

# WADJEMUP PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT



JUNE 2022

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

On behalf of WA Government, Rottnest Island Authority acknowledges the Whadjuk Noongar People as the Traditional Owners of Wadjemup and pay respect to all Aboriginal peoples impacted by the historical use of the Island as a place of unjust incarceration.

We recognise the ongoing pain felt by communities today.

Rottnest Island Authority kaadatj Wadjak Noongar moort. Baalap Wadjemup kaaradjiny, RIA acknowledge Whadjuk Noongar families. They Wadjemup caring,

baalabang malayin nakolak-ngat wer wirn kalyakoorl noyinand koort boodja-k wer kep-ak. their culture and spirits always connected Island-to and water-to.

Ngalak kaadatj nedingar, birdiya wer boordakan Noongar moort. Ngalak karnadjil kaadatj We acknowledge ancestors, Elders and future Noongar families. We truly acknowledge men

maaman wer noba wirn ali kalka nginow noyiyang Wadjemup ngardak boodja-k. and boys' spirits who still remain connected Wadjemup under ground-in.

Baalabang moort maambart-boort, ngooni-boort, kongk-boort wer Birdiya-boort. Their family's father-without, brother-without, uncle-without and Elder-without.

Thank you to Sharon Gregory for the translation of our acknowledgment.

## PROJECT LED BY



## SUPPORTED BY



# ROTTNEST IS



## CULTURAL SAFETY

Elements in this document may be upsetting and distressing. Our deepest respects and condolences go to all families and kin affected by past trauma and injustice.

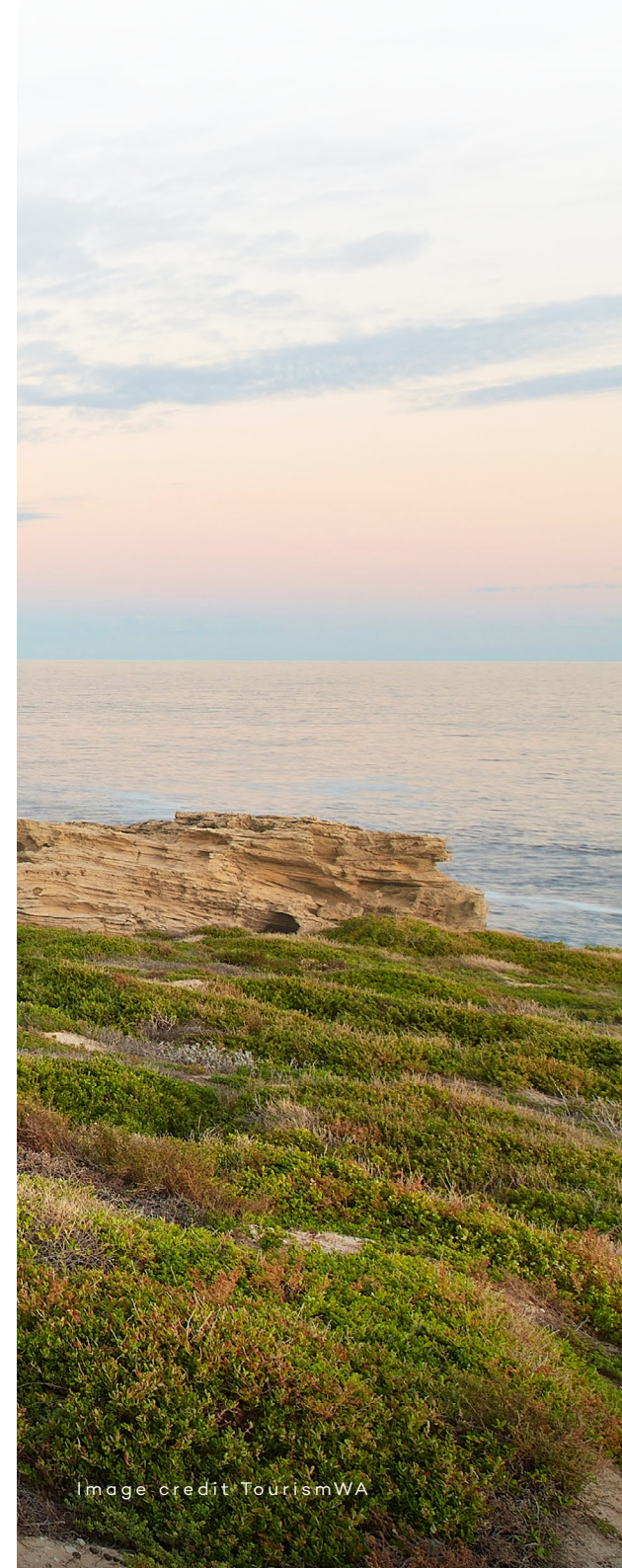
## LANGUAGE WARNING

Aboriginal people are advised that there may be words and descriptions that may be culturally sensitive and which might not normally be used in certain public or community contexts. Readers are warned that this report contains language or words from documents that reflect the period in which the item was written, and may be considered inappropriate today.

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# FOREWORD

BRENDAN MOORE, LINDSAY DEAN, PAMELA THORLEY, WALTER MCGUIRE, KATHLEEN MUSULIN, CASEY KICKETT - WADJEMUP ABORIGINAL REFERENCE GROUP

The Wadjemup Aboriginal Reference Group (WARG) is a Cabinet-appointed advisory group established in 2017. Our formal role has been to advise the Rottnest Island Authority on all Aboriginal cultural matters in relation to the day-to-day function of the Island; however, our primary focus has always been to ensure the many truths about Wadjemup are shared and acknowledged.

The commencement of the Wadjemup Project and the publication of this consultation document is an important step in our shared journey towards truth telling, healing and reconciliation.

We acknowledge the strength and resilience of the Aboriginal communities of Western Australia and pay our respects to our Elders (past and present).

WHADJUK WADJEMUP PROJECT CULTURAL AUTHORITY GROUP


Wadjemup is a significant site for Whadjuk Noongar people and Aboriginal people State-wide. Prior to colonisation and continuing today, Wadjemup is distinguished as a spiritual place for Noongar people and is linked to our Koordarm, our creation stories. After colonisation, the traumatic events that took place on the Island, are a part of the history and have gone untold for too long.

Whadjuk people have come together to discuss this unfinished business.

The Whadjuk community have elected an Elders reference group and a Cultural Authority panel, to lead and engage this process. These groups will liaise with the wider Noongar community, and the Aboriginal people throughout the State that share these links with Wadjemup.

We, as a collective of Aboriginal people whose ancestors were effected by the actions on this Island, will coordinate and present recommendations to the relevant bodies, including government, to implement actions for memorialisation, commemoration and ongoing change to strive for truth-telling.

Wadjemup, ngarlang  
koordarm boodja.  
Wirrin boodja.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wadjemup Project is working to deliver truth-telling, ceremony, and commemoration strategies to formally acknowledge and reconcile the Aboriginal prison history on Wadjemup (Rottneest Island) (1838-1931). The project is one of Australia's first large-scale acts of recognition related to the impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal people.

This document provides a summary of the historical and contemporary events and issues relevant to the Wadjemup Project. This includes an overview of the long-term concealment of Aboriginal history and the impacts of colonisation as well as descriptions of the people and processes that have contributed to reconciliation efforts on the Island to date.

It is intended that the report support future planning and inform public, community and intra-government consultations to ensure that learnings from the past are incorporated into a shared future.

This report has been drafted in the spirit of transparency, truth-telling, inclusion and reconciliation. Truth-telling is an ongoing process promoting healing and countering racism to reduce the potential for new trauma.

## PROJECT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Those working to deliver the Wadjemup Project acknowledge the Whadjuk Noongar as the Traditional Owners of Wadjemup. The Project is also a practical demonstration of the recognition of Noongar people as the Traditional Owners of Noongar boodja (Noongar land) through the Noongar (Koorah, Nitja, Boordahwan) (Past, Present, Future) *Recognition Act 2016*, and of the support and recognition of traditional rights as codified by the commitment of the parties to execute and implement the South West Native Title Settlement.

A photograph of a dark, narrow tunnel. On the left side, there is a corrugated metal vent or grate. The right side shows a rough, textured wall, possibly made of stone or concrete, with some reddish-brown patches. The overall scene is dimly lit, with a bright light source coming from the vent.

# INTRODUCTION





On 2 June 2020, the then-Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Hon Ben Wyatt LLB MSc MLA and Minister for Tourism Hon Paul Papalia CSC MLA announced the commencement of the Wadjemup Project: A new proposal to reconcile the historical incarceration of Aboriginal peoples on Wadjemup (Rottnest Island) (1838–1931), in partnership with Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners and Aboriginal peoples across the State of Western Australia.

For nearly a century, Rottnest Island was used as a place of incarceration, segregation and forced labour for over 4,000 Aboriginal men and boys who were forcibly taken from regions across WA – Whadjuk and the rest of Noongar Country, Murchinson, Gascoyne, Goldfields, Pilbara, Kimberley and the Central Desert. Boys as young as seven years old and as old as eighty years old were imprisoned on the Island. Of those taken there, almost 400 died while imprisoned, and were buried in unmarked graves on the Island. This is the largest recorded Aboriginal deaths in custody site in Australia.

The removal of Aboriginal men and boys from across WA and incarceration on Rottnest Island had a significant impact on communities that continues to impact Aboriginal people today. This impact is due to this history not being reconciled, as well as the inappropriate uses of the prison sites that followed, which has worked to compound the intergenerational trauma.

In many cases, the men that were removed from communities were Elders, knowledge holders, warriors and significant leaders who played an integral role in their communities. The removal of these men broke traditional social structures, leaving women and children vulnerable to the impacts of colonisation and in many areas, their removal severed the intergenerational maintenance of cultural knowledge. Given this, the old prison building known as the Quod, the Aboriginal Burial Ground and other sites connected to this history, both on Wadjemup and the mainland, are considered sacred with varying degrees of associated trauma.

The Quod holds particular significance. It was the second prison to be built on Wadjemup and was completed in 1864 by the labour of Aboriginal prisoners, serving as a prison until its formal closure in 1904. At the closure of the prison, Rottnest Island quickly became a favoured destination for recreation. Through this time, Aboriginal prisoners remained on the Island and were used as forced labour for various works, including the conversion of the Quod and other infrastructure for holidaymakers. The Quod was initially converted into a State Hostel for accommodation and was later further adapted for use as commercial accommodation, forming part of the Rottnest Island Lodge. These adaptations have long obscured the building's prison origins and the impact of the prison history on the Western Australian Aboriginal community.

After its conversion, the Quod was used for accommodation for 87 years until the building, and some associated structures, were relinquished from a commercial lease and returned to the management of the Rottnest Island Authority on 31 May 2018. Only 11 years earlier in 2007, the infamous tourist camping ground known as 'Tentland' had been relocated from the area containing the unmarked graves of the Aboriginal prisoners. This delineated area was then formally recognised as the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground.

The Wadjemup Project is focusing on how best to commemorate the Aboriginal men and boys who are buried on the Island, as well as determining the future use of the Quod.

To support First Nations people who have been impacted by Wadjemup's Aboriginal prison history, this Project is working to deliver strategies for:

- **Truth-telling** – to acknowledge Wadjemup's history of Aboriginal incarceration and its role in the colonisation of WA.
- **Ceremony** – to facilitate healing in line with Aboriginal cultural protocol.
- **Commemoration through memorialisation** – of the former prison sites on Wadjemup, including the Quod and the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground.

Aspirations for a future characterised by healing, recognition and reconciliation are central to the success of the Project. These are the cornerstones upon which the relationships between the WA Government and Aboriginal communities across the State can be re-built and the impacts of colonial era policy addressed.

However, it must be acknowledged that these foundational notions are not new. For decades, Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal allies have sought to acknowledge the history and resolve the past from both outside and within Government. While there have been numerous successes, no long-term sustainable change and holistic redress of the prison-era history has been achieved at an appropriate scale.

The Wadjemup Project's uniqueness sets it apart as it aims to be entirely Aboriginal-led through an Aboriginal Designed Cultural Authority Framework. The Framework was developed by Whadjuk Elders and Leaders, and is being supported by the WA Government. The Framework is guiding State-wide Aboriginal consultation, ensuring cultural protocols are observed and all Aboriginal people and communities with a connection to Wadjemup are included, or have the opportunity to have their say.

Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners and custodians are responsible for authorising, coordinating and enabling cultural protocols and processes through to completion of the Project. The process will ensure Aboriginal people decide how their ancestors will be honoured, and how their cultural groups, communities or countries are to be represented.



An aerial photograph of a coral reef. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, with darker patches of brown and green coral visible beneath the surface. The coral appears to be a mix of hard and soft coral species, creating a complex, textured landscape. The overall scene is bright and clear, suggesting a healthy reef environment.

HOW WE GOT HERE:  
A HISTORY OF DENIAL,  
DISAFFECTION AND  
DISENGAGEMENT



# WADJEMUP BEFORE ROTTNEST: ENDURING WHADJUK NOONGAR CONNECTIONS

The Whadjuk Noongar people are the Traditional Owners of Wadjemup. Their connection to the Island is long, significant, and enduring. Wadjemup is referred to as the place of spirits across the ocean and is associated with notions of heaven or paradise (Wilkes 1995; Stasiuk 2015).

Located approximately 20km off the coast of Perth, Wadjemup is the largest of a chain of offshore islands comprised of Tamala Limestone (Ward et al. 2016). Approximately 20,000 years ago when sea levels were at their lowest, during the peak of the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM), the Island formed part of an expansive coastal plain dissected by the Swan River (Ward et al. 2016). Rising sea levels resulting from post-LGM climate change disconnected the islands from the mainland at around 6,500 years ago.

The Whadjuk Noongar people hold cultural knowledge about the period when the offshore islands from Garden to Wadjemup were joined and formed one big island called Biidjiigoordup or Biidjigurdu-Nguni (Stasiuk 2015). Several interpretations, mythologies and creation stories portraying the retracting land mass, as shared by Noongar Elders and leaders, have been captured and documented.

Commonly, the formation of the offshore islands is linked to a great battle between the creator, being the Waugal (serpent), and the Yondock (ancestral crocodile) (Neville Collard in Stasiuk 2015). While this document is not the context to consider these stories in detail, they are noted as a testament to the richness, immutability, and primary importance of Whadjuk Noongar cultural connections to Wadjemup.

Archaeological evidence further supports Whadjuk Noongar links to the Island. Paleosols in Pleistocene-aged Tamala Limestone on the Island have been found to contain calcrete and fossiliferous chert artefacts and have been securely dated to between 49,000 and 10,000 years ago using Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) (Ward et al 2016; Dortch and Dortch 2019).

A proportion of the Pleistocene-aged artefacts have been accessioned into the Wadjemup Museum. The remainder are held in the State collection at the Western Australian Museum. There is no physical or ethnographic evidence that Whadjuk Noongar people visited Wadjemup between the completion of islandisation and European settlement.

- Land mass today
- Land mass 7,000 years ago
- Pleistocene-age archaeological material recovered here



Archaeological evidence  
further supports Whadjuk  
Noongar links to the Island

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# THE PRISON ERA AND ITS LASTING IMPACTS

The settlement and colonisation of Western Australia by Europeans in the early 1800s had profound negative effects on Aboriginal communities across the State, and its impacts are still felt today. Regrettably, many of the most brutal and inhumane aspects of colonial policy, including dispossession, translocation, unjust incarceration, and death, were enacted directly and indirectly on Wadjemup.

The Island was used as an Aboriginal prison between 1838 and 1903 (excluding a brief period of closure in 1849–1855) and as a forced labour camp for Aboriginal prisoners until 1931. State records indicate that 3,700 Aboriginal men and boys from Western Australia were imprisoned on the Island. At least 373 of these prisoners died in custody and were buried in the area currently referred to as the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground (note that it has been referred to previously by other names including the Aboriginal Prisoner Cemetery).

Aboriginal prisoners unjustly convicted of marginal crimes were often escorted long distances in chains before ever setting foot on Wadjemup. Many never made it home after their release. The removal of leaders, law men, warriors, fathers, brothers and sons created turmoil in their communities. Women were left to care for families and bravely continue life alone, sometimes never knowing the fate of their loved ones. Women from all over WA on the mainland lit fires along the coast to signal to those imprisoned on the Island. The impacts of this history, including the loss of knowledge and the destruction of culture, have been felt across generations.



Photo credit State Library of WA



Image credit  
State Library of WA



Documented conditions in the prison were deplorable, and its operations included systemic brutality and forced labour. Aboriginal prisoners operated the Island salt works, quarried stone, and built the roads and structures that defined the early settlement, including the main prison building the Quod. Registered Aboriginal sites on the Island dating to the prison era include the Quod, the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground, holding cell and several glass artefact scatters (next page).

Although this tragic history still has many unknown elements, the prison era has been researched, documented, and skilfully synthesised in more detail in numerous general and academic texts (e.g. Ferguson 1986; Randolph et al. 1993; Joske et al. 1995; Watson 1998; Green and Aguiar 1997; Kwaymullina 2001; Moran 2001; Collard and Revell 2001; Stasiuk 2015; Roscoe 2016; Stasiuk and Hibberd 2017; Stasiuk 2021). Critical foundational resources include Green and Aguiar's (1997) database of

Aboriginal prisoners. Equally, Stasiuk's (2015) doctoral exegesis and documentary (Watch Wadjemup: Black Prison White Playground Online | Vimeo On Demand on Vimeo) is particularly insightful and has been publicly applauded for its respectful privileging of Aboriginal perspectives on the history.

State records indicate that 3,700 Aboriginal men and boys from Western Australia were imprisoned on the Island.



GOLF COURSE SITES

WADJEMUP  
ABORIGINAL  
BURIAL GROUND

HOLDING CELL


HOSPITAL/  
MORGUE

QUOD

Aboriginal Heritage sites

MAP OF WADJEMUP PRISON ERA  
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE SITES

Registered Aboriginal sites on the Island dating to the prison era include the Quod, the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground, holding cell and several glass artefact scatters



In addition to the foundational literature, accessible summaries of the history are presented publicly in the WA Museum Boola Bardip, RIA's-Wadjemup Museum on the Island, and online on government websites (Wadjemup (alwayswadjemup.com); Wadjemup — The Land Beyond the Shore | DLGSC; Waking up to Wadjemup | Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (oric.gov.au)). Go Cultural Aboriginal Tours also provides an on-Island tour highlighting significant aspects of life in the penal settlement (Go Cultural: Our Tours).

Despite the substantial corpus of resources and the many opportunities to learn and understand, this history is largely invisible in the landscape, and many Western Australians and visitors to Wadjemup are unaware of these past injustices. This is due mainly to a legacy of concealment. In addition, many Aboriginal people do not feel safe or comfortable returning to the Island. The reasons for this are multifaceted, but primarily it is fair to say that Wadjemup has outstanding and unfinished business. The Aboriginal peoples have not had sufficient opportunity to heal. Previous Governments have not been committed or invested in addressing the outstanding Wadjemup issues, and true reconciliation for the Island is still a work in progress. The lack of a physical memorial and the absence of a visible, powerful, and permanent Aboriginal presence leave a significant and sorrowful void. In this context it is critical to note that the already difficult path forward has been further complicated, and at times completely obstructed, by both the purposeful and incidental concealment of the past.

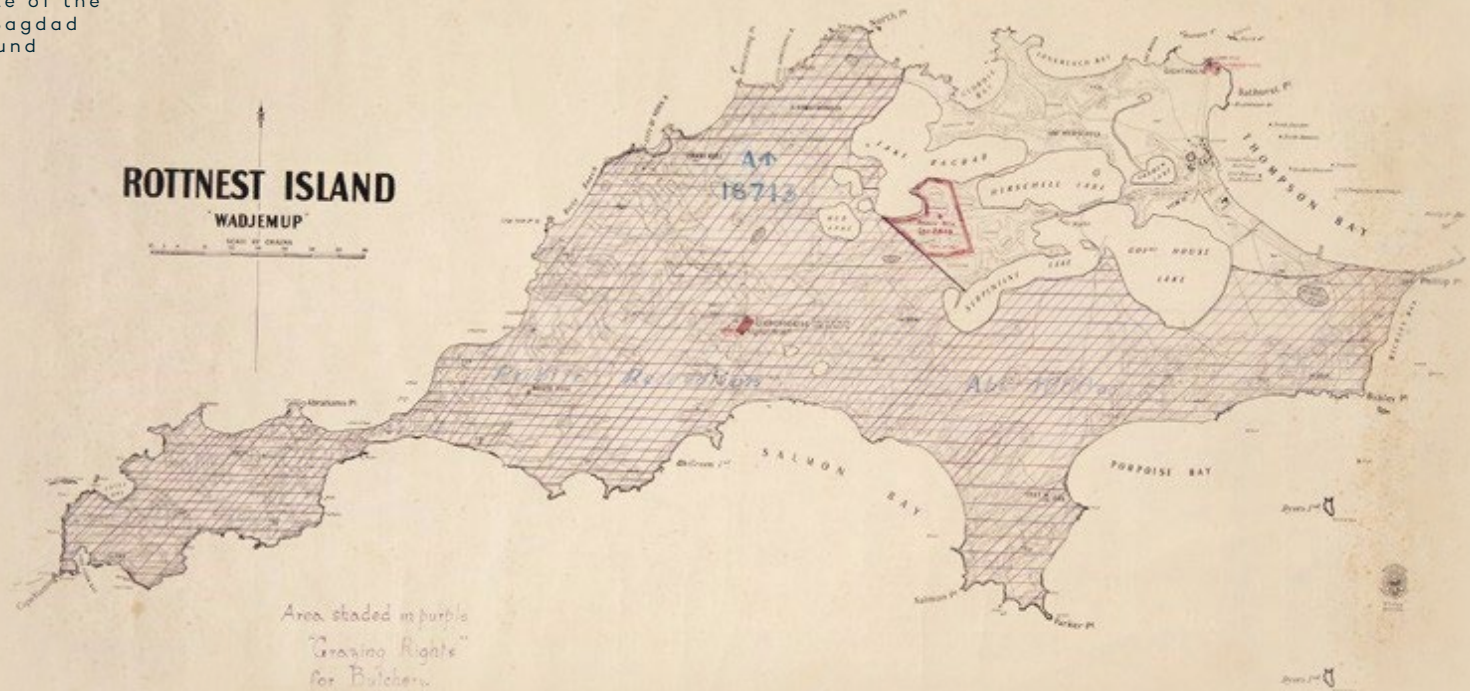
# CONCEALING THE TRUTH

In 1902, Cabinet approved the formal closure of the prison and appointed an Honorary Advisory Board to inform the colonial secretary on the conversion of the Island into a resort (Ferguson 1986). Although progress was slow, the transformation of the Island and the denial of the past had begun. From 1904 until 1931, Wadjemup was used as an annex to the Fremantle Prison. Prisoner numbers fluctuated between eight and 40, with Aboriginal prisoners representing approximately 10% of the population (Green and Aguiar 1997).

In 1917, Wadjemup was established as an A-class reserve for public recreation, and a Board of Control was appointed under the Parks and Reserves Act. Existing buildings were upgraded and new accommodation was built, including the timber bungalows in North Thomson Bay. Importantly, penal labour was relied upon to execute the new building program. The prisoners were moved from the main settlement to temporary accommodation near the salt lakes, and works on a new reformatory prison located between Lake Baghdad and Lake Herschel were undertaken.

Moving the prisoners out of the main settlement is just one of the ways in which the Aboriginal presence and history on Wadjemup was minimised and eventually concealed. During World War 1 (WWI), German and Austrian “enemy aliens” were interned on the Island and accommodated in an area that intersected the unmarked Burial Ground. In addition, despite its vast size, the location of the Burial Ground is not acknowledged at all on early maps (below).

1919 Map of Wadjemup showing the site of the proposed prison reformatory at Lake Baghdad but not the location of the Burial Ground





State Hostel, Rottnest Island, Western Australia, ca. 1915 [picture] / Karl Lehmannl (National Library of Australia)

In 1932, tuart trees (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) were reintroduced to the Island as part of the establishment of a substantial tree nursery under the direction of Board member William Somerville. Tuarts were eventually planted in formal rows across the entirety of the Burial Ground, hiding the graves below. Over time, new buildings and infrastructure began to encroach upon the site.

Perhaps the most disturbing and well-known act of concealment was the transformation of the Burial Ground into a camping area that became known as Tentland and the conversion of the main prison building, the Quod, into hostel accommodation in 1913 (above).

These tourist facilities operated for decades with little or no transparency about the former uses of the sites. In fact, the prison history did not begin to re-enter the broader public consciousness until the Burial Ground was inadvertently disturbed decades later during works conducted under the Rottnest Island Board of Control.

# THE PAST, DISTURBED: ABORIGINAL SKELETAL REMAINS UNCOVERED ON WADJEMUP

The inadvertent disturbance of human remains on Wadjemup was first reported to the public on 13 June 1970 in a Weekend News article titled “Convict bones found on Rottnest”. The impact occurred during the excavation of sewerage trenches. A briefing provided to the Rottnest Board on 19 June 1970 by Des Sullivan, who was Island Manger at the time, indicates that the human remains were uncovered in high densities and that the sewer depth was raised substantially to avoid further impacts (Winder 1989).

Reports were made to the necessary authorities, including the museums, the Protector of Aborigines and the Police. It is noted that every attempt was made to replace the bones as quickly and quietly as possible, though the origin of this decision is unclear. It is understood that the Commissioner of Native Welfare also became involved and reached an agreement with news outlets that the find would not be reported in the press, allegedly for the protection of the Burial Ground (Winder 1989).

This lack of full transparency in initial documentation and reporting, whether deliberate or circumstantial, has contributed to ambiguity regarding the possibility of additional impacts. As such, it is difficult to verify events and attribute accountability. In a 1987 West Australian article titled “Island’s Ugly Past”, Island resident Ernie Shardlow describes the uncovering of multiple skeletons in 1962.

However, Shardlow’s description is not dissimilar to his account of the 1970 disturbance, and thus it is unclear whether he is referring to two separate events or a single occurrence. Concerningly, he implies that human skulls were removed from the site as souvenirs by passers-by. This is not reflected in Government records. In the same news article, a former staff member of the Rottnest Lodge describes a further disturbance occurring north of the Quod in 1986 during the installation of a fence. Again, there is no additional documentation.

Later, in 1989, a protest was led by Aboriginal community leaders Robert Bropho and Len Colbung regarding the alleged burning of an Aboriginal skeleton at the rubbish tip following its discovery during plumbing works near the lodge (Moran 2001).

Although these claims were not substantiated, the evident distrust is understandable given the uncertainty regarding the potential for previously undisclosed impacts.

Human remains in the Burial Ground were verifiably impacted for a second time during earthworks in 1993. This disturbance is described further in the coming sections of this report.

# ADVOCATES FOR ACTION

The fifteen-year period following the first documented disturbance of graves in 1970 is characterised by a relative lack of activity. Without doubt this reflects the social and political context of the time.

Many years later, the first important step toward genuine acknowledgment was taken. In 1985, the Western Australian Department of Aboriginal Sites formally recorded and registered the Burial Ground site. Regrettably, this cannot be seen simply as a gesture of reconciliation or proactive site management. Instead, at least in part, the listing was in reaction to an impending redevelopment on the Island that was announced in 1984. The proposed redevelopment included the amalgamation of The Quod and the former Boys' reformatory building into one complex called the Rottnest Lodge Resort, and became linked to Alan Bond's company Dallhold Investments.

However, the years since 1985 have seen an extensive suite of projects, studies, consultations, meetings and activities undertaken over multiple decades.

Collectively, these works have aimed to:

1. ensure the long-term management of prison-era Aboriginal sites; and
2. appropriately acknowledge the penal history.

Key activities and many of the organisations and people that contributed are outlined in detail in Appendix A – Timeline of Aboriginal Prison Heritage Management and Consultation on Wadjemup.

The work and support of government officers, specialist practitioners and subsets of the broader community cannot be underestimated. However, it has been the leadership of Aboriginal people, communities and groups that has been most critical in driving change. This section presents a summary of the key Aboriginal people and groups that are directly relevant to the Wadjemup Project and their relationship to Wadjemup.

## ROTTNEST ISLAND DEATHS GROUP ABORIGINAL CORPORATION (RIDGAC) – ACTIVISM AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Rottnest Island Deaths Group Aboriginal Corporation (RIDGAC) was formed in 1988 and incorporated in 1993 following years of advocacy and activism on the Island. Its founding members included Robert Bropho, Violet Newman, Clarrie Issacs, Len Colbung and Mingli Wanjurri-Nungala. Although RIDGAC's presence on the Island has ebbed and flowed over time, its mission to protect the Burial Ground and acknowledge the past has been sustained by its members for over three decades. RIDGAC asserts to be the peak body for consultation regarding the Aboriginal Burial Ground and the Quod.

Importantly, the formation of RIDGAC occurred in the context of the ongoing redevelopment of the Quod by Dallhold Investments (owned by Alan Bond) and the increased emergence of strategic Aboriginal activism in the broader Perth region (including the Swan Brewery protests).

Members are credited with:

1. highlighting Wadjemup's history at a time when it was not well known;
2. negotiating development outcomes on the Island (including preventing some aspects of development proposals for the Quod); and
3. materially contributing to the long-term protection of the Burial Ground.

RIDGAC has been an active and dominant party in many of the key consultations regarding the protection of the Burial Ground and the future of the Quod. In 1988 there was a meeting between Rottnest Island Board staff, WA Minister for Tourism Pam Beggs, Department of Aboriginal Sites, Aboriginal leaders, and 200 Aboriginal representatives, including future members of RIDGAC (Appendix B). At the meeting, the following requests were made by the Aboriginal representatives in attendance:

1. The roads be detoured, some of the cottages removed, the camping area moved back and the site fenced off.
2. A monument be erected to recognise those who had died.
3. No development upon the Island, particularly those involving subterranean works, should take place without Aboriginal consultation and supervision.
4. Aboriginal people be employed to research the Aboriginal history of Rottnest Island.
5. Anthropologists/archaeologists should examine the area outside the current boundary to determine the extent of the burials.
6. The families of all the prisoners represented by the cemetery, from throughout WA, be consulted with prior to any management plan/decisions.
7. Further discussions must take place with the Aboriginal people "as a mob", not with a small number of spokespeople.

Aboriginal people  
throughout WA  
will be consulted  
before any management  
decisions are made.

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## Aboriginal people will be employed to research the Aboriginal history of the Island.

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The Minister made the following commitments:

1. Aboriginal people throughout Western Australia will be consulted before any management decisions are made.
2. A memorial will be erected.
3. No subterranean works will take place within the site boundaries (as pegged by John Montgomery, Rottnest Island Board Engineer, on 9 March 1988) and no developments will take place within the area without Aboriginal consultation.
4. Aboriginal people will be employed to research the Aboriginal history of the Island.
5. The old stone cottage adjacent to the site will be restored and developed as an Aboriginal interpretive centre. This centre will be of the form desired by Aboriginal people.
6. A symbolic area will be delineated to represent the cemetery.
7. A group of four or five spokespeople representing those at the meeting should meet regularly with the office of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and herself in order to resolve this issue.

In October 1990, further meetings were held in Perth and on Wadjemup with RIDGAC members and approximately 100 Elders from across the State. The meetings resulted in the below proposals from communities (Appendix C):

1. To cease all work at the jail as it constitutes an Aboriginal deaths site. It is to be fenced off now with long term plan to be turned into a Museum of Remembrance of the Blackfellas taken there in chains who suffered and died. This immediate action is necessary for the protection of the site. We are calling on the WA Government and Dallahold to respect our wishes as it is of paramount importance to us that due to work continuing on it is desecrating the jail which is of extreme significance to Aboriginal People from around this State and which constitutes a breach of Aboriginal law which is the concern of the Elders.
2. To close off the roads over the Aboriginal graves and burial site.
3. Houses on Aboriginal graves have got to be removed.
4. Tentland where dead bodies are laying has got to be turned into parkland.
5. The same on the strips where dead bodies are laying.

