swan River from Guildford to Walyunga National Park. The natural vegetation along much of this length of river is reduced to scattered trees along the banks, though above the Swan's confluence with Ellen Brook the banks are relatively well wooded. Flooded gum, swamp sheoak and paperbark occur throughout the reaches of Middle and Upper Swan, in some sections saplings and seedlings are present but elsewhere animals have prevented regeneration. The land adjacent to the river is mainly used for stock while vineyards occupy most of the remainder of the valley.

Landscape Description

Precinct Description

Waterform

The Swan River becomes increasingly narrow upstream of the Helena River confluence. At the confluence, the river appears broad and straight edged and makes an attractive viewscape. The Swan River takes several broad irregular meanders in this section. The sharp bend just south of the Bennett Brook confluence is emphasised by the height of Success Hill which reaches up to 25 metres. The opposite bank is a flat floodplain which creates an attractive contrast. This section of the river has a restricted viewscape and only segments of water can be viewed from the foreshore at one time which creates an element of expectation for the river user. The river also has several fallen branches and uneven sinuous clayey banks and reeds which create an irregular edge.

Natural riparian zone

The northern banks of the Swan River at the confluence with the Helena River are highly susceptible to erosion due to the lack of fringing vegetation. Recent flooding has left debris on the low lying floodplains of the Swan River and due to the recent abundance of water, weeds are particularly prolific. A section of foreshore south of Guildford Road Bridge has attractive fringing vegetation including several types of rush, a few sheoaks and flooded gum. Several areas of exposed clayey banks occur on the low lying floodplains and these are reddish in colour. The banks become gradually steeper towards Success Hill where large expanses of exposed sandy embankments occur. These banks appear to be highly susceptible to erosion due to their almost vertical slope and little vegetation cover. Bennett Brook appears as a small stream entering the Swan River through a section of melaleuca and reeds, behind which the land is completely cleared. The banks are comparatively low lying with often a small clayey embankment before flattening out to a flood plain. At Middle Swan, areas of erosion, branch falls and reeds provide a complex element to the semi circular shaped flood plain.

There is a section of Viveash foreshore where sedges and melaleuca fringe the edge of the muddy banks while the land behind has a dense stand of mainly young flooded gum. However the understorey is mainly exotic grass species such as Paterson's curse. Upstream, the river embankments become higher and steeper alongside of the Midland Brick foreshore while the opposite bank is low lying and undulating. The opposite northern banks have been altered for riparian land uses and are discussed below.

Landform

The Swan River takes several broad irregular meanders in this section. The sharp bend just south of the Bennett Brook confluence is emphasised by the height of Success Hill which reaches up to 25 metres. The opposite bank at Fish Market Reserve is a flat floodplain which creates an attractive contrast to the high almost scarp face of Success Hill. There is a small tributary which leads into Bennett Brook adjacent to Pyrtton Training Centre which has created a small valley between Eden and Success Hills. Between Fish Market Reserve and West Swan Road the southern bank forms a wide flat floodplain behind which a semi circular like higher embankment creates an enclosed viewscape. Upstream, the landform is quite flat until the gentle rise at Woodbridge which continues a small escarpment past Governor Stirling Senior High School. The opposite bank is wide and flat to Lilac Hill Park where it rises fairly steeply from the river's edge and once again flattens near Riverbank. Upstream, the land is relatively flat after a slight rise from the river foreshore. Around Midland Brick the landform has a steep embankment and then recedes into a flat wide plain south of Middle Swan Bridge.

Vegetation

South of the Bridge Street Crossing, the natural flooded gum vegetation complex has been mainly cleared, however a few magnificent flooded gum still stand on the flood plain. The understorey however is a mass of exotic grasses, such as barley and blowfly grass. On the higher land there are remnants of a marri woodland with a few trees dotting the empty blocks, however most vegetation has been replaced by the residential gardens. Upstream, there is an abundance of the giant reed on the steeply sloping banks at Success Hill. Other prominent species include marri, peppermint, and flooded gum as the dominant trees, while the understorey consists of bracken fern, watsonia and kikuyu as well as other weeds. The block adjacent to Success Hill has badly degraded marri-banksia woodland which is filled with weeds and has been recently burnt creating bare sandy patches between the weeds.

