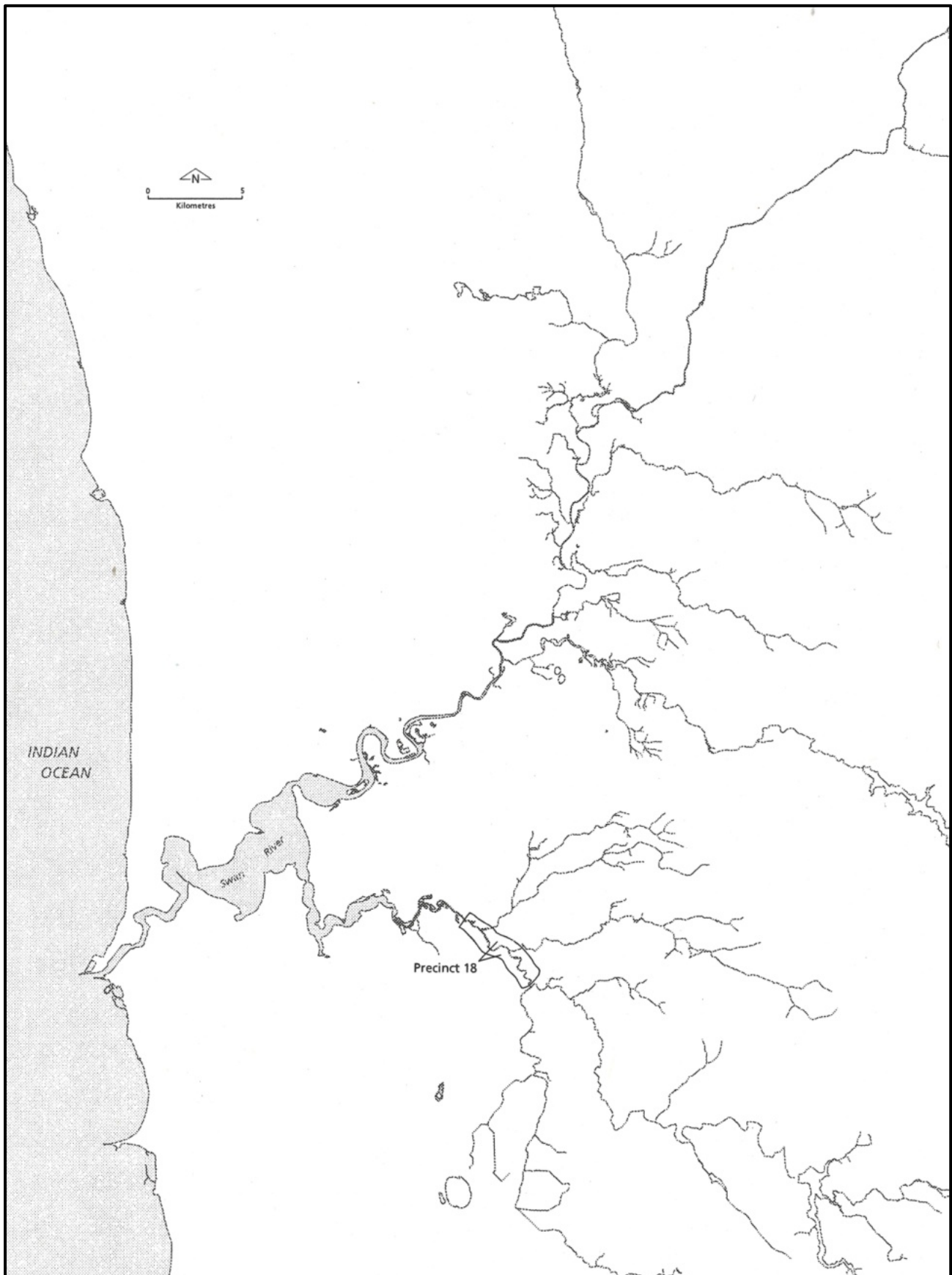


Precinct 18

Canning River – Nicholson Road Bridge to
Southern River Confluence



Summary

Canning River – Nicholson Road Bridge to Southern River Confluence

The precinct includes the Canning River between Nicholson Road Bridge and its confluence with the Southern River, as well as confluences with Yule and Bickley Brooks. The Canning River in this section is a narrow and shallow Channel which seasonally inundates.

Some of the low lying areas become seasonally waterlogged and form damplands and palusplains. Wetland areas, such as Hersey Place, have attractive vegetation and waterforms; however these are detracted from by the adjacent light industrial and commercial areas which have their work yards abutting the wetland. As with much of this area the land has evidence of soil being dumped to form higher land for the commercial areas, the result being a steep face of soil and weeds on the Albany Highway side of the wetlands.

Other water features include Yule and Bickley Brooks which are very narrow channels which due to the encroaching urban land use and the degradation of their fringing vegetation are not particularly attractive and appear like stormwater drains. In contrast, the outward appearance of the fringing flooded gum and melaleuca woodlands of the Canning River are particularly attractive as there is a dense canopy of soft greens and a mixture of tree forms. Unfortunately, weeds proliferate in the understorey, particularly in the damplands and adjacent to the channel.

One of the attractive land uses in the area is the old orchards at Burslem Drive. This provides a link to the historic use of the area and a break from the rather gaudy commercial and industrial areas along Albany Highway and closer to the river. Much of the land has been subdivided into residential blocks, such as Langford and Thornlie. These two suburbs have quite modest homes which are built in the fashions of the 1980s. At Kenwick some of the old orchard sites have been redeveloped into 'villages' of duplexes and small houses. These have been constructed by developers and therefore have been built in a uniform style and materials.

Biophysical Processes

Geological Processes

The Guildford Formation is alluvial and the geological unit occurs around the river channel and the northern banks. The Guildford Formation consists of lenticular interbeds and mixtures of sand, clay and conglomerate, which are locally calcareous.

Behind the river channel on the southern bank is the Bassendean Sand, which is a series of leached dunes of quartz sand parallel to the coast laid down on the ancient shorelines of the Holocene and Pleistocene high sea level events.

Swan alluvial terraces are red podsollic and undifferentiated alluvial soils along the present stream terraces. They are of high fertility and have a rich texture. South of the Canning River are the Southern River grey sand dunes with intervening clayey swamps. To the northern plains are the Guildford Soil Associations which are yellow podsollic soils.

