

How can we make better use of the Swan River?



Medium and high-density development

I'd like to see more of the brownfield sites being developed along the Swan River, particularly the derelict East Perth power station and Sunset Hospital site in Dalkeith. What they've done with the Tate Modern in London is the perfect example of revitalising an under-utilised heritage building into a mixed-use, arts-based precinct.

Beyond that, there's scope for more medium and high-density development in brownfield sites and existing suburbs along the Swan River, such as Fremantle, Canning Bridge and Victoria Park. We should aim for best-practice, low-energy sustainable developments that have a high proportion of residents who work in and around the area so they don't need to add to Perth's traffic congestion.

Tim Perkins
Senior Lecturer in Planning, School of Law and Justice



Heritage trail

I'd like to see more attractions that encourage tourists to the river. At the moment you can visit parts of the river, or take a cruise along it, but having a heritage trail along the river bank would encourage people to stroll from point to point and enjoy different areas. They've done this very well in cities like Kuching in Malaysia and Brisbane with South Bank.

The other opportunity is to promote more interaction between tourists and the Indigenous custodians of the river, the Nyoongar people, through guided tours. Activities that help tourists interpret and engage with the culture and history of the river would be very popular.

Ross Dowling
Foundation Professor of Tourism School of Business



Restore wetlands

I'd like to see the fringing wetlands and large stands of rushes that were once abundant along the edge of the Swan River restored. They would enhance the river's ability to remove and control the range of pollutants that wash in from the catchment. The restored areas would also provide shelter for juvenile fish and other aquatic life, enhancing biodiversity within the river.

Wetland edges are often better at coping with storm events than the walls in place in many locations. The cost of maintaining and replacing these walls is considerable and could be offset by the restoration.

Associate Professor Mark Lund
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