Bennett Brook confluence has had most of its vegetation cleared except for a narrow belt of melaleuca-casuarina and club rush. The Bennett Brook valley has some flooded gum and marri with understorey predominantly of kikuyu grasses and bracken fern. Upstream there is mainly the flooded gum -melaleuca complex which is dotted in thin remnant belts along the river banks and the land behind has been mainly cleared of the natural complex for vineyards and residential purposes. Along the river banks both marsh and lake club rush occurs in patches usually adjacent to the melaleuca complex.

At Lilac Hill and sections of the Viveash foreshore, flooded gum woodland occurs with an exotic grassy understorey. Melaleuca and several reed species line the foreshore in a broad belt.

Riparian land use

There is a WAWA drain leading from Brook Street to the river south of Guildford Road Bridge. The drain has been 'trained' which has created a straight channel with grassy banks. There are several flooded gum which are attractive and if the channel was meandering would almost be reminiscent of the original tributary. An old jetty which occurred adjacent to the drain was recently partly demolished in this year's floods, which is unfortunate as these small wooden jetties in low density suburban areas are an attractive foreshore feature.

Kings Meadow Reserve has a large oval with lawn which is not highly maintained and several old toilet blocks adjacent to the foreshore edge. There are several types of outdoor furniture and the car park area is gravel and partly informal. There are several attractive river gum and peppermint and a quite prominent almost dead pine tree. The banks are highly susceptible to erosion and wooden retaining walls have been constructed near where dredging once occurred and therefore there are no riparian reeds or trees at this section. There are two short wooden jetties which extend from Kings Meadow Reserve to almost half way into the river. The jetties are nicely balanced by two similar jetties at the downstream southern bank of Point Reserve.

The Guildford Road Bridge is a low form wooden pile structure which, although is currently being upgraded, has graffiti'd concrete abutments. The wooden piles and white wooden balustrades are rather attractive features in the historical context of the river. There are two adjacent railway crossings which have unattractive shaped piles and a wide grey superstructure; however from up and downstream the traffic and rail are in line with each other and appear as one element. The electric power lines also rise above the already tall obtrusive features.

Adjacent to the houses at Success Hill, there is a steep bank which has had small rocks and other debris placed along the river's edge to reduce erosion. The water pipeline is a arched suspension bridge which has a pleasing semi circular curve over the water and makes an attractive feature of an essential service. The overhead powerlines have been placed in the same line as the bridge which minimises the number of vertical elements in the plane.

Success Hill Park is located in a small valley. In the centre of the valley, hence the central viewscape, there is a toilet block which detracts from the attractive landform and also restricts river views.

The banks are mainly lawn with a few trees lining the central red brick pathway and a few more recently planted trees on the hill slopes. The edge of the hill before the steep escarpment is emphasised by the lawn extending to the embankment and tall trees growing from the embankment creating a distinction between the two landforms. On the northern bank there are a few pine trees which stand out against the remnant banksia woodland on the adjoining hill. On the opposite bank there are the electricity line towers and a small lookout shelter painted green. From the shelter the viewer can see the arch of the water pipeline. The pipeline is an attractive riparian feature due to its unusual form. A small T-shaped wooden jetty is adjacent to Success Hill spring. The original spring which ran down the escarpment has been directed into a concrete waterfall edged with bauxite rocks and similar bauxite rock bitumen paths lead down the escarpment.

The Fish Market Reserve is an attractive peninsula of mature flooded gum trees and grassy understorey which give the appearance of grassy woodland edged with melaleuca and reeds. The parkland has a few picnic facilities and two gravel parking bays. The rock walled entrance defines the park boundary and also has a plaque explaining the significance of the reserve's name. There is a small boat ramp which is ridged concrete; however its small nature, rock edges and surrounding fringing vegetation make it appear rather informal.