In June 1994, following a further disturbance of Aboriginal remains in 1993 (see *Testing the ground* for further details), RIDGAC convened a ceremonial meeting on Wadjemup with Aboriginal delegates from across the State (Video Meeting Record 1994 held by the Wadjemup Museum courtesy of Herbert Bropho). A key element of the 1994 event was the ceremonial reburial of the disturbed bones.

In addition, the following six proposals for Wadjemup were presented to Premier Richard Court (Appendix D):

1. The area known to Nyungahs as Wadjemup (Rottnest Island) to be given back to Nyungah People to have full authority and control of the area.
2. That an official Aboriginal Cemetery be formally established.
3. That the area today known as The Quod recognised to be the Gaol where our Ancestors' Blood is still on the wall and their Spirits are still in the cells, is to be under the full control and custody of Aboriginal Peoples.

4. That further ground probing Radar take place throughout Wadjemup to fully record Burial Sites before any new developments or relocations of current buildings and tourist camping sites takes place.
5. That an Area of Land is set aside for a Meeting Camp for Aboriginal People from throughout the State.
6. That further research take place to record the true history of Wadjemup to ensure the past is known and not forgotten.

Although Premier Court did not provide a firm commitment to enact the recommendations, he recognised the site as the biggest deaths in custody site in the country – an important and historic milestone for the Island. Additionally, many of the proposals were actioned over time, including the delineation of the Burial Ground.

Critically, RIDGAC specifically derives its claimed authority from a decision made by delegates at the 1994 meeting. While RIDGAC's advocacy and leadership through hard times cannot be understated, their influence through the initial stages of truth-telling was due in some part to the limited capacity and/or absence of any formally endorsed representative body. Despite their achievements, RIDGAC's insistence on primacy has at times brought them into conflict with other groups and government.

## WHADJUK PEOPLE - NATIVE TITLE AND THE SOUTHWEST SETTLEMENT

The Southwest Native Title Settlement (Settlement) is a landmark native title agreement, negotiated between the Noongar people and the WA Government. The six Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) that comprised the Settlement were executed in June 2015 and subsequently registered. The Settlement took full effect on 25 February 2021. The agreements are intended to bring substantial benefits to both parties by formalising a process for decision-making regarding land use, cultural heritage, economic opportunities, and community development.

Wadjemup is part of the ILUA area of the Whadjuk people. As a result, RIA entered into a Noongar Standard Heritage Agreement (NSHA) with the Southwest Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) on behalf of the Whadjuk People Agreement Group in 2017. This agreement formalises a collaborative approach to the management of heritage sites. The Regional Corporation for the Whadjuk People is currently being formed as part of the Settlement. In accordance with the executed ILUA, this body will represent the Whadjuk People and become the peak consultation body for land management issues and heritage matters on Wadjemup.

## WADJEMUP ABORIGINAL REFERENCE GROUP (WARG) - A POSITIVE FORCE FOR CHANGE

In June 2016, RIA received approval from the then-Premier to establish the Wadjemup Aboriginal Reference Group (WARG). The WARG members were appointed with support from the Whadjuk People (at that time represented by the Whadjuk Working Party) and under the provision of the *Rottnest Island Authority Act 1987* (schedule 1, clause 6). The WARG consists of members representing multiple communities from across the State. Their first meeting occurred on 10 March 2017.

At the time of its establishment, the primary purpose of the WARG was to advise the Rottnest Island Authority (RIA) on strategic directions for the management, conservation, and recognition of the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground and the Quod. Over time, their role has developed to include the provision of advice on all matters relevant to Aboriginal heritage and reconciliation on the Island.

Since 2016, the WARG has contributed substantially to the advancement of the objectives of RIA, the Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners, and the broader Aboriginal community. Key successes have included the launch of The Wadjemup Project Concept during Reconciliation Week 2017, the return of the Quod to RIA management in 2018, the delivery of a preferred concept design for the memorialisation of the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground in 2019, and the delivery and renaming of the new Wadjemup Museum in 2021.

The following past and present members have contributed to the success of the WARG: Pamela Thorley (January 2017–present Chair); Walter McGuire (January 2017–present); Brendan Moore (January 2017–present); Lindsay Dean (January 2017–present); Kathleen Musulin (June 2022 - present); Casey Kickett ( June 2022 - present); Barbara Bynder (January 2017–May 2020); and Patrick Churnside (January 2019 - January 2020).

## WADJEMUP WHADJUK CULTURAL AUTHORITY (WWCA) - CREATION OF A CULTURAL AUTHORITY FRAMEWORK

In 2020, APP was contracted by the Department of Premier and Cabinet to assist with the Wadjemup Project. Through a Noongar-led process, a Wadjemup Whadjuk Cultural Authority Reference Group (WWCARG) was established in 2021 to lead State-wide consultation regarding the future of the Burial Ground and the Quod.

Membership included Neville Collard, Herbert Bropho, Farley Garlett, Margaret Colbung, Elizabeth Hayden and Karen Jacobs.

Additional details regarding the WWCARG are presented in the section - Developing a Cultural Authority Framework.

## KEY INDIVIDUALS - IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGH TIME

In addition to these active groups, several individuals have contributed materially to the advancements on Wadjemup. Noongar scholars Dr Glen Stasiuk and Prof. Len Collard are acknowledged for their seminal research and ongoing contributions to the Island and truth-telling. Karen Jacobs was the first Aboriginal person appointed to the Rottnest Island Authority Board in 2006, during her term, she chaired both the Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee and the Environmental Advisory Committee for the RIA and is noted for the work she completed towards memorialising the Burial Ground during her tenure and introduced a focus on the true number of men imprisoned and buried in the Burial Ground. Noel Nannup is recognised for his achievements as the first Aboriginal tourist operator on Wadjemup.

In 2015, Indigenous Economic Solutions (IES) were contracted to complete civil works around the Burial Ground area. This included the employment of 12 young men and site monitors representing a majority of the Whadjuk family groups (Appendix J) noting the burial grounds comprise of the graves of Aboriginal men. A smoking ceremony was conducted daily as part of the project protocol for all staff, visiting trades and site monitors. The protocol supported all staff, site visitors and monitors in paying respect to the Aboriginal ancestors and thanking them for protection from injury and incident during the works. Throughout this time, tourists to the Island would ask questions of the labourers as to the works being undertaken. The IES team used this opportunity to educate the public on the burial ground site, the Islands history and details of the works being conducted.

# SEARCHING FOR THE TRUTH OF UNMARKED GRAVES


The combined advocacy and efforts of many groups and individuals has resulted in the advancement of reconciliation on Wadjemup. The delineation of the Burial Ground can be singled out as an exceptionally crucial milestone. It is noteworthy as an example of a complex cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural process applied in pursuit of the truth. It is exceptional given the broader intellectual, social, and political climate in which it commenced. The establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and the 1992 Mabo Decision had enhanced the burgeoning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agency. However, at the same time, interpretations of British colonisation of the continent and aspects of Australian identity were being ferociously contested and debated in a public ideological conflict broadly referred to as The History Wars.

## DEFINING AND ASSESSING THE SITE - PHYSICAL EVIDENCE, DOCUMENTARY RECORDS AND ETHNO-HISTORIC ACCOUNTS

In a categorical sense, four types of primary evidence were utilised to define the extent of the burials: (i) historical records; (ii) physical and forensic evidence (i.e. disturbance sites); (iii) ethno-historical accounts; and (iv) ground penetrating radar (GPR). This does not imply an absence of other cultural knowledge or ways of understanding the site. It simply acknowledges that these have not been documented or materially utilised in government site management processes to date.

Historical records indicate that at least 363 men and boys died and were buried on the Island (Appendix E); however, information concerning the precise locations of the graves is scarce. Regrettably, the most compelling and unmistakable evidence for the existence and extent of the Burial Ground is the documented physical disturbance of human skeletal material described in an earlier section of this report.

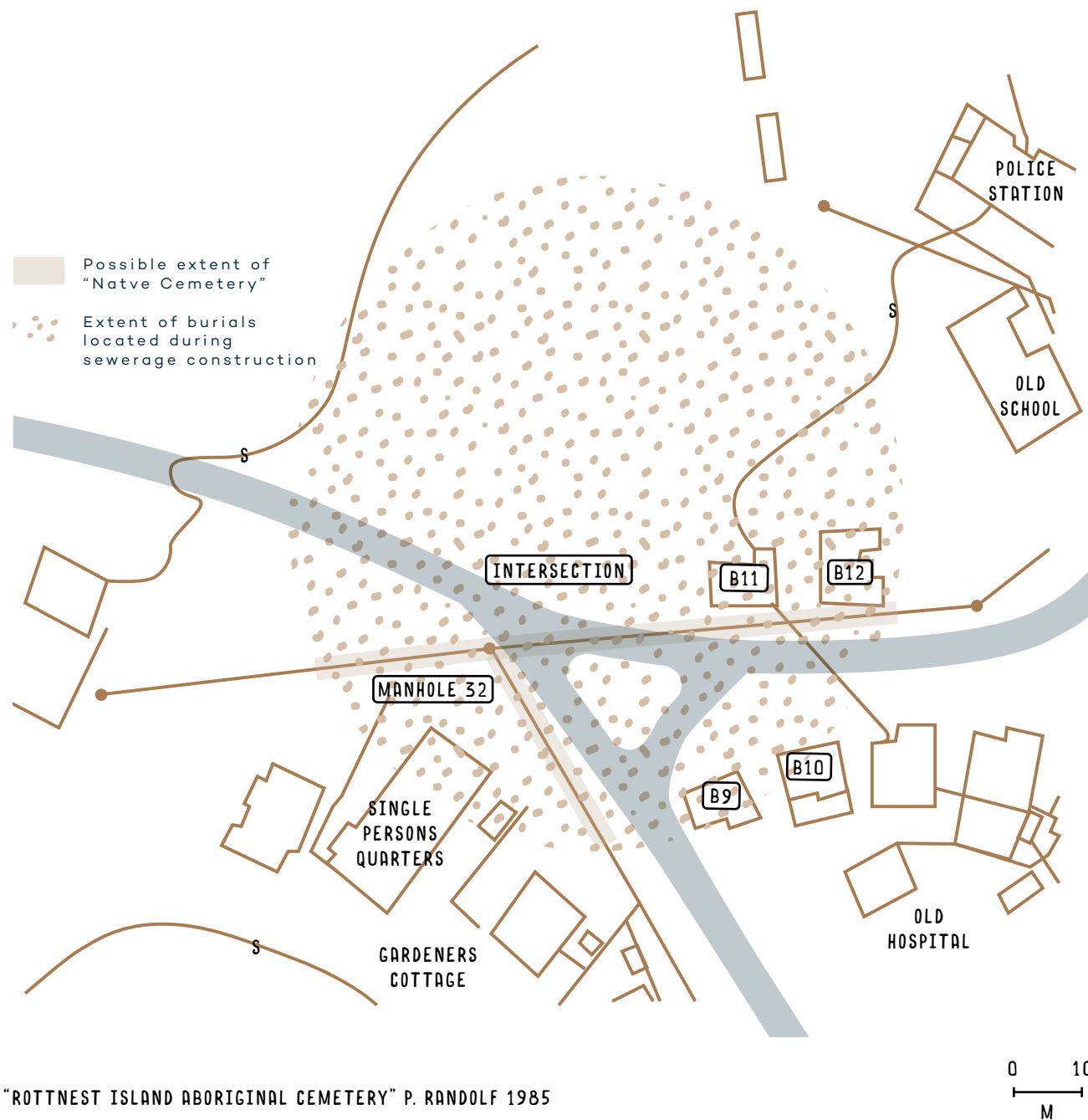
Historical records indicate that at least 363 men and boys died and were buried on the Island.



The 1985 mapping of the site by the Western Australian Department of Aboriginal Sites was based on a description of the location of the skeletons disturbed during the 1970 sewer works provided by witness Ernie Shardlow (Winder 1989) (below). It also considered aspects of an ethno-historic account by Edward J Watson (son of the Rottneest Island Boys' Reformatory Superintendent who lived on the Island between 1881 and 1901) from his 1937 manuscript (an edited version was first published in 1998 under the title *Rottneest: Its Tragedy and Glory*).

The resulting preliminary boundary and registration of the site was the State's first formal recognition of its prison history and the traumas that occurred.

However, this boundary was largely symbolic because the available information simply did not allow for a more accurate recording. For a range of reasons, outlined in more detail in Randolph et al. 1993 and Appendix A, the principal interest in determining the archaeological extent of the Burial Ground intensified in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Of particular importance was a new and acute research-based awareness of the possibility that two cemeteries were established during the prison era.



William Henry Timperley (1885), superintendent of the prison between 1883 and 1890, noted in Report on Rottneest Prison for the Year 1884 that: 'the old cemetery was closed and a new one set apart at a greater distance from the prison'. This was required after a substantial increase in prisoner deaths resulting from an influenza outbreak (Broome 1884, Report by the Colonial Surgeon of the Public Health of the Colony for year 1883). The likelihood of a second site was further supported by a new account provided in 1990 by James O'Donoghue (son of the chief warden of the Aboriginal prison from the mid-1890s to 1903) (Appendix F). This also resulted in a careful re-examination and clarification of Watson's 1937 account (Tann 1990).

Cumulatively, the available evidence suggested that: (i) the skeletal material disturbed in 1970 was associated with the first formal cemetery on Wadjemup as remembered by Edward Watson; and (ii) a second, currently unmapped cemetery, as described by Donahue, existed to the north, and intersected the campground known as Tentland. Further investigation was required; however, consultations with Aboriginal people had definitively excluded the possibility of site excavations.

## TESTING THE GROUND - SUMMARY OF GROUND PENETRATING RADAR (GPR) ASSESSMENTS

GPR is a geophysical technique that is currently employed widely for the non-invasive location of burials in archaeological contexts. Although GPR cannot detect the presence or absence of skeletons, changes or anomalies in sediment that are indicative of graves can be identified reliably.

In 1983, Curtin University geophysicist Verne Wilson demonstrated the successful application of GPR for the delineation of bedding and sub-surface structures in the sand and limestone of the Island to a depth in excess of two metres (Randolf et al. 1993). Based on these results, Wilson recommended the commencement of a GPR investigation to delineate the Burial Ground in 1990. It is relevant to note that a federal protective order for the Burial Ground was under consideration at this time.

Following a GPR trial in December 1990, Wilson conducted a series of three GPR assessments between March 1991 and November 1992 on behalf of Curtin University (Wilson and Frampton 1991a; Wilson and Frampton 1991b; Wilson and Frampton 1992; Wilson and Frampton 1993). These were conducted with assistance from Curtin University students, employees from the Western Australian Department of Aboriginal Sites and members of the Rottneest Island Deaths Group. The studies successfully identified disturbed ground (known as anomalies) that are highly likely to be indicative of graves, contributing to the delineation of an area believed to represent the "first" pre-1884 cemetery (below). Additional areas of disturbed ground that were deemed likely to be indicative of burials were also identified further north within Tentland.

LOCATIONS OF POSSIBLE GRAVES DETERMINED BY GROUND PENETRATING RADAR IN THE EARLY 1990S (RANDOLPH ET AL. 1993).



SINGLE  
PERSONS  
QUARTERS

GARDENERS  
COTTAGE

TENTLAND

OLD  
HOSPITAL

B11

B12

0 10  
M



Although the anomalies broadly reflected the two cemeteries described by Watson (1937) and O'Donoghue (1990), no agreement was reached regarding the site boundary at the conclusion of the GPR in 1992 (Randolph et al. 1993). Broadly, RIDGAC was not satisfied by the extent of the surveys and sought additional assessments further north. Conversely, RIA was unwilling to exclude the possibility that the northern disturbed areas were the result of historical activities linked to the use of the area as a campground and internment site in World War 1. As a result, it was recommended that further investigation including conventional invasive archaeological techniques be considered (Wilson and Frampton 1993).

At a local scale, the enduring conflict between Aboriginal values and the legislative mandate (Rottnest Island Authority Act 1987) to safeguard the Island as an economically sustainable tourism locale was peaking under the pressure of additional political factors (Appendix I). Aboriginal communities, as represented by members of the emerging Rottnest Island Deaths Group, were agitated after decades of deception, uncompromising in their pursuit of the truth, and rigid in their expectations of government (Moran 2001).

Regrettably, and for reasons that are not explicitly documented, no further GPR investigations occurred, and the permanent protection order being considered by the Commonwealth Government was not enabled. Instead, in October 1993, RIA discovered further skeletal remains in northern Tentland, as predicted by the GPR testing (Department of

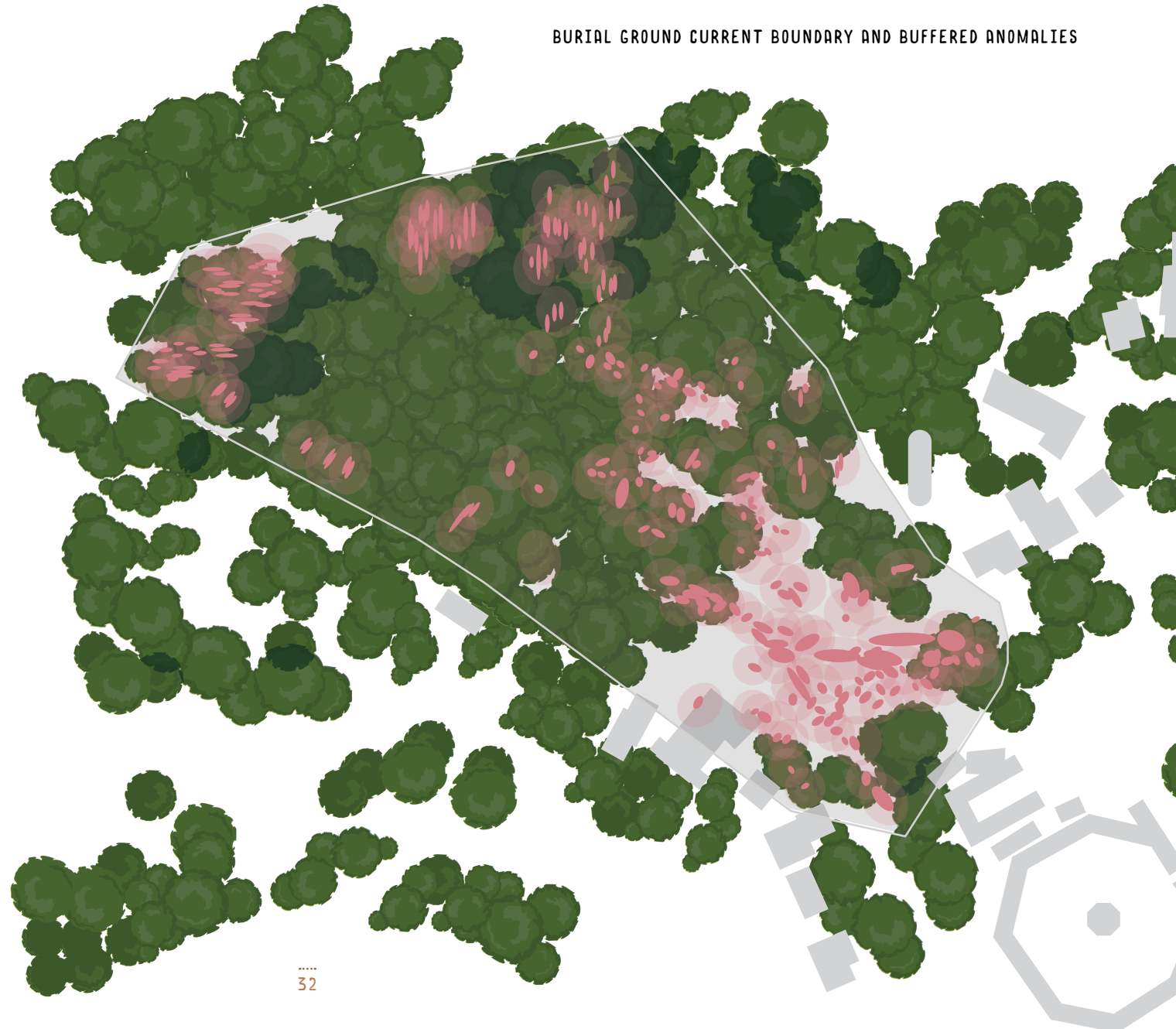
Aboriginal Sites 1993). This triggered further animosity towards RIA and resulted in the 1994 meeting with Premier Richard Court as detailed on page 24. It is relevant to note that a federal protective order for the Burial Ground had been under consideration in 1990 but was never enacted (Rottnest Island Authority 1990).

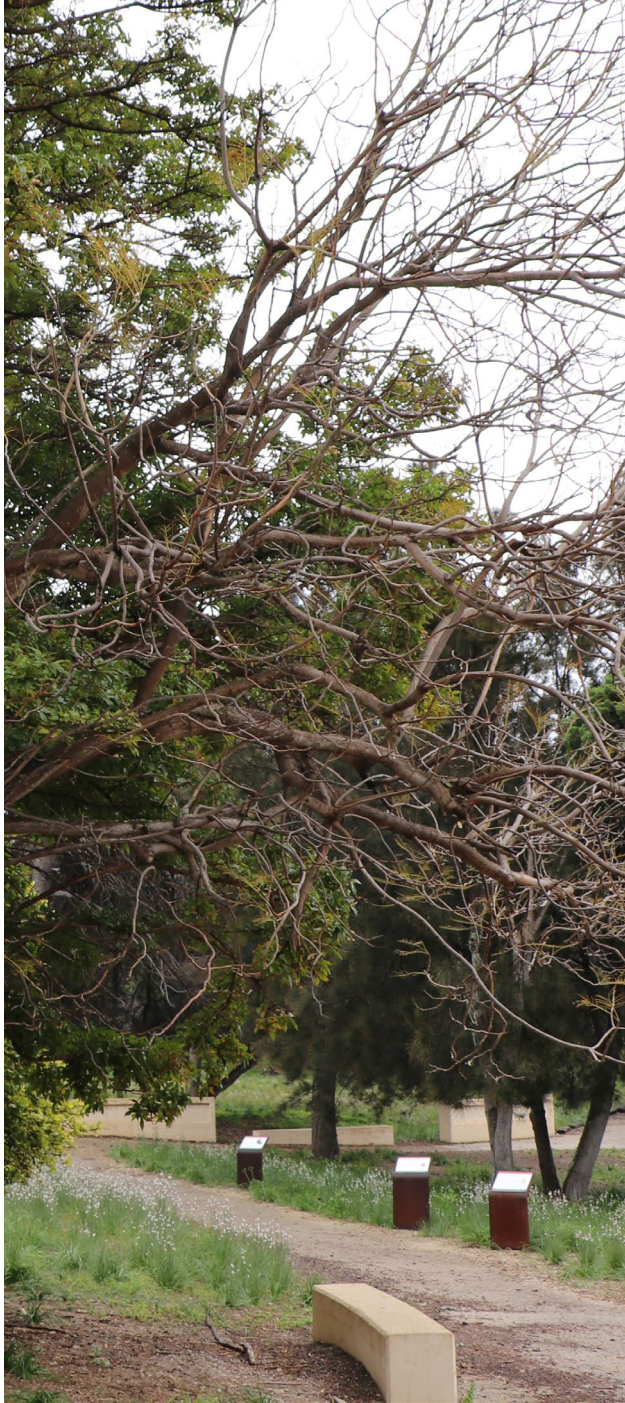
The final delineation of the Burial Ground was eventually concluded in 2004 when an extensive additional GPR assessment was undertaken to confirm the maximum extent of the anomalies (Wilson 2005). The validity of the boundary produced in 2004 is validated further by incompatible water table depths in the north, surface limestone in the west and south, and historical records limiting the eastern extent. However, although compelling, the final boundary does not preclude the possibility of isolated burials elsewhere on the Island. Tentland was eventually closed in 2007.

The boundary currently utilised by RIA for management of the site is based on buffered polygons representing all identified anomalies. GPR is now commonly undertaken on the Island to minimise risk and support compliance processes under the NSHA (see page 25 for details on the NSHA). Recent GPR surveys have been conducted in the vicinity of the Boys' Reformatory and across the Heritage Common.

Naturally, GPR and visualisation technology have advanced considerably over time. It would now be possible to conduct additional assessments in order to create a 3D model of anomalies and site features, including tree roots and sub-surface services, represents a potential avenue for improving future site management and facilitating memorialisation of the site.

#### BURIAL GROUND CURRENT BOUNDARY AND BUFFERED ANOMALIES





## MEMORIALISING THE BURIAL GROUND

The potential for physical acknowledgment and memorialisation of the Burial Ground is an enduring objective in the body of available documentation regarding the site. However, the decades since the commencement of the ground penetrating radar studies have been characterised by a recurrent ebb and flow of engagement with this goal. Intermittent periods of intensive focus on the site have resulted in progress; ultimately, though, advancements have been slow and no appropriate memorialisation has been achieved.

The periods of activity have frequently been stimulated by Aboriginal leadership and involvement. The phases of protracted stasis have been due primarily to failures to reach a consensus, and have commonly been linked

to changes in Government, escalations in land access conflicts and significant deficiencies in funding and resourcing.

Complexities aside, a suite of concept design options has been developed over time. All share various commonalities, including requirements for culturally appropriate demarcation, education, and respectful acknowledgement of the site. However, no comprehensive physical outcome has been achieved. Instead, the consultation and design processes to date have demonstrated the primary importance of: (i) cultural processes and ceremony as prerequisites for co-design and memorialisation; (ii) genuine partnerships between the State Government and Aboriginal communities.

## 1992 CONCEPT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL SITES

The first formal concept designs were developed in 1992 and were provided in a broader funding submission presented to the ATSIC State Advisory Council by the Department of Aboriginal Sites and Rottneest Island Authority (Appendix H). The designs were broadly based on the proposals presented by RIDGAC and Aboriginal Communities in 1990, but were not a direct collaboration. Two options, represented in artwork by Naomi Mills (Artist and Freelance Consultant, Department of Aboriginal Sites), are outlined as a starting point for further discussions with the communities. However, the designs were not supported by some members of RIDGAC (Appendix H). Equally, there appears to have been broader criticism of the designs. The public commentary by members of the Aboriginal community implies that inadequate consultation and poorly conceived elements contributed to the lack of support (Video Meeting Record 1994 held by the Wadjemup Museum courtesy of Herbert Bropho).

Whether premature or underdeveloped, the design works did not progress. Instead, the next few years were characterised by further GPR, essential site works (specifically the removal of buildings from the Burial Ground), and ongoing consultations and negotiations with Aboriginal stakeholder groups including RIDGAC.

## 2004-07 - CONCEPT BY BLACKWELL AND ASSOCIATES

Following additional GPR work to determine the maximum extent of the Burial Ground in 2004 (Wilson 2005), concerted efforts to memorialise the site were reinvigorated by the commencement of a State-wide consultation process facilitated by Marilyn Morgan. This resulted in the development of a new concept plan by landscape architectural firm Blackwell and Associates. The design approach is notably inclusive, with multiple opportunities for Aboriginal communities across the state to be engaged and represented. Highlights include provision for commissioning of 400 sculptural

sentinels from artists from across the State. Options to include vegetation and rammed or stabilised earth features comprised of sediment collected from across Western Australia are also presented. Additional practical elements including a pathway, edging and reflection spaces are also a feature of the design.

While aspects of the design were positively received, RIDGAC raised concern about the consultation process.

In 2007, RIA was granted approval under section 18 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* to begin the remedial works necessary to implement the design (e.g. the removal of selected buildings, the placement of boundary markers, and the installation of signage). These works are sometimes referred to as Stage 1, and were partially progressed between 2007 and 2009.



## 2013-19 - CONCEPT BY UDLA

Following the initial (but partial) site works in 2007–09, the active emphasis on the site diminished for several years. It was reactivated in 2013 when RIA partnered with Rottneest Foundation (RF) to seek funding to build the memorial. Following substantial planning, including consultation with the Whadjuk Working Party (WWP) and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA), RF successfully applied for and was awarded a Lotterywest Community Spaces Building and Fit Out grant for the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground in June 2015. The work to be conducted under the grant is sometimes referred to as Stage 2 and included:

1. the design and development of a memorial for the site; and
2. construction.



In 2015, RIA also funded additional site works at the Burial Ground, to complete the Stage 1 remediation originally commenced in 2007. This work was conducted by Indigenous Economic Solutions Pty Ltd between August and November under a fixed-price contract. This work included the upgrade of the indicative path and the addition of new signage.

In National Reconciliation Week 2017, RIA announced an earlier version of The Wadjemup Project, a strategic project focused on recognising Wadjemup as a landmark reconciliation location. A key aim was the appropriate memorialisation of the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground. In support of this goal, a tender process was initiated in early 2017 to commence stakeholder engagement and the design and development of a memorial for the site. In December that year, landscape architect firm UDLA were appointed utilising the Lotterywest funds for the provision of interpretation, landscape planning, and design (including the development of works tender documentation).

### UDLA CONCEPT

UDLA commenced work on the Aboriginal-led Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground Project in early 2018. Their project team developed a stakeholder engagement strategy and conducted State-wide consultation with groups across the Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne/ Midwest / Murchison, Central Desert, Goldfields, Southwest / Great Southern, and Perth Metropolitan regions in September and October 2018. The extent to which this engagement process referenced prior consultations and work is not well documented.

Irrespective, UDLA developed a new Preferred Concept Plan and presented it in the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground DRAFT Design Report (UDLA, 2019) (the DRAFT UDLA Report). Other key elements of the UDLA report included a design process represented by the six Noongar Seasons and a non-linear pathway forward based on truth-telling, ceremony and healing.

The seed can lay dormant but  
the truth will come out and  
everyone will see it in the end.

Whadjuk Working Party participant

## Outcomes

**The outcomes of the Stage 2 - Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground project offers a new narrative for state-wide Aboriginal-led memorials.**

### Intangible

Educate people about Wadjemup's Aboriginal Heritage

Educate people about Rottnest's history as an Aboriginal prison and its role in the European settlement of WA.

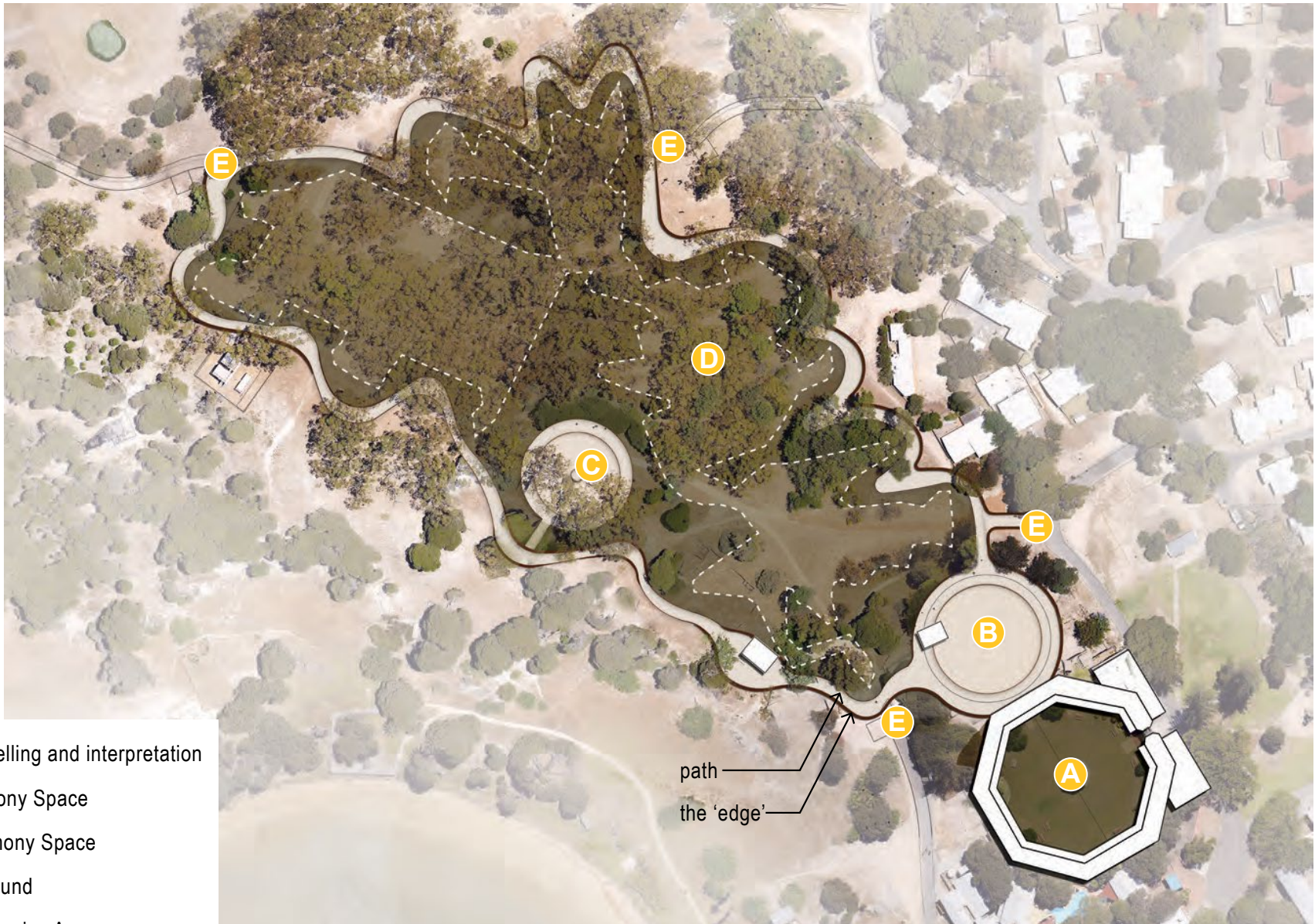
Raise awareness of the significant Aboriginal Heritage related to the prison era including the Quod, Burial Ground and other related buildings, sites and infrastructure.