Topography

The Canning River channel is situated within the Pinjarra Plain landform which consists of unconsolidated fluvial sediments. These formed as alluvial fans as over time the small streams which run over the Darling Scarp deposited their sediments. The area is surrounded by the Bassendean Dune System which represents a Pleistocene accumulation of beach sands along an old coastline. The dunes today are low lying and within the intervening swale sandy swamps have formed. The river channel and associated flood plains are low lying and surrounded by a higher sand plain. Much of this precinct is subject to seasonal inundation. The southern bank was originally sandy swamp while the northern banks were a low lying plain, however much of this original landform has been infilled.

Hydrological Processes

Water features

The Canning River is characterised by a single phase sinuosity and the channel is irregular in its width. The south eastern boundary of Hester Park is the location of 'The Rapids', which was an important crossing point on the Canning during the early years of settlement. The low lying areas are seasonally inundated during periods of high water levels. The flat lands and basins become seasonally waterlogged and form palusplains and damplands.

The river is fluvial and by definition there are no tidal influences rather the fresh water flows from the catchment. However there are historical records which suggest that prior to dam construction the river was seasonally estuarine up to Hester Park.

Bathymetry

The Canning River water depth is very shallow and in places is less than a metre deep, although in areas such as downstream from Royal Road the channel is narrow and approximately 2 metres deep. The water volume held in the channel is most often much lower than its total carrying capacity, such as during the summer months when the flow is reduced to a trickle at the base of the channel.

Flooding

Much of the area lies within the floodway and most of the low lying land is below the 100 year flood level. There is a wide flood plain which is seasonally inundated and in areas becomes waterlogged. The flood plain varies from 200 to 300 metres width and up to 5 metres in depth.

Erosion and Accretion

Erosion occurs where riparian vegetation has been removed or degraded along the channel banks. For the most part, vegetation, whether indigenous or exotic, is quite prolific along this section of the river channel and erosion is not a serious problem. Generally, people do not use this section of the river for water activities and the dual use path encourages people to stay away from the riparian vegetation. During periods of high water erosion and accretion occur as part of the channel's natural processes.

Vegetation Communities

Native

Swan Complex

The indigenous flora of this precinct is classified as being part of the Swan Complex.

The vegetation ranges from fringing woodland of flooded gum (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) with localised occurrence of low open forest of swamp sheoak (*Casuarina obesa*) and saltwater paperbark (*Melaleuca cuticularis*). The various communities which make up this complex are described below.

Juncus Community

Sedges and rushes such as bare twig rush (*Baumea juncea*), pale rush (*Juncus pallidus*) and shore rush (*Juncus kraussii*) occur along the river's edge and also in seasonally inundated damplands such as at Hester Park.

Melaleuca Community

The swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) communities are found along the Canning River in swampy areas. These communities have a dense canopy of the small paperbark (less than 10 metres). It most commonly has an disturbed understorey of arum lily (**Zantedeschia aethiopica*) or ephemeral grasses.

Acacia Community

There are three stands of low closed forest of coojong (*Acacia saligna*). These stands tend to be monospecific and are found near Ellison Drive, Burslem Drive and the north side of the railway crossing. The coojong is not indigenous to this area although it is a native plant.

Eucalyptus-Melaleuca communities

The dominant vegetation along the river edges is the flooded gum (*Eucalyptus rudis*) and swamp paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) complex. Within this precinct a number of remnant understorey species exist. These include mohan (*Melaleuca viminea*), swishbush (*Viminaria juncea*), a tall shrub (*Calycophyllum ephedroides*) and spearwood (*Kunzea* sp).

Exotic

There are several non indigenous eucalypts and casuarinas planted in Hester Park and along the roadside reserves, while exotics such as jacaranda (**Jacaranda mimosifolia*) and Queensland box tree (**Lophostemon conferta*) have been planted adjacent to the river reserve. Weeds which are a problem include, veldtgrass (**Ehrharta* sp), Paterson's curse (**Echium* sp), blackberry (**Rubus* sp), docks (**Rumex crispus*, **Rumex conglomeratus*) and cape tulip (**Hemerocallis flaccida*), pampas grass (**Cortaderia selloana*), arum lily (**Zantedeschia aethiopica*), bulrush, (**Typha orientalis*), buffalo grass (**Stenotaphrum secundatum*) and kikuyu (**Pennisetum clandestinum*). In the Melaleuca closed woodland, the understorey is invaded by wild oats (**Avena fatua*) and watsonia (**Watsonia bulbilifera*). Other prominent exotic trees include the cape lilac (**Melia azedarach*), weeping willow (**Salix* sp), castor oil bush (**Ricinus communis*) and fig (**Ficus carica*).

