

CITY OF SOUTH PERTH LOCAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Management
Category

B

PLACE RECORD FORM

Prepared by *Heritage Today*, March 2000
Most recent update by City of South Perth, November 2015

Place No: CB 2 Como Beach and Como Jetty



(Chris Rowett for the City of South Perth, 2007)

LOCATION

Name of Place	<i>Como Beach and Como Jetty</i>
Other / former names	Como Beach; Como Jetty
Address	Como Reserve, Foreshore
Suburb	Como
Local Government Authority	City of South Perth
Scope of listing	This heritage listing applies to the Como Jetty structure and to the Como Beach Reserve, but not to any other improvements within the Como Beach Reserve.

LISTINGS BY OTHER BODIES

Name of Body	Reference No.	Grade of Listing	Date
Heritage Council of Western Australia	4797	Data base only – not listed	-

LAND DESCRIPTION

Reserve No.	Lot	Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio
38804	-	Swan 40		-

PERIOD

Design Style	
Construction Date	Original <i>Como Jetty</i> constructed in 1907
Source/Details	<i>Peninsular City : A Social History of the City of South Perth</i> , Cecil C Florey

USE(S) OF PLACE

Original	Jetty and beach
Present	Jetty and beach
Other / former	Jetty, beach and swimming enclosure

HISTORICAL NOTES

Como Beach became popular in the early 1900s after the subdivision in 1905 of the land bounded by South Terrace, Thelma Street, the river and Fremantle Road (Canning Highway). The subdivision was known as 'Como Estate', and the beach was promoted as a fine recreation spot for residents and visitors. In 1907, the Estate contractors built the *Como Jetty*, which has been well used since that time. In the early years, the *Como Jetty* was also used by the South Perth Yacht Club¹ and, after the construction of the jetty, became part of the ferry route between Applecross (Canning Bridge) jetty and the Barrack Street Jetty. The ferries provided access to the beautiful, soft, clean, pure white sandy *Como Beach* for swimming, camping and day trips. While being accessible to all, it still remained sufficiently isolated and virgin to seem as though it was miles from civilisation.

Between 1900 and 1920, Edward Francis (Frank) Edgecumbe ('the King of Como'), the first president of the Como Progress Association, was a prominent figure in supporting the development of Como as a desirable residential area. Over the years, a number of promotional events were held at Como Beach. In 1909, the first 'Gala at Como' event took place, and in 1913-14, a special 'Como Day Picnic' was enjoyed by many. *Como Beach* had been declared public in 1911. The South Perth Road Board supported the development of the beach with the construction of toilets and facilities. Como Reserve became an extremely popular camping area, and reports indicate that up to 3,000 people used the beach on a summer's day, increasing to 7,000 holiday makers during the holiday season.

¹ For some years prior to the preparation of land along the river for the impending Freeway, the South Perth Yacht Club operated from the eastern side of the river near the end of Henley Street, Como. The Club then relocated to the western side of the river, and was renamed the 'South of Perth Yacht Club'.

HISTORICAL NOTES (cont'd)

Como Beach was appreciated by young families for its warm shallow water and safe swimming conditions, and the Road Board (*the municipality was demoted to a Road Board in 1922*) intended that it remain popular. An application to build a hotel in Comer Street in 1928 was opposed, on the grounds that it might lead to intoxicated behaviour and the harassment of young ladies going to and from the beach. As late as 1933, men and boys were prohibited from rolling their bathers down to the waist, as it was considered that bare chests would degrade the good reputation enjoyed by the beach. In 1929, a swimming jetty was constructed at the end of the *Como Jetty* after much fund raising, and was used in the 'Swim Through Como' event in that year. The resulting swimming enclosure was home to the Como Swimming Club (formed in 1931) for many years.

Pressure on facilities mounted, until no further camping was allowed for a period after 1919. By 1947, reports show that Como Beach Reserve was being used as a long term caravan area owing to a shortage of post war housing. Pressure for more sites made the Council reconsider the position, and a decision was made to end all camping and caravan living in the area.

In 1982, the main *Como Jetty* was rebuilt. In 1995-97, the swimming enclosure jetty was declared unsafe, and a decision was made to remove it and upgrade the main jetty, despite opposition from many, including the Art Deco Society.

DESCRIPTION

Como Beach is the stretch of the foreshore located at the end of Preston Street, generally between South Terrace and Thelma Street. A series of footbridges across the Kwinana Freeway provide access to the beach for Como residents and visitors. The *Como Jetty* is a timber structure which extends out into Melville Water. It is not the original structure, having been modified several times during the years, and rebuilt in 1982. *Como Beach* is a pleasant, popular recreation area, providing safe swimming, a sandy stretch of beach, grassed and treed areas, and a dual use path for pedestrians and cyclists. It has been further enhanced by the City of South Perth with contemporary artworks.