Honour and pay respect to the Aboriginal men and boys that were imprisoned on Rottnest and died en route to the island, during incarceration and whilst attempting to return to their home countries after release.

Understand the memorial as a cultural ceremony.

### Tangible

The Physical memorial itself is to provide a space for ongoing ceremony. A space to promote Healing for WA Aboriginal people and the State.



- A** Quod - truth telling and interpretation
- B** Public Ceremony Space
- C** Private Ceremony Space
- D** Disturbed Ground
- E** Emergency/Service Access



RECLAIMING THE QUOD





# ROTTNEST ISLAND AUTHORITY RESUMES MANAGEMENT OF THE QUOD

On 31 May 2018, after 87 years of use as holiday accommodation, the Quod and some associated structures, were relinquished from a commercial lease and returned to the management of the Rottnest Island Authority.

The handover of the Quod back to the WA Government was met with renewed hope for truth-telling and healing from members of the Aboriginal community.

The Quod no longer serves as accommodation, with its future to be determined under the Wadjemup Project.

In 2021, Rottnest Island Authority consulted in depth with the Wadjemup Aboriginal Reference Group to ensure the Quod building interfaced with the redevelopment of the Rottnest Lodge in an appropriate way.

# THE ROTTNEST ISLAND LODGE REDEVELOPMENT

In conjunction with work and consultations being undertaken by Elders, strategic and operational projects are underway on the Island to prepare for the progression of the Wadjemup Project. Likewise, capital works currently being undertaken within the vicinity of the prison precinct are designed, where possible, to complement and enhance future memorial plans.

In recognition of the exceptional significance of the prison sites and the importance of safeguarding land to support the effective delivery of the Wadjemup Project, a proposed geographic scope (footprint) has been developed for the project (below). The boundary encompasses the Quod and the Burial Ground, and also allows sufficient land to adequately provide for potential future requirements (such as new auxiliary buildings to support the future use of the Quod) and create space for respectful memorialisation and management of the sites. In addition, a 'no development' zone has been established adjacent to the project boundary wherever possible.

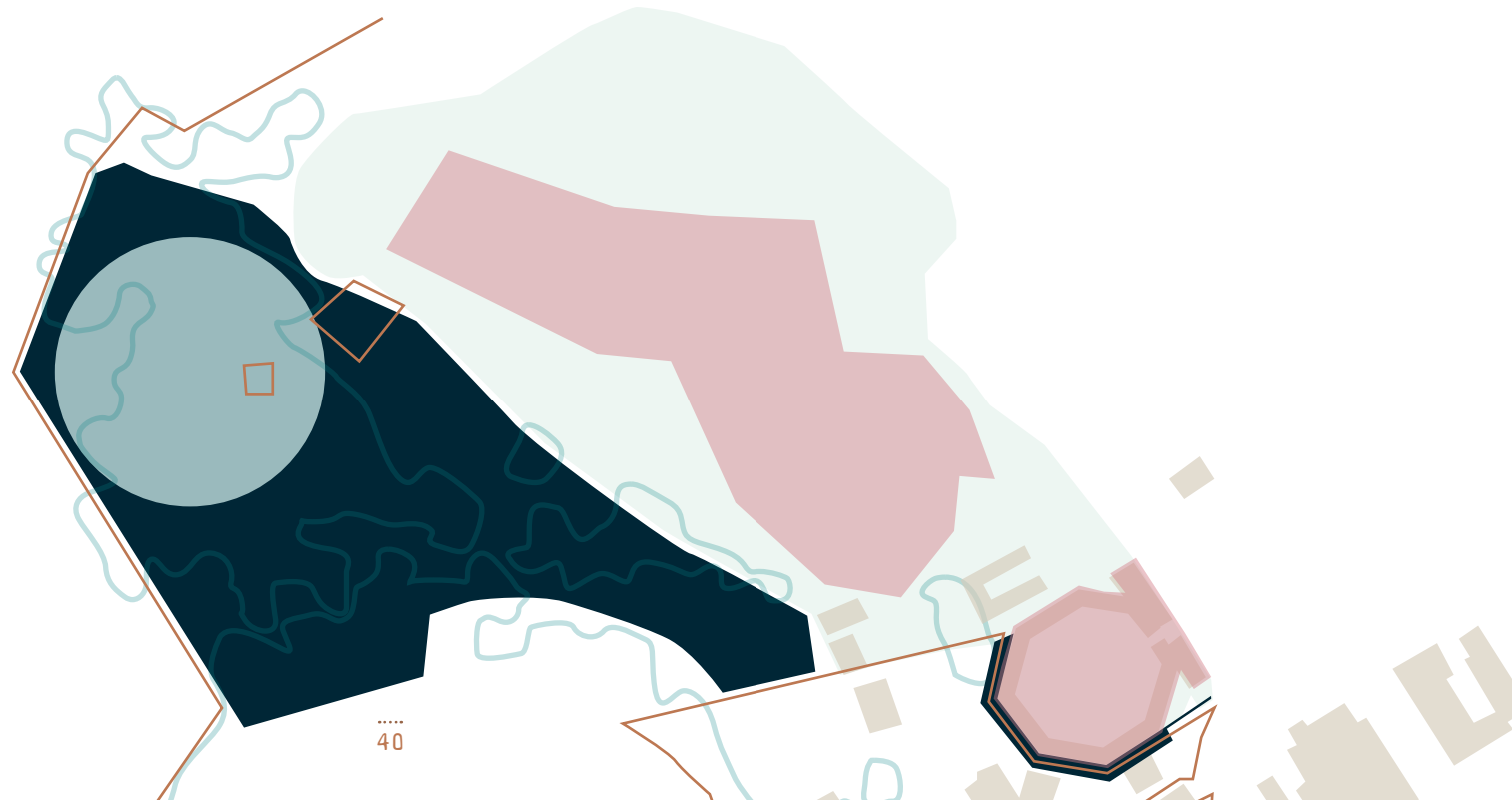
- Proposed footprint for Wadjemup Project
- Non-Development Areas
- Aboriginal Heritage Sites
- Threatened Ecological Communities
- Commercial Leases

Conservation of the Quod as a built asset is undertaken by RIA. The most recent Building Condition Assessment was undertaken by Hocking Heritage in June 2021. The Quod is in fair condition for its age; however, a detailed and strategic Asset Management Plan and schedule of works is currently being developed to ensure its long-term conservation.

Ongoing management of all prison-era sites under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and in line with the NSHA is a critical priority for RIA. It is important that all current and future interfacing projects be respectful of the Aboriginal history and work in concord with plans for the Wadjemup Project.

Developments on the Island are being undertaken in a manner that is respectful of Aboriginal history.

PROPOSED WADJEMUP PROJECT FOOTPRINT





Credit to The Lodge Wadjemup  
by Place Development

On 20 May 2020, the then Minister for Tourism Hon David Templeman announced that a WA consortium led by Place Development Australia had been selected to redevelop the Island’s Lodge site (excluding the Quod). Place Development is committed to ensuring that the \$40 million proposal respects the important history of the Island through harmonious design elements. Design guidelines have been conditionally endorsed by the Heritage Council and include a requirement for a 6m exclusion zone surrounding the Quod.

In addition, various current projects in the settlement have been developed through consultation with the WARG to honour and share Aboriginal connections to Wadjemup. The Island Gateway, funded through the Commonwealth Government’s National Tourism Icons program, has included the redevelopment and renaming of the Wadjemup Museum to highlight Aboriginal history (Rottneest Island Authority | [Island Gateway \(ria.wa.gov.au\)](http://Island Gateway (ria.wa.gov.au))).



The RIA has also recently completed significant revitalisation works to the Island’s Settlement Mall and recently opened a nine-metre-high sculpture, depicting a Noongar warrior and breaching whale. Called Koora-Yeye-Boordawan-Kalyakoorl (Past-Present-Future-Forever), the sculpture creates a powerful welcome statement to the Island that celebrates the Noongar people’s ancient and ongoing spiritual connections to Wadjemup, while recognising the brutal history and incarceration of Aboriginal men and boys that occurred on Rottneest for over a century.



# WADJEMUP PROJECT: A NEW WAY FORWARD



It is clear that previous efforts by Government had failed to adequately acknowledge and reconcile the Aboriginal prison history on Wadjemup. Until recently, there was no formal recognition of the historical and intergenerational impacts of the former prison on Aboriginal people across Western Australia.

The 2 June 2020 announcement of the Wadjemup Project provided new impetus and a commitment to enabling community to lead the manner in which formal acknowledgement and reconciliation would be achieved. In doing so, the project is working to enable Aboriginal people with a connection to the Quod to consider its future use, and the most appropriate way to formally acknowledge and commemorate the Aboriginal men and boys who were incarcerated on the Island and those that remain buried there in unmarked graves.

The apology by the then-Minister for Tourism, Hon. David Templeman, in November 2021 on Wadjemup was a landmark moment on the path to reconciling the Island's history and its impacts on Aboriginal people across Western Australia. Minister Templeman's acknowledgement of the way the State's agenda had worked to obfuscate the Aboriginal prison sites and history in favour of tourism was delivered following the foundational work of the project, highlighting the project's capacity to deliver real change.

# A PARTNERSHIP MODEL AND ABORIGINAL DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY

Given the significance of the project, in 2020 the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) assumed leadership of the project to assist in a whole-of-Government approach to the project design and delivery. DPC's Aboriginal Engagement Directorate has played a coordination role, building on their existing relationships with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC), and respecting and building on previous engagements done over the years.

Previous consultations and many years of WA Aboriginal Community members calling on Government to do something has highlighted the call for Aboriginal-led solutions and South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council along with the then-Whadjuk Working Party, outlined a proposed way forward calling on State-wide Aboriginal leadership for the Project.

That same year, DPC contracted Aboriginal Productions and Promotions (APP) to assist with the Wadjemup Project and facilitate and document engagements with Aboriginal people who have a connection to Wadjemup (Rottneest Island) and the former Aboriginal prison.

As host Nation, Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners and custodians are responsible for authorising, coordinating and enabling cultural protocols and processes through to completion of the Project. This process ensures Aboriginal people decide how best their ancestors will be honoured, and how their cultural groups, communities or countries are to be honoured in the final memorial.



# EMPOWERED BY NEW WAYS OF WORKING

The Wadjemup Project's uniqueness sets it apart as it aims to be entirely Aboriginal-led, with Aboriginal governance critical to the project's success.

The Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy released in 2021, sets out how the WA Government will direct its efforts towards a future in which all Aboriginal people, families and communities are empowered to live good lives and choose their own futures from a secure foundation. The strategy outlines the high-level framework for future WA Government policies, plans, initiatives and programs that contribute to better outcomes for Aboriginal people, built around genuine partnerships and engagement with Aboriginal people, strong accountability, and culturally responsive ways of working.

The strategy is critical to the Wadjemup Project because it holds Government accountable in reshaping services and systems to work with culture.

Additionally, the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, and in particular Priority Reform One, further supports these ways of working by requiring Government to acknowledge the shared decision making structures Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have already developed. The Wadjemup Project has made, and is clearly delivering, on its commitment to align with this principle and work in a culturally aware and responsive way.



# ESTABLISHING CLEAR OBJECTIVES

Through APP, the project is delivering strategies for:

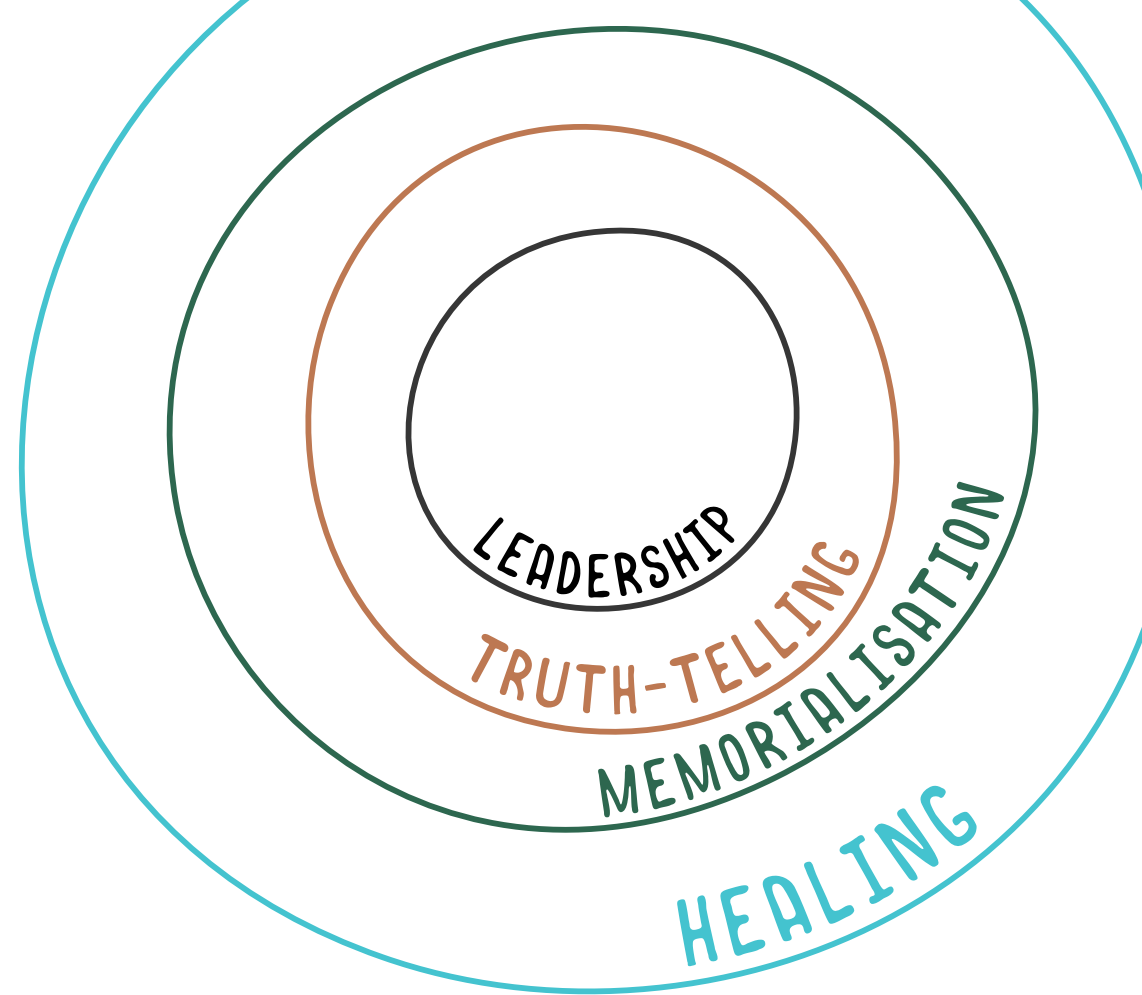
- **Truth-telling** - to acknowledge Wadjemup's history of Aboriginal incarceration and its role in the colonisation of WA.
- **Ceremony** - to facilitate healing in line with Aboriginal cultural protocol.
- **Commemoration through memorialisation** - of the former prison sites on Wadjemup, including the Quod and the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground.

In delivering these strategies, the Wadjemup Project aims to create outcomes for:

- **State-wide reconciliation:** An opportunity between the WA Government and Aboriginal communities. Place based reconciliation and truth-telling through the development of a place of historic reflection.
- **Acknowledgement of Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Ownership** and ongoing role and responsibility to protect country. Contemporary commemoration and celebration of the strength and resilience of Aboriginal cultures and the significant contributions Aboriginal people have made to our State.
- **Healing intergenerational trauma for Aboriginal communities.** Resolving historic injustice through the celebration of Aboriginal culture and creation of capacity development opportunities for Aboriginal communities.
- **Economic opportunities:** Create long term and sustainable cultural, social, environmental, governance and economic outcomes for the WA Aboriginal community, including procurement during project development, NRM and Whadjuk Ranger opportunities, cultural tourism, ongoing operation/management of the memorial. Increased visitation and new tourism offerings for Wadjemup honouring the truth of the past and journey into the future.



# PROJECT TIME FRAMES



## STAGE 1 - IMMEDIATE

Aboriginal-led community engagement process to develop Cultural Authority Framework and State-wide Consultation Group



## STAGE 2 - MEDIUM

Burial Ground and Quod consultation, design and memorialisation

## STAGE 3 - LONG

Acknowledge Wadjemup's cultural value and historical significance for Whadjuk Noongar.

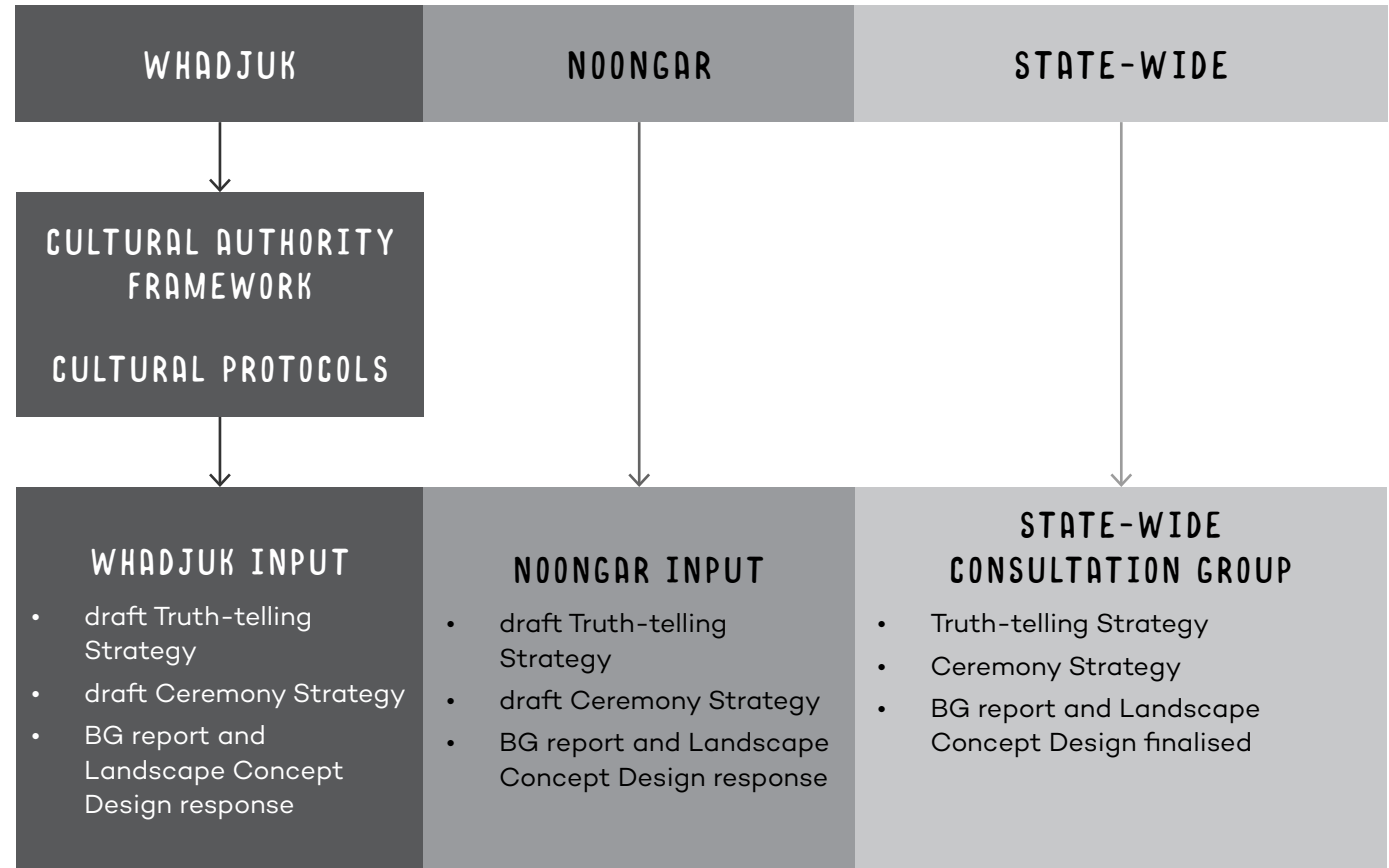


# DEVELOPING A CULTURAL AUTHORITY FRAMEWORK

# PROCESS AND KEY OUTCOMES

To support completion of Stage 1, and in keeping with Aboriginal Protocol, APP designed a three step process to guide how State-wide Aboriginal consultation will occur, ensuring cultural protocols are observed, and all Aboriginal people and communities with a connection to Wadjemup and the Quod are included, or have the opportunity to have their say.

Refer to 'Consultation process' on page 54 for more details on how State-wide Aboriginal consultation connects with non-Aboriginal stakeholders on the consultation topics.



In light of the COVID-19 outbreak across the world initial engagement occurred via phone calls and email contact with Whadjuk Male Elders.

Female Elders whilst initially not included in the Project Scope were later included as the Project grew to reflect the deep cultural connect to Wadjemup, spanning across generations.

Separate Male and Female meetings were then held to formally introduce the Project and seek endorsement for the Department to support the Project and endorsement for APP to undertake the work. This ongoing endorsement process has been critical to the success of the Project.

The immediate focus is the Aboriginal-led community engagement process to develop;

- Cultural Authority Framework and Cultural Protocols
- State-wide Aboriginal Consultation Group
- Ceremony Strategy to heal people and cleanse Quod and Burial Ground sites
- Truth-telling Strategy, including research project.
- Memorialisation plans for the Quod and Burial Ground.

Representatives from the Male and Female Elders groups were nominated to carry the responsibility for providing ongoing input. This group is called the Wadjemup Whadjuk Cultural Authority Reference Group (WWCARG) who are the holders of the Cultural knowledge related to the Whadjuk area. The group operates within the structure of the Cultural Authority Framework.

We are the wives,  
mothers, sisters,  
aunties and we had to  
carry the load when  
the men were gone



# ESTABLISHING WADJEMUP WHADJUK CULTURAL PROTOCOLS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The journey is being guided by Principles for Engagement that respect the significance of this State-wide reconciliation project on Whadjuk Noongar land:

**Aboriginal-led:** Visioning, community engagement and cultural decision making processes will be Aboriginal-led and guided by the Cultural Authority Framework and Cultural Protocols developed by Whadjuk Elders.

**Understand Culture:** Actively build knowledge and respect for the culture, diversity, values and history of Traditional Owners.

**Be Inclusive:** Ensure that everyone in community who should be involved has an opportunity to do so.

**Engage Early:** Engage at the idea stage to maximise Aboriginal community input. Develop trust and embed Community and Culture in project design.

**Establish Expectations:** Be clear on purpose, be consistent in communication and seek feedback.

**Develop Authentic Relationships:** Acknowledge that it takes time to develop meaningful relationships, be prepared to have open and honest conversations, be accountable and transparent, and communicate to achieve outcomes.

**Be Present:** Invest in face to face communication. Make the time to be available and actively listen and be receptive.

The cultural protocols provide a basis for the Whadjuk Elders to initiate discussion on the appropriateness of the protocols, and to amend and/or endorse where required.

- Respect Elders past and present
- Respect all prisoners of Wadjemup and their families
- Respect prisoners buried at Wadjemup and their families
- Respect each person in the meeting
- Respect the engagement process
- Move forward on ceremony and truth-telling
- Respect the decision of the majority
- Engage with other stakeholders regarding Wadjemup.

The Whadjuk Authorities provide input that will reflect the views and beliefs of the Whadjuk people and endorse decision making.

The Whadjuk Authorities will refer to the wider bodies of Elders for decision making and input where they believe they do not have the authority to do so.

The Authorities established protocols (TOR) for:

- Member's obligations
- Meeting procedures
- Decision making procedures
- Addressing meeting outcomes
- Establishing meeting objectives
- Communicating and ongoing feedback loop around project stages.

The appointed Cultural Coordinators role is to interact with the community and liaise with the Authorities regarding information required for the Project. Cultural Coordinators can also manage presentations to the Authorities to provide information relating to the agenda.

The Male and Female Cultural Authorities can hold joint meetings, with the ability to implement to male and female breakout groups when necessary.

Authority members are paid sitting fees, and regular Wadjemup Project Newsletters are used as a communication tool.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet's role is to support the Wadjemup Project process in partnership with the Rottnest Island Authority.



# CULTURAL SAFETY WITH HEALING SUPPORT

## SMOKING CEREMONIES

The smoking ceremony is a traditional Noongar ritual used to not only cleanse and purify a specific area but it cleanses the spirit, body and soul whilst you are on Noongar Country. It also helps to ward off warra wirrin – bad spirits and to bring in the blessings of the kwop wirrin – good spirits.

The leaves and shavings from the balga (grass tree) smoulder and the smoke purifies the area and prepares for a new beginning. This ritual of purification and unity – signifies the beginning of something new.

The balga tree is the life tree. It provides medicine, food, shelter warmth and healing.<sup>1</sup>

Smoking Ceremonies before each meeting have become an integral part of the Project. The Project will continue to work with stakeholders to further enhance ceremony process.

## NOONGAR CONNECT

Noongar spirituality lies in the belief of a cultural landscape and the connection between the human and spiritual realms. Everything in our vast landscape has meaning and purpose. Life is a web of inter-relationships where maam and yok (men and women) and nature are partners, and where kura (long ago, the past) is always connected to yey (present). Through our paintings, music and koroboree/kobori (dance) we are paying respect to our ancestral creators, and at the same time, strengthening our belief systems. Noongar connection with nature and boodja (country) signifies a close relationship with spiritual beings associated with the land. We express this through our caring for boodja and observing Noongar lore through an oral tradition of story-telling.

Noongar spirituality is one of many kaartdijin systems within Aboriginal Australia, and like other knowledge systems, there is diversity in our Noongar interpretations.<sup>2</sup>

## STATE-WIDE CONNECT

This area will grow as further State-wide Conversations occur.

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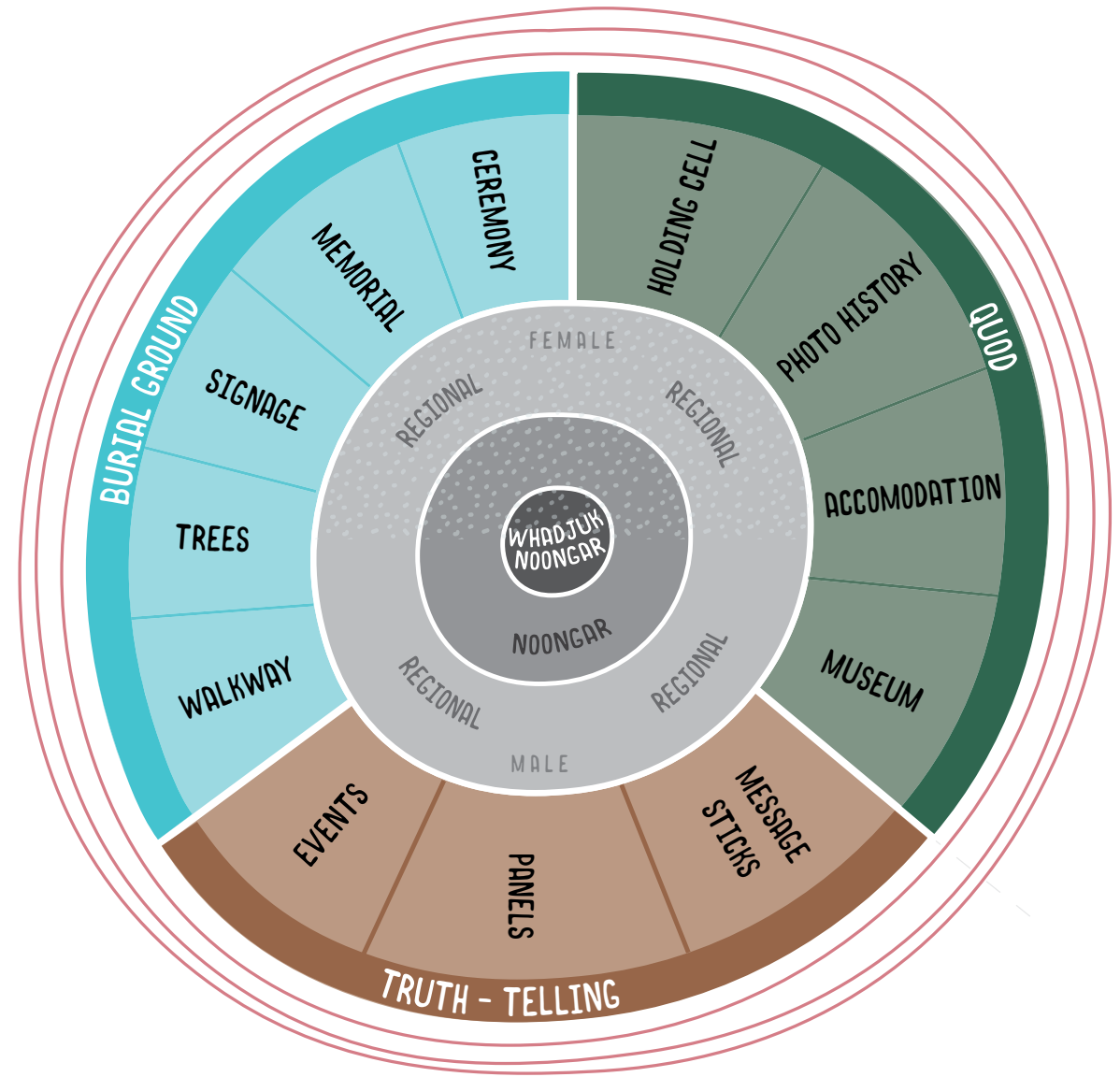
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/spirituality/>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/spirituality/>

# CONSULTATION PROCESS

APP designed the phased consultation process which has informed who is engaged when and for what topic. As the diagram depicts, and given Wadjemup is Whadjuk Noongar boodja, Whadjuk Noongar representatives were consulted first on the cultural protocols, followed by the Greater Noongar representatives, and finally regional representatives. Every stage also involved separate male and female meetings as mentioned earlier. Around the outside of the wheel are the topics that have been discussed, relating to the three main spokes of consultation being the Quod, the Aboriginal Burial Ground, and truth-telling. Each of these spokes have non-Aboriginal stakeholders who have additionally been engaged along the way. The engagements to date are noted over the page.