Historical Land Use and Resulting Environmental Changes

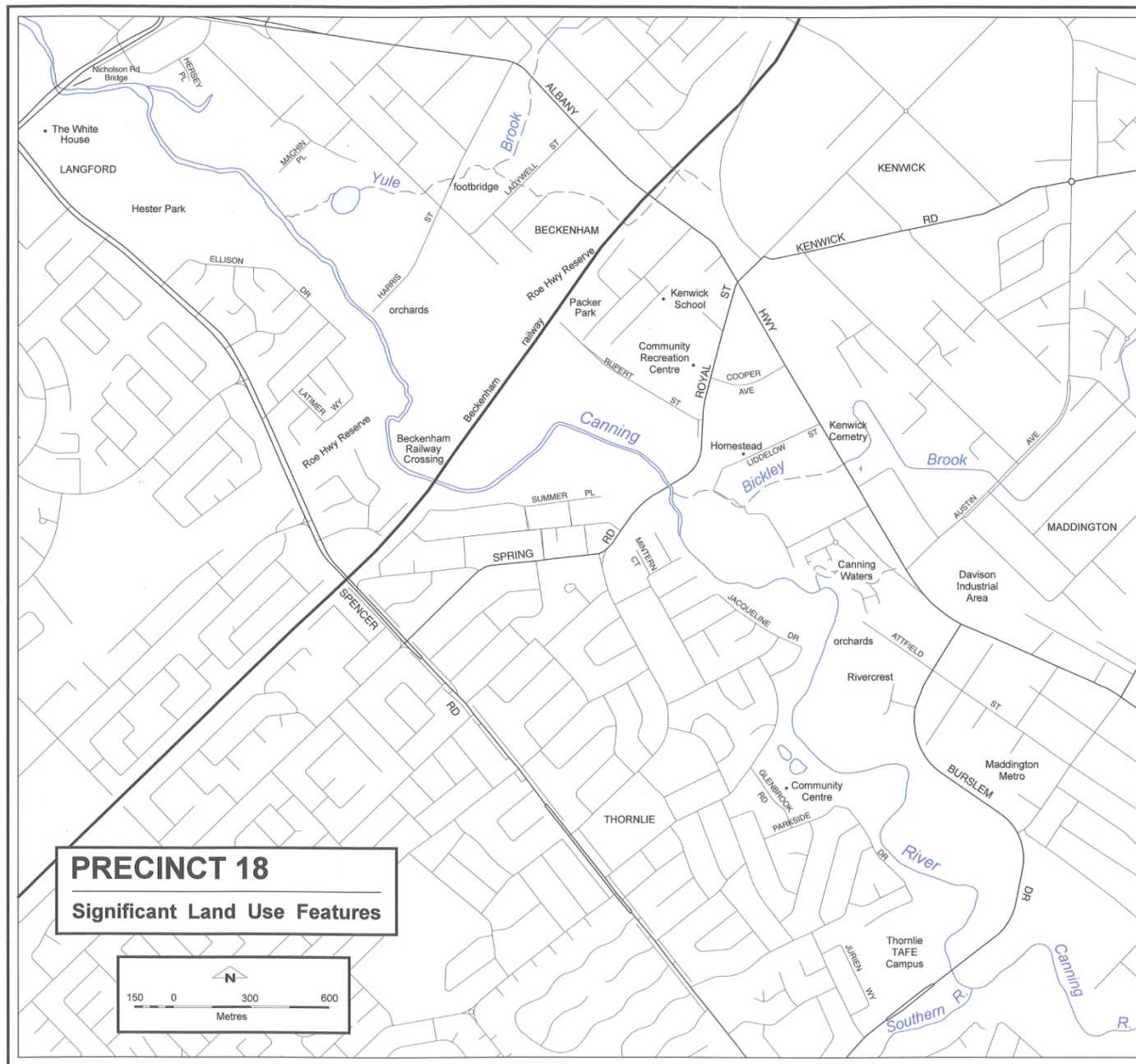
The original grants in the area were made to the following W. Knight (Lot 6), W. Owen, (Lot 7 & 9), C. Simmons (Lot 8), Bull & Wood (Lot 10), G.Morrit (Lot 11), R. Dawson (Lot 12) A.H. Gilbert & Nairne (Lot 13), T. Bannister (Lot 17), P. Pegus (Lot 18), T. Hester (Lot 19) and H.Willet (Lot 21) (Carden, 1968).

The early settlers in the area flourished in the unfamiliar environment. Both Peter Pegus and Thomas Hester planted crops in November and December 1829 which failed to survive the summer heat. They also planted crops of potatoes on the flood plains in the winter of 1930 which became waterlogged or entirely flooded. The Hester family and the Spencers both lost children who were probably buried in the park (McQueen, 1963). Peter Pegus and his servants arrived in late 1829 and established 'Coleraine'. This property was burnt to the ground in 1834 due to a bush fire and he requested government assistance. Pegus soon left the Canning property for a small government post on the Swan River (McDonald and Cooper, 1988).

His neighbour Thomas Hester was soon to follow bringing with him his family, a flour mill, ploughs, tools, clothing and a piano all up river to his property 'Redcliffe'. The Hester family was plagued with misfortune from the start. One servant died in his sleep while the second wandered off soon after the family arrived. In December 1830, Sophia Hester died in childbirth and the newborn son died a few days later. By this time Thomas Hester's eyesight was failing and he was almost blind. He and his five remaining children struggled to survive often relying on neighbours and the local Nyungar people for food (McDonald and Cooper, 1988).

R. Dawson did little to his land and Location 12 became the property of Wallace Bickley in August 1833 (McDonald and Cooper, 1988). Despite an arrangement with his neighbour G. Morrit to have half of Location 11, the government did not recognise the exchange and Bickley left the colony. Almost 20 years later he returned from India with his second wife and five daughters. Despite his long absences on return trips to India, his property flourished due to the strong and capable management of his wife. The property included Locations 3, 11, 12 and 18 and produced hay, cattle and horses.

The syndicate Yule, Lewis and Houghton was on Location 8. They called the property 'The Rapids' and bought large numbers of stock (McDonald and Cooper, 1988). The water in the Canning was salty up to The Rapids when the property was first taken up, however by the 1830s weirs were built which controlled the flow of salt water from 'The Rapids' and upstream of this location.



Raymond Houghton passed his share on for the more fertile Swan Valley and set up the 'Houghton' vineyards.

Thomas Bannister was given a large property at location 17 which he named 'Woolcoombs'. Only a few weeks later the daily grind of colonial life started to be unappealing to Bannister and he spent most of his time in Albany and Fremantle instead (Swartz, undated).

Dulton owned Location 15; however he had a house at Preston Point and never took up his land on the Canning River probably because of the personal misfortune which had so far plagued him in the colony. The land was sold to William Habgood in 1835 (Carden, 1968).

At the turn of the Century W.G. Brookman (Mayor of Perth) established the River View Estate on Location 21 which was 300 acres (McDonald and Cooper, 1988). There are remnants of the vines and orchards at the north-western part of Hester Park. These were watered using the river and Brookman's property in particular was a model farm with a piggery, stables, poultry, orchards and vineyard. The house was stately and contained a ball room and had a uniformed footman. Eleven weatherboard cottages were constructed for his labourers at his property near Nicholson Rd Bridge.

John R. Phillips owned Location 13 as part of his grant and due to financial difficulties sold the land to Major William Nairne in 1833 (McDonald and Cooper, 1988). Details of John R. Phillips are discussed in Precinct 36. Nairne was enthusiastic and enterprising and based his property on wool production. He built a two storey home 'Maddington Park' which is at the end of Olga Road (Carden, 1968). The homestead was one of the grandest in the colony and Nairne's plans for the jarrah and limestone house expanded as the home was constructed. Unfortunately, his finances were less grand and the craftsmanship and materials on the second floor are inferior to the lavish first floor. Nairne borrowed a large sum of money from the Surveyor General J.S. Roe and in the end sold the park in 1840 as his debts were too great. John Liddelow bought the land at Maddington Park but his attempts at reviving the property failed and he bought land at Cooper Road (Kenwick). In 1906 his grandson Beverley Liddelow sold Kenwick Park to developers.