Due to the low lying land on either side of the river upstream of Bennett Brook there is little riparian land use, instead residential areas are set well back from the flood plain. A small jetty occurs adjacent to West Swan Road Bridge which is known as Moulton's Landing as it was built to allow supplies for Moulton's Store to be landed last century. The bridge itself is an attractive low lying wooden piled form with white wooden balustrades similar to Guildford Road Bridge. As both bridges are old, they provide an attractive entrance to the historic Guildford area, and give the river user a glimpse of how the river would have appeared earlier this century. At St Charles seminary, the river side has several river accesses, an old concrete bore and a fence. Lilac Hill Park has a cricket oval which has temporary stands erected for games. The rest of the area is wooded flooded gum and grass land which is particularly attractive surrounding for the few pine picnic tables.

Upstream on the northern bank the vineyards extend to the edge of the floodplain. These provide a pleasing land use as the green leaves and red clayey soils suggest fertility and productivity. The end of the floodplain is delineated by a sharp rise in slope on which houses are built. There is a small drain running down from Hamersley Road which passes by mounds of soil which has been moved due to levelling of land for agricultural purposes.

The Guildford Grammar School foreshore has several interesting land uses. There is an old stable building which is constructed of wood with a corrugated iron roof. The roof is rusting and the paint fading giving the building an attractive weathered texture in a location which appears to be rural. The horses have kept the understorey as a grassy layer among the remnant flooded gum trees. Further upstream the Guildford Grammar School rowing shed is a low form shed set into a depression on the hill. Although the shed is in a prominent location the use of olive green paint minimises its impact on the lawned foreshore.

Marshall Park has a number of old river gum which shade a boat shed and two jetties known as the Governor Stirling Jetties or West Midland Pool. At this narrow stretch of river, the jetties provide a partly enclosed swimming area for the school students. There is a rough gravel car park and flat cleared land in front of the embankment. The landform to the east, although relatively flat is slightly lumpy and subsiding due to its past use as a rubbish dump. The area is treeless and full of grasses and weeds.

The Blackadder Creek confluence with the Swan River has been redirected twice in recent history and its present location is the most northerly location. Originally, it was near the Governor Stirling Jetties. The present day channel is straight and narrow, almost drain like. At the confluence a small wooden bridge has been constructed and a few flooded gums have been planted in two strips along the channel. Unfortunately, the linear planting emphasises the unnatural form of the creek and it would be beneficial to extend the planting in a more natural pattern.

At Viveash the foreshore land use is mainly sections of fringing vegetation with a river trail allowing pedestrians to walk between Marshall Park and Reg Bond Reserve. Adjacent to Blackadder Creek there is a paddock filled with Paterson's curse which is used for a small flock of sheep. A small block of river gum has been retained which provides a valuable attractive feature adjacent to the flat paddock and the new Viveash housing estate.

Land use

Some of the most important land uses of the area for creating the precincts identity are the several historic houses and riparian features which line this section of the Swan River. The older houses range from grand to modest.

Upstream of Point Reserve, there are several grand riverfront houses which front onto large blocks. The houses include new and old houses built as early as late last century. Most of the older houses have been renovated and had extensions built. These houses have eclectic gardens and several have small vegetable patches. The houses are located above the floodplain embankment which means that they are often 50 metres or more away from the river foreshore on the lower side. Situated between the Guildford Road Bridge and the Guildford Railway Bridge, is *Earlsferry* which is an attractive Federation style homestead. The two storey house is built of brick and has been recently renovated including a new corrugated iron roof. The prominence of the building is obscured partly by the traffic and rail bridges.

Between Walter Road East and Success Hill Reserve, there is a reserve used for a below surface gas pipe. There is evidence of an old pathway which was originally lined with gravel rocks similar to those of Success Hill, however apart from this the reserve supports a degraded banksia woodland. The houses of Eden Hill were built in the mid 1950s by the State Housing Commission but over time have become individualised as new owners have created their own gardens and added extensions. Adjacent to the Bennett Brook confluence with the Swan River is the training centre run by Disability Services. The area has several styles of building; however the most prominent building which overlooks the river is grey concrete and brutalist/international style with a flat roof. The area is grassed to the embankment edge and several mature mainly exotic trees dot the lawned area.

Slightly away from the Swan River is the Swan Valley Nyungah Community which is currently building a small community development on the banks of Bennett Brook. The Corporation is currently constructing several individual wooden buildings with attractive half cylindrical iron sheeting roofs painted bold cheerful colours.