RIA  
DPC



RIA  
DPC



RECONCILIATION WA  
STATE LIBRARY  
RIA  
DPC

Disclaimer: Points noted above are topics discussed to date. No decisions have been made at this time and other topics may arise.



## ENGAGEMENTS TO DATE

- SWALSC Board agree to support the Wadjemup Project
- Meeting with Minister Dawson (Aboriginal Affairs)
- Regional conversations (informal):
  - Central Desert
  - Western Desert
  - Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC)
  - Kimberley Land Council (KLC)
  - Goldfields
- Healing Strategy
- Whadjuk Noongar meeting
- Greater Noongar meeting
- Meeting w/representatives from each of the six Noongar corporations in collaboration with SWALSC
- YMAC visited Wadjemup and held a Board meeting on the Island
- Reconciliation WA – Official partner to lead Truth Telling Strategy
- State Library WA, Aboriginal Heritage Unit

- Geographic Names Committee – Discuss changing the name of Rottneest to Wadjemup
- First brochure distributed across the State
- Rottneest Island Authority launch of Reconciliation Action Plan
- Minister Templeman's apology
- Update from RIA on the development of the Rottneest Lodge and an opportunity to provide feedback
- Reps nominated to be involved in further discussion in three aspects Wadjemup projects (includes past history, present ceremony and events, and future activations and goals)
- New Ministers: Minister Buti (Aboriginal Affairs); Minister Templeman (Heritage); Minister Cook (Tourism)
- Wadjemup Whadjuk Project Reference Group and Elected Noongar Representatives Meeting
- Nomination of Noongar Male and Female Reference Group
- Unveiling of new welcome sculpture on Wadjemup
- Truth-telling Strategy

## PARTNERSHIPS

Along the way partnerships both informal and formal have occurred through this process.

Key partnership with the State Library WA mean that as the project grows, it will maintain momentum and continue to build trust.

Links to other projects such as the Fremantle Prison Interpretation project are vital to ensuring that project linkages occur in the context of Truth-telling.

Reconciliation WA are also key Partners with regards to Truth-telling.



FRAMING  
THE CONVERSATION

# INITIAL FRAMING FOR CULTURAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENTS

The following points have been used as initial framing to guide the conversation and early engagements in developing the Project Protocols and refining what is put out for State-wide consultation.

## OPEN AND RESPECTFUL CONVERSATION

- Aboriginal-led and strongly supported by everyone else
- Open mind, kind hearts and strong spirits
- Never underestimate the power of the spirit
- Shared through journey, song, dance and art
- No one is left behind - everyone can be part of this journey
- Take responsibility for the change we want to see
- Trust is built through listening and acting with integrity
- Co-designing our way forward
- Love and friendship
- Aligning to care for everything
- Cultural governance
- Constantly linking through dialogue and action
- Create what we want to see in 2029 now
- Aboriginal-led to ensure better outcomes for everyone
- Acknowledge Country and the Whadjuk Noongar People.
- Respect for everything
- The journey is led by Aboriginal knowledge and practises and we acknowledge the system of harmony these created for people living in this place for tens of thousands of years
- Dah-ni! (deep listening/meditation)
- Follow energy not time
- Always strengthen the collective
- Acknowledge different ways of knowing, being and doing
- Knowledge shared within the context of this workshop remains property of those who have shared it
- Knowledge is responsibility not power
- We are all unlearning and learning. The process is likely to bring up all kinds of emotions. Take care of each other.
- Everyone is invited on this journey and they are free to join.

Everyone is invited on this journey and they are free to join



## PERPETRATOR AND VICTIM

### WHO WAS/IS THE PERPETRATOR OF THE INJUSTICE/S?

Incarceration/segregation of men and boys was endorsed/facilitated by authorities of the former colony of Western Australia, and after federation the WA Government.

Use of the Quod for hotel accommodation for 87 years following closure of the prison was facilitated by the Rottnest Board of Control, and later the Rottnest Island Authority, and endorsed by the WA Government.

Use of the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground as 'tentland' until 2007 was facilitated by the Rottnest Board of Control, and later the Rottnest Island Authority, and endorsed by the WA Government.

### WHO WAS/IS THE VICTIM OF THE INJUSTICE/S?

Aboriginal men and boys removed from country and incarcerated/segregated on the Island.

WA Aboriginal communities who were affected by the original removal and segregation of men and boys from community to Wadjemup/Rottnest Island.

WA community and visitors to the Island who were not made aware of this history and the significance of sites including the Quod and Burial Ground.

## TRUTH-TELLING

Resolution of injustice/s through truth-telling and justice delivery focused on healing victim trauma and disadvantage to create a stronger relationship between perpetrator and victim that prevents a repeat of past mistakes and creates a stronger future.

Difficult histories can evoke an emotional response in both those researching the truth and also those that hear it. We need to be considerate in our engagement with this content and the sharing of it with members of the community, particularly those directly impacted, including the Aboriginal community but also decedents of the perpetrators. Anger, resentment and frustration are often the first emotions we feel in relation to unresolved difficult histories. Unmanaged, these responses can cause harm to people and communities and so we need to be conscious of providing people guidance in how to deal with their emotional response.

When managed appropriately an emotional response can be followed by understanding and a want or intention to resolve the historic injustice. The end goal should always be to leave people feeling hopeful and optimistic that this effort in truth-telling and understanding will lead us to a brighter future for all.

Compassion must underpin everything we do in this space.

## ABORIGINAL BURIAL GROUND

Discussions around appropriate memorialisation outcomes for the Aboriginal Burial Ground will build on previous consultations and works for the area, including further consideration of the UDLA Burial Ground Concept Designs that were previously delivered as noted earlier in this report.

## THE QUOD

Determine an appropriate future use for the Quod (former Aboriginal prison) through consultation with Aboriginal communities across WA who have a connection to this site and who were impacted by the Island's prison history.

## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR CONSULTATION

- Reconciliation - what does reconciliation in this context look like?
- What is Truth-telling to the broader community
- Trees – unable to be removed how do we incorporate into the design process
- Protocols in each region required for Ceremony
- Feedback loop – How would people like to be kept informed of Stage 2 what does engagement look/feel like.
- How best can Stage 2 be communicated out and in– is this email updates to people who took part? This is an opportunity for Government to really demonstrate real two-way feedback on a State-wide project.

## OUT OF SCOPE

Whadjuk co-management of Wadjemup and surrounding waters.

Rottneest Island Lodge Redevelopment - Whilst the development of the Lodge was out of scope, the Wadjemup Whadjuk Cultural Authority Reference Group were provided the opportunity to provide feedback into the process which was welcomed. The Cultural Authority Group expressed a preference to be kept updated on the status of the redevelopment.

# EMERGING PROJECT PROTOCOLS - WHADJUK NOONGAR

## PROTOCOLS

- What do we have to do to make it safe for people to go over to the Island?
- Minutes silence before each meeting.
- Ferry – A minute silence before leaving and sing onto the Island.
- Importance of acknowledging that people will feel uncomfortable and that's supported.
- Take the Elders and their next in line to Wadjemup to pass on the knowledge and responsibility to carry things forward.
- Commence each gathering with an affirmation or reminder of what the process of removing men from country and imprisonment on Wadjemup was all about.
- Public service process vs cultural authority process - Importance of following the Noongar cultural authority process and moving away from government processes.
- We need to make sure the next generation are taught the importance of culture and language.
- Need to be mindful with the languages for example - Bardip in some areas means telling lies.
- Government needs to listen to both sides of the story.
- Different areas to perform a smoking ceremony on the Island in their own way. OR other ceremony to their area (over time) like maybe annually.
- 10 women and 10 men council to sit with Government.
- Truth-telling strategy
  - History
  - Real story about what happened at Wadjemup.
    - Old man who swam away from the Island
    - Impact on families
    - Impact all over the State
- Women talk for women's business, men talk for men's business.
- Visitors respect local people and their cultural obligations to their country.
- Listen and learn from each other.
- Visitors and other peoples behaviour need to be respectful to the Noongar people and culture.
- Acknowledge and respect Noongar peoples obligations to care for Country (Boodja).
- Signage to be in dual language (Noongar/ English).
- Stories told by Noongar people.
- Visitors include business and service providers. Need a Noongar stand Point Theory, Cultural lens over the whole island, activities and operations.

# PROJECT PILLARS

The Wadjemup Project Pillars have been formed through the cultural authority process and will help with strategy delivery. The Pillars are conversational messages captured during meetings held to date. They are being used to further frame the State-wide consultation, and will also inform future phases of the Project.




## QUOD

The quod is a place of misery and death the lodge shouldn't be there and shouldn't be used for accommodation because of the atrocities.

- It should be removed and something bigger should occur.
- Prison in Melbourne has images showing of the Elders (QUOD IDEA)
- Penrith prison was handed back to community
- Memorial Wall discussed
- All the stories are to be collected. Not only those who are buried but for those who have stayed there.
- Should be a place to tell the story of the prison and run by Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal people should not be burdened by healing to take on the Quod - The State/RIA should own it and continue to maintain it but we run/manage it
- Need to address all infrastructure connected to the prison, not just the Quod.
- We are not happy with how the RIA are developing areas next to the Quod, the children's play ground and the lodge redevelopment

Aboriginal people  
should not be  
burdened by healing  
to take on the quod.






## MEMORIAL (BURIAL GROUND)

- What would have let us know that we were approaching sacred ground, and how can we put that in a contemporary way that also forms a part of the narrative and symbolism.
- When it comes to ceremony, where and how do the ceremonies and events take place?
- Differences between a burial ground and a memorial. A memorial is a contemporary concept and different to a burial ground
- It's more of telling a story because a memorial is not going to change what happened. The State has to do something because the people are waiting for something and this isn't going to be it. It's about the whole story
- The other thing for me while talking about memorialising is the communities from which people came, where do they feature in this project. For me it's always been about more than that place, the burial ground. The story is not confined to that place. How do you tell that story at that site?
- A path around disturbed ground - A path could enclose and define the area and presents opportunities in terms of a journey narrative. Connecting the path of the burial ground back through the arrival experience of the island can potentially connect back to the Round House and to the various regions, regional prisons and country. Some aspects of Wadjemup could find itself back on country and begin to tell the story of the memorialisation of Wadjemup back on country in all of these places. A path is an experiential thing as opposed to just building an object to focus on like an obelisk. It's a journey and the story is told in fragments as you move along to give people an opportunity to pause and reflect.
- One of the key objectives of handling the burial ground is that we don't want people walking over it. This could be prevented physically with infrastructure or education where respect is instantly understood
- Create opportunity for continual renewal of the space so it becomes something positive and future generations keep connecting with it and understanding the story.

- People's thoughts related to leadership, truth-telling, ceremony and memorialisation as it comes to them through dreams and messages from our old people.
- Burial Ground respect and reverence called by Ancestors to sit with the lost Elders
- Memorialisation should not just be confined to the burial ground, the whole Island and its operations need to remember/acknowledge what has happened on the Island
- What does memorialisation mean – there is something there that recognises that there are over 300 men in the grounds at the moment.
- Every tree in Kings Park has a plaque with names on them – can we do the same for the trees over the burial ground?
- Proper Smoking needs to occur before attendance – statue of a mother with a child in her hand pointing towards the Island.
- Burial ground – the spirits need to be laid to rest they need to be at peace. The whole of the Island is spiritual ground and memorialisation is a spiritual issue.
- Wording and messaging for project and memorial to include “leaders, fathers, sons, uncles” not just “men”.
- Interpretation translation and implementation
- Spirits want to fly free- fencing closes them off
  - More signage to stop people walking over it
  - Some sort of statue that shows the significance of the place (women with a baby in arms)
  - Statue in Fremantle – the place they began the final journey
  - People can't walk over the graves because our people can't rest if they do
  - Plaques on trees/fence that tell the stories
- Recognise the total number of men imprisoned on the island by placing a totem for each person upright in the Quod. Include marking of the language group or identity.
- On arrival: an interpretation so visitors are informed.
- Respect, acknowledge, listen, remember, and learn.
- Each regional area: start off with the prison where the men were imprisoned
- The cost of lives in transit
- Access: public prohibited
- Demarcated- fenced/why
- Identify all burial sites e.g. golf course and all others
- Continued research on the whole island
- Beware of traditional areas: remain on designated pathways
- Record burial – knowledge for all nations represented

Burial ground – the spirits need to be laid to rest they need to be at peace. The whole of the Island is spiritual ground and memorialisation is a spiritual issue.



## TRUTH-TELLING

There are different ways of knowing Wadjemup because there is a diversity of ground stories

There are three different time periods of the island, the ancient, the prison era and the present day and the project is about finding what the island means for the community in a contemporary setting and what they want it to be in the future.

Needs to include the escapees stories

- What is it that we want to communicate to the broader WA community? Is it the pre prison Whadjuk values, the prison story or the current use of the island as a playground? What is the legacy we want to leave?
- That can all be addressed through the truth telling that will go backwards, cover the prison and also look to the future.
- History goes back right before the sea level rose
- Island history is significant in context of Cultural history ceremony/business

Two years of missing records from a fire.

- 4200 men imprisoned 10% of prisoners = 1500, 381 died
- Linkages to those who died on the way needs to be included
- Honesty from Gov i.e. deaths in custody – policy today – need unified group to impact policy
- Prison officer's knowledge of Wadjemup history is important especially when we still have deaths in custody – “staff have no idea”
- Men who passed on the way also need to be considered including those on ships
- Women want their needs to be recognised on the island, noting that there is also unfinished business that needs to take place to reconcile this into the historical context
- Books for tourists – Truth telling on an island set apart from the mainland and can show respect for those that have passed on.

- Truth-telling to include:
  - History of Wadjemup with a focus on the history prior to the rise of sea levels
  - History of Noongar engagement processes for Wadjemup
  - Truth of Wadjemup in education and marketing
  - Military history
  - Reflect racism and discrimination
  - Change the name
  - Incorporate the sacred narrative with connections to other sacred places
- Request for awareness to be made for “tenants” on the island.
- Promote out Lore and Culture on the land on the shore and on the boat
- Truth-telling structure:
  - Every visitor to the island must buy a ticket to the truth-telling session
- Run by Aboriginal Presenters with male/female perspectives
- Pre-history – Noongar stories
- History – Incarceration (State-wide)
- Mistreatment of the men - disease, death, cell size, food, access to amenities
- Use of the Quod/present use
- Burial site
- Workers on Island to undergo truth-telling session as part of the induction (mandatory)
- Acknowledge most points in the healing
- Visuals of history to photos-shared/display
- A list of names of those that were on the island
- Acknowledge the stories of the men and their families- tell these stories
- Women can’t talk about the round house, that is men’s business
- Everyone should have the opportunity to tell their story
- Real history...hard line
- From all nations
- Good and bad history
- Truth-telling through tourism
- Schools – curriculum taught by Noongar people
- Visual monitor – individuals from different areas
- Government to acknowledge R.I history in Cabinet. Government set the prison up in the first place.
- Quod purpose and use of the Quod
- Deliberately out to conceal

- White history acknowledge that colonial treat Aboriginal people like this
- Ask the question why?
- Truth-telling through education
- Aboriginal museum
  - Ferries
  - Yarning circles
  - QR codes for sites
  - Recognition/memorialisation of regional and local groups

### Story telling

- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal journey: interactive interpretation
- Historical formalising in book written by us inclusive of all WA Aboriginal people
- Short stories by everybody
- RIA to tell the truth

- Being seen – Elders telling the truth
- Capture and document oral histories
- Conflict resolution process
- Tell the first story before Wadjemup (Biidjiigoordup)
- Pre-Island past: the long history and ancient history
- Prison Island: the total no/ impact on Aboriginal Men and Families: the men that died in transit from across the states/ territory

Image credit TourismWA

There are different ways of knowing Wadjemup because there is a diversity of ground stories... there are three different time periods of the island...



## CEREMONY

- Define ceremony and healing. Is it ceremony in a cultural context with specific cultural protocols or referring to something more contemporary?
- Important to involve young people
- This is an awesome project that we have all taken upon ourselves to be involved with
- Noongar country is matriarchal country and the women want this and women's role to be strongly acknowledged. Women are standing alongside the men, not in front or behind. The women want the entire Island to be considered in the conversation related to memorialisation. We have not chosen to identify any individual as our leader, we are a collective group of women leaders working together as one. We are committed to the healing of the Noongar Nation as a whole and are keen to explore the role of women in ceremony such as smoking ceremonies.

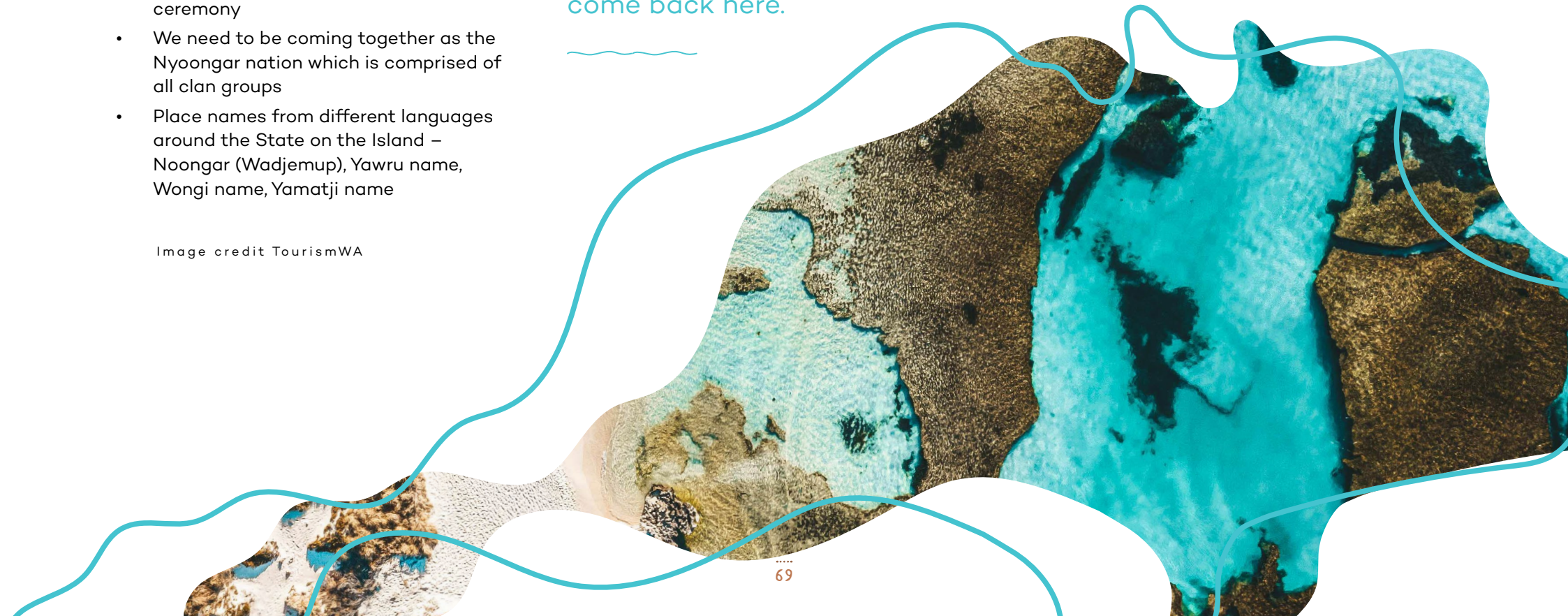
The healing needs to start at Wadjemup and then radiate out across all of Noongar country. Women were mourning for their men from the mainland so the feeling of healing also needs to come back here.

- The women want to see a substantial investment from the Government to ensure healing is undertaken properly across the state. We need to cleanse and heal the Island to prepare it for all the mobs across the state.
- Ceremony Strategy
  - Welcome to Country to other cultural groups from Noongar Elders to other Elders.
  - State-wide ceremony
  - Smoking ceremony from Elders
  - The women to choose women elders to be involved in ceremony, and women included in ceremony because ancestors were sons, brothers, fathers etc.

- Other Aboriginal cultural groups bring a ceremonial practice to be included in the ceremonial process
- Mourning time to grieve
- Place of silence – Contemplation of what took place on the land
- A living member from individual clans to be honoured and recognised at the ceremony
- We need to be coming together as the Nyoongar nation which is comprised of all clan groups
- Place names from different languages around the State on the Island – Noongar (Wadjemup), Yawru name, Wongi name, Yamatji name

Image credit TourismWA

The healing needs to start at Wadjemup and then radiate out across all of Noongar country. Women were mourning for their men from the mainland so the feeling of healing also needs to come back here.



## OTHER

- Needs a place that can be used as a Cultural Centre to welcome all to the island, building near the lighthouse.
- Newsletter resources be available for use and educational purposes .
- Noongar/NITV/Aboriginal Radio Media
- Timeline of Aboriginal women's involvement on the island. e.g. women involved in
- Welcome to Country for Clontarf, Noongar TAFE participants, visit/excursions to
- Wadjemup, cultural discussion and land issues.
- Birthing place prior to colonisation – Wadjemup part of the seven sisters dreaming connection to the main land.
- Stories held by other cultural groups to come back to Noongar people
- Matriarchal Boodjarah- mothers Country
- Blame- no shame tell stories- don't deny history-lets talk

## Documentary

- Women and children on mainland beach looking towards Wadjemup.
- Men on Wadjemup working at mainland.

## Healing

- Women's meetings- set up groups to talk and learn (young people involved)
- Meetings on Wadjemup and mainland
- Women's ceremony on mainland (Walyalup) foreshore
- Memorial creates an opportunity for people to heal
- Truth-telling must inform healing
- Must include Fremantle and the Island
- Need to include other Mob from around the State: in line with Whadjuk/Noongar cultural protocols
- We must be the ones creating healing places or monuments/memorials



- Allow people to take their own healing journey
- Support people to find their personal family connection
- Smoking/fire ceremony eternal flame
- Ceremony mainland with women (prior)
- Feedback from other regions (e.g. women involvement) listening to the Elders stories
- Continuity on the island
- Documentary (visual and verbal)
- Include young people

#### Walbrening – Holistic Healing

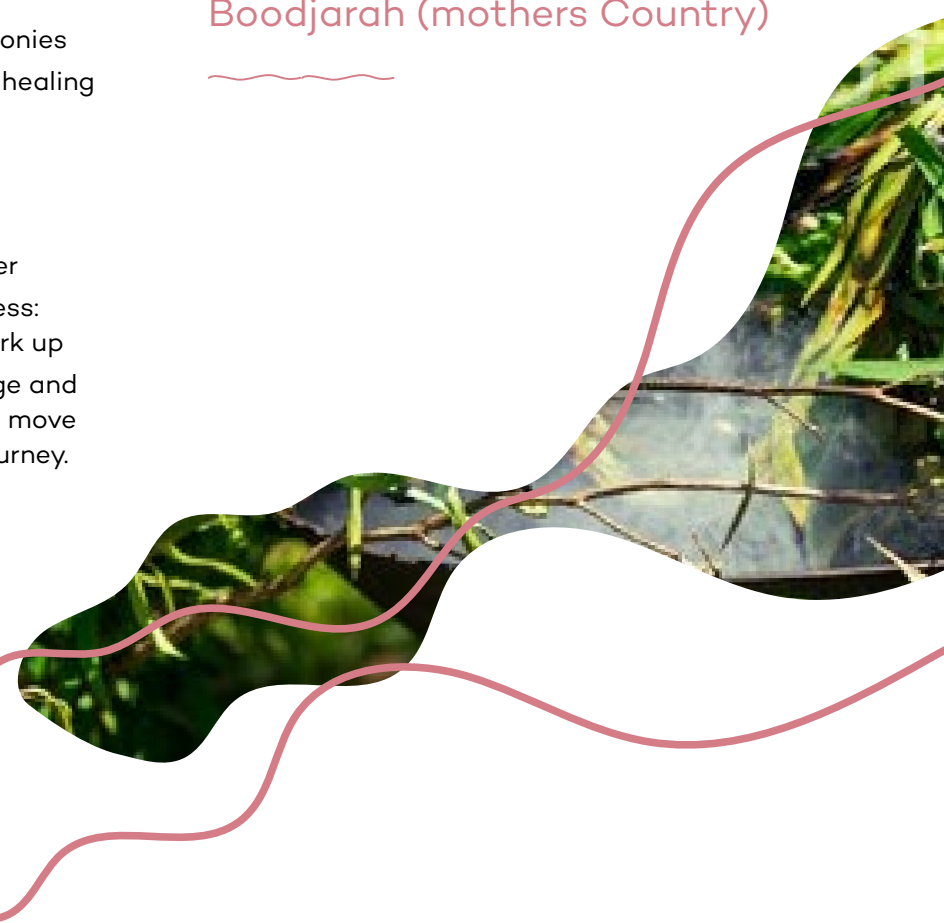
- Inclusive healing for all Aboriginal people
- Talking between our homes and families about our experience
- Going home to country – talking to our old people who are with us wherever we go

- People don't go because it's wirnitj – spirits need healing – rewrite the history - Noongars must be the educators on Boodjarah (mothers Country)
- On the ferries – sharing the true history to the audience on the ferry
- Women and men- separate ceremonies
- Women want to be involved in the healing and lead with women from regions

#### Statements

- Respect for each other
- Integrity in how we treat each other
- Achieve outcomes – action/progress: respect – act on and wrap this work up
- Government steps on lore, language and culture. It's exhausting: we want to move forward and persevere with this journey.

People don't go because it's wirnitj – spirits need healing – rewrite the history - noongars must be the educators on Boodjarah (mothers Country)





# APPENDICES

## **CULTURAL SAFETY**

Elements in this document may be upsetting and distressing. Our deepest respects and condolences go to all families and kin affected by past trauma and injustice.

## **LANGUAGE WARNING**

Aboriginal people are advised that there may be words and descriptions that may be culturally sensitive and which might not normally be used in certain public or community contexts. Readers are warned that this report contains language or words from documents that reflect the period in which the item was written, and may be considered inappropriate today.

## APPENDIX A

### TIMELINE OF ABORIGINAL PRISON HERITAGE MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION ON WADJEMUP (1900 - PRESENT DAY)

**June 1902** - The government announces the closure of the prison in Thompson Bay Settlement.

**1911** - The Colonial Secretary announces plans to develop Rottnest Island for recreation. These plans involve converting the prison buildings into accommodation and using prison labour to develop roads and infrastructure for sanitation and water supply. Works are done on the Quod to develop it into a state hostel.

**1917** - The Island is declared a reserve under the Parks and Reserves Act 1895 and the government appoints the Rottnest Island Board of Control under this legislation. The Quod building is used as hostel accommodation and a camping ground is eventually established over the area known to be the Burial Ground.

*Note: In the decades that followed this transition, the Island became a location primarily for the purposes of recreation and defence. Much of this history is already well documented in other resources. Throughout this period, the true history of the Island and its previous use as a prison were hidden by the Rottnest Island Board of Control. This was a methodical attempt to make the Quod and other facilities more appealing as accommodation for those holidaying on the Island.*

**1970** - Up to 10 burials are uncovered in the vicinity of the camping ground by Rottnest Island Board Staff while installing sewerage mains. The event is largely undocumented and there is no indication that Aboriginal people are consulted or notified. Rottnest Island Board employee Ernie Shardlow provides a firsthand account of this in the investigation that takes place many years later.

**1984** - WA Government announces a major redevelopment on Rottnest to facilitate greater tourist visitation. The development includes joining the two hostel buildings (the Quod and the Boys' Reformatory) into one complex called the Rottnest Lodge Resort. Hancock Developments Pty Ltd acquires the lease of this complex for 21 years with the possibility of extending the lease at the completion of various stages of the extension and development works. Aboriginal people are not consulted about the management of the Quod building or the potential impacts on the Burial Ground.

*Note: Details around the lease of the Rottnest Lodge Resort are included in this timeline to highlight how the subsequent contracted management of this asset significantly and regrettably impacted RIA's responsiveness to recommendations made by Aboriginal stakeholders in relation to the Quod and the Burial Ground.*

**January 1985** - Details of the “Native cemetery” in Watson’s diary and evidence provided by Rottnest Island employee Ernie Shardlow, who was present for the uncovering of burials in 1970, prompt an investigation into the Burial Ground by Peter Randolph from the Department of Aboriginal Sites. While Aboriginal people were not consulted, six sites were recorded by Randolph over the course of this investigation, including on the camping ground now commonly known as Tentland. The subsequent report makes recommendations that the National Aboriginal Conference (a consultative body established by the Federal Government in the 1970s) be consulted on the management and commemoration of the Burial Ground. This consultation was reportedly initiated with limited success. The site report also recommends that subterranean works be conducted to determine the extent of the burials.

**November 1985** - R&I Bank seeks security over the lease of Rottnest Lodge Resort by assignment. The deed between Rottnest Island Resort Pty Ltd and the Rottnest Island Board, with Hancock Developments as guarantors, is finalised the following month, with the requirement that works be completed in August 1987 to extend the lease from 21 years to 35 years.

**1987** - Rottnest Island Authority officially recognises the Burial Ground as part of the history of the island by means of a memorial plaque.

**1988** - Australia-wide, planned celebrations for the bicentenary of the arrival of the first fleet galvanise activism groups and public discourse on colonial violence and injustice. Meanwhile, Dallhold Investments, owned by WA billionaire Alan Bond, takes over a 30-year lease of Rottnest Island Lodge from Hancock Developments and continues the development of the site, including the Quod building and extensions. Aboriginal stakeholders are still yet to be consulted on the development, inflaming tensions further.

**March 1988** - RIA Engineer John Montgomery pegs out a perceived site boundary of the Burial Ground. There is a meeting held on the Island between Rottnest Island Board staff, WA Minister for Tourism Pam Beggs, Elizabeth Bayshaw from the Department of Aboriginal Sites, and Aboriginal leaders including Robert Bropho, Corrie Bodney, Everett Kickett, Ted Wilkes, Ben Taylor and 200 other representatives (file no. 337152: Report on meeting). Aboriginal representatives put forward proposals and the minister makes

a commitment to consult Aboriginal people across the state before key decisions are made, specifically regarding disturbance in the Burial Ground area and the memorialisation of the prisoners who died.

**April 1988** - Letters are sent out by the Minister for Tourism and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs asking Aboriginal consultative committees to nominate representatives to participate in a reference group (file no. 256396: DAS and RIA submission to ATSIC 1992).

**December 1988** - A meeting of the DAS Aboriginal Sites Group with the Minister for Tourism, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and RIA is convened to discuss the consultation process for proposals made at the meeting in March. It is decided that a meeting will be held with an Aboriginal reference group in January 1989. There are some suggestions of approaching an Aboriginal sculptor to design and produce a monument at the designated site.

**January 1989** - The first meeting of this reference group is held on Wadjemup and attended by Robert Bropho and the newly-formed Rottnest Island Deaths Group (RIDG), which protests the government-led consultation process.

The reference group is subsequently disbanded, prompting the WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to commission an investigation into Rottnest Island's Aboriginal prison history and burial sites, to inform future consultation (file no. 256396: DAS and RIA submission to ATSIC 1992). Consultant Ken Winder is eventually appointed to conduct this investigation.

**May 1989** - Dallhold Investment Pty Ltd commence construction on the upgrade and renovation of the Rottnest Lodge Resort, including the Quod building (Harris 1990).

**August 1989** - Developments at the Quod are frustrated by archaeological finds, activism and industrial action. Aboriginal sites are reported by RIDG members Robert Bropho and Corrie Bodney and recorded by Pat Vinnicombe of DAS. The sites recorded include "Rottnest: Lodge/Quod" (Registered site) and "Rottnest: Lodge Extension", the latter of which the APMC subsequently resolves does not constitute a site under the AHA. Concurrently, a ministerial directive forces a cease works on the Lodge site until an archaeologist can be appointed to supervise ground disturbance. In response to the listing of sites, Dallhold acquires a section 18 for the works, but development of the Quod is halted due to a black ban on the site by union body CMEU (Harris 1990).