Due to the demand in the early years of the Canning Settlement a ferry Service ran to Yules Rapids, however by 1835 this Service was disbanded due to its unreliability and the dangerous nature of the trip (Carden, 1968). Therefore the only remaining communication was by crossing at Chenies farm to a dirt track which led to Bull's Creek.

Location 18 eventually became the Canning Vale estate which was sold as orchard, poultry farm, garden and dairy lots. It was advertised as having rich moist soils all year round, however these properties were not as fertile as the opposite river bank and the area was too isolated for most buyers (McDonald and Cooper, 1988).

Present Land Use and Social Patterns

This section of the precinct is undergoing land use redevelopment. Much of the area has in the past been the site of intensive horticulture such as orchards and small dairy properties. However due to the high cost of the land and new generations taking over the properties, much of this land has been given over to residential purposes. Some orchards remain on Burslem Drive and within Kenwick. Examples of recent developments are the Rivercrest and Canning Waters subdivisions where developers have built a large node of small houses and units all of similar design and materials on the one block. These have neat landscaped gardens and common driveways and front lawns. Other areas such as Thornlie and Langford have been subdivided as individual residential areas mainly during the 1980s and although the houses are all of a similar fashion they are individual.

Much of the area in Kenwick and Maddington is commercial and light industrial. There are several retail outlets, the closest to the river being Maddington Metro Shopping complex on Burslem Drive. Most of the retail is in ribbon development form along Albany Highway, and the showrooms face onto the highway rather than the river. The light industrial area includes such businesses as car panel beating and clothing factories which often have large work yards adjacent to the river reserve.

The Thornlie TAFE campus is located on the foreshore adjacent to Burslem Drive.

Recreation nodes

Hester Park is a 45 hectare area of open public space located on the western banks of the Canning River, Langford. There are four open drains. The area includes remnant fringing woodlands that have remained despite the Clearing for agriculture, grazing, timber cutting and fire. There is a irrigated oval and canoe slalom course, the latter can only be used during periods of high water level. There are also areas suitable for passive recreation such as Walking, dog exercise, picnicking, and cycling.

The dual use path runs along the entire southern bank at this section of the precinct; there is mainly a narrow belt of reserve, however this is well used by local residents as there are many young families in the area. Adjacent to Jacqueline Drive there is a cement cricket pitch which allows for an informal game of cricket by the river banks. The Thornlie Community centre provides for organised recreation adjacent to the river and there are play equipment structures along the southern banks.

Public access

Public access to the southern banks of the river is well catered for by the dual use path adjacent to the fringing vegetation. However there is no parking in the area and due to the sensitive nature of these wetlands easy public access would not be suitable. Along the northern bank access is rather difficult due to private properties, such as the orchards and residential blocks, and very few people would bother to climb into the inundated wetlands of the Canning River adjacent to the river crossings.

Sites of Nyungar & Wider Australian Community Significance

Nyungar significance

At the time of colonial settlement, the Canning River was the run of two Nyungar groups. The Beeloo, lead by Munday, mainly lived between the river and the Darling Ranges. The Beeliar, lead by Midgegooroo, used the land between the Canning River and the ocean. It is possible that the area of the 'Maddington Park' property was a meeting ground for both groups (O'Connor *et al*, 1984).

The Canning River was one area where conflict between the Nyungar and colonists was particularly heated. Nyungar relied on the wild food resources in the various environments. Their disciplined and ordered nomadic lifestyle required no domestic animals or crops. This lifestyle was not understood by the new colonists, who demarcated their properties with fences and were not willing to share the land (Mc Donald and Cooper, 1988).

A serious incident occurred near Maddington Park in December 1833. Two of Major Nairne's young shepherds, Hokin (11 years old) and Cleulow (9 years old), were Walking to the summer pastures at the nearby foothills. Only a short distance from the homestead they came across a Canning River Nyungar, Buoyeen. A woman travelling with Buoyeen asked the boys for bread. (The local Nyungar were often given food by the settlers, mainly to prevent the loss of crops to the Nyungars who still gathered food from their traditional grounds).

The boys refused and Buoyeen, offended by their manner, began to threaten the children until Cleulow burst into tears. Hokin turned to run, and was hit in the back by Buoyeen's spear. The Nyungar woman who was by now enraged by the insulting manner of the boys beat Hokin over the head with her *wanna* or digging stick. Cleulow, terror stricken, turned to run and was brought down by a second spear from Buoyeen. Both boys were left for dead. However Hokin managed to get back to Maddington Park and the boys were attended to by a surgeon and survived the ordeal. Buoyeen was caught and executed within a few weeks (McDonald and Cooper, 1988).

Other significance

The 'River View' mansion at Nicholson Road Bridge was built by a well-known Goldfields identity and later Mayor of Perth, William Brookman, in the 1890s (McDonald and Cooper, 1988). It was a lavish house with uniformed footmen and a ballroom. Adjacent to the house were eleven weatherboard houses for his workers. In the 1960s the home was used as a reception centre.

Woodlupine Brook joins Yule Brook at Mills Park, Beckenham. Woodlupine is an English flower and was the original name for the area, however after a murder of a 17 year old girl, Fairy Compton, in the early 1900s, the name was changed due to notoriety. It was named Queens Park after Queen Alexandra (Carden, 1968).