ASSOCIATIONS**ASSOCIATION TYPE**

Edward Francis (Frank) Edgecumbe	A prominent landowner and promoter of development in Como – the 'King of Como'
Mark Gardner	Developer of Como Estate

HISTORIC THEME / Sub-theme**CATEGORIES OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Transport and Communications/ <i>Jetties</i>	Aesthetic
Community Efforts/ <i>Sport, Recreation and Entertainment</i>	Historic
	Social
	Representative

RATING AND ASSESSMENT**High****Low**

Aesthetic value (streetscape, setting)	1 ✓	2	3	4	5
Architectural merit (design features)	1	2	3	4	5
Rarity value	1	2	3 ✓	4	5
Value as part of a group/precinct	1	2 ✓	3	4	5
Condition	1	2 ✓	3	4	5
Integrity	1	2 ✓	3	4	5

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Como Beach has aesthetic, historic and social heritage value. It has been a popular recreation destination for many decades, with up to 3,000 people visiting the beach daily at peak times during the 1920s and up to 7,000 during holiday periods. The *Como Beach* and *Como Jetty* could be included in a heritage precinct with the nearby Pagoda and the Cygnet Theatre.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**Management Category B : Considerable significance**

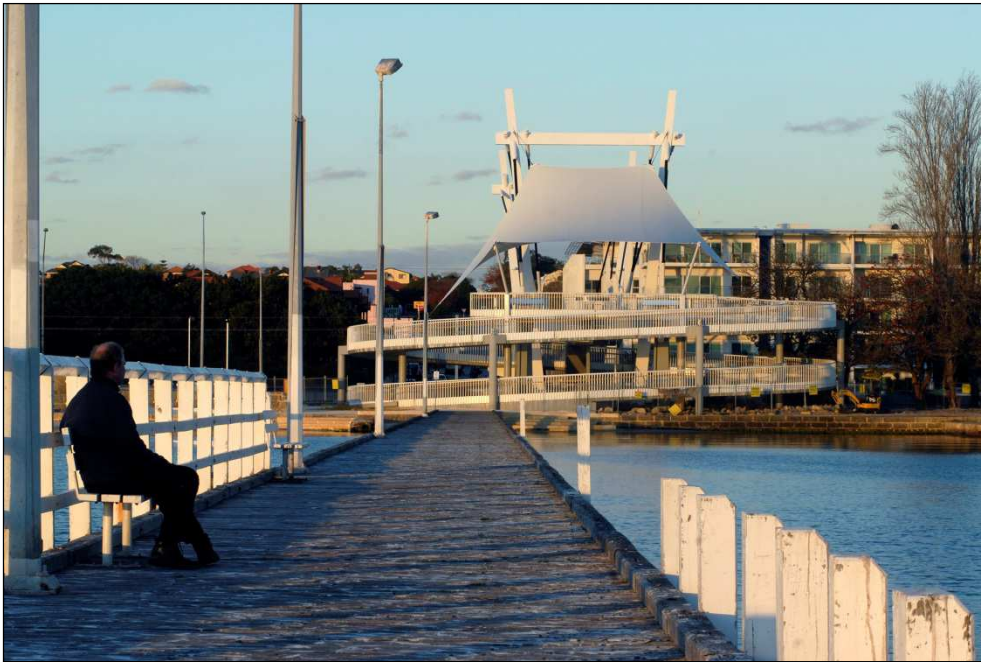
Conservation essential. Reflects the highest level of local cultural heritage significance. Very important to the heritage of the locality. High degree of integrity and authenticity. Demolition or significant alteration to a place in Management Category B of the Heritage List is not permitted. Any alterations or additions are to be guided by a Conservation Plan, if any, and reinforce the heritage values of the place.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION / BIBLIOGRAPHY

- City of South Perth Municipal Heritage Inventory (No. 1) 1994.
- Reviews of Municipal Heritage Inventory by *Heritage Today* in 2000 and 2006.
- Florey, C, '*Peninsular City: A Social History of the City of South Perth*'. Publishers City of South Perth 1995.
- *Southern Gazette* newspaper, 6 December, 1994.
- *Southern Gazette* newspaper, 29 August, 1995.