*Note: Consultation with Traditional Owners and the wider Aboriginal community over this period was clearly disrupted and often framed by wider controversies around Aboriginal site desecration, in particular the staged protest at the Swan Brewery development in Perth, with which prominent Aboriginal leaders and activists Robert Bropho, Clarrie Isaacs and Corrie Bodney were involved. Activists were camped at the Swan Brewery site for nine months in 1989.*

**September 1989** - The Federal Government intervenes to protect Aboriginal heritage on Wadjemup due to concerns voiced by Traditional Owner representatives about Aboriginal sites being desecrated by the lodge developments. This intervention utilises provisions in section 10 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984. The injunction enforces a temporary stop works and triggers a Commonwealth investigation into the development and its impact on Aboriginal sites.

**November 1989** - Consultant Ken Winder submits his report on the Aboriginal Prison History of Rottnest Island, as commissioned by the WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. The report identifies eight consultative regions based on the origins of the prisoners known to be buried on the Island (file no. 110449:

Winder Report, 1989). Meanwhile, the ministerial directive that required an archaeologist to monitor any ground-disturbing works associated with the Lodge development results in Dallhold Investments and RIA engaging a consultant, Jacqueline Harris, of McDonald, Hales and Associates. Harris fills this role full time until January 1990, predominantly monitoring works for the extension of the Lodge and the development of lakeside units. No Aboriginal people are involved in the monitoring of works; however, no work takes place in the Quod building itself over this period due to the union black ban on the site.

**January 1990** - Sydney-based archaeologist Richard Wright is commissioned to investigate significant Aboriginal areas on Wadjemup on behalf of the Commonwealth Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

**April 1990** - On the advice in the Winder report, the WA Premier and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs writes to 319 Aboriginal communities seeking input as to a suitable commemoration and receives nine replies. Informal consultation on the project involving RIDG representatives continues.

**October 1990** - Meetings are held in Perth and Wadjemup with RIDG members and

approximately 100 elders from around the state to discuss RIA's management of the Burial Ground and Dallhold Investment's redevelopment of the Quod. The meeting results in proposals for RIA to cease all works on the Quod and to remove all roads and houses from the Burial Ground, to convert it into parkland.

**November 1990** - RIDG undertakes litigation against Dallhold Investments for breaching section 18 conditions by carrying out work on a swimming pool in the Quod.

**December 1990** - A three-day trial of Ground Penetrating Rader is conducted on the Burial Ground. The project is commissioned by RIA, managed by Peter Randolph of DAS and designed by Curtin University and geophysicist Vern Wilson. The trial successfully identifies disturbed ground which has most likely been dug up as burial sites. Richard Wright submits his report on the protection of Aboriginal heritage on Wadjemup, which argues that formal protection under the AHA should be implemented and that there should be a test excavation to verify the GPR results.

**January 1991** - Phase 1 of the GPR survey is conducted.

**March 1991** - Phase 2 of the GPR survey is conducted.

**July 1991** - The evidence from the GPR survey leads to the installation of a temporary fence around what is understood to be the Burial Ground's boundary. ATSIC funds a conference on Wadjemup with Aboriginal representatives from across the state. Resolutions from the conference include establishing a site boundary for the Burial Ground, converting the Quod into a commemorative centre, and placing the Quod and Burial Ground under Aboriginal control while RIDG monitors the progress of these developments (file no. 256395).

**October 1991** - RIA challenges sections of the newly-determined site boundary due to the possibility of some of the anomalies detected being related to the construction of infrastructure in Tentland. RIDG are not satisfied with the extent of the survey, arguing that burials could extend further or that there could be a second Burial Ground in a separate location.

**January 1992** - On the advice in Wright's report, the Burial Ground is afforded six months of temporary protection under the AHA to allow the parties to resolve their boundary disputes.

**April 1992** - Alan Bond's bankruptcy puts his companies into receivership, forcing Bankwest (formally R&I Bank) to take on the 30-year lease of the Lodge Resort. The Quod is included in this lease and retains its use as visitor accommodation as a result, despite requests for it to be managed appropriately as an Aboriginal site.

**May 1992** - Phase 3 of the GPR survey is undertaken using funding received from AAPA.

**June 1992** - The temporary protection of the Burial Ground is extended for an additional six months.

**July 1992** - The GPR results are still unable to successfully identify the boundary of the burial site. Plans are made to carry out more GPR work in Tentland in November.

**August 1992** - Graham Merritt is appointed by DAS to coordinate the consultation process with the Aboriginal community in order to progress the development of the Quod and the Burial Ground. The community is provided with an update on the current situation, which results in proposals, echoing those made in 1988, 1990, and 1991, to register Tentland as an Aboriginal site, remove infrastructure from the site, conduct more GPR surveys and historical

research, and turn the Quod into an Aboriginal museum. They also request a meeting with the Premier and all relevant state ministers.

**October 1992** - Aboriginal artist Naomi Mills is commissioned by DAS to design concept plans for a commemorative precinct in the area of Tentland and the Burial Ground. The plan is included in a submission made by DAS and RIA to ATSIC requesting funding to complete the GPR survey and clear the buildings from the Burial Ground area so they can commence the commemoration project. In response to the submission, some members of the RIDG state that the proposed design elements of the commemorative facilities are not appropriate. The ATSIC State Advisory Committee decides that the Karlkininy Regional Council (ATSIC representative body for the Noongar region) should be provided with all progress reports and information regarding the development of projects on Wadjemup.

**November 1992** - Phase 4 of the GPR survey is conducted.

**October 1993** - While installing gas services in Tentland, RIA staff uncover bones that look to be possibly human. Executive Director Chris Back contacts the Department of Aboriginal Sites to report the discovery. DAS

arranges for the bones to be photographed in-situ then flown to Perth where they can be examined by Alana Buck at the Department of Anatomy and Human Biology at UWA. Buck identifies the bones as human and DAS arranges for archaeologists Steve Corsini and Gavin Jackson to investigate the site. RIDG representative Len Colbung is also contacted about attending but is unable to make the flight. Corsini and Jackson produce a report on the skeletal material recommending that RIDG convene a meeting to determine the management of these human remains and that a semi-permanent barrier be erected around the site in the interim to prevent further disturbance.

**December 1993** - Rottnest Island Death Group registers as an Aboriginal corporation under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006. The corporation rule book states that RIDGAC aims to act on the decisions of the elders and law men and women at the 1990 Rottnest Island Conference and to represent the views and wishes of Aboriginal people in Western Australia regarding Aboriginal issues on Rottnest Island. Its founding members include Robert Bropho, Violet Newman, Clarrie Isaacs, Len Colbung and Mingli Wanjurri-Nungala. In response to the state of crisis stemming from the discovery

of human remains and the lack of another representative entity, RIDGAC becomes the peak body for providing Aboriginal heritage advice to RIA and representing Aboriginal interests that relate to Wadjemup.

**June 1994** - RIDGAC, with the support of ATSIC and AAPA, convenes a ceremonial meeting on Wadjemup with Aboriginal delegates from across the state. Premier Richard Court is in attendance and listens to proposals made by the delegates for Wadjemup to be handed back to Noongar Traditional Owners, an official cemetery to be formally established, the Quod to be placed under the control of Aboriginal people, more GPR work and research to be conducted, and an area to be designated as a camp for Aboriginal people from around the state.

**2001** - The Minister for Tourism meets with members of the RIDGAC on the Island regarding the recognition and protection of Aboriginal heritage on Wadjemup. RIDGAC are granted a five-year lease of a cottage adjacent to the Burial Ground to use in their capacity as representatives of Aboriginal interests on the Island.

**2003** - Wadjemup is added to the Register of Aboriginal Sites as an interim listing. The site is reported following consultations for the South



Beach Village Redevelopment Project at South Fremantle. Based on the information lodge, the ACMC determines that the Island should not be listed as a site.

**August 2004** - RIA and RIDGAC meet and agree to develop a joint agenda for a parkland and memorial commemorating Aboriginal people imprisoned on Wadjemup. It is agreed that this cannot take place until the sites of these burials are clearly defined. It is also understood that they will need to seek comment from Aboriginal representative groups around the state and that, due to the protected status of the site, they will need to clarify the required consultation with the Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA).

**December 2004** - At the request of RIA and RIDGAC, Vern Wilson conducts a comprehensive GPR survey of the Burial Ground to verify the investigation that was initiated in the early 1990s and subsequently discredited by the discovery of skeletal remains outside the perceived site boundary in 1993. The survey examines the areas adjacent to the designated site boundary to determine the full extent of the burials. Iva Hayward-Jackson of RIDGAC is involved in the survey. The Department of Indigenous Affairs anthropologist Richard Riordan is seconded to RIA to work on the Burial

Ground project and to develop procedures for consultation and the management of Aboriginal heritage on Wadjemup.

**2005** - DIA notifies RIA that their current consultation protocol for the management of the Burial Ground, coordinated through RIDGAC, is unsatisfactory. RIA enters an MoU with the Aboriginal Economic Development Unit within the Department of Industry and Resources, and this facilitates the secondment of Aboriginal consultant Marilyn Morgan to conduct consultation with the wider Aboriginal community to determine what they would like to see happen at the site. Marilyn Morgan's consultation informs a preliminary concept plan developed by landscape architect firm Blackwell and Associates, which attempts to capture suggestions from the Aboriginal community that involve converting the site into a reflective parkland space with the inclusion of interpretative elements.

**2006** - Consultation with Aboriginal groups from across WA continues, including two visits to Wadjemup by the Kimberley Law and Culture Centre (KALACC). Karen Jacobs is the first Aboriginal person to be appointed to the Rottnest Island Authority Board.

**January 2007** - A section 18 for Stage 1 works on the Burial Ground is submitted with the concept plan and a list of people consulted by Marilyn Morgan attached.

**March 2007** - Section 18 conditional consent is provided, allowing stage 1 works to commence. Members of RIDGAC criticise the consultation process that accompanied the section 18.

**August 2007** - In response to the round of GPR surveys undertaken in 2004, which showed that Tentland was probably built above the Aboriginal Burial Ground, Tentland is finally closed and relocated. This delay between the GPR survey and the relocation of Tentland is due to RIA needing to wait for a lease on the site to expire. In response to the recommendations provided through the section 18 Aboriginal consultation, RIA also removes the fence that marks the boundary of the Burial Ground.

**2008** - RIA makes a submission to the state government appealing for funding to remove buildings and infrastructure, conduct further consultation and eventually develop the Burial Ground for interpretation and reflection.

**2009** - Aboriginal heritage consultant Kado Muir is contracted by RIA to conduct a desktop investigation, consult with Aboriginal stakeholders, record Aboriginal sites, and submit a report on the Aboriginal heritage of Wadjemup. Muir consults with past and present members of RIDGAC as well as Whadjuk Traditional Owners. The report is never finalised.

**2011** - The Karma Royal Group acquires the Rottnest Island Lodge lease from Bankwest, which is due to expire in 2017. This facilitates negotiations for the transfer of the management of the Quod building back to RIA, with the intention that its future use be determined in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders. Section 18 conditional consent for ongoing repairs to and maintenance of the Lodge is acquired in consultation with Aboriginal groups including RIDGAC.

**2013** - Rottnest Foundation partner with RIA to source funding for the development of the Burial Ground Project.

**February 2014** - Specialist heritage consultants TPG Heritage, Dr Jane Lennon and Amergin Consulting commence consultation for the development of the Wadjemup Cultural Landscape Management Plan with community

stakeholders, including members of RIDGAC and Whadjuk elders.

**March 2014** - Rottnest Foundation presents to the Whadjuk Working Party an outline of the aims and anticipated outcomes of the Burial Ground Project. DAA meets with RF to explain that the Whadjuk Aboriginal people are the primary Aboriginal group for consultation, not RIDGAC. DAA also states that the next stages of the project can occur under the existing Section 18 acquired in 2007.

**November 2014** - A meeting is held between representatives from the RF, RIA and DAA, and a Whadjuk Traditional Owner. The purpose of this group, known as the Aboriginal Burial Ground (ABG) Steering Committee, is to work collaboratively to drive the Burial Ground project forward.

**2015** - Aboriginal company Indigenous Economic Solutions is contracted to conduct Stage 1 landscaping works on the Burial Ground. The contract includes the engagement of a representative from RIDGAC to be on site for the duration of construction. Stage 1 is completed with the installation of new signage.

**2016** - The Rottnest Foundation is awarded a \$500,440 Lotterywest grant to further the restoration of the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground. RIA requests expressions of interest, then establishes the Wadjemup Aboriginal Reference Group with its key terms of reference being to provide advice on the management of the Quod and the Burial Ground. The five members appointed are Walter McGuire, Brendan Moore, Lindsay Dean, Barbara Bynder and Pamela Thorley.

**May 2017** - At Reconciliation Week 2017, RIA announces the commencement of the Wadjemup Project, a strategic project focused on recognising Wadjemup as a landmark reconciliation location.

**2017** - A request for tender is circulated by RIA for an external contractor to develop a second-stage concept design for the Burial Ground that integrates interpretation and landscaping, in consultation with Aboriginal representatives from across the state.

**2018** - The Quod is returned to the management of RIA and closed to the public.

**2018** - The contract for stage two design of the Burial Ground is awarded to landscape architecture firm UDLA, who employ the services of a project team including Karen Jacobs, Gordon Cole, Grant Revell and Joshua Kalmund. UDLA proposes a Noongar-led engagement strategy that involves state-wide consultation with various Aboriginal groups and organisations across WA.

**2019** - UDLA submits a draft design concept to the RF; however, the project steering group finds the content incongruous with the original scope of the tender and problematic in relation to some specific site constraints and requirements. The contract is finalised without some deliverables. The report remains in draft.

**June 2020** - The then Ministers for Aboriginal Affairs and Tourism announce the Wadjemup Project, which focuses on how to best commemorate the Aboriginal men and boys who are buried on the island, and the use of the old prison building at the historical Thomson Bay settlement known as the Quod. Drawing on aspects of previous consultations, the project aims to establish a Whadjuk Noongar cultural authority that will drive engagement with other Noongar and Aboriginal people across WA.



## APPENDIX B

### REPORT ON MEETING WITH MINISTER FOR TOURISM, 10 MARCH 1988

#### ROTTNEST ISLAND : REPORT ON MEETING OF 10 MARCH 1988

At Rottnest Island on 10 March 1988 a meeting took place between Pam Beggs (Minister for Tourism) and over 200 representatives for the families of the Aboriginal prisoners that died upon the Island during its use as a penal institution. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the recognition of these deaths, particularly through the appropriate protection and management of "The Native Cemetery" (site S2118).

A representative from the Department of Aboriginal Sites was formally requested to attend the meeting. Peter Randolph (A/Registrar) and Elizabeth Bradshaw (Site Documentation Officer) were present.

The majority of the Aboriginal group arrived on the Perth ferry at 10.45am. Following a flag planting ceremony at the waters edge in Thompson's Bay, short discussions took place between Robert Bropho, Corrie Bodney, Ben Taylor and the Minister. It was decided to march to the site of concern (S2118) for a brief ceremony and public discussion. The remainder of the Aboriginal group arrived on the Hillarys ferry shortly afterwards.

The entire group marched to the site and discussions took place at the intersection of the roads that lie over the site. There was no sound amplification and this restricted the number of people who could hear and respond to the Minister. This problem was exacerbated by the large numbers of media personnel surrounding the Minister. It did however, ensure the proceedings were carried out in a fairly low key and constructive manner. The main spokes-people for the Aboriginal group were Corrie Bodney, Everett Kickett, Robert Bropho, Ted Wilkes, Ben Taylor, Mrs Bropho, Marshall and several other women.

The nature of these talks can be summarized as follows.

The requests/wishes of the Aboriginal people were:

- 1) The roads be detoured, some of the cottages removed, the camping area moved back and the site fenced off;
- 2) a monument be erected to recognize those who had died;
- 3) no development upon the Island, particularly those involving subterranean works, should take place without Aboriginal consultation and supervision;
- 4) Aboriginal people be employed to research the Aboriginal history of Rottnest Island;

- 5) anthropologists/archaeologists should examine the area ~~outside~~ the present site boundaries to determine the extent of the burials;
- 6) the families of all the prisoners represented by the cemetery, from throughout W.A., be consulted with prior to any management plan/decision;
- 7) that further discussions have to take place with the Aboriginal people "as a mob", not with a small number of spokes-people.

The commitments made by the Minister were:

- 1) Aboriginal people will be consulted throughout Western Australia before any management decisions are made;
- 2) a memorial be erected;
- 3) no subterranean works will take place "within" the site boundaries (as pegged by John Montgomery, Rottnest Island Board Engineer, on 9 March 1988), and no developments take place within the area without Aboriginal consultation;
- 4) Aboriginal people will be employed to research the Aboriginal history of the island;
- 5) the old stone cottage adjacent to the site will be restored and developed as an Aboriginal interpretive centre. That this centre be of the form desired by Aboriginal people;
- 6) a symbolic area be delineated to represent the cemetery;
- 7) a group of 4 or 5 spokes-people representing those at the meeting should meet regularly with the office of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and herself in order to resolve the issue.

This summary shows that on a number of points both parties were in full agreement. In response to the Aboriginal wish for the road closure, cottage and camping area removal and fencing of the site boundary, the Minister argued that this was not desirable. That the exact whereabouts of the burials is not known and such works could either cause greater disturbance of the site or possibly result in the movement of these features to the true site location. Despite the Minister's rejection of this request, her conciliatory statements and demeanor with regard to cooperation between the parties to gain appropriate recognition for the burials, may have been interpreted as acceptance of the proposal.

An additional problem that may affect future local consultation on this issue, is the differing forms this is seen as taking. The involvement of the Office of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs was however specified by both parties. The Department of Aboriginal Sites may be requested to respond in this role at some future stage.

Elizabeth Bradshaw  
Site Documentation Officer  
Department of Aboriginal Sites

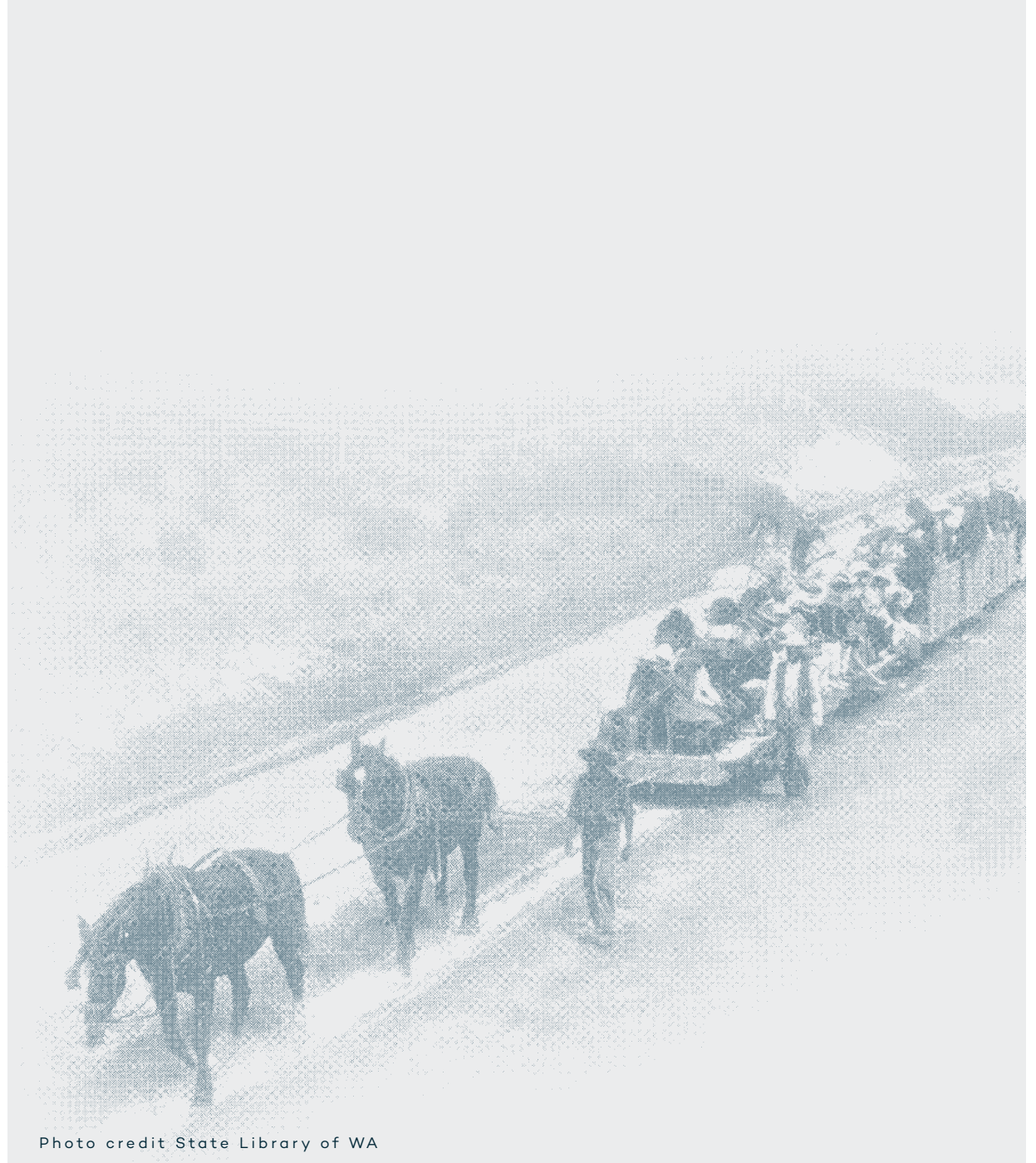


Photo credit State Library of WA

APPENDIX C ABORIGINAL ELDERS AND REPRESENTATIVES MEETINGS - FORMAL PROPOSALS TO WA GOVERNMENT, OCTOBER 1990

ROTTNEST ISLAND

We the Aboriginal Elders and Lawmen and representatives as delegates of the Aboriginal People throughout the state of WA from the North and East and South meeting together on 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th October 1990 concerning the many of our People who died on Rottneest Island:

We have met and discussed and we put forward the following proposals

To the WA Government: the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Carmen Lawrence, Dallhold and the Bond family, the Rottneest Island Authority, the Trustees of the WA Museum, the Aboriginal Cultural Materials Committee, the Minister for Tourism Pam Degey, the Minister Assisting the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Pam Buchanan, the Construction Mining and Energy Union, the Builders Labourers Federation.

Proposals

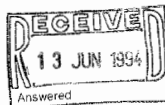
- 1) To cease all work at the jail as it constitutes an Aboriginal death site. It is to be fenced off now with a long term plan to be turned into a Museum of Remembrance of the Blackfellas taken there in chains who suffered and died. This immediate action is necessary for the protection of the site. We are calling on the WA Government and Dallhold to respect our wishes as it is of paramount importance to us that due to work continuing on it is desecrating the jail which is of extreme significance to Aboriginal People from around this state and which constitutes a breach of Aboriginal law which is the concern of the Elders.
- 2) To close off the roads over the Aboriginal graves and burial site.
- 3) Houses on Aboriginal graves have got to be removed.
- 4) Tentland where dead bodies are laying has got to be turned into parkland
- 5) The same on the strips where dead bodies are laying.

Authorised by us all.  
 Delegates from: West Kimberley One Arm Point Derby Broome Turkey Creek Kununara Wyndham Mowanjumb La Grange Port Hedland Strelley Warralong Western Desert Camp 61 Carnarvon Bussleton Albany Wagin Nowangerup Tambellup Katanning Kellerberrin Kalgoorlie Metropolitan Swan Valley Beverley Narrogin

*Handwritten signatures and names:*  
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 FRANK FRENCH  
 ROSAY HARDCASE  
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 BOBBY  
 GLEC WILLIAMS  
 KEVIN FRED  
 T... PATTERSON  
 Joy Marlumbur  
 Shirley Bray  
 Frank Sebastian  
 David Mowalambai  
 Louie Gray  
 Isabel Walker  
 Rose New  
 Amen  
 Damen Taylor  
 Laurel Bropho  
 Robert Bropho  
 Kenny Bropho  
 Beela Bropho  
 Richard Bropho  
 The Bropho  
 Janny Bropho  
 Wimbawu W. Casson  
 Barry Paffill  
 Patrick Winima  
 Isabel Bropho  
 Lytha Bropho  
 Dorothy Bropho  
 Edna Bropho  
 Lockygo  
 Robert G. Bropho  
 Lewis Bropho  
 Harvey Bropho  
 Shianne  
 Rick Baker  
 Rob Baker  
 Kathleen Penn  
 Sheila Gaylor  
 Leonie Mowalambai  
 Annie Lewis  
 Locky Coomang  
 George Pitt  
 Frank Pitalgar  
 W. Wallasi  
 R. Wallasi  
 C. Wongam  
 Valerie Dick  
 Shirma Ugle  
 A. Williams  
 Pamela Quaterman  
 Pamela Hebro  
 W. W. W. W.  
 Denis Hayward  
 Reeder  
 Noel Moss  
 Len Culbong  
 Samantha Culbong  
 Marian Cass  
 Ed. Blatter  
 A.S. Peith  
 R. J. Colford

## APPENDIX D WADJEMUP ROTTNEST ISLAND CEREMONIAL MEETINGS - FORMAL PROPOSALS TO WA GOVERNMENT, JUNE 1994

### Wadjemup Rottnest Island Ceremonial Meeting



On behalf of all Aboriginal People in the State of Western Australia, we who attended the Ceremonial Meeting from 1st June to the day it ceased on the 4th June 1994 are sending forth in this letter of thanks, our appreciation to all those who took part in assisting the Funeral Ceremony for our Ancestors on Wadjemup which Aboriginal People from all over the State attended and the Ceremonial Meetings and the Meeting with the Premier Richard Court. This is what the Roots of Reconciliation is about.

To those Devoted Workers our Brothers and Sisters who quietly worked behind the scenes devoted to the Cause of the Aboriginal People our deepest gratitude and thanks for their cooperation and service.

Special Thanks go to AAPA especially Brian Wyatt and Cedric Wyatt and ATSIC especially Ron Santen and Peter Mackin. Without their assistance with funding we would not have been able to come together.

Our special thanks and appreciation go to the Construction, Forestry, Mining, and Energy Workers Union for lending us their 3rd floor gym as an office and for all their facilities and support especially to Bill Eihell and Melissa and Karen and all in the office below.

We would like to thank the Rottnest Island Authority for their understanding and co-operation, and the Premier of Western Australia Richard Court for his time and assistance.

Our thanks and appreciation to the Governor of Western Australia for his message of truth and understanding.

We would especially like to thank Steve Wood of the Premier's Department for coming to see us and help us, and Paul Byrne and Richard of Greyhound and Lorraine McNeilly at Ansett whose assistance ironed out a lot of travelling arrangements, Tony di Latta and all his crew of Oceanic Cruises and Russell Wilson and Natasha and Brendan and their crew of Boat Torque who all gave us understanding and assistance with all the people on all the ferries, John Mac and his team at Budget Truck Rentals, and Osborne Rentals, for their help with vehicles for transporting our people, and Mary and John Blair for lending their car, and Dean Collard and Cheryl Taylor for providing shelter at Manguri for the people as they arrived from all parts of the State, and Alan and Rita Wright of Kingston Barracks Rottnest for their help with shelter, and also Noalimba.

Our Thanks to Mt Lawley Sewing Machine Company for the use of their machines, and Manchester Trading Company for assistance with flag material.

Our thanks go to the film-makers who voluntarily gave us their time and their abilities to film the once-in-a-lifetime Ceremonial Meeting and the coming together of all Aboriginal People - Bruce Chalk and Rob Bygott., and James Kerr and Tim, and especial thanks to our people Bevan, Andrew, and Adrian of WAAMA for reporting back on air to the Aboriginal people who could not attend, and to Graham and Harvey Deegan of WAAMA for helping with the media. We thank Graham Shenton of Channel 2 for his sensitive and respectful report on TV which went to all Aboriginal people Australia-wide, and we thank ABC Radio and Karen Brown of the West Australian for informing the public at large of this Sacred Time, and Channel 10, Channel 7 and Channel 9. Our thanks to our Wadjela friend Helene Short for taking still photos.

We would like to thank Cliff Macrone of Main Roads Department for the mobile kitchen, Warrant Officer Gene Negro and the Army for lending their field stoves, St Vincent de Paul for lending blankets, our people for the cooking - Edna and Malcolm Ryder and their team, Enid Hart and her team, Marr Mooditch and their team and Lillian Arthur and Doris Smith - & all the staff at the Nursing Post at Rottnest for their caring of our people, St John of God Hospital for giving us sheets and pillowcases, and our thanks to Stirling Marine Services for transporting everything - the mobile kitchen, the trestle tables, Lenny and Maureen's bus, the 4 tons of firewood, the 4 tons of fruit and vegetables, the food, the inflatable mattresses, the marquee, the tents, the blankets, the army stoves, the gas tanks, everything - to Rottnest.

We thank Eric Hayward Chairperson of Karlkarniny ATSIC Council for attending and representing ATSIC.

Our thanks to our people Greg Martin, Bob Edgill, Malcolm Ryder and his son for up and down country trips, and to Revel Oakley for driving our people on Rottnest, and appreciation to the young kangaroo hunters who travelled far for meat for the Old People.

We would like to thank all the Wadjela people on Rottnest for their interest and friendliness.

Our thanks to George Prgomet for attending as the PWD Engineer in 1970 at the time when our Ancestors' Remains were dug up and disturbed, and to the Rottnest Island Authority workers who stopped work when they saw our Ancestors' Remains disturbed and dug up in October 1993.

Our warm thanks to the young didgeridoo player Martin for playing for the people and the Aboriginal Dance Development Unit for dancing for the people in the night including some of the white people on Rottnest who joined us that night in the marquee.

We thank the Police Department and Rottnest Island Police for their co-operation, and Gary Silcock and staff of the Geordie Bay Store for all their help.

We thank Katrice and David at Finkelstein Hickmott for assisting us with the accounts, and Community Aid Abroad for their assistance. Our thanks go to Abmusic for lending the PA, and especially to our lawyer Marcus Holmes for being on hand.

We send forth our warm thanks to our Wadjela friends Fran Limb, Rosemary Greenhalgh, Audrey Hine, Tim McCabe, and Andre Brown for everything they did, and especially to Paul Allardyce who is a first class organiser in an emergency, and to Margaret Jeffery for her part, and to Christine Muecke for putting together the Ceremonial Meeting Folders according to Len and Robert's ideas.

If we have failed to recognise the names of anybody who assisted, they are included.

As the Relations of our Ancestors who are on the Island we send forth our thanks and appreciation for assisting us in this once-in-a-lifetime Ceremony. Our Ancestors were waiting for us for a long time. We will never forget the Ceremonial Meeting and the coming together as One as long as we live.

*We Be With You Always Our Ancestors.*

*Robert Bropho*  
*Violet Newman*  
*J.P. Grace*  
*Nyngah Wanyjara - Nyngah*  
**YALURITJA (CIARRIE/SACCS)** *J. Culbong*

Through the Rottnest Island Deaths Group and their representatives.

7 June 1994

c/o Post Office, Guildford, Western Australia, 6055  
Contact: Robert Bropho 2791636, Violet Newman 3679169, Len Culbong 3424062

**ROTTNEST - WADJEMUP  
CEREMONIAL MEETING  
JUNE 1ST 2ND 3RD & 4TH  
1994**

Delegates from: West Kimberley, One Arm Point, Broome, Wyndham, La Grange, Port Hedland, Warralong, Collie, Salt River, Western Desert, Pinjarra, Carnarvon, Busselton, Albany, Narrogin, Gnowangerup, Tambellup, Kellerberrin, Three Springs, Kalgoorlie, Swan River and Swan Coastal Plain, Stirling Ranges, Warrakurna, Leonora, Brookton, Beverley, Quairading, Hamersley Ranges, Onslow, Western Desert, Jigalong, Wiluna, Roebourne, Karratha, Bunbury, Katanning, Manjimup:

On the 2nd to 4th June 1994 at Wadjemup concerning the many of our People who died here.

**Preamble:**  
Our People throughout this State suffered inhumane and degrading treatment while forced into slavery by the Government. They were sent here for getting a piece of meat. They worked in the quarry with chains around their neck and ankles.