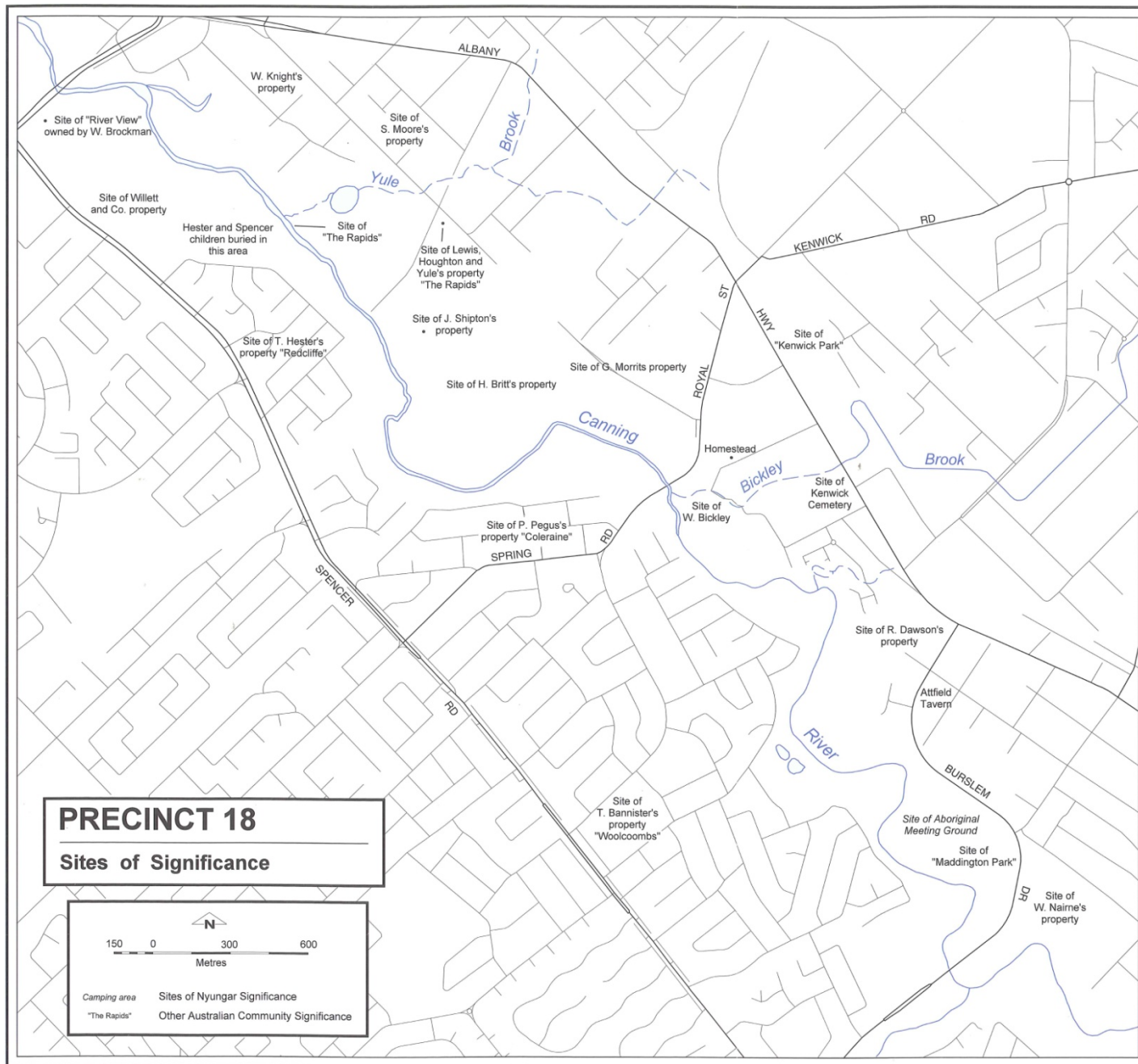
In 1883 William Green, sold land in the Kenwick district to Walter Padbury. The Padburys built a house for their niece and her husband, Mr James. The name Thornlie homestead was from the James' family residence in India. After the death of the James the Canning property was subdivided in 1932 and again in 1974 (McDonald and Cooper, 1988).

Kenwick Pioneer Cemetery on Albany Highway was established in 1865 and many of the early settlers are buried here.

Conservation Areas

Wetlands

The area has several areas of inundation which are listed as the Canning River palusplain and flood plain in the *Wetlands in the City of Gosnells* (WAWA 1993). These have been classified according to management strategy and within this precinct are areas of High Conservation such as the entire Canning River flood plain; Conservation and Open Space Wetlands such as Hester Park; and Resource Enhancement areas such as the palusplain areas of the Canning River.



System 6

M75 Upper Canning and Southern Rivers

The recommended area comprises the Canning River and its fringes from Nicholson Road Bridge to the boundary of State Forest, together with those parts of the Southern and Wungong Rivers within the City of Gosnells.

The Canning River is well fringed with flooded gums and paperbark along the west bank between Nicholson Road Bridge and Royal Street and the east bank is fairly thickly fringed near where Yule and Bickley Brooks join the Canning River. Native species have been almost entirely lost from the ground flora. At the river's confluences with Bickley Brook and the Southern River both banks are well covered, mainly with flooded gum and paper barks. Grasses and weeds abound. The area constitutes open space of regional significance because of its high conservation and recreational values, its proximity to Perth's residential areas and regional roads passing through the area.

Landscape Description

Precinct Description

Waterform and natural riparian zone

Upstream of the Nicholson Road Bridge, the Canning River forms a small meander before branching into the Hersey Place wetland. The area of inundation forms a three armed water body which in periods of high inundation forms a small island of higher land in the northern section of the wetland. The Hester Park section of the river has a deep channel and shallower areas of inundation where channels overflow in winter months. The main Canning River channel curves in a northerly bend and then takes a straighter form to Yule Brook. Yule Brook is a very narrow shallow channel, which looks more like a drain than a creek due to the adjacent land uses. The brook has small meanders before forming a wetland and island prior to entering the Canning River. The flooded banks of the Canning River give the water form an informal shape as it extends into the fringing vegetation as of shallow pools. Bickley Brook enters the Canning River upstream of Royal Street Bridge. It is a narrow shallow channel and its confluence with the main river appears like a small drain entrance.

The narrow channel near the Beckenham railway crossing broadens downstream after taking the tight meander before Harris Street. The shallow form of the river channel can be seen between the breaks in the paperbark stands adjacent to Jacqueline Drive, where the river branches into a small wetland on the northern bank. The wetland is surrounded by a small belt of remnant paperbarks and a new residential area. The river forms wide tight meanders upstream of the wetlands towards the confluence of the Southern River. However for the most part this section of the river is so shallow and the riparian vegetation so dense it is difficult to view the river and its channel.

Landform

At Hester Park the land takes the form of gently undulating slopes with the depressions filling with water during winter months. The present day landform has a rather clumpy soil surface which is reminiscent of the past intensive horticultural land use. From the residential area the land gently slopes towards the flatter area of the flood plain. The flood plain at Hester Park appears to be a wide bank in comparison with the restricted nature of the opposite northern bank which has had its flood plain infilled. The Langford area is quite flat due to infilling for urban development and this is similar at Thornlie. The areas of infilling have steep embankments which slope down to the flood plain of the river. In many places, such as Summer Place this is quite a steep embankment. The northern bank has mainly a flatter more natural landform and the gradient between the river flood plain and the urban areas is quite gentle.