Bennett Brook housing for disabled people is a small 1980s style complex with small townhouse like units which allow for independent living.

Opposite to the Bennett Brook confluence are the St Vincent's Hospital and Aged Persons Home which consists of several buildings of differing styles and ages and an attractive garden which grades into the flood plain area. The washing line, sheds and car parks, however are prominent features of the Home to the river user.

The Bristle Quarry site on Harper Street is well away from the Swan River; however its four brick smoke stacks are a prominent feature from the Caversham area.

Saint Charles Seminary is an attractive homestead built in the gold rush era. The house is a brick and tiled roof single storey bungalow. From the river a gazebo like roof room is the dominant of the now seminary. Remnant exotic gardens occur down the sloping embankment while the dominant area is lawn. A few flooded gum and sheoak fringe the floodplain. There is an old water tank adjacent to the house which due to its box like nature and rusting colour is an unattractive element in the environment. Upstream on this bank are small Federation cottages which have been built on the edge of the curved embankment. The houses have been renovated and provide an attractive backdrop to the grassy floodplain.

The Mulberry Farm Convention Centre is built from brick and tin to be reminiscent of the early houses in the area. However the building style is modern particularly from the car park entrance. There are several limestone walls in the exotic plant gardens. Several bits of farm machinery are placed in the garden to link the building with the surrounding agricultural land uses. A windmill and dam farm the front entrance feature which is consistent with the adjacent vineyards. Adjacent to the farm are the overhead high tension powerlines which are prominent to both the river and land user due to the flatness of the landform and the lack of mature trees in the area.

Caversham vineyards are particularly attractive. There are mixtures of struts which are either wooden or metal V shapes. The vines provide an all year round change of foliage colour clearly delineating the season on the plain. The neat ploughed rows provide the viewer with a scene of order and rural activity which is a rare feature in the Swan River area. The houses associated with the vineyards range from old tin roof styled homes to modern ornate often reminiscent of the families' Mediterranean backgrounds. Metal sheds and farm equipment are dotted on the land which although rather plain and functional are important in defining the area. Caversham homestead has been greatly altered since its original design and has a corrugated roof and white rendered walls. The gardens obscure most of the house from the river. A small wooden jetty adjacent to the house is an attractive riparian feature; however the informal nature of the parking area is damaging the banks.

Guildford Grammar School has attractive buildings which have been constructed from the Federation period onwards. The chapel is an attractive Federation Gothic style which is set in the centre of a school modelled on the English grammar schools. From the river only glimpses of the buildings and school ovals can be seen due to mature exotic deciduous and pine trees and the remnant fringing vegetation.

One of the features most popular with river users in the area is Woodbridge House which is a particularly grand Victorian homestead. It has been successfully restored to a state reminiscent of its original condition with attractive brickwork and lace work and iron hipped roof with veranda cantilevered at a lower angle. The gardens are in beautifully maintained cottage and formal styles with a contrasting foreshore of fringing flooded gum and melaleuca and an almost continuous band of shore rush. Recently planted saplings have become a shrub layer in the community creating a relatively dense foreshore. There is an uninterrupted viewscape of the house and gardens leading to the river as the river user moves upstream of the meander at Mulberry Farm, however from a downstream direction the house is obscured by the high embankment and Governor Stirling Senior High School.

The Governor Stirling Senior High School has its main buildings perched adjacent to the steep sandy embankment and the three storey box like buildings accentuate the vertical element in the area. The school's tennis courts are adjacent to Woodbridge House and the areas are separated by large bushes. The school is neat, however the school's sheds and back ends of the buildings overlook the river.