HISTORY OF HERITAGE LISTING BY CITY OF SOUTH PERTH

	Date Adopted by Council
Town Planning Scheme No. 5 – Schedule G	Gazetted 25 September 1986
Initial listing in MHI	December 1994
Update of MHI	February 1996
Update of MHI	December 1996
Update of MHI	December 1997
Review of MHI by <i>Heritage Today</i>	June 2000
Update of MHI	June 2002
Update of MHI	March 2003
Review of MHI by <i>Heritage Today</i>	February 2006
Interim Heritage List – Policy P313 'Local Heritage Listing'	April 2013
Updated in renamed LHI	November 2015



*Como Jetty, looking landwards towards the Preston Street overpass.
(Chris Rowett for the City of South Perth, 2007)*



Some of the contemporary public art displayed at *Como Beach*
(City Records)



TOP: Public art on *Como Beach* near the *Como Jetty*. This is one of three groups of human figures of varying ages, ranging from 1.2 to 3 metres in height. The silhouettes are fabricated from steel, with simple cut-out shapes symbolising aspects of the area's historic lifestyle.
Artists: Danuta Szole (Danka Scholtz von Lorenz) and Jason Hirst. (2008)

BOTTOM: Steel and timber stylized boat sculpture located at the base of the Preston Street overpass, near the corner of Melville Parade and Preston Street. This had been the site of the *Como Beach* tram stop.
Artist: Malcolm McGregor.



*Como Beach and Como Jetty.
(Heritage Today, 1999)*



*Como Beach photographed from Como Jetty on a stormy day
when the beach was flooded, 1945.
(Picture South Perth Photograph Collection)*



Como Beach, a popular recreation resort.
(Origin and date of photo unknown – c1940s.)



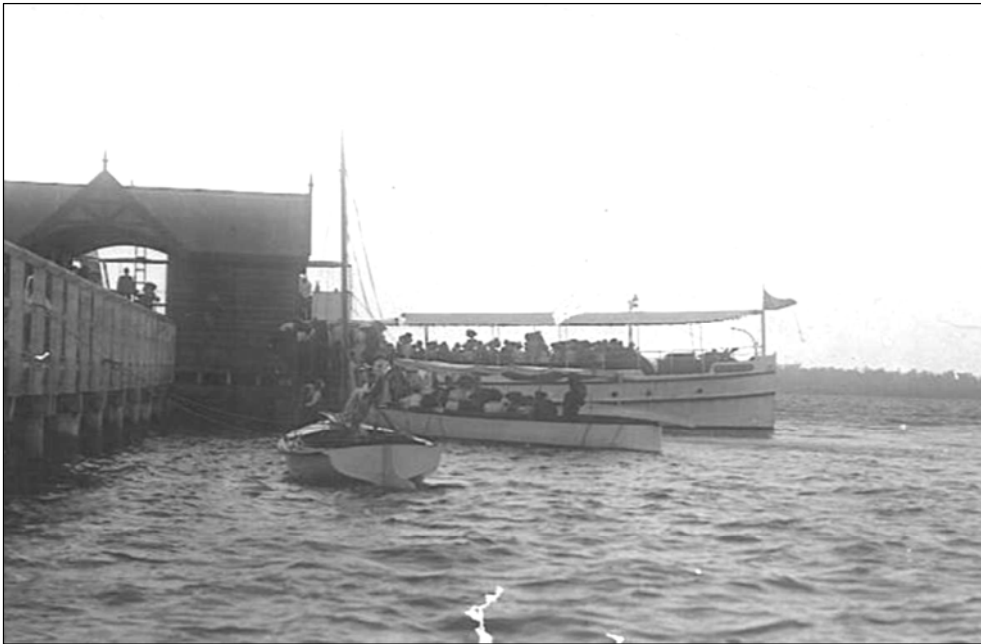
Como Beach, easily accessed directly by car, 1946.
(Picture South Perth Photograph Collection)



*Como Jetty, 1997, showing the swimming enclosure before it was demolished later that year.
(Picture South Perth Photograph Collection)*



*Plaque commemorating the opening of the rebuilt Como Jetty in 1982.
(Picture South Perth Photograph Collection)*