Vegetation

The precinct has been- mainly cleared of its natural vegetation for residential and farming purposes; however the fringing vegetation along the river banks is still present. The vegetation complex along the river at Hester Park is a tall belt of paperbark and flooded gum. The tall stand of *Acacia saligna* within the flood plain adjacent to Ellison Drive, Langford is particularly attractive as a form of bright green shiny leaves among the dense paperbark communities which grow within the flooded banks. There are several trees which emerge from the main canopy and the contrast in height creates visual interest. The lower canopy is much denser and there are contrasts in shades of green within the fringing vegetation. The cleared area has an abundance of weed species all of varying heights and foliage which during the winter months appears lush. The vegetation around Hersey Place wetland has an overstorey of paperbark and sheoak which have an open light canopy and soft bark; however this is detracted from by the weedy nature of the understorey and the adjacent land use.

Unfortunately, the paperbark flooded gum stand near Latimer Way, Langford, has been recently burnt so that the most evident vegetation is the flourishing weeds. There is remnant banksia woodland on the rise of the southern bank adjacent to the Beckenham railway crossing. The understorey is predominantly weeds and lawn; however these trees are a reminder to the river user of the sandy woodland that once occurred in the now cleared area.

The fringing vegetation at Summer Place is relatively narrow and is separated from the road side mowed verge by the bike path. There are several prominent weeds including a large stand of bulrush and a coral tree at this section of the river. Near Mintern Court there is a band of vegetation including a variety of mature eucalypts. The fringing vegetation upstream continues to be mainly dominated by flooded gum and paperbarks. The fringing vegetation around Yule and Bickley Brooks is similar to the flooded gum and paperbark communities along the Canning, however they are infested with weeds and in parts the vegetation has been entirely cleared. Similarly, the wetland at Canning Waters is a thin band of paperbark and fringing reeds which is surrounded by the new development and the trees are showing signs of stress with wilted foliage and damaged branches.

The Burslem Road orchards are a rather attractive landscape feature as they are becoming rarer as land prices increase. The fruit provide a colourful element among the shiny green leaves and the pruned tree forms. The understorey is mainly grasses and ploughed land.

Riparian land use

Hester Park is a large area adjacent to Spencer Road, Langford. The park has a few amenities such as outdoor furniture and signs; however the most patronised facility is the concrete dual use path which runs parallel to the fringing vegetation. The rest of the area is a large cleared area with grasses and weeds giving it the appearance of an overgrown paddock. The pump Station at Ellison Drive was originally painted sensitively using soft greens and browns so that the Square building was not very conspicuous, however the walls have been graffitied in vivid red, blue and white, which has made the structure a most prominent feature.

The Beckenham Railway Bridge required some infilling of the flood plain creating a steep embankment beneath the steel structure. The dual use path passes beneath the bridge on the southern bank and the bridge is supported by limestone and concrete which has been partly graffitied, as has the steel superstructure of the railway bridge. The railway track passes through a cut in the higher land and from O'Dell Road, Thornlie, and the vegetation reduces the visual impact of the railway by partly covering the line.

There is a bridge which crosses at Spring Road-Royal Street. This has narrow white barriers and the road dips down to meet the crossing. The adjacent flooded gum rises above the bridge and gives an attractive backdrop on either side of the crossing. At the end of Jacqueline Drive the residential area is set back from the wide meander of the river and therefore there is a wedge of cleared land adjacent to the fringing vegetation. A cement cricket pitch has been constructed and the area is used as an informal recreation area. The dual use path runs adjacent to the houses near Jacqueline Parade.

The Harris Street Footbridge is a low white wooden bridge which crosses Yule Brook before the brook forms a small wetland prior to entering the Canning River. Burslem Drive crosses the Canning River through a narrow band of fringing vegetation and is a busy thoroughfare considering the small nature of the bridge.

Land use

There is a mixture of land uses around this precinct, including residential, commercial, farming and light industrial areas. The White House reception centre (River View Homestead) adjacent to Nicholson Road has been expanded in a style which is in keeping with its original facade. The area has several exotic trees and the lawn is well maintained. There is a low limestone wall marking the boundary near the edge of the flood plain.

Next to Hersey Place wetland there are the frames of old wooden sheds and commercial yards which are located on landfill. The landfill is raised, however in places it has subsided giving a lumpy effect. It has a steep gradient face leading to the flood plain. The adjacent houses are modest homes of various ages and there are several empty blocks which are overrun with weeds and have plant clippings dumped on them.

The Thornlie and Langford residential areas which front onto the foreshore reserves are generally well maintained and have mainly eclectic gardens. Almost all have a front lawn. There is a break in development at Thornlie which is the road reserve set aside for the extension of Roe Highway.

The northern bank of the river adjacent to the Beckenham rail bridge is pasture for cattle and is partly cleared with several stands of river gum. The Beckenham railway runs past Packer Park which has a particularly unattractive change room block which is box shaped and graffitied. The trees along the reserve, however are mature and improve what would otherwise be a bland landscape. The residential area is quite modest and often unkept.