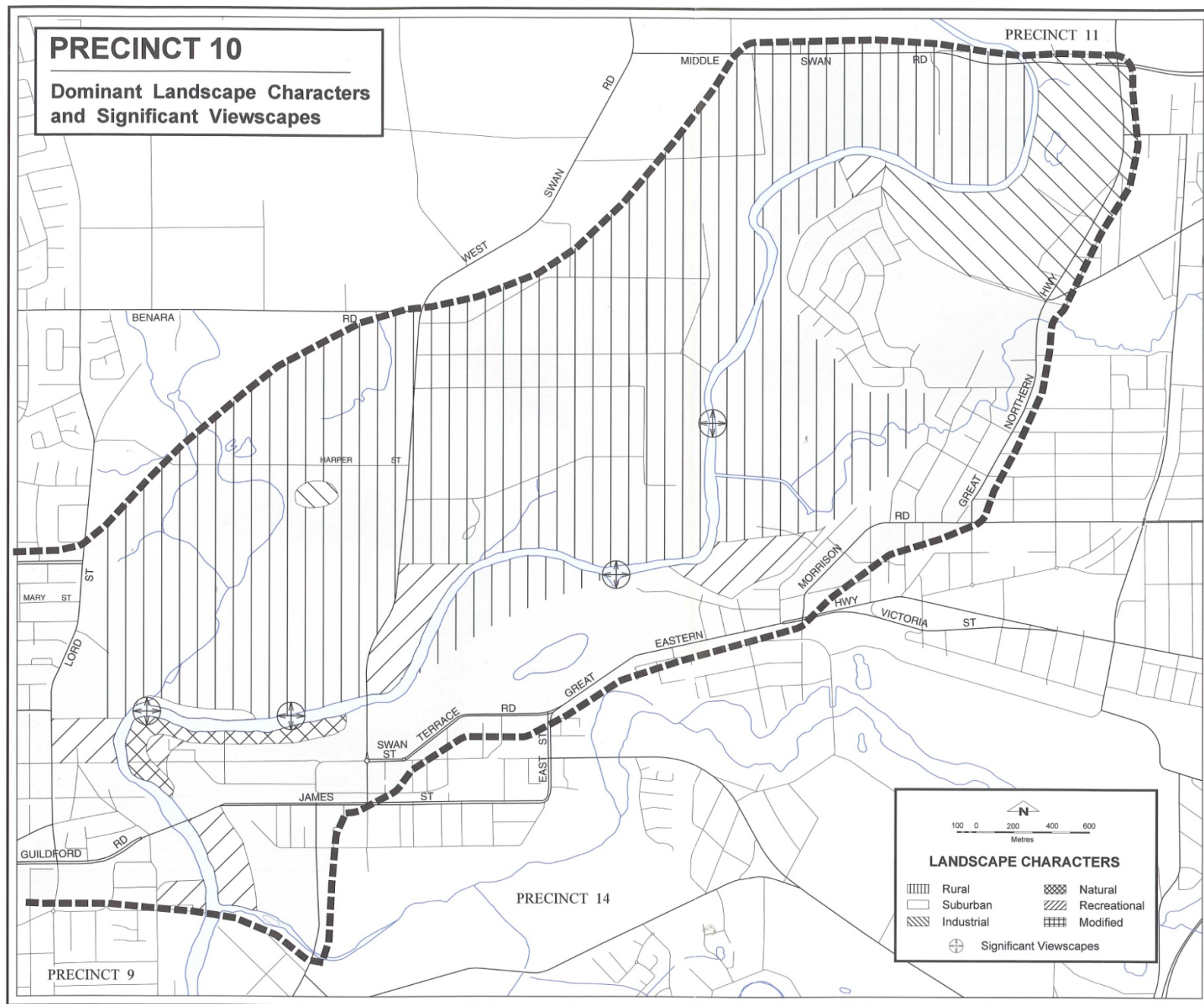
The Riverbank Detention Centre is a series of modern buildings mainly constructed from the 1960s onwards. It overlooks the Viveash subdivision which has occurred in two stages with older houses in the centre and a newer subdivision which is being built around the outside of the older subdivision. The new house are typically of the popular 'Federation' and 'Mediterranean' styles and many are quite large.

Near Blackadder Creek there is the Midland Community Christian Centre which was an old school, the Swan District Hospital and the La Salle College. These are set away from the river and have little impact on its landscape.