They cut all the limestone and put all the buildings up and slept in chains 33 people to a cell without rugs.

It is a disgrace to the white race. They slaughtered Our People for nothing.

It was a Death Camp for Aboriginal People.

Lots of our people died from all over our Country.

This meeting should culminate in the resting of the Spirits of our Ancestors.

**Proposals:**  
We come as One People to meet, discuss and put forward the following unanimously agreed proposals to the Governments of Western Australia and Australia.

1. The area known to Nyngahs as Wadjemup (Rottnest Island) to be given back to the Nyngah People to have full authority and control of the area.

2. That an Official Aboriginal Cemetery be formally established.



Proposals (cont'd):

- 3. That the area today known as the Quad recognised to be the Gaol where our Ancestors' Blood is still on the Walls and their Spirits are still in the Cells, is to be under the full control and custody of Aboriginal Peoples.
- 4. That further Ground Probing Radar take place throughout Wadjemup to fully record Burial Sites before any new developments or relocations of current buildings and tourist camping sites takes place.
- 5. That an Area of Land be set aside for a Meeting Camp for Aboriginal People from throughout the State.
- 6. That further research take place to record the True History of Wadjemup to ensure the past is known and not forgotten.

Brian Blurton  
 Anthony Bawell  
 Kathy Yanson  
 Leslie Harris  
 KEVIN FRED  
 Myra Phillips  
 ROBERT ETAYLOR  
 FRANK SEBASTIAN  
 GREG FRANCIS  
 ALBERT CORUNNA  
 TOM EDGAR  
 TOM BIRCH  
 Dennis Harvey  
 Judith Polley  
 Ruth Kettlebridge  
 Dobby Roberts  
 Alison & Allan  
 GLAUDE BUTLER  
 I nnis Eggington  
 PETER STEVENSON S P S  
 SEPTIM BAHAM  
 Barry Paynter  
 Carol Bright  
 Robert Eginton  
 Timothy Kavanagh  
 Steve Mickle  
 Marnie van Heeswen  
 Joan Williams  
 ANNE DEAN  
 Kathleen Panny  
 Elsie Wynne  
 Lena Rogers  
 Janet Colbung

BROOKTON.  
 Brookton  
 Quairading  
 Leonora  
 WARRALONG  
 SWAN RIVER  
 MIDLAND  
 BROOME  
 " "  
 GULDFORD  
 BROOME  
 NYNBERG  
 One Arm Point  
 One Arm Point  
 HAMERSLEY ONSLOW  
 WADPH WDPAC WESTERN DESERT  
 NYUNGA BROOKTON  
 ONSLOW  
 NYUNGA  
 HAMERSLEY RANGES  
 47 MORGAN ST PORT HEDLAND 6721  
 Swan Valley  
 Swan Valley  
 17 BARKER ST NORTH PERTH.  
 47 CARNAC ST. Fremantle, WA  
 BROOKTON (South West) NYUNGA  
 28 Canning St Albany 6330.  
 ALBANY.  
 Bassendean Perth.  
 Quairading  
 Quairading  
 Quairading

Mylyn Quartermaine  
 Bonnie McHenry  
 Milton & Rod  
 Sydney Latham  
 Leo Thomas  
 Gary Anderson  
 Michael Wonganot  
 Sunshine Williams  
 Rossy Steven  
 Friday Jones  
 Kaye Bingham  
 Bill Faltner  
 Rosalind Patterson

Stewie  
 Paul Porter  
 Peter Lewis  
 Juan Sheppard

Bill Wasky

MANUMUP  
 TERRY CORNWALL  
 MICHAEL CORNWALL  
 BEATRICE CORNWALL  
 LARRY CORNWALL  
 JEROME CORNWALL  
 GLEN KELLY

M. SCHA ' PETERS BROOME  
 NODA DAVIS  
 MATT GILBERT  
 ROBERT COLE  
 BILL MARCHANT  
 Ralph Wimmer Perth

Waddington  
 Quwading  
 Quwading  
 Kalgooli  
 Ygganawli Wularva  
 " " "  
 " " "  
 " " "  
 " " "

Warakang  
 Voa. Alice Springs  
 N.T.

Kalgooli

TIM LAYLAND  
 WYNDHAM

Darwin  
 LACRANGE

NAME	ADDRESS
15 DALLAS PHILLIPS	1/0 Post office BROOME 6725.
15 EBONY CAWLOW	103 ST LEONARD'S AVE WEST LEEDERVILLE 6007. W.A.
1RS DIANE NARKLE	<del>Box 183 Bentley WA</del> <del>6230</del>
Mr Warren Yorkshire	10 Clichester WAY Nollamerry 6061 WA 41 Dwyers St Bentley 6102. WA. PO Box 183 Bentley 6102
George Pitt + Kids	
Maed Maed	
Rosemary van den Berg } Ex-Pinjarra	114 Jaynes Way Armadale 6112.
Peter van den Berg } From PINJARRA	
Clayton Corbett. } Down South West.	
LORNA LITTLE EX-Pinjarra elder.	19 CHARLES ST KEMSCOTT 6111 WA
Peter Stevens	Karratha
MARZKY HYLAND	ONSLOW. Richard. Cashen. ROCKY WEDGE Bastley James
Beverly Huselet	P.O. Box 81, ONSLOW WA
Maudie DONTAN	" "
PEARLINE M'KAY	PO BOX 84 ONSLOW WA.
DEBBIE COX	" "
EDDIE CAREY	" "

NAME	ADDRESS
LINDA SMIRKE	PO BOX 84 Onslow
PEGGY SMIRKE	" "
BRIAN SAMSON	Jigalong Comm.
ARNOLD LAPPINCENE	ONSLON
ALVIS DEAGE	" "
ROCKY WEDGE	" "
DAISY MOSES f	Roebourne
Esther Pat	" "
monica Togo	Roebourne
Tevenia Mousambine	"
TOOTSIE Daniel	"
GEO Daniel	"
Kaylene Daniel	"
Edry Daniel	"
Esther Daniel	"
Patricia Daniel	"
RAMES DELMON	"
LADLY DUBO	Kalgoorlie
Yvonne DUBO	"
Dorothy DUBO	Perth
Ralph DUBO	Perth
KENNY JOHNSON	Perth
Alex Johnson	Perth
MORAN CHAMPION	Kalgoorlie
Bouforn Champion	Kalgoorlie
Dwayne Jarran	Perth
DAVE CHAMPION	Kal.
Charles Champion	Perth
Dave - Bundy	Kal
Winston Stokes	Kal
Dave - Champion	Kal
DAVE JARRAN	Perth

Andy Betts	Kalgoorlie
Sarah Betts	"
Lucy Betts	"
Linda Dambro	Kalgoorlie
Donna Dambro	Kalgoorlie
Ken CORBETT	CARNARVON
Colin Wheelock	Perth
Vanessa Calbong	"
Presto Wheelock	"
Dylan Wheelock	"
Nancy De Pinto	Perth
Amantel Biggs	Perth / Three Springs
Narelle Ogilvie	Perth
Clayton Corbett	Perth
Kim Francis	Kalgoorlie
Noeline Culbong	
Nicole	Perth
Len	
Vanessa	
Samantha	
YA'URITJA (CARRIE PARKS)	Perth
Owen and Penny Blackwood	urban Aborigines
Jason Blackwood	Perth
Cris Masella (U.W.A.)	Perth
Kym Vardell (U.W.A.)	Queensland
Amanda Bell (UWA)	Perth
Dicie Pensio (UWA)	Karratha

## APPENDIX E

### RECORDS OF ABORIGINAL MEN AND BOYS WHO DIED AT ROTTNESST ISLAND 1838-1903

No	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
1	Hellia	15.08.1838	Perth	Drowned
2	Goodap	18.08.1838	Swan River	Speared
3	Ingen	6.11.1839	Unknown	Fit
4	Waytup	6.01.1840	Unknown	Sunstroke
5	Gundabung	31.10.1840	Upper Swan	Bowel Disorder
6	Deemang	2.11.1840	Unknown	N.R. *
7	Wannyne @ Mr. Waylen	2.11.1840	Swan River	Fish Poisoning
8	Dinary	7.11.1840	Swan River	N.R.
9	Doonda @ Tiger	13.09.1842	Unknown	Pleurisy
10	Yolyan	25.05.1843	Unknown	N.R.
11	Eenjan	pre Oct '43	Unknown	Murdered
12	Yongal @ Billy	pre Oct '43	Unknown	Dysentery
13	Yarmwart	11.02.1845	Unknown	N.R.
14	Nourap	15.02.1845	Unknown	N.R.
15	Nunjad	18.04.1847	Bunbury	N.R.
16	Mangagora	11.05.1847	Unknown	N.R.
17	Youngal	8.04.1856	Canning River	N.R.
18	Yantum	31.08.1856	York	Dysentery
19	Niell	17.08.1857	Northam	N.R.
20	Mayteyal	13.02.1859	Albany	N.R.
21	Mellamey	31.10.1860	Busselton	N.R.
22	Bourgart	16.11.1860	Bunbury	N.R.
23	Jaac	17.02.1861	York	N.R.
24	Maynean	28.02.1861	Bunbury	N.R.
25	Waitenet	4.04.1861	Albany	N.R.
26	Baratar	2.07.1861	Bunbury	N.R.
27	Coolocal	28.09.1861	Albany	N.R.
28	Murree	13.10.1861	Toodjay	N.R.
29	Gurah	27.12.1861	York	N.R.
30	Burney @ Rom	29.12.1861	Albany	N.R.
31	Koojoc	17.01.1862	Toodjay	N.R.
32	Jenninghart	30.03.1862	Albany	N.R.
33	Diamond	8.06.1862	Albany	N.R.
34	Bingo	3.07.1862	Champion Bay	N.R.
35	Bambelya	20.07.1862	Toodjay	N.R.
36	Yettap	4.08.1862	Gin Gin	N.R.
37	Quinyack	18.08.1862	Busselton	N.R.
38	Bourdarcot	28.08.1862	York	N.R.
39	Enjal	4.09.1862	York	N.R.
40	Vongleyong	29.09.1862	York	Measles
41	Jilliatt	16.10.1862	Bannister River	N.R.
42	Eickenarra	10.11.1862	Champion Bay	Measles
43	Wallup	10.11.1862	Victoria Plains	Measles
44	Crimmenbelt @ Tom Buckett	23.11.1862	Albany	Measles
45	Eingal @ Bobby	28.11.1862	Unknown	Measles
46	Bungar	28.11.1862	Albany	N.R.
47	Yargimalla	28.11.1862	Champion Bay	Measles
48	Wabbuia	29.11.1862	Champion Bay	Measles
49	Mangwatt	8.12.1862	York	Measles
50	Bingee	9.12.1862	N.R.	N.R.
51	Pyciove	9.12.1862	Toodjay	N.R.
52	Douja	16.01.1863	York	N.R.
53	Goeve	17.02.1863	Vasse	N.R.
54	Werrup	26.02.1863	Bunbury	Sunstroke

\* N.R. Indicates Not Recorded

No	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
55	Whipput	26.02.1863	Bunbury	Sunstroke
56	Cowlian	4.03.1863	Busselton	N.R.
57	Gillat	5.03.1863	York	N.R.
58	Kendall	11.03.1863	Bannister River	N.R.
59	Jack Spratt @ Noonet	22.03.1863	Albany	N.R.
60	Wannier	1.05.1863	York	N.R.
61	Bowrell	2.05.1863	York	N.R.
62	Wowden	11.05.1863	York	N.R.
63	Gearing	22.05.1863	York	N.R.
64	Emmol	9.06.1863	Bunbury	N.R.
65	Muygagoora	12.06.1863	Geraldton	N.R.
66	Vugea	17.07.1863	Champion Bay	N.R.
67	Dicky	10.09.1863	York	N.R.
68	Margutowel	17.10.1863	Geraldton	N.R.
69	Coorall	25.10.1863	Albany	N.R.
70	Davabit	28.10.1863	Blackwood	N.R.
71	Vowruby	11.11.1863	Vasse	N.R.
72	Johnny	18.11.1863	Albany	N.R.
73	Mearabin	27.11.1863	York	Executed
74	Bunamarra	6.12.1863	Victoria Plains	N.R.
75	Wallinette	8.12.1863	Albany	N.R.
76	Queintwar	28.12.1863	Albany	N.R.
77	Rinamar	29.12.1863	Bunbury	N.R.
78	Worra Worra	30.12.1863	Champion Bay	N.R.
79	Jack	31.12.1863	Bunbury	N.R.
80	Jardock	1.01.1864	York	N.R.
81	Jubba	4.01.1864	Victoria Plains	N.R.
82	Merich	8.01.1864	Albany	N.R.
83	Wangar	7.02.1864	Albany	N.R.
84	Carunalga	10.02.1864	Champion Bay	N.R.
85	Wagtulla	14.02.1864	Victoria Plains	N.R.
86	Noringbert	5.07.1864	Albany	N.R.
87	Bunjei	1.08.1864	York	N.R.
88	Ned	11.08.1864	Victoria Plains	N.R.
89	Dulap	12.10.1864	York	N.R.
90	Yergoway	16.10.1864	Geraldton	N.R.
91	Genanger	16.11.1864	Geraldton	N.R.
92	Quarbut	16.11.1864	Busselton	N.R.
93	Warcol	11.12.1864	Victoria Plains	N.R.
94	Willachar	27.11.1864	Geraldton	N.R.
95	Naldaboogu	24.01.1865	Victoria Plains	N.R.
96	Duddie	20.02.1865	Bunbury	N.R.
97	Carburry	1.03.1865	Victoria Plains	N.R.
98	Willibar	1.03.1865	Victoria Plains	N.R.
99	Munderbury	6.03.1865	Victoria Plains	N.R.
100	Vanderbury	2.04.1865	Geraldton	N.R.
101	Margubut	30.04.1865	Blackwood River	N.R.
102	Quarga	30.04.1865	Geraldton	N.R.
103	Rumbleby	23.05.1865	Champion Bay	N.R.
104	Mulkerby	19.07.1865	Geraldton	N.R.
105	Warramburra	19.08.1865	Victoria Plains	N.R.
106	Naricut	23.08.1865	York	N.R.
107	Elvie	20.09.1865	Geraldton	N.R.
108	Cunda	26.09.1865	Victoria Plains	N.R.
109	Daenere	30.09.1865	York	N.R.
110	Deehan	21.11.1865	Toodjay	Lung Disease
111	Malbarie	26.12.1865	York	N.R.
112	Meringit	5.01.1866	Williams River	N.R.

No	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
113	Narrooloo	23.02.1866	Toodjay	N.R.
114	Bullal	24.02.1866	Toodjay	N.R.
115	Eundo	2.08.1866	York	Cold
116	Carlo	5.01.1867	Geraldton	Jaundice
117	Ellen @ Johnny	26.01.1867	Geraldton	N.R.
118	Murtegan	5.02.1867	York	N.R.
119	Cochanete	16.04.1867	Bunbury	N.R.
120	Yeargoora	19.10.1867	Toodjay	N.R.
121	Cambyne	1.11.1867	Toodjay	N.R.
122	Gowan	14.12.1867	Bunbury	N.R.
123	Gyargeroot	1.01.1868	Geraldton	N.R.
124	Japangiret	1.01.1868	Toodjay	N.R.
125	Yandagoot	13.01.1868	Toodjay	N.R.
126	Reuben	16.01.1868	York	N.R.
127	Wellow	17.01.1868	Victoria Plains	N.R.
128	Wengey	20.01.1868	Port Walcot	N.R.
129	Bangagert	25.01.1868	Victoria Plains	N.R.
130	Mangert	8.02.1868	Bunbury	N.R.
131	Yunbunette	13.04.1868	Albany	N.R.
132	Beachaten	22.04.1868	Victoria Plains	N.R.
133	Suga	21.07.1868	Victoria Plains	N.R.
134	Onamah	1.12.1868	Victoria Plains	N.R.
135	Wanganah	15.12.1868	Victoria Plains	N.R.
136	Polder	10.04.1869	Albany	N.R.
137	Imarra-Carra	20.05.1869	Victoria Plains	Drowned
138	Worypar	20.05.1869	Albany	N.R.
139	Giggerett	30.08.1869	Bunbury	N.R.
140	Tomkin	7.10.1869	Albany	N.R.
141	Guinea	18.10.1869	Toodjay	N.R.
142	Coonjeido	24.02.1870	Geraldton	N.R.
143	Jualat	24.02.1870	York	N.R.
144	Durecan @ Pat	15.04.1870	Albany	N.R.
145	Coongean	22.04.1870	York	N.R.
146	Jack	3.05.1870	Blackwood River	N.R.
147	Newgunga	21.06.1870	Roebourne	N.R.
148	Toolgin	30.06.1870	Albany	N.R.
149	Bowera @ Dicky	13.08.1870	Port Walcot	N.R.
150	Meagon	29.10.1870	Roebourne	N.R.
151	Tobey	30.10.1870	Northam	N.R.
152	Namberra (Weibeira)	11.04.1871	York	N.R.
153	Tommy	15.04.1871	Bunbury	N.R.
154	Johnny	16.04.1871	York	N.R.
155	Nairne	6.07.1871	York	N.R.
156	Njipic	20.10.1871	Roebourne	N.R.
157	Njipice	24.10.1871	Roebourne	Cold
158	Old George	28.10.1871	Bunbury	N.R.
159	Merley	1.11.1871	Greenough	N.R.
160	Mearidan	27.02.1872	Victoria Plains	N.R.
161	Burregett	1.01.1873	York	Drowned
162	Woorgilbiddy	29.03.1873	Roebourne	N.R.
163	Weenyoo	27.01.1874	Roebourne	N.R.
164	Kinellinger	8.09.1874	Dongarra	N.E.
165	Chammy	15.12.1874	Victoria Plains	N.R.
166	Pindoo	7.01.1875	Victoria Plains	N.R.
167	Putpie	14.03.1875	Greenough	N.R.
168	Jack	23.04.1875	York	N.R.
169	Lim	25.04.1875	Dongarra	N.R.
170	Friday	25.04.1875	York	N.R.

No	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
171	Jimmy Gutchell	4.05.1875	York	N.R.
172	Myangalli	5.05.1875	Victoria Plains	N.R.
173	Malcapan	22.05.1875	Blackwood	N.R.
174	Ben	19.06.1875	Perth	N.R.
175	Eulganga	22.09.1875	Perth	N.R.
176	Robert	28.09.1875	York	N.R.
177	Barmy	1.10.1875	Fremantle	N.R.
178	Cathago @ Charlie	11.11.1875	Roebourne	N.R.
179	Jimmy Bittoom	1.12.1875	Toodjay	N.R.
180	Mimba	21.11.1876	York	N.R.
181	Punch	23.11.1876	Guildford	N.R.
182	Morman	31.12.1876	Greenough	N.R.
183	Sam	8.01.1877	Greenough	N.R.
184	Mumbetti	15.04.1877	Murchison	N.R.
185	Johnny	16.04.1877	Geraldton	N.R.
186	Boorimwingmarra	24.07.1877	Roebourne	N.R.
187	Moonba	20.10.1877	Victoria Plains	N.R.
188	Mulgite	27.10.1877	Blackwood	N.R.
189	Master Johnny	22.02.1878	Bridgetown	N.R.
190	Tony	22.02.1878	Unknown	N.R.
191	Bultucker	6.03.1878	Northampton	N.R.
192	Kullinga	12.03.1878	Bunbury	N.R.
193	Mr Cook	17.03.1878	Victoria Plains	N.R.
194	Jacky	27.03.1878	Pinjarrah	N.R.
195	Warrida	21.04.1878	Victoria Plains	N.R.
196	Mordyts	17.05.1878	Murchison	N.R.
197	Dinah Charlie	9.06.1878	Greenough	N.R.
198	Killong	17.10.1878	Victoria Plains	N.R.
199	Long Bile	19.12.1878	York	N.R.
200	Boxer	12.01.1879	York	N.R.
201	Chilgoorah	4.04.1879	Roebourne	Executed
202	Bateman	18.05.1879	York	N.R.
203	Tampin	19.07.1879	Albany/Esperence	Executed
204	Ned Narger	5.12.1881	Roebourne	N.R.
205	Yaumah @ Monkey	5.04.1882	Roebourne	Old Age
206	Gibbalow	22.07.1882	Gascoyne	Rheumatism
207	Paperango	27.07.1882	Gascoyne	Old Wound
208	Mcdamilla	9.08.1882	Gascoyne	Influenza
209	Yaujoguna	12.08.1882	Upper Gascoyne	Influenza
210	Mindagoora	16.08.1882	Murchison	Influenza
211	Gilgarra	7.09.1882	Upper Gascoyne	Enteritis
212	Tuba Dan	14.09.1882	Ashburton	Enteritis
213	Winjamuda	22.09.1882	Upper Murchison	Enteritis
214	Vithagoora	22.09.1882	Ashburton	Enteritis
215	Bluey	8.04.1883	Bunbury	Drowned
216	Guerhilla	18.06.1883	Fitzroy River	Executed
217	Wangabiddie	18.06.1883	Gascoyne	Executed
218	Yethero	19.06.1883	Unknown	Old Age
219	Numea @ Joe	13.07.1883	Gascoyne	N.R.
220	Nannacrow @ Coori	27.07.1883	Gascoyne	Executed
221	Barby	18.11.1883	Gascoyne	N.R.
222	Benoggu	1883	Upper Murchison	Influenza
223	Billy	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
224	Bob Lang	1883	Pyramid Stn Pilbara	Influenza
225	Bundanga	1883	Murchison	Influenza

No	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
226	Cabing	1883	Upper Gascoyne	Influenza
227	Chilli-Babong	1883	Kimberleys	Influenza
228	Darvey	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
229	Dubda Biddie	1883	Upper Gascoyne	Influenza
230	Ebenezer	1883	Pyramid Stn Pilbara	Influenza
231	Farrody	1883	Upper Murchison	Influenza
232	Georgy	1883	Pyramid Stn Pilbara	Influenza
233	Illegowra	1883	Upper Murchison	Influenza
234	Jenna	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
235	Jenna Jackine	1883	Upper Murchison	Influenza
236	Jimmy	1883	York	Influenza
237	Johnny	1883	Roebourne	Influenza
238	Jacobgoora	1883	Manilya River	Influenza
239	Juddie	1883	Upper Murchison	Influenza
240	Karrabba	1883	La Grange Bay	Influenza
241	Kidellarie	1883	Upper Gascoyne	Influenza
242	Mangrove	1883	Unknown	Influenza
243	Marger	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
244	Meanobby	1883	Manilya River	Influenza
245	Mereaburnia	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
246	Mosey	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
247	Mundgoo	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
248	Muntha	1883	Upper Gascoyne	Influenza
249	Murragowra	1883	Manilya River	Influenza
250	Nallyerroo	1883	Upper Murchison	Influenza
251	Stillits	1883	Esperence Bay	Influenza
252	Tommy	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
253	Toolapi	1883	Pyramid Stn Pilbara	Influenza
254	Ven-mee	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
255	Varraroo	1883	Ashburton River	Influenza
256	Willbeangoona	1883	Upper Murchison	Influenza
257	Winyela	1883	Upper Murchison	Influenza
258	Yadygoora	1883	Upper Gascoyne	Influenza
259	Yararie	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
260	Yarra	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
261	Yongourbiddie	1883	Gascoyne	Influenza
262	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
263	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
264	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
265	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
266	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
267	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
268	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
269	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
270	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
271	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
272	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
273	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
274	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
275	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
276	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
277	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
278	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
279	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
280	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
281	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
282	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza

No	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
283	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
284	Unknown	1883	Unknown	Influenza
285	Numbar	6. 01. 1884	Upper Murchison	Cong. of Lungs
286	Wyartha	3. 02. 1884	Upper Murchison	Old Age
287	Wingele	15. 02. 1884	Upper Murchison	Rheumatism
288	Jinganulla	12. 04. 1884	Upper Murchison	Debility
289	Bippool	21. 05. 1884	Eucia	Cong. of Lungs
290	Booreynan	4. 06. 1884	Eucia	Influenza
291	Geyger	10. 06. 1884	Eucia	Influenza
292	Doorab @ Donald	15. 06. 1884	Eucia	Influenza
293	Onnierer	15. 07. 1884	Upper Murchison	Rheumatism
294	Jungerra	20. 07. 1884	Upper Murchison	Old Age
295	Hearugurdy	21. 07. 1884	Upper Murchison	Rheumatism
296	Vyfart	11. 08. 1884	Upper Murchison	Rheumatism
297	Gengagooroo	22. 08. 1884	Upper Murchison	Rheumatism
298	Dwie @ Saucepan	14. 09. 1884	Gascoyne	Rheumatism
299	Munderberry	2. 05. 1885	Fraser Range	Drowned
300	Nubbagee @ Bubba	06. 1885	Murchison	N. K.
301	Thally Bygaigoo	16. 10. 1885	Upper Murchison	Old Age
302	Mergalu @ Albert	7. 05. 1886	Victoria Plains	Influenza
303	Nadging @ Dingo	18. 05. 1886	Upper Murchison	Influenza
304	Wallar	18. 05. 1886	Upper Murchison	Influenza
305	Sambo Jumbo	20. 05. 1886	Roebourne	Influenza
306	Wyodah	21. 05. 1886	Upper Murchison	Influenza
307	Eulman	23. 05. 1886	Gascoyne	Influenza
308	Osain	21. 06. 1886	Gascoyne	Influenza
309	Sambo	28. 06. 1886	Irwin River	Influenza
310	Tommy Jimacrow	28. 10. 1886	Toodjay	Influenza
311	Weberdiene	15. 01. 1887	Upper Gascoyne	Influenza
312	Ben Ben	2. 04. 1887	Williams	Influenza
313	Wildcadgee	17. 06. 1887	Fraser Range	Influenza
314	Kyser	1. 09. 1887	Roebourne	Influenza
315	Wyarda	10. 10. 1887	Fraser Range	Inflamed Lungs
316	Mangrove	23. 12. 1887	Roebourne	Inflamed Lungs
317	Gingeree	13. 03. 1888	Albany	Kidney Disease
318	Carlabongunburra @ Cabbergerana @ Pichewarra @ Arthur	13. 06. 1888	Roebourne	Executed
319	Wallebine Charlie	18. 08. 1888	York	Ruptured Liver
320	Thooladoona	17. 08. 1890	Hamersley Range	Lung Disease
321	Chum Chum	1. 03. 1891	Swan River	Lung Disease
322	Kungercng	4. 03. 1892	Hamersley Range	Liver Disease
323	Vindawara	19. 04. 1892	Hamersley Range	Syphillie
324	Hawry	16. 07. 1892	Upper Gascoyne	Diarrhoea
325	Kallinbandy	21. 01. 1893	Victoria Plains	Drowned
326	Martajewarry	21. 01. 1893	Victoria Plains	Drowned
327	Milganah	21. 01. 1893	Victoria Plains	Drowned
328	Winnig	21. 01. 1893	Victoria Plains	Drowned
329	Mullagible Jack	19. 03. 1893	Roebourne	Lung Disease
330	Mardurabin	19. 08. 1893	Roebourne	Brain Disease
331	Fred	16. 02. 1894	Kimberley	Lung Disease
332	Jalgoona	19. 05. 1894	Gascoyne	Cold
333	Parano	12. 10. 1894	Roebourne	Pneumonia
334	Jupiter	21. 04. 1895	Roebourne	Pneumonia
335	Jumby	27. 05. 1896	Roebourne	Old Age
336	Yalachana	10. 06. 1897	Carnarvon	Senile Decay

ABORIGINAL MEN WHO DIED AT ROBINSON ISLAND 1838-1900

No	NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
337	Orgman	24.07.1897	Derby	Cong. of Lungs
338	Mujar	25.07.1897	Carnarvon	Cong. of Lungs
339	Captain	26.07.1897	Derby	Cong. of Lungs
340	Walaglenie	26.07.1897	Wyndham	Cong. of Lungs
341	Charlie Snow	27.07.1897	Roebourne	Cong. of Lungs
342	Moondue	27.07.1897	Wyndham	Cong. of Lungs
343	Bulong	28.07.1897	Wyndham	Cong. of Lungs
344	Numberine	28.07.1897	Derby	Cong. of Lungs
345	Earrawarrrie	29.07.1897	Lawlers	Cong. of Lungs
346	Carolan	30.07.1897	Fitzroy Crossing	Cong. of Lungs
347	Culuzgin	30.07.1897	Wyndham	Cong. of Lungs
348	Carabung	1.08.1897	Wyndham	Cong. of Lungs
349	Macuinlya	1.08.1897	Wyndham	Cong. of Lungs
350	Sandalwood	4.08.1897	York	Senility
351	Doclaga	6.08.1897	Derby	Pneumonia
352	Mindic	6.08.1897	Lawlers	Senility
353	Thongee	6.08.1897	Wyndham	Influenza
354	Udderaganna	12.08.1897	Derby	Pneumonia
355	Nairbeena @ Daddy	14.08.1897	Roebourne	Pneumonia
356	Mugala	18.08.1897	Lawlers	Pneumonia
357	Urimant	29.08.1897	Roebourne	Paralysis
358	Yardarrrie	10.10.1897	Roebourne	Pneumonia
359	Mardinga	16.10.1897	Roebourne	Pneumonia
360	Robert	11.10.1897	Roebourne	Pneumonia
361	Niger @ Joe	22.12.1897	Carnarvon	Cyst on Liver
362	Bulwaring	15.04.1898	Wyndham	Pneumonia
363	Balloraba	15.05.1898	Carnarvon	Senility
364	Nardarook	12.07.1898	Wyndham	Pneumonia

NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
Youngul	8.04.1856	Canning River	Not Recorded
Yantum	31.08.1856	York	"
Niell	17.08.1857	York	"
Mayteyal	13.02.1859	Albany	"
Mellainey	31.10.1860	Busselton	"
Bourqart	16.11.1860	Bunbury	"
Jaac	17.02.1861	York	"
Baratar	28.02.1861	Bunbury	"
Maitenet	4.04.1861	Albany	"
Maynean	2.07.1861	Bunbury	"
Murree	13.10.1861	Toodjay	"
Koojoo	17.01.1862	Toodjay	"
Jenninghart	30.03.1862	Albany	"
Diamond	8.06.1862	Albany	"
Bingo	3.07.1862	Geraldton	"
Yettap	4.08.1862	Gin Gin	"
Bourderoot	29.08.1862	York	"
Jilliatt	16.10.1862	Barrowater River	"
Enjal	4.11.1862	York	"
Bickenarra	10.11.1862	Geraldton	"
Bungar	28.11.1862	Albany	"
Yergimalla	28.11.1862	Geraldton	"
Wabbula	29.11.1862	Geraldton	"
Wongleyong	29.11.1862	Vasse	"
Mangwatt	8.12.1862	York	"
Bingee	8.12.1862	York	"
Pycivoe	9.12.1862	Toodjay	"
Douja	16.01.1863	York	"
Goeve	17.02.1863	Vasse	"
Wherrup	26.02.1863	Bunbury	"
Whipput	26.02.1863	Bunbury	"
Wannier	1.03.1863	York	"
Cowan	4.03.1863	Busselton	"
Gillat	5.03.1863	York	"
Jack Spratt, Mbonet	22.03.1863	Albany	"
Bowrell	2.05.1863	York	"
Wowden	11.05.1863	York	"
Gearing	22.05.1863	York	"
Emmol	9.06.1863	Bunbury	"
Muygagoora	12.06.1863	Geraldton	"

NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
Weigee	17.07.1863	Geraldton	Not Recorded
Mergutewel	17.10.1863	Geraldton	"
Coorall	25.10.1863	Albany	"
Devabit	26.10.1863	Blackwood	"
Wowruby	11.11.1863	Vasse	"
Johnny	18.11.1863	Albany	"
Tom Buckett	23.11.1863	Albany	"
Meerabin	27.11.1863	York	Executed
Bunanarra	6.12.1863	Victoria Plains	Not Recorded
Wallinetta	8.12.1863	Albany	"
Guaintwar	29.12.1863	Albany	"
Ninamar	29.12.1863	Bunbury	"
Jack	31.12.1863	Bunbury	"
Jardock	1.01.1864	York	"
Jubba	4.01.1864	Victoria Plains	"
Merich	8.01.1864	Albany	"
Wangar	7.02.1864	Albany	"
Carunalga	10.02.1864	Geraldton	"
Wagtulla	14.02.1864	Victoria Plains	"
Noringbert	5.07.1864	Albany	"
Bunjel	1.08.1864	York	"
Ned	11.08.1864	Victoria Plains	"
Bunjel	1.08.1864	York	"
Yergoway	16.10.1864	Geraldton	"
Genangar	16.11.1864	Geraldton	"
Guarbutt	16.11.1864	Busselton	"
Willachar	27.11.1864	Geraldton	"
Warcol	11.12.1864	Victoria Plains	"
Naldaboogu	24.01.1865	Victoria Plains	"
Duddie	20.02.1865	Bunbury	"
Carburry	1.03.1865	Victoria Plains	"
Willibar	1.03.1865	Victoria Plains	"
Munderbury	6.03.1865	Victoria Plains	"
Yanderbury	2.04.1865	Geraldton	"
Juargu	30.04.1865	Geraldton	"
Marglebest	30.04.1865	Blackwood River	"
Nunbleby	23.05.1865	Geraldton	"
Mulkerby	19.07.1865	Geraldton	"
Warramburra	15.08.1865	Victoria Plains	"
Noricut	23.08.1865	York	"
Elvie	20.09.1865	Geraldton	"
Cunda	26.09.1865	Victoria Plains	"
Daenare	30.09.1865	York	"
Malbarie	26.12.1865	York	"

NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
Meringut	5.01.1866	Williams River	Not Recorded
Narroolon	23.02.1866	Toodjay	"
Beschaten	22.04.1866	Victoria Plains	"
Bullal	24.04.1866	Toodjay	"
Bundo	2.08.1866	York	"
Carlo	5.01.1867	Geraldton	"
Johnny	26.01.1867	Geraldton	"
Murteygun	5.02.1867	York	"
Cochanete	6.04.1867	Bunbury	"
Yeargoora	19.10.1867	Toodjay	"
Ombyne	1.11.1867	Toodjay	"
Gowan	14.12.1867	Bunbury	"
Gyangeroot	1.01.1868	Geraldton	"
Rember	6.01.1868	York	"
Vandagoot	13.01.1868	Toodjay	"
Wellow	17.01.1868	Victoria Plains	"
Wengey	20.01.1868	Roebourne	"
Bangegett	25.01.1868	Victoria Plains	"
Raiter	10.04.1868	Albany	"
Yumbunetta	13.04.1868	Albany	"
Duncan	15.04.1868	Albany	"
Sugar	21.07.1868	Victoria Plains	"
Gnanek	1.12.1868	Victoria Plains	"
Wanganah	15.12.1868	Victoria Plains	"
Inurra-Corra	20.05.1869	Victoria Plains	"
Marypan	20.05.1869	Albany	"
Giggerett	30.08.1869	Bunbury	"
Tonkin	7.10.1869	Albany	"
Guinea	18.10.1869	Toodjay	"
Jualet	24.02.1870	York	"
Coongean	22.04.1870	York	"
Jack	3.05.1870	Blackwood	"
Newgunga	21.06.1870	Roebourne	"
Joolgun	30.06.1870	Albany	"
Bowera	13.08.1870	Roebourne	"
Tobey	30.10.1870	Northam	"
Nemberra	11.04.1871	York	"
Nairne	6.07.1871	York	"
Njinic	20.10.1871	Roebourne	"
Old George	28.10.1871	Bunbury	"
Marley	1.11.1871	Greenough	"
Mearidan	26.02.1872	Victoria Plains	"



NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
Burregett	1.01.1873	York	Not Recorded
Moorilbidy	29.03.1873	Roebourne	"
Weenyoo	27.01.1874	Roebourne	"
Channy	15.12.1874	Victoria Plains	"
Pindoo	7.01.1875	Victoria Plains	"
Putpie	4.03.1875	Greenough	"
Jack	23.04.1875	York	"
Friday	25.04.1875	York	"
Lim	25.04.1875	Dongarra	"
Jimmy Gutchell	4.05.1875	York	"
Myangalle	5.05.1875	Victoria Plains	"
Maicapam	22.05.1875	Blackwood River	"
Ben	19.06.1875	Perth	"
Bulgamba	22.09.1875	Perth	"
Robert	28.09.1875	York	"
Barney	1.10.1875	Fremantle	"
Cuthago	11.11.1875	Roebourne	"
Jimmy Blitton	1.12.1875	Toodyay	"
Warider	21.04.1876	Victoria Plains	"
Punch	23.11.1876	Quildford	"
Mimba	31.12.1876	York	"
Momon	31.12.1876	Greenough	"
Sam	8.01.1877	Greenough	"
Murbett Picanni	15.04.1877	Murchison	"
Johnny	16.04.1877	Geraldton	"
Boorinwing	24.07.1877	Roebourne	"
Moomba	20.10.1877	Victoria Plains	"
Mulgite	27.10.1877	Blackwood River	"
Master Johnny	22.02.1878	Bridgetown	"
Bultucker	6.03.1878	Worhampton	"
Kullinga	12.03.1878	Bunbury	"
Mr Cook	17.03.1878	Victoria Plains	"
Jacky	27.03.1878	Pinjarrah	"
Mondyta	17.05.1878	Murchison	"
Dinah Charlie	9.06.1878	Greenough	"
Millong	17.10.1878	Victoria Plains	"
Long Bille	19.12.1878	York	"
Boxer	12.01.1879	York	"
Bateman	18.05.1879	York	"
Tampin	19.07.1878	Albany	Executed
Ned Narger	5.12.1881	Roebourne	Not Recorded

NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
Yaunah	5.04.1882	Roebourne	Old age
Gibbalow	22.07.1882	Gascoyne	Rheumatism
Japarengo	27.07.1882	Gascoyne	Effects of old spea wound
Madamilla	9.08.1882	Gascoyne	Influenza
Yaujojuanna	12.08.1882	Upper Gascoyne	"
Winduogooga	16.08.1882	Upper Gascoyne	"
Gjillgorra	7.09.1882	Upper Gascoyne	"
Tuba On	24.09.1882	Upper Murchison	Enteritis
Wingamurda	22.09.1882	Upper Murchison	"
Withagoora	22.09.1882	Upper Murchison	"
Gaurhillia	20.12.1882	Fitzroy River	Executed
Ven-mee	1883	Gascoyne	Not Recorded
Darvey	1883	York	"
Jimmy	1883	Geraldton	"
Karrabba	1883	La Grange Bay	"
Bundanga	1883	Murchison	"
Mosey	1883	Gascoyne	"
Farrody	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Muntha	1883	Upper Gascoyne	"
Kidellarie	1883	Upper Gascoyne	"
Cabing	1883	Upper Gascoyne	"
Toolapi	1883	Pyramid Str. Pilbara	"
Ebenezer	1883	Pyramid Str. Pilbara	"
Bob Lang	1883	Pyramid Str. Pilbara	"
Georgy	1883	Asburton River	"
Warraroo	1883	Gascoyne	"
Billy	1883	Roebourne	"
Johny	1883	Gascoyne	"
Mundgoo	1883	Gascoyne	"
Yarra	1883	Gascoyne	"
Yararie	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Benogu	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Illegowra	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Judie	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Willbeangoona	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Winyela	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Nellyerloo	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Jenna Jackine	1883	Upper Murchison	"
Mereaburnie	1883	Gascoyne	"
Marger	1883	Gascoyne	"
Jemee	1883	Gascoyne	"
Yadygoora	1883	Upper Gascoyne	"
Dubda biddie	1883	Upper Gascoyne	"
Murragowra	1883	Manilya River/Gascoyne	"
Meanobby	1883	Manilya River/Gascoyne	"
Joobagoora	1883	Manilya River/Gascoyne	"
Stillts	1883	Esperance Bay	"

NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
Yongourbiddle	1883	Gascoyne	Not Recorded
Tommy	1883	Gascoyne	"
Naneatrow	13.07.1883	Gascoyne	Executed
Bluey	16.11.1883	Bunbury	Drowned
Number	6.01.1884	Upper Murchison	Conjection of lungs
Wyartha	3.02.1884	Upper Murchison	Old age
Wingela	15.02.1884	Upper Murchison	Rheumatism
Jinganulla	12.04.1884	Upper Murchison	Old age
Bippool	21.05.1884	Albany	Influenza
Booregnoon	4.06.1884	Albany	"
Doorah	15.04.1884	Albany	"
Gegger	15.06.1884	Albany	Congestion of lungs
Oniere	15.07.1884	Upper Murchison	Rheumatism
Jungerra	20.07.1884	Upper Murchison	Old age
Mearugundy	21.07.1884	Upper Murchison	Rheumatism
Wyjart	11.08.1884	Upper Murchison	"
Gangagoroo	22.08.1884	Upper Murchison	"
Dirie	14.09.1884	Gascoyne	"
Munderberry	2.05.1885	Fraser Range/Albany	Drowned
Thally Bygalgoo	16.10.1885	Upper Murchison	Old age
Mergalu, Alfred	7.05.1886	Victoria Plains	Influenza
Nadging, Dingo	18.05.1886	Upper Murchison	"
Waller	18.05.1886	Upper Murchison	"
Sambo Jumbo	20.05.1886	Roebourne	"
Wyodah	21.05.1886	Upper Murchison	"
Eulmen	23.05.1886	Gascoyne	"
Geslu	11.06.1886	Gascoyne	"
Sambo	28.06.1886	Irwin River	"
Tommy Jimacrow	28.10.1886	Toodjay	"
Ben Ben	2.04.1887	Williams	"
Woberdiene	15.05.1887	Upper Gascoyne	"
Wildadgee	17.06.1887	Fraser Range/Albany	"
Kyser	1.09.1887	Roebourne	"
Wyarda	10.10.1887	Fraser Ranger/Albany	Inflamation of lung
Mangrove	23.12.1887	Roebourne	"
Gingeree	13.03.1888	Albany	Diseased kidney
Carlabangunburra	13.06.1888	Roebourne	Executed
Weilbine, Charlie	18.08.1888	York	Ruptured liver
Munderong	4.03.1892	Hemersley Range	Liver disease
Windarra	19.04.1892	Hemersley Range	Syphillis
Mawry	16.07.1892	Upper Gascoyne	Diarrhoea

NAME	DATE OF DEATH	DISTRICT OF ORIGIN	CAUSE OF DEATH
Johnny Kallinbandy	21.01.1893	Gascoyne	Drowned
Milgenah	21.01.1893	Gascoyne	"
Martajewarra	21.01.1893	Gascoyne	"
Winning	21.01.1893	Gascoyne	"
Mullagible Jack	19.03.1893	Roebourne	Lung disease
Nardurabin	19.08.1893	Roebourne	" "
Fred	16.02.1894	Kimberley	Lund disease
Jalgoons	19.05.1894	Gascoyne	Cold
Parano	12.10.1894	Roebourne	Pneumonia
Jupiter	21.04.1895	Roebourne	"
Yalachana	10.06.1897	Carnarvon	Senility
Orgran	24.07.1897	Derby	Congestion of lungs
Mujar	25.07.1897	Carnarvon	"
Waiagenie	26.07.1897	Wyndham	"
Captain	26.07.1897	Derby	"
Moondue	27.07.1897	Wyndham	"
Charlie Ghow	27.07.1897	Roebourne	"
Numberine	28.07.1897	Derby	"
Bulong	28.07.1897	Wyndham	"
Earrwarrie	29.07.1897	Lawlers	"
Quizgin	30.07.1897	Wyndham	"
Carolm	30.07.1897	Fitzroy Crossing	"
Carabang	1.08.1897	Wyndham	"
Macuinba	1.08.1897	Wyndham	"
Sandalwood	4.08.1897	York	Senility
Thorgee	6.08.1897	Wyndham	Influenza
Mindic	6.08.1897	Lawlers	Senility
Doalaga	6.08.1897	Derby	Pneumonia
Valderaganna	12.08.1897	Derby	"
Daddy	14.08.1897	Roebourne	"
Mugla	18.08.1897	Lawlers	"
Urment	29.08.1897	Roebourne	Paralysis
Yardarrie	10.10.1897	Roebourne	Pneumonia
Mardinga	16.10.1897	Roebourne	"
Robert	11.10.1897	Roebourne	"
Njiger	22.12.1897	Carnarvon	Liver complaint
Bulwaring	15.04.1898	Wyndham	Pneumonia
Balloraba	15.05.1898	Carnarvon	Senility
Narderook	12.07.1898	Roebourne	Pneumonia

Register of Natives

MOOREHEAD Bay of ...  
1.1.1899.  
SOURCE Archives - Perth  
L.B.

No.	Name	Date - Warrant Received	Date - Discharge or Release	Date Discharged
1	Gmarling & Dickert	18-9-94 (Ct. Sec)	R-4-9-1901	
2	Quander Jimmy	12-2-95 pt	R-29-1-1902	Jan 31-1902
3	Laban - Willie	12-2-95 pt	R-29-1-1902	Jan 31-1902
4	Jack Yoran	30-4-95 Judge Stone	R-23-4-1903	
5	Paddy Barber	7-5-95 great (Ct. Sec)	D-19-4-1902	Jan 2-1-99
6	Bonman Mick	7-5-95 great (Ct. Sec)	D-19-4-1902	10-4-1901
7	Doolabunga Larn	20-8-95 great (Ct. Sec)	D-7-8-1902	
8	Carlagora Knight	20-8-95 great (Ct. Sec)	D-7-8-1902	
9	Lalungo C Jimmy	8-10-95 great (Ct. Sec)	R-23-9-1902	
10	Jundah C Tommy	7-12-95 pt	D-30-9-1902	
11	Downbin	14-3-95 ginalah	D-23-10-1902	Jan 24-1903
12	Bingara C Joe	5-6-95 kiple	R-23-5-1903	
13	Congerland	8-9-95 (Ct. Sec)	R-15-7-1903	
14	Maryamara C Charles	8-9-95 (Ct. Sec)	R-15-7-1903	
15	Witowanda	22-9-95 (Ct. Sec)	R-15-7-1903	
16	Carringona C Charles	22-9-95 galsch	D-12-5-1901	
17	Kotalong	27-11-95 Pearsle	D-23-10-99	26-10-99
18	Munbin C Peter	21-1-95 (Ct. Sec)	R-8-12-1903	
19	Beeroo C Jimmy	9-6-95 (Ct. Sec)	D-10-6-99	13-6-99
20	Windmar C Freddy	13-7-95 (Ct. Sec)	R-16-6-1904	
21	Johnny Michael	13-7-95 (Ct. Sec)	R-16-6-1904	
22	Limbong	31-8-95 Pearsle	D-2-10-99	12-9-99
23	Yamie C Corolla	31-8-95 Pearsle	D-2-10-99	12-9-99
24	Windoring	31-8-95 Pearsle	D-2-10-99	12-9-99
25	Pillil	31-8-95 Pearsle	D-29-6-99	13-6-99
26	Bundilman C Leo	31-8-95 -	D-7-5-99	2-5-99
27	Wenjae C Cochrane	21-9-95 (Ct. Sec)	R-23-8-1904	
28	Jimmy	21-9-95 (Ct. Sec)	R-21-7-1904	
29	Pearse	10-6-95 Pearsle	D-21-8-1904	

APPENDIX F

WITNESS STATEMENT ON LOCATION OF ABORIGINAL BURIAL GROUND ON ROTTNEST ISLAND

My name is JAMES JOHN ALEXANDER O'DONOGHUE.  
I reside at 61 Kitchener Street, Victoria Park, Western Australia.  
I was born on the fifteenth of May, eighteen ninety four. (15-5-1894).  
From the age of three weeks, I was raised and educated on Rottnest Island.

My father was John James O'Donoghue, chief warden of the aboriginal prison from the mid 1890's until its closure in 1903.  
I saw deceased aboriginal prisoners being layed to rest on Rottnest in a cemetery. Today this area is known as "Tentland".

This cemetery was about one hundred yards square and was situated in the north-eastern corner of the area now known to me as "Tentland".  
Its eastern border was about thirty yards west of the road that ran from the old gaol to the "Basin".

I would describe the centre of this cemetery as being two hundred yards to the north, north-west of the aboriginal hospital.  
I know of no other aboriginal cemetery on Rottnest Island.

This statement is true and correct.

*J. O. Donoghue*  
.....  
JAMES JOHN ALEXANDER O'DONOGHUE.

*A. S. Mitchell*  
.....  
WITNESS. 10/11/90

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 ROTTNESST ISLAND

 ABORIGINAL PRISONERS CEMETERY
 

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## PREAMBLE

As a permanent reminder of the impact of European settlement the Rottnesst Island Aboriginal Prisoners Cemetery is a powerful tool which can be cited as the major "deaths in custody" example in the history of the State and be a foundation in the argument for reconciliation. Its potency had been lost for many years because the colonial authorities dismantled and neglected the Cemetery.

This submission details the history of the Cemetery, the current situation and future action. Expenditure to date and costs for the next stages are also listed. The Department of Aboriginal Sites and the Rottnesst Island Authority believe it appropriate that ATSI support the initiatives outlined and request \$120,000 to undertake the Ground Probing Radar (phase 4) and initial clearance of the Cemetery area.



More than 3500 Aboriginal men were imprisoned on Rottnesst and 364 of them died.

Submission to ATSI State Advisory Council  
by Department of Aboriginal Sites  
and Rottnesst Island Authority  
October 1992.

BACKGROUND

The History in brief is as follows:

1838-1903 Some three and a half thousand Aboriginal men from throughout the State were imprisoned on Rottnest for offences against the imposed colonial laws; spearing a sheep, burning the bush, taking flour, killing a shepherd, running away from employer. At least 364 died as a result and most are buried at the Cemetery.

Edward Watson who lived on the island from about 1880 - 1900 gave as his recollection in 1937 "The graveyard was about fifty yards in diameter and was enclosed by a cobble stone wall. In it grew many large cypress trees".

1903 - 1970 All trace of the Cemetery disappeared.

1970 As many as ten burials were exposed when a deep sewerage line was installed at the junction of Nifty Terrace and Bourke Highway. The disturbed remains were reburied at the site and the incident was not made public.

1984 - 1985 The document outlining Rottnest Island Management Plan was commenced. A copy of part of Watson's manuscript was found and, together with first hand information from one of the men who helped dig the sewerage line, the whereabouts of the Cemetery was estimated. Recommendations for future action were included in the Management Plan:

"Rec. 10:26 In consultation with the WA Museum and the Local Aboriginal Community, the Aboriginal burial area should be acknowledged by an on site plaque, explaining the background to, and importance of the area.

Rec. 10:27 No further disturbance to the burial site should occur, except to maintain existing service lines.

Rec. 10:28 The R.I.B in consultation with the WA Museum and local Aboriginal groups should prepare a history of the burial site to be used in education interpretation programmes".

Consultation with the National Aboriginal Conference was initiated with limited success.

1987 Plans by AB-Music to hold a 1988 Bi-centennial Protest Concert and erect a commemorative plaque at the site failed to get off the ground.

1988 March A major demonstration of some 250 Aboriginal people, headed by Mr Robert Bropho, protested over the need to protect and commemorate the Cemetery. The Minister responsible for Rottnest, the Hon Pam Beggs MIA, gave an undertaking that the Government would consult with Aboriginal people on this issue. A further commitment to the possible establishment of an Interpretive Centre to provide visitors with an Aboriginal perspective of the Island's history was made.

The Department of Aboriginal Sites (DAS) along with the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority (AAPA), the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and the Rottnest Island Authority (RIA) decided to proceed with the commitments made by the Hon Minister for Tourism. This included informal consultation particularly between Joseph Wallam of DAS and metropolitan people (eg, Len Culbong, Clarrie Isaacs).

April Letters co-signed by the Minister for Tourism, and the Hon Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Ernie Bridge were sent to all Aboriginal Affairs Consultative Committees requesting nominations for a representative Aboriginal group to discuss appropriate protection and commemorative proposals. There was no formal response to these letters.

To maintain progress the Aboriginal Advisory Council (AAC) was requested to nominate representatives to advise on the implementation of the project. Mr Robert Bropho was invited to participate on this reference group.

1989 Jan At the first meeting of the group Mr Robert Bropho attended in the company of approximately 40 others to protest vigorously at the nature of the consultative process. The reference group was consequently disbanded though informal consultation continued, as described above, with the newly formed Rottnest Island Deaths Group (RIDG).

March RIDG forwarded a submission seeking funds for the research of the Aboriginal history of Rottnest Island and the organisation of a conference on the Island involving 500 Aboriginal delegates from throughout the state.

June	Concerns about the expense, practicality and effectiveness of such a large conference led the Hon Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Carmen Lawrence, to seek consultation on a regional basis and the proposal for a consultant was endorsed by AAC.	Nov	An area, roughly coinciding with the area identified in the initial report, was taped off in readiness for the GPR survey and to block the roads to vehicles.
Sept	Mr Ken Winder was appointed, to consult with Aboriginal people around the State about the recognition, commemoration and protection of the Aboriginal heritage of Rottnest Island.	Dec	Proposals 2 - 5 above are contingent on accurately identifying the boundary of the Cemetery. A trial 50m x 20m area was surveyed using GPR with funds provided by AAPA and RIA.
Nov	Mr Ken Winder's report was submitted. It included research on the Aboriginal history of the Island, indicated widespread interest, and recommended further consultation.	1991 Jan	The Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, following a request from RIDG, commissioned Prof. Richard Wright to report on the Rottnest Island burials situation.
1990 April	The Premier and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs wrote to 319 Aboriginal Communities throughout the state seeking input on a suitable form of commemoration, only 9 replies were received.  Informal consultation continued with meetings between DAS, AAPA, ATSIC, RIA and a representative of RIDG, Mr Graham Merritt.		Late in the month the results of the GPR trial were received and showed anomalies extrapolated to be burials, based primarily on the evidence of the exposure of graves in 1970. Further GPR work was planned.
June	Attempts to use modern technology to identify the extent of the Cemetery without disturbing the ground were carried out. None of the methods available proved capable of fulfilling the task.	March	Phase 2 of the GPR survey was conducted.
July	Ground Probing Radar (GPR), now known to be available in Australia, was suggested as a means to identify the boundary of the Cemetery and DAS sought funds to undertake a survey.	May	Prof. Wright's report broadly supported the progress to date, but argued that formal protection under the Aboriginal Heritage Act (State) should be initiated and that sensitive excavation be used to validate the GPR interpretations.
Oct	RIDG organised a conference of Aboriginal elders from throughout the State for which ATSIC provided funds. The conference concluded by making the following proposals:  "1. To cease all work at the jail as it constitutes an Aboriginal death site. 2. To close off all roads over the Aboriginal graves and burial site. 3. Houses on Aboriginal graves have got to be removed. 4. Tentland where dead bodies are laying has got to be turned into parkland. 5. The same on the strips where dead bodies are laying."	July	The phase 2 GPR results provided more evidence of the extent of the Cemetery and a temporary fence of barrier tape, chain and moveable standards was erected.
		Oct	The results were used to endeavour to reach agreement on a boundary for the Cemetery. However; RIA challenged sections of the boundary because of two sets of anomalies, both close to buildings, arguing validation was needed as they may be pits for building rubble for example. RIDG challenged the boundary because some portions of Tentland had not been examined, arguing that there might be a second Cemetery or an extension of the core Cemetery which has already been substantially located.
		1992 Jan	Temporarily Protected Area (TPA) status under the Aboriginal Heritage Act was gazetted for 6 months to afford the protection recommended by the ATSIC report and allow time to resolve the boundary question.

May Phase 3 of the GPR was undertaken with funding from AAPA.

June The TPA gazettal was renewed for a further 6 months.

July The phase 3 GPR results were once again used in an attempt to finalise a boundary but without success. Plans were made to carry out more GPR work in November, especially in Tentland and at two other sites, the Rottnest Island Cemetery (European) and Mogumber Cemetery (Aboriginal) to provide validation of the anomaly signatures that have been interpreted as graves at the core Cemetery.

August Mr Graham Merritt was appointed to the DAS staff to enhance liaison with the Aboriginal Community and progress the project. A meeting was held to inform the Aboriginal community of the current situation, a number of resolutions resulted which DAS agreed to draw to the attention of the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs:

- "1. Register the whole of Tentland as an Aboriginal site and put Temporarily Protected Area Status on it as soon as possible.
2. Remove huts/houses from Tentland and near the core of the Cemetery at the intersection. The Government to re-examine the original five resolutions from the Aboriginal meeting held in October 1990.
3. Recommend to the Minister that more money be provided to DAS for Ground Probing Radar work to be carried out on Tentland quickly. Also to apply to ATSIC for funding.
4. The Quod be turned into an Aboriginal Museum.
5. An invitation be sent to Premier Carmen Lawrence, Minister Judyth Watson and all relevant Ministers (e.g Pam Beggs) to meet with the Aboriginal people to discuss the concerns of Rottnest within two (2) months. A copy of the invitation to be sent to the Governor.

6. The Government close Rottnest down so we (the Aboriginal people) can 'do our job in peace'.
7. DAS to obtain all relevant information on Rottnest which includes maps, gaol records 1903-32, memoirs, army records and research."

Informal meetings between DAS, RIA and ATSIC resulted in a willingness to accept a revised but still temporary boundary and, in broad agreement with the Aboriginal viewpoint, fence the area off with a more stable fence and more adequate signage. In principle agreement to move the buildings, create a Commemorative Precinct (including Interpretive Centre) and build in a realistic Aboriginal stakeholding was also reached. ←

Sept The above agreements were referred to the Hon Minister for Tourism, Pam Beggs, and the Hon Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Judyth Watson, who discussed them in a meeting with DAS, RIA and ATSIC representatives and generally confirmed the agreements.

Members of the Aboriginal community who attended the August 12 meeting were circulated with information on the progress and asked to respond if they had concerns.

Oct Some concerns were raised as it was misconstrued that the more stable fence and improved signage were final steps. These misunderstandings were clarified and the fence and signs have been erected.

An Aboriginal artist, Ms Naomi Mills, has been commissioned by DAS to prepare concept plans of the Commemorative Precinct for consideration by the Aboriginal community in an endeavour to progress the final stages of this project.

#### CURRENT SITUATION

##### Clearing the Cemetery Area

The RIA have indicated a willingness to remove the buildings from the Cemetery, where it can be shown they do encroach, and to relocate services (eg power, 1st and 2nd grade water, sewerage, telephones and paths/roadways) subject to funding being acquired for the purpose. It is possible for four of the buildings to be relocated almost in their entirety. It is argued the Gardeners Cottage be upgraded and remain in situ with a purpose appropriate to the final plan. Although no decision has been made regarding the future of the Single Quarters, should it be decided to remove the building, it would be necessary to demolish it as it is built on a concrete pad. It is not feasible to relocate most of the services till a final plan is agreed by all groups.

##### Planning a Commemorative Precinct

Many ideas for a Commemorative Precinct have already been expressed. They range from:

Minimal alteration - this may include landscaping to create a parkland and possibly a suitable barrier to limit access to the area which contains graves.

Restoration - this option envisages the reconstruction of a low wall and planting of a cypress grove.

Memorial - this could include a monument displaying the names of those who died.

The artists representations prepared by Ms Naomi Mills show two possible combinations of the above, one being public access the other no access.

Consecrating the Precinct by the performance of an appropriate ceremony has been suggested by many people.

All options could include an Interpretive Centre either close to the site, incorporated with other Island facilities or on its own.

To ensure the ongoing maintenance of the Precinct and Centre Aboriginal people would be trained and employed and the enterprise would be controlled by them. Ideas for the Centre include, interactive displays telling the Aboriginal history of the Island, guided tours of sites, meeting room/theatre for talks/films, a commercial outlet for Aboriginal products (eg, books, music, art), research facilities and archival storage for material relevant to the Island's Aboriginal history.

#### FUTURE ACTION

##### Implement Clearance of Cemetery Area

The tasks outlined under Current Situation can be commenced at relatively short notice provided funding can be obtained and Aboriginal people agree to vehicles working within the core Cemetery to carry out the work. A final decision concerning the Single Quarters may have to wait on the willingness of RIA to accept the GPR interpretations.

##### Creation of Commemorative Precinct and Interpretive Centre

The concepts outlined under Current Situation must be considered by as many interested Aboriginal people as possible (ideally through the ATSIC network) and other ideas should be added. Decisions on what is to occur should be made by an appropriate forum (eg, a conference, the State Advisory council, members of RIDG). When the conceptual plan is finalised and has Ministerial approval, funding must be sought and the creation of the Commemorative Precinct and Interpretive Centre can commence.



Cemetery showing huts to be removed.



EXPENDITURE

To date a considerable sum has been expended on this project:

AATSI	1990	Conference at Rottnest and Manguri.
	1991	Investigation and report by Richard Wright.
	Ongoing	Salaries and functional costs.
DAS	1984/85	Initial report.
	1985	Consultation with NAC
	1988-1992	Informal consultation
	1990/91/92	GPR surveys ancillary expenditure
	1991	Production of information sheet
	1991	Provision of temporary fence
	1992	Provisions of stable fence and signs.
	Ongoing	Salaries and functional costs.
RIA	1990/91	GPR 1 & 2 contribution of \$10,000
	Ongoing	Salaries and functional costs.
AAPA	1989	Consultancy and
	1989/90	Employment of Research Officer costing c.\$50,000.
	1990/91	GPR 1 & 2 Contribution of \$10,400
	1991	GPR 3 plus brochure & signs \$18,500
	Ongoing	Salaries and functional costs.

ESTIMATE OF FUNDING REQUIRED

1992	GPR Phase 4	
a)	Rottnest - (i)finalise eastern boundary, (ii)finalise western boundary, (iii)examine portions of Tentland, (iv)validation test Rottnest Island Cemetery (European).	←
	Equip hire and operators fee	7,800.00
	Consultant and assistant fees.	2,400.00
	Processing and reports	4,000.00
	Aboriginal employment	1,000.00
	RIDG observers	350.00
	Accommodation	1,500.00
	Fares	350.00
	Supplies	250.00
b)	Mogumber - validation test at Mogumber Cemetery	
	Equip hire and operators fee	2,800.00
	Consultant and assistant fees.	800.00
	Processing and reports	1,500.00
	Aboriginal employment	600.00
	WAC observers	400.00
	Accommodation	1,000.00
	Vehicle mileage	200.00
	Supplies	50.00
	SUB-TOTAL	25,000.00
1992/93	Clearance of Cemetery area	
	Hut B11 Relocate building, Remove pad/fences/paving, and seal off services.	3,000.00
	Rebuild wet areas	5,000.00
	Reconnect services	9,000.00
	Hut B12 as for B11	3,000.00
	Hut B9 as for B11	20,000.00
	Hut B10 as for B11	20,000.00
	Gardeners Hut	
	Remove old additions	4,500.00
	Secure	1,500.00
	Make good roof	4,000.00
	Roadway Rip and skim bitumen and limestone base.	3,000.00
	Cover area with soil.	2,000.00
	SUB-TOTAL	95,000.00
	TOTAL	\$ 120,000.00

**FUTURE FUNDING REQUIREMENTS**

1993/94 Further Clearance of Cemetery Area - to be costed later, subject to final concept plan.

Single Quarters	Demolish. Remove materials Remove fences/paving
Relocate Services	Power 1st & 2nd grade water Sewerage Telephones

1993/94 Commemorative Precinct - to be costed later subject to final concept plan.

Consultation conference or meetings of representatives.	Fares Food Accommodation
Landscaping	Fill Wall/fence Plants
Memorial	Raw materials Art work Transport Erection
Gardeners Cottage	Renovation Furnishing
Ceremony	Fares Food Accommodation

1993/94 Interpretive Centre - to be costed later, subject to final concept plan.