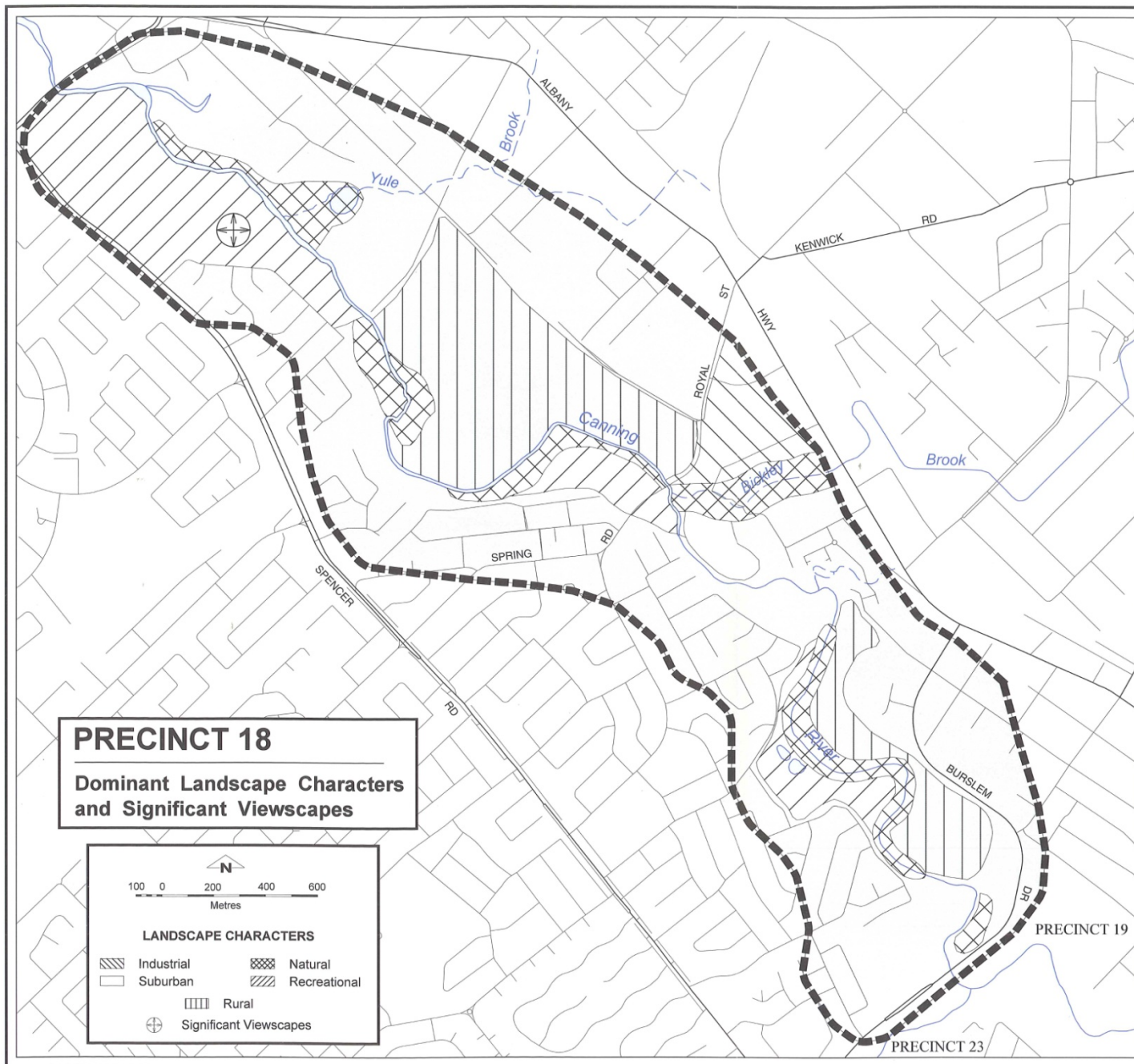
Adjacent to the railway reserve on the southern bank is a group of new units with tiled roof and pale bricks which nest into the cut. The residential area fronts onto the reserve near Lester Drive. On the eastern side of Jacqueline Drive the properties back onto the foreshore and are fenced with various materials.

Along Jacqueline Drive there are several box trees planted along the roadside reserve. These have been shaped into circular forms which conflicts with the attractive irregular forms of the native fringing vegetation. Along Glenbrook Road there is a community centre building which is harmoniously coloured and is built into the dip of the infilled land. Unfortunately, the toilet block is stuck on top of the hill separate from the main building rather than incorporated within the main building. The surrounding area has been infilled; however it gives an attractive undulating and dipping form to the landscape. Mainly native trees have been planted and although they are not indigenous to the area the general colours, textures and forms are concordant with the fringing vegetation of the Canning River. The two man-made lakes with islands have been shaped informally and the vegetation is 'unkept' which is attractive and in keeping with the adjacent river form. Due to a lack of foresight a row of gum trees have been planted directly under powerlines. Consequently, they have been cut, and their stumpy forms detract rather than contribute to the landscape. Planting a few metres back could have resulted in a fine row of eucalypts.

Thornlie TAFE centre is located on the southern bank adjacent to Burslem Drive. It is built of pale brick and colourbond corrugated iron. The grounds have been planted with native trees and lawn, and the campus is relatively inconspicuous to the passerby. There is a narrow band of fringing vegetation adjacent to the edge of the campus property. Burslem Drive, Maddington, crosses the river before the Canning River's confluence with the Southern River. This road runs along the edge of a private orchard which nests into the river meander bend. Maddington Metro Commercial complex has a large car park and windowless facade.

The northern bank of Kenwick until recently consisted of large residential blocks and orchards, however within the last few years many orchards have been redeveloped as small suburban 'villages', which consist of numerous duplexes and uniform houses built by a developer in a uniform style. These homes have very small landscaped gardens and are placed along cul-de-sacs. The Canning Waters Development is very close to the river reserve vegetation of paperbarks and rivergum.

The Liddlelow Homestead is at present closed to the public. It is being sensitively renovated; however it is surrounded by light industrial and commercial properties, so that the passerby would hardly notice the homestead. The light industrial area is unattractive due to gaudy signs and exposed work yards. The Albany Highway commercial area is a ribbon of rather gaudy buildings and car parks. Considering the unattractive development, it is rather unfortunate that from Albany Highway drivers would hardly know that the attractive remnant vegetation of the Canning River still exists.



Dominant Landscape Character

The original landscape character in the immediate vicinity of the river would have been natural with predominantly melaleuca and sedges fringing the flat alluvial terraces of the Canning River. There may have been a greater presence of saline tolerant species along the river prior to the construction of the Kent Street Weir.

Today, the landscape of this precinct is very patchy with several different landscape characters occupying small areas. There are several small patches of relatively natural vegetation which mainly consists of endemic trees and a weedy understorey. These natural landscapes appear isolated and the surrounding suburban and rural land uses infringe on the appearance of these vegetation communities. In general, the urban landscape is quite modest with small houses often on large blocks of land. The orchards and fields for grazing are remnant land uses in the precinct. The orchards are quite old and there is pressure to develop these properties into residential areas. The grazing land is adjacent to Beckenham railway and it will probably continue to be used for this rural activity until the Roe Highway extension is commenced. These rural landscapes are quite rare so close to the city and river environment. The orchards in particular provide pleasing and attractive views. They are important characteristics of this precinct and their loss will result in a change of character.