The foreshore at Midland - Whiteman Brickworks is steeply sloping and potentially liable to erosion if the weedy embankments were to be subject to high water levels. The embankments have young saplings and remnants of the sheoak-melaleuca community. There are several concrete drains entering the river at this point. The banks are covered with

indigenous overstorey and exotic grassy understorey. From the foreshore the large sheds and smoke towers can be seen between the trees, however their impact has been reduced by the use of a light green paint for the shed walls. Within the brickworks grounds, piles of rubble and clay mix are surrounded by scrap metal, weeds and a few planted trees. The main sheds which shelter the clay are very tall; however efforts to screen most of the work have been quite successful.

On the northern banks, Sandalford Wines is the most northern vineyards in the precinct. The homestead is tucked away from the river and only glimpses of the vineyards can be seen. Adjacent to Middle Swan Road are several rural land uses including an animal hospital and horse agistments which have small fenced paddocks shaded by remnant marri and flooded gum vegetation. At present, Middle Swan Road is being realigned and as a consequence the road works block most of the Sandalford peninsula viewscape.



Landscape Interpretation

Dominant Landscape Character

The original landscape character would have been the flat alluvial terraces of the Swan and Guildford landscape. The dominant vegetation community in the damp alluvial soils would have been flooded gum, paperbark and sedges in moist locations. In the drier locations an open eucalyptus woodland would have been found. Today much of the vegetation has been cleared for agricultural and suburban land, however the landform is still a dominant factor in the landscape, in particular, the high alluvial embankments at Success Hill, the town of Guildford and near the brickworks. The flat alluvial terraces at Caversham are emphasised by the lack of trees and the neat vine rows.

At Fish Market Reserve, the landscape appears to be relatively natural due to the remnant woodland. Historically, the land has been used for a number of rural and industrial land uses, however today some flooded gums have regenerated and the fringing vegetation is in relatively good condition. The sedgeland continues upstream of the Fish Market Reserve and appears to be a limited but natural landscape. The central section of Fish Market Reserve was cleared in the 1970s for silica mining. Young flooded gum trees have regenerated and the understorey consists of grasses. The appearance is of an open parkland rather than a natural vegetation community. Several picnic amenities and unsealed roads cross the area.

The dominant landscape of the southern section of the precinct is suburban. One of the most important features of the suburban landscape is that a large number of houses were built last century. This gives the landscape a sense of historic significance. In contrast, the newer housing developments at Viveash provide a more modern suburban landscape.

The Brickworks at Middle Swan are clearly an industrial land use feature which dominates the landscape character in this area. The several sheds, clay mounds and conveyor-belts are the key industrial elements. The Bristle quarry at Harper Street is an isolated industrial landscape typified because of its four chimneys and numerous sheds.

The large portion of the landscape is rural. The vineyards of the Middle Swan area are an important element in the whole Swan River landscape. The vineyards have large sections of land cleared for the neat rows of vines with small clusters of sheds and houses. In addition, the residential buildings associated with the rural land use are sparsely distributed across the landscape.

Significant Viewscapes

There are several significant viewscapes in the precinct. The views of the rural landscape characters are important in an increasingly suburban riparian landscape. One of the most attractive viewscapes is the panoramic view of Woodbridge House and the vineyards opposite the house. The house is an attractive historic element in a relatively rural environment.

The confluence of Bennett Brook and the Swan River provides an attractive view. The confluence of the brook and river is mainly obscured by the fringing vegetation, which appears attractive and natural. In addition, the steep alluvial terrace of Success Hill contrasts with the flat plain of Fish Market Reserve.

Conforming and Non Conforming Elements in the Landscape

The Kings Meadow Reserve is not highly maintained. The toilet amenities are in a prominent position adjacent to the Helena River and detract from the riparian environment. The short wooden jetties at the reserve are an attractive element in the parkland environment and conform with the informal land use of the parkland. Similarly, the Governor Stirling jetties are also attractive riparian features.

The Guildford Bridge although graffitied, was built several years ago and has an attractive old style in keeping with the surrounding suburban area which has a number of houses built last century.

At Success Hill, the original spring which ran down the escarpment has been directed into a concrete waterfall edged with bauxite rocks. Unfortunately, the effect is rather drain like and weeds have grown around the edges and in the waterfall. Similar bauxite rock bitumen paths lead down the escarpment. Possibly it would be more consistent to replace the bitumen with a more natural pathway material or even the same red bricks which lead to the pathway. In addition, the toilet block at Success Hill is in the centre of the viewcape; if it is upgraded its relocation could be addressed.