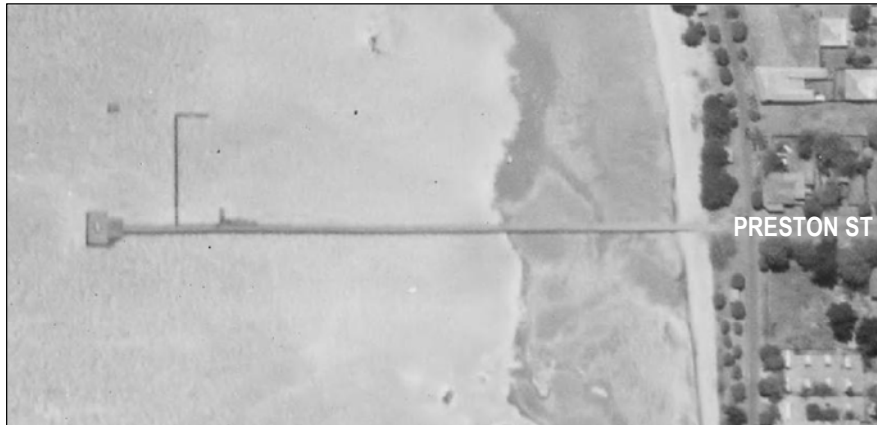
The 'Emerald' ferry and other boats at the Como Jetty, c.1920.
(Picture South Perth Photograph Collection)



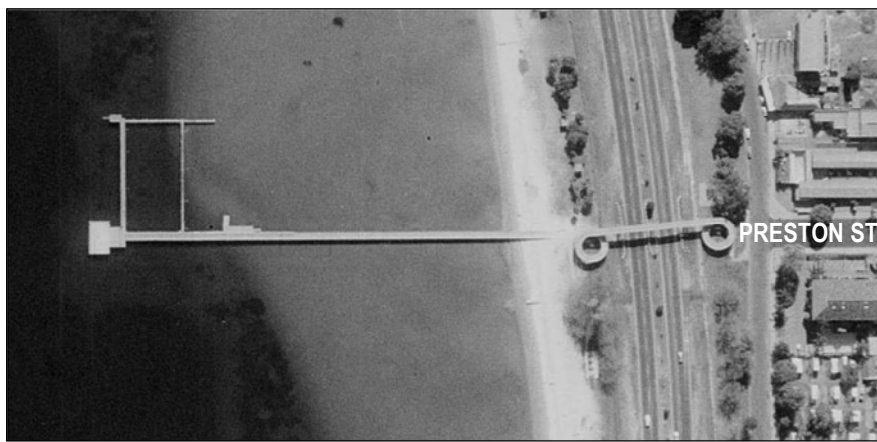
Como Jetty, c1910. The ferry shelter is visible at the end of the jetty.
(Picture South Perth Photograph Collection)



‘The Billabong’ tearooms near Como Reserve, c1922. The building had a corrugated iron roof, weatherboard walls, with a latticed verandah.
(Picture South Perth Photograph Collection)



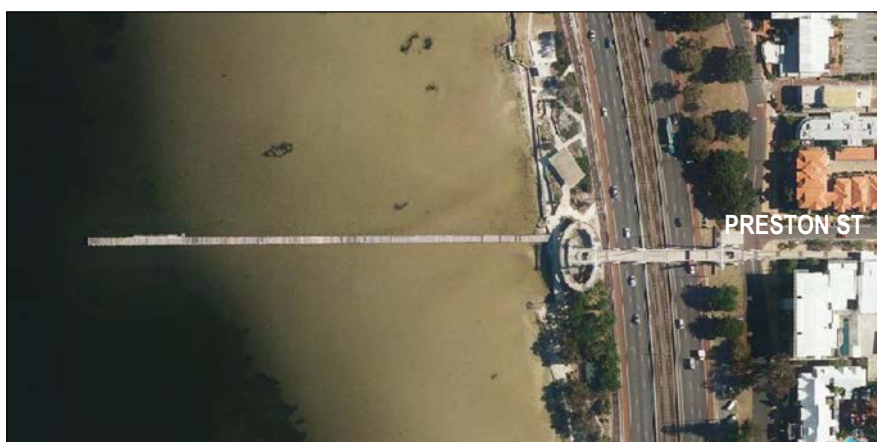
1953 aerial view of the *Como Jetty*, showing the shelter at the end of the jetty and a partial swimming enclosure. At this time, the Kwinana Freeway had not been constructed.



1977 aerial view of the *Como Jetty*, showing the shelter at the end of the jetty and a fully enclosed swimming area. By this time, the Kwinana Freeway and the pedestrian overpass at Preston Street had been constructed and in use for almost 20 years.



1995 aerial view of the *Como Jetty*, showing that the shelter at the end of the jetty had been removed, and the swimming enclosure had been reduced back to partial protection. It was soon to be completely removed.



2014 aerial view of the *Como Jetty*, showing that the swimming enclosure had been completely removed, but the foreshore reserve had been further enhanced.

LOCATION MAP



(Digital Cadastral Data supplied by Landgate, WA. P295)