Significant Views

Hester Park is an important section of this precinct as it provides open space in an area which is becoming urbanised. The vegetation in this area is quite degraded; however the line of flooded gum and paperbark not only is attractive but provides an important ecological corridor and also breaks up the urban landscape.

Conforming and Non-Conforming Elements in the Landscape

There are several instances where public buildings and structures have been vandalised making them a detracting element in the landscape.

There are several public toilet blocks and a water pump house which have been placed in the centre of views. Their impact could be mitigated by Screening with plants or if possible relocating to a less prominent position.

Thornlie TAFE centre is located on the southern bank of Burslem Drive. The campus has low visual impact on the landscape, as it has low building forms and subtle colours. The gardens have been landscaped with Australian species which are visually sympathetic with the adjoining Canning River vegetation.

Adjacent to the narrow belt of fringing vegetation, tree landscaping has resulted in non indigenous species being planted. Although many of these species are attractive specimens they detract from the subtle colours and form of the indigenous vegetation.

Recommendations for Maintenance and Enhancement of the Present Landscape Character

- Regular maintenance of buildings and infrastructure would assist in enhancing the environment. Unfortunately, it is difficult to reduce vandalism and it is often necessary to incorporate upkeep costs into planning.
- Areas of open space such as Hester Park are important as buffers between the suburban areas and the Canning River. The park provides opportunity to have areas of natural riparian vegetation and also open grassy parklands for recreation. At present the parkland has few trees and the long weedy grasses make most of the area unattractive visually and for recreation.
- Consider the retention of the remnant rural landscapes in the form of orchards and turn of the Century houses.

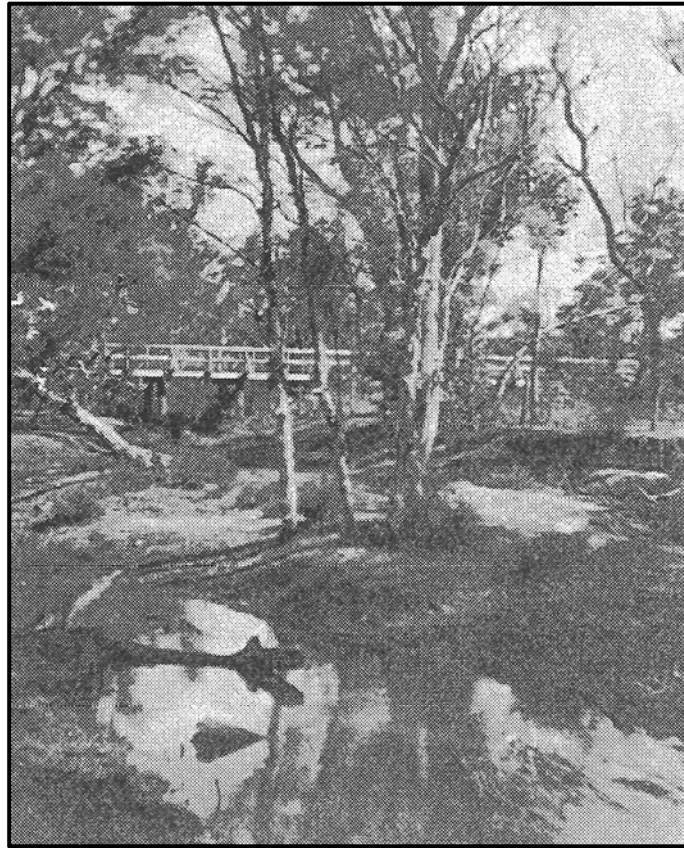
Landscape Interpretation

Dames and Moore International. 1985. **Environmental Overview of Nicholson Road Crossing**. For P & M Tooby Pty Ltd. February 1985.

McDonald and Cooper, W. 1988. **The Gosnells Story**. City of Gosnells.

McQueen, J. 1963. **Pioneers of the Canning District**. Graylands Teachers College.

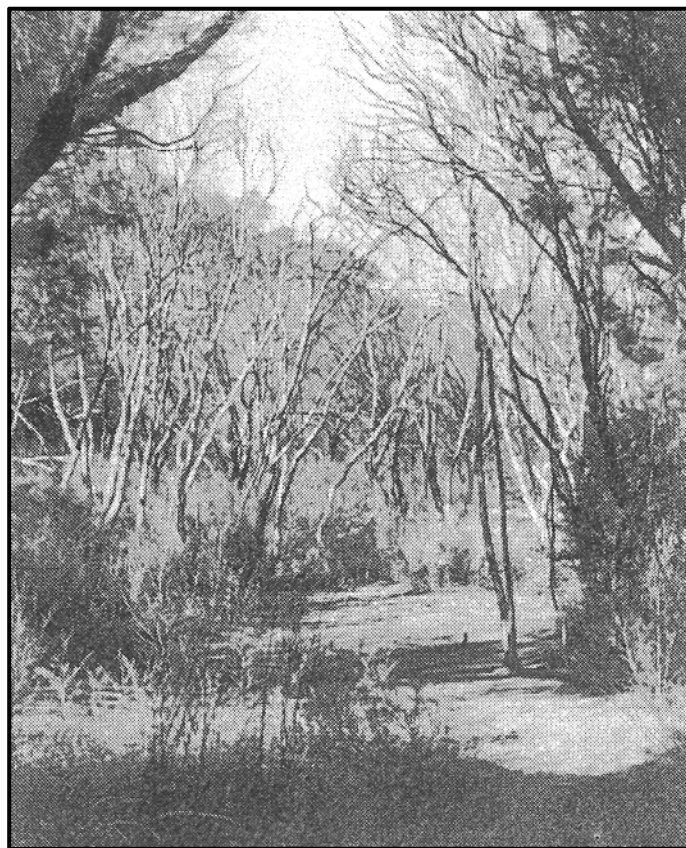
Water Authority of Western Australia. 1993. **Wetlands in the City of Gosnells**. A report to the Water Authority of Western Australia and the Environmental Protection Authority by Joan Payne. Report No WP 160.



Canning River, Gosnells. 1915.
Battye Library, 209195P.



Hester Park, Spencer Road, Canning River, 1997.
Swan River Trust.



Canning River, near the White House, Nicholson Road, 1997.
Swan River Trust.



Beckenham Railway Bridge, Canning River. 1997.
Swan River Trust.