Governor Stirling Senior High School, like many buildings adjacent to the river, has not taken advantage of the riverside location. Straight box like buildings accentuate the high river embankment and many of the sheds are located adjacent to the foreshore.

The Midland and Whiteman brickworks have high embankments which screen the industry from the foreshore. The embankments have been planted with some trees to reduce the risk of erosion;

however the understorey consists mainly of weeds which detract from the embankment.

Recommendations for Maintenance and Enhancement of the Present Landscape Character

- There is the opportunity to relocate the Kings Meadow Reserve change room amenities and parking closer to Guildford Primary School, leaving an attractive parkland facing onto the confluence of the Swan and Helena Rivers. By retaining the jetties along this section of the precinct, the recreational landscape will be maintained.
- There is opportunity to improve the plantings at Blackadder Creek to cover the whole wetland rather than the linear planting along the stream.
- Blackadder Creek confluence and Viveash foreshore has the potential to be revitalised as an area of public open space with attractive native flora and facilities for public access and recreation.
- Success Hill has an attractive natural landform. There is the opportunity to enhance the natural vegetation and improve the design and location of public amenities at this park.
- Careful consideration of building styles should be taken when planning for future development along the river. The attractiveness of Guildford is its predominantly turn of the century houses and well established gardens. Future development should not compromise this landscape amenity.

Precinct Specific References

Bell, H. 1995. **Idjhil - And the Land Cried for its Lost Soul.**
University of Western Australia Press. Cygnet Book Imprint.

Bourke, M.J. 1987. **On the Swan. A History of the Swan District Western Australia.** University of Western Australian Press for the Swan Shire Council, Middle Swan WA.

Carter, J. 1986. **Bassendean - A Social History 1829- 1979.**
Town of Bassendean. Perth.

Gibbons, C. 1929. **Guildford - 1829-1929. A Century of Progress.**

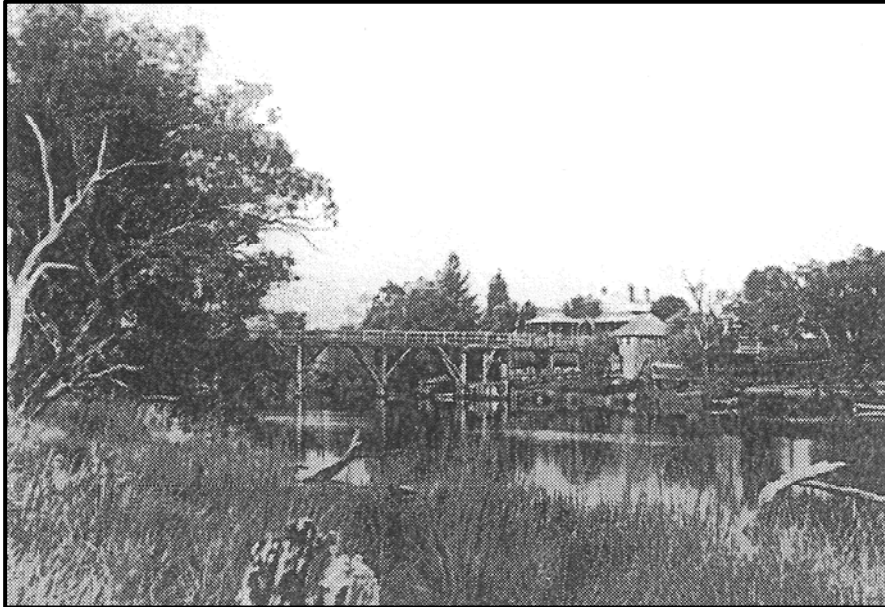
Moss, J.V. Undated. **The Birth and Growth of Guildford.**
Teachers Higher Certificate Optional Thesis.

Shire of Swan. 1979. **Ray Marshall Park, West Midland.**
Development Proposals Final Report. Kinnaird Hill de Rohan and Young Pty Consulting Engineers.

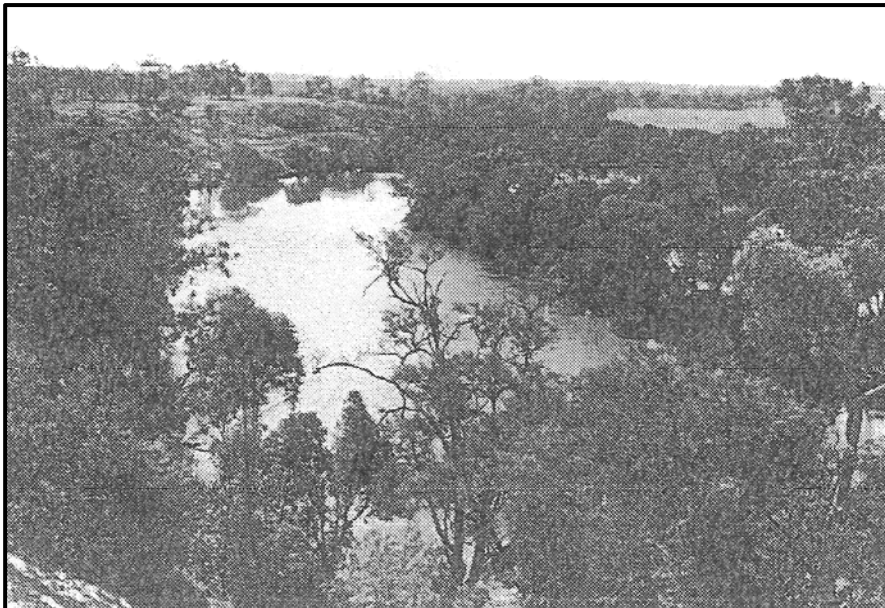
Shire of Swan. 1993. **Bridge It - A Social History of the Bridges in the Swan Valley.** The Shire of Swan.

Students of Middle Swan School, 1987. **Reflections of the Swan Valley Heritage Trail.** Pamphlet.

Western Australian Tourism Commission. 1986. **Swan Valley Tourism Development Plan.** A report to the Western Australian Tourism Commission. Prepared by Ernst and Whinney.



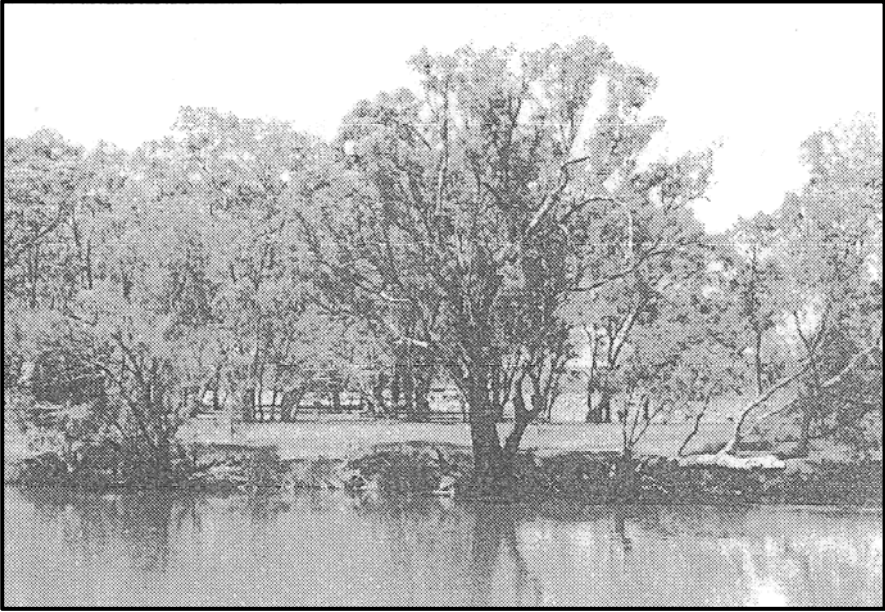
Barker's Bridge and Moulton's Landing, Guildford, 1985.
Swan River Trust.



View from Success Hill, Bassendean, 1937.
Battye Library 38995P.



Woodbridge, Guildford, 1993.
Swan River Trust.



Viveash foreshore, 1996.
Swan River Trust.