Building	Design Build Furnish
Staff	Salaries Accommodation Travel costs Overheads Functional costs
Displays	Design Materials Preparation Installation
Tours	Uniforms Brochures Technical equip-tapes, videos etc
Commercial Outlet	Furniture Equip-Computer, cash register, safe Shelving
Research Facility	Resources - books, photos Storage facilities Equipment and furniture

**FUTURE FUNDING REQUIREMENTS**

1993/94 Further Clearance of Cemetery Area - to be costed later, subject to final concept plan.

Single Quarters	Demolish. Remove materials Remove fences/paving
Relocate Services	Power 1st & 2nd grade water Sewerage Telephones

1993/94 Commemorative Precinct - to be costed later subject to final concept plan.

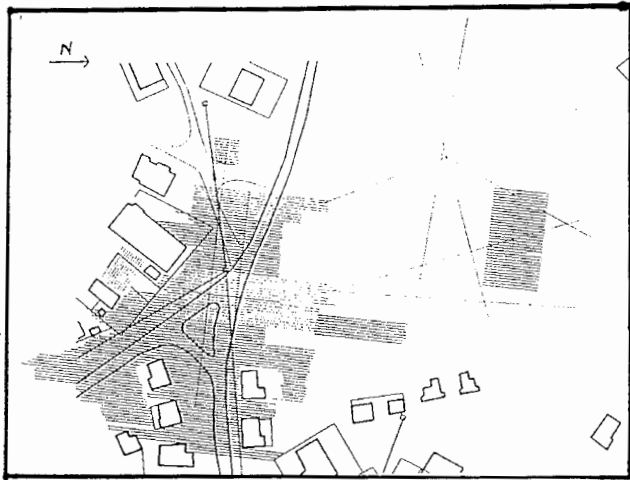
Consultation conference or meetings of representatives.	Fares Food Accommodation
Landscaping	Fill Wall/fence Plants
Memorial	Raw materials Art work Transport Erection
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Tours	Uniforms Brochures Technical equip-tapes, videos etc
Commercial Outlet	Furniture Equip-Computer, cash register, safe Shelving
Research Facility	Resources - books, photos Storage facilities Equipment and furniture

**REQUEST**

In order to make realistic progress on this extremely important project the Department of Aboriginal Sites and Rottneest Island Authority request the ATSIAC State Advisory Council to favourably consider this submission and make available, in the first instance, \$ 120,000.00

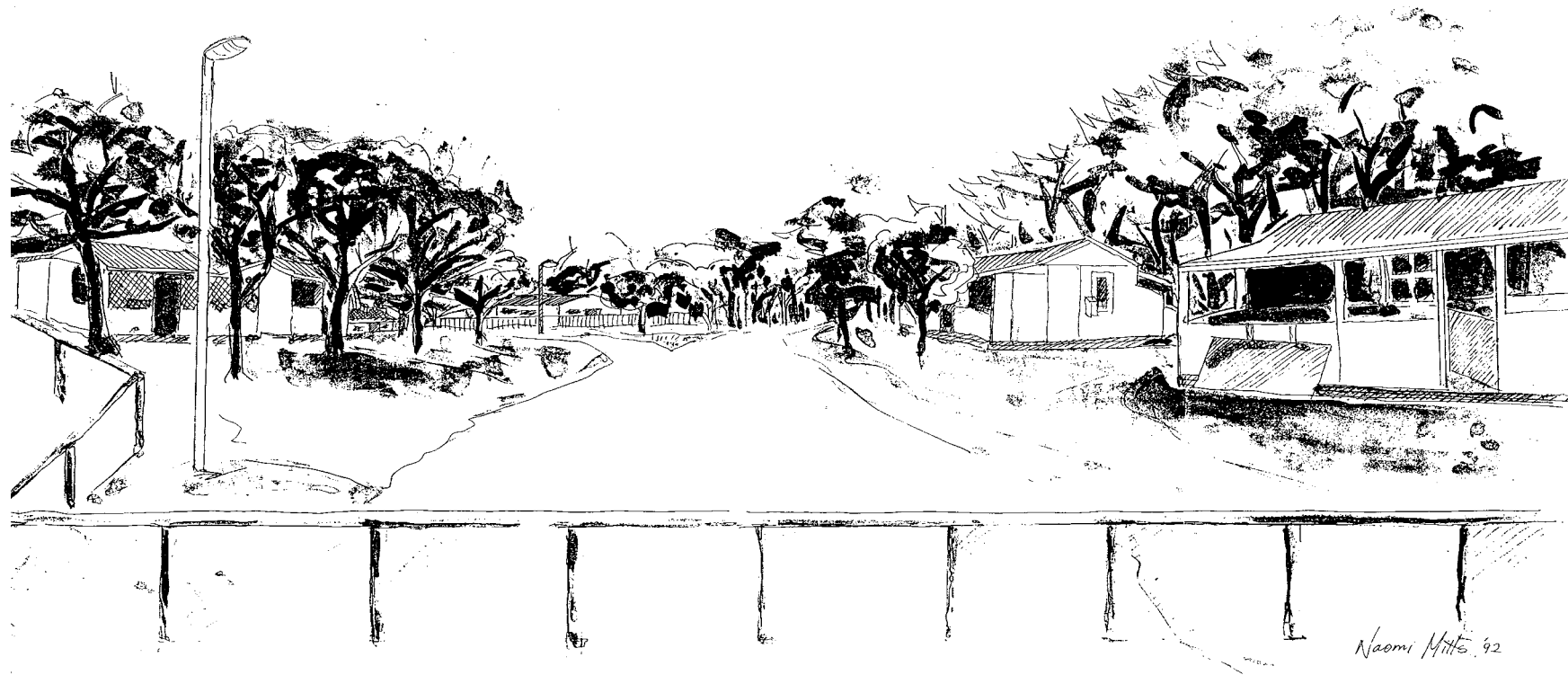


Locality map showing Ground Probing Radar, Phases 1-3.

/usr/lizc/rotnnest15-10

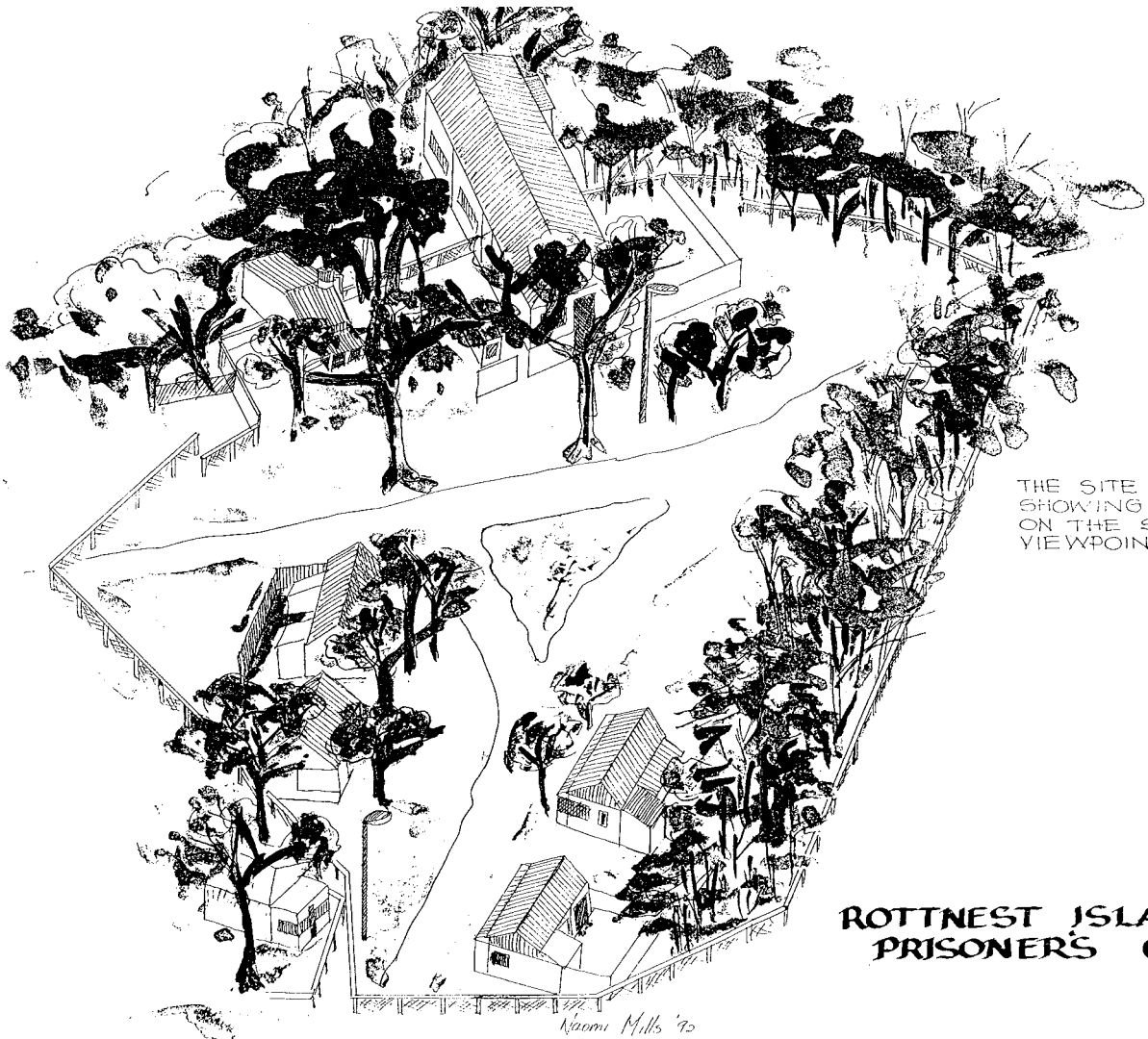


APPENDIX H DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL SITES AND ROTTNESST ISLAND AUTHORITY ABORIGINAL BURIAL GROUND SITE CONCEPTS 1992



THE SITE AS IT EXISTS AT PRESENT, SHOWING ALL THE BUILDINGS THAT ARE ON THE SITE FROM A GROUND PERSPECTIVE.

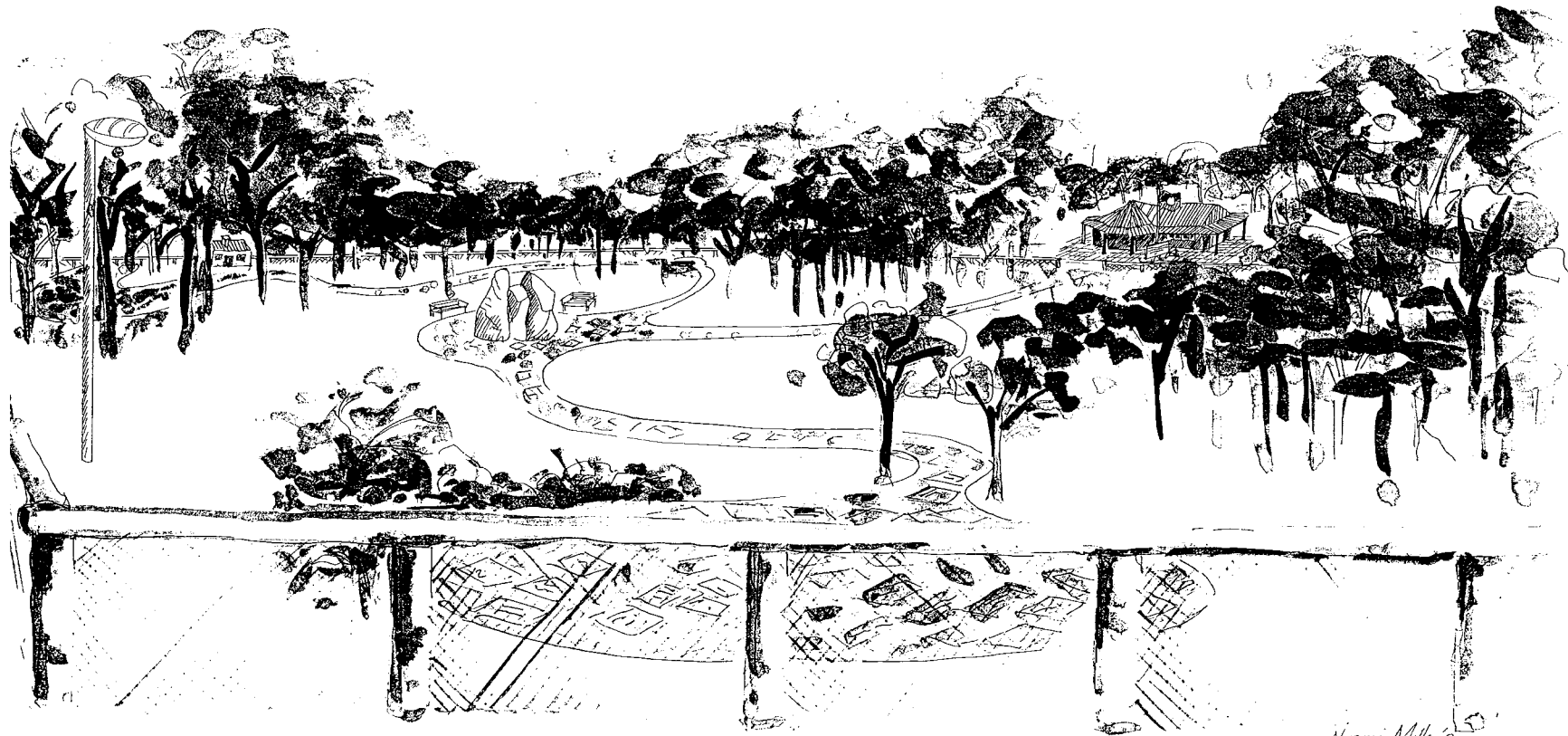
**ROTTNEST ISLAND ABORIGINAL PRISONER'S CEMETERY.**



THE SITE AS IT EXISTS AT PRESENT,  
SHOWING ALL BUILDINGS THAT ARE  
ON THE SITE, FROM AN AXONOMETRIC  
VIEWPOINT.

**ROTTNEEST ISLAND ABORIGINAL  
PRISONERS CEMETERY.**

*Naomi Mills '92*



THE FUTURE : OPTION 1

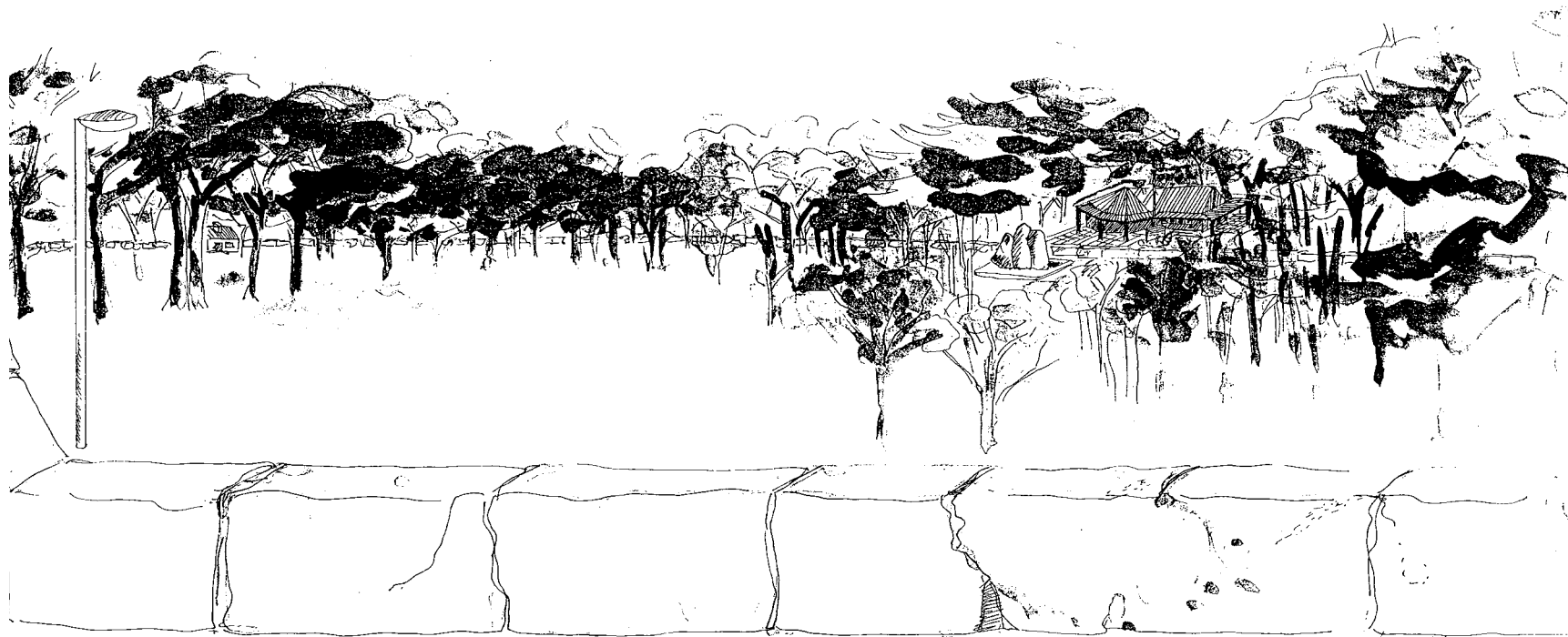
THE SITE IS DESIGNED TO FACILITATE PUBLIC ACCESS ALONG A CARE-FULLY DESIGNED PATHWAY THAT MOVES BETWEEN KNOWN GRAVES. INLAID ALONG THE PATHWAY ARE MEMORIAL STONES. THESE HAVE THE NAMES OF THE PRISONERS THAT DIED, INSCRIBED ON THEM. AT THE CENTRE OF THE SITE IS A MEMORIAL SCULPTURE. ACCESS TO THE SITE IS VIA THE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE.

**ROTTNEST ISLAND ABORIGINAL PRISONERS CEMETERY**



Naomi Mills '92  
THE FUTURE : OPTION 1  
AXONOMETRIC VIEWPOINT, SHOWING THE  
SITE, MEMORIAL SCULPTURE, PATHWAY  
AND INTERPRETIVE CENTRE.

## ROTTNEST ISLAND ABORIGINAL PRISONER'S CEMETERY.



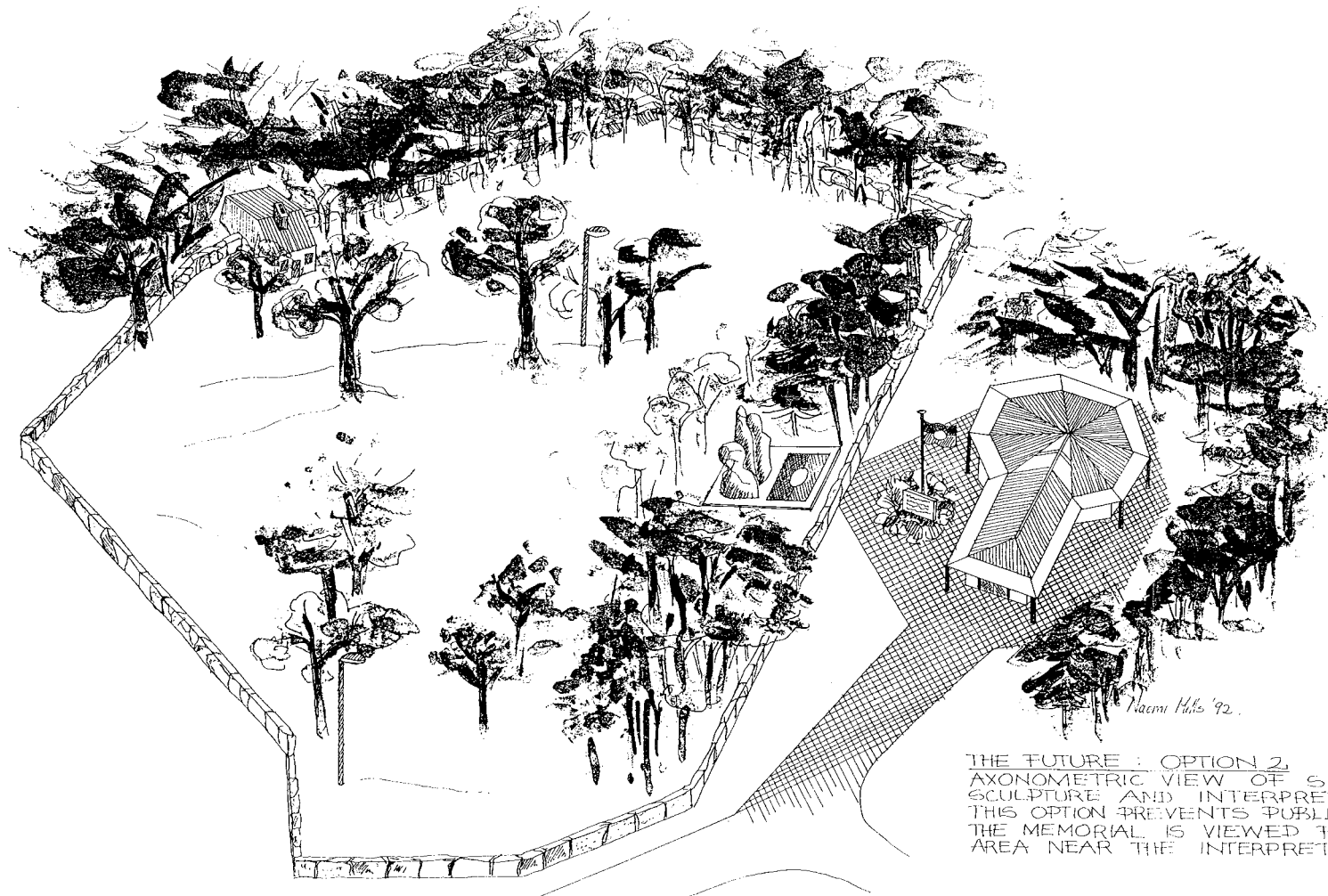
*Naomi Mills '92*

THE FUTURE : OPTION 2

THE SITE IS DESIGNED SO THAT THERE IS NO PUBLIC ACCESS, BY ENCLOSING THE AREA WITH A LOW STONE WALL. A MEMORIAL SCULPTURE LISTING THE NAMES OF THE PRISONERS IS LOCATED OPPOSITE THE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE. THE SITE IS CLEARED, AND JUST LEFT WITH NATURAL VEGETATION.

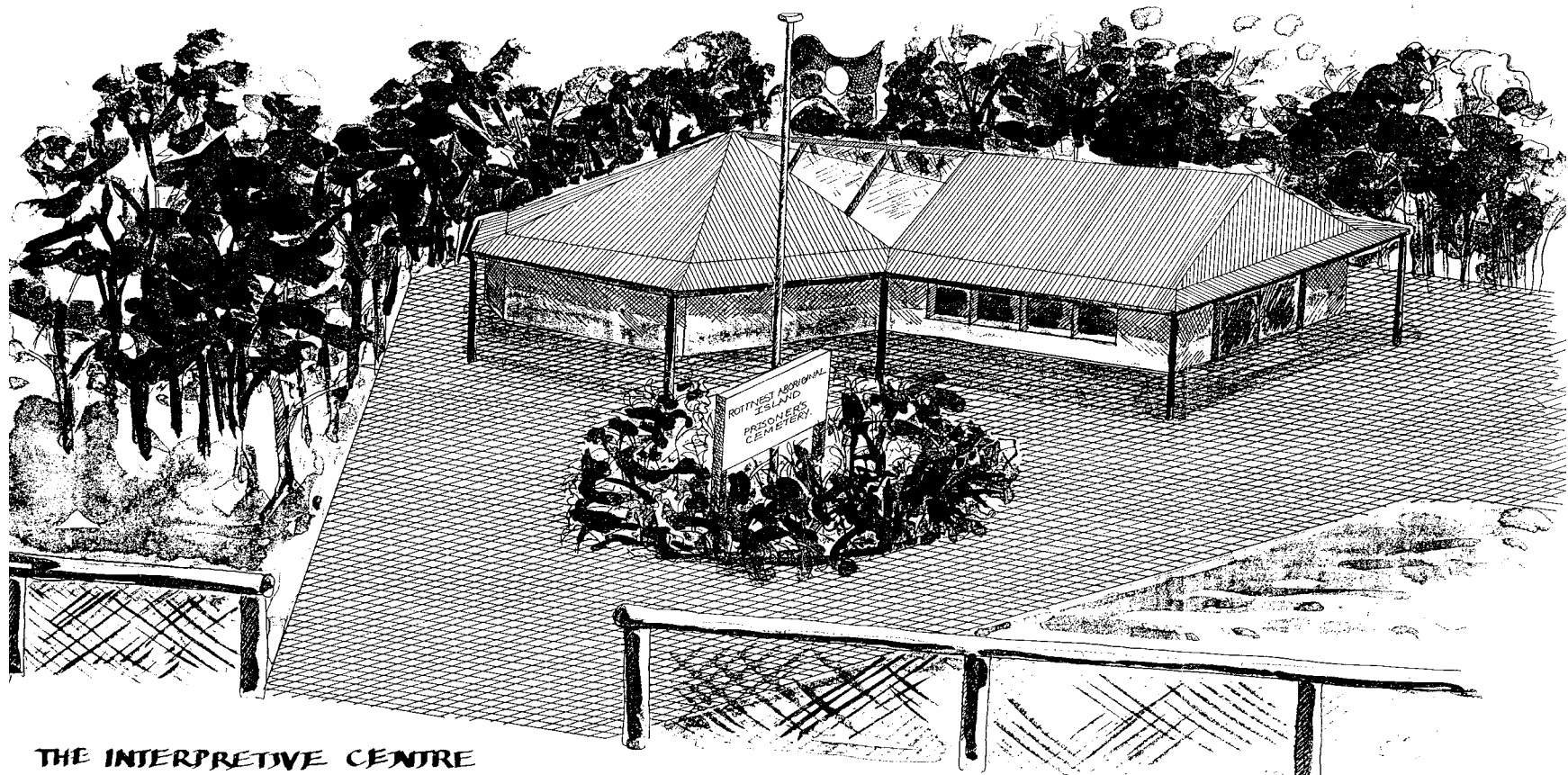
**ROTTNEST ISLAND ABORIGINAL PRISONER'S CEMETERY.**





THE FUTURE : OPTION 2,  
 AXONOMETRIC VIEW OF SITE, MEMORIAL  
 SCULPTURE AND INTERPRETIVE CENTRE  
 THIS OPTION PREVENTS PUBLIC ACCESS  
 THE MEMORIAL IS VIEWED FROM THE  
 AREA NEAR THE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE

**ROTTNEST ISLAND ABORIGINAL PRISONER'S CEMETERY.**



### THE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE

A PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE, VIEWED FROM THE EDGE OF THE MEMORIAL SITE. THE CENTRE WOULD BE A FOCUS POINT OF THE CEMETERY, THAT WOULD EDUCATE THE PUBLIC TO THE HISTORY OF THE SITE AND PROMOTE ABORIGINAL CULTURE IN A POSITIVE MANNER.

### ROTTNEST ISLAND ABORIGINAL PRISONERS' CEMETERY.



Photo credit State Library of WA

## APPENDIX I

# LETTER FROM ATSIC TO THE COUNCIL FOR ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION 1993



W.A. State Office  
268 Adelaide Terrace Perth W.A. 6000  
P.O. Box 0117 East Perth W.A. 6982  
(08) 2203211 Fax: (08) 2213954

File: 92/389/2

Sir Ronald Wilson, AC KBE CMG  
Deputy Chairperson  
Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation  
6B Atkins Road  
Applecross WA 6153

### ROTTNEST ISLAND

#### RECENT BACKGROUND

The issue of Rottnest Island, the Aboriginal prison that was established there and the deaths of between 300-500 Aboriginal prisoners who are buried in a cemetery on the Island needs to be resolved.

It is a matter that Aboriginal people throughout the State feel strongly about. If the wider community was made aware of, and recognised, what actually happened at Rottnest, and appropriate protection for the cemetery and facilities commemorating the past were constructed and managed by Aboriginal people, it would be an important step in the reconciliation process between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

ATSIC funded a Conference on the matter of the Aboriginal cemetery on Rottnest in July 1991. Aboriginal representatives from all regions of WA attended. The representatives were people who had links with those known to be buried at Rottnest.

The Conference resolved that there was a need to:

- clearly establish the extent of the graveyard, and properly protect it;
- to close the Quadrangle and convert it to a commemorative centre;
- to place the graveyard and the Quadrangle under Aboriginal control;
- a group known as the Rottnest Island Deaths Group (RIDG) be established to monitor developments and progress on these issues.

The Quadrangle is at present a part of the Rottnest Lodge, previously owned by Alan Bond, since taken over by the R&I Bank and being run by Receivers. The Quadrangle has been converted into accommodation units (22 units) and a lawn area by the Lodge and if this number of units were closed the Lodge would not be a viable commercial proposition.

In discussion with the Department of Aboriginal Sites (DOAS), and State Ministers Watson and Beggs in early October, 1992, ATSIC suggested that the provision of any funds by ATSIC would depend on a clear indication of the extent:

- of all developments on Rottnest associated with the Aboriginal deaths on the Island;
- that the land where the Cemetery, other recognised burial sites, and associated facilities are located be under Aboriginal control;

- that Aboriginal people are given control of any facilities associated with Aboriginal deaths on the Island;
- of Aboriginal management and employment of all facilities associated with Aboriginal deaths on the Island;
- that full consultation takes place between all involved agencies and a group recognised by the Aboriginal Community to speak on behalf of the above matters.

As the ATSIC State Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting from 26-28 October 1992 Officers of the DOAS presented a Report on the present situation at Rottnest and future proposals and designs for commemorative facilities. A copy of the Report is attached (ATTACHMENT A). Some Perth members of the RIDG have stated that the designs and facilities are not appropriate.

Since this Report further ground probing radar has been undertaken by the Department of Aboriginal Sites to establish the full extent of the cemetery. The State government have also undertaken to move almost all of the buildings that are on the cemetery site.

The Report requests that ATSIC commit itself to the provision of funds in the future for:

- A commemorative centre near the Cemetery;
- An Interpretive Centre near the Cemetery.

The Report does not quantify the funds requested for these projects.

The Report does not make clear what funding and resources other agencies – State and Commonwealth – will provide on this issue.

In past meetings with the Rottnest Island Authority (RIA) and the DOAS it has been made clear that the State government, and its agencies are unable to provide the resources for further Cemetery protection, and rehabilitation, or the associated facilities.

At the SAC meeting it was decided, given that Rottnest is located in the Nyungah region, the Karlkarniny Regional Council will be at the ATSIC Regional Council that all progress reports and other information regarding Rottnest Island, and projects and work associated with Aboriginal deaths on the Island, be channelled through.

As the Rottnest Lodge is in Receiver's hands the WA State Office of ATSIC has asked the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation (ATSICDC) to make enquiries into purchasing it for Aboriginal interests in order that the heritage issues may be addressed, while remaining commercially viable. The ATSICDC have stated that after initial investigation they consider the Lodge, as it stands, a good proposition for investment but need to ensure that there is Aboriginal community support for such an investment and the implications of such a purchase are fully understood by those Aboriginal people who would participate in its management.

#### PRESENT SITUATION

Although there is SAC Meeting from 16-18 February, 1993 the ATSIC State Office is not able to provide a briefing, or recommendations, to it due to a lack of a consensus among community representatives on the extents and type of facilities that would be appropriate.

There is a need to bring together, at a low-key meeting, members of the RIDG, the Karlkarniny Regional Council, interested State and Commonwealth agencies and the ATSICDC to discuss the issues and to formulate a plan and strategy to protect and preserve the cemetery and construct appropriate facilities that are managed by Aboriginal people.

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation can play a vital role in facilitating and chairing such a meeting given the bi-partisan support it receives from major political parties and its position above local politics.

Once a general agreement on what is appropriate for Rottnest can be established by Aboriginal people, either at such a meeting, or follow up meetings, it should be possible to establish a formal committee that could be supported and consulted by ATSIIC and relevant State and Commonwealth agencies to implement the plan.

  
PETER MACKIN  
State Manager  
5 February, 1993

## APPENDIX J

### WADJEMUP BURIAL GROUND CIVIL WORKS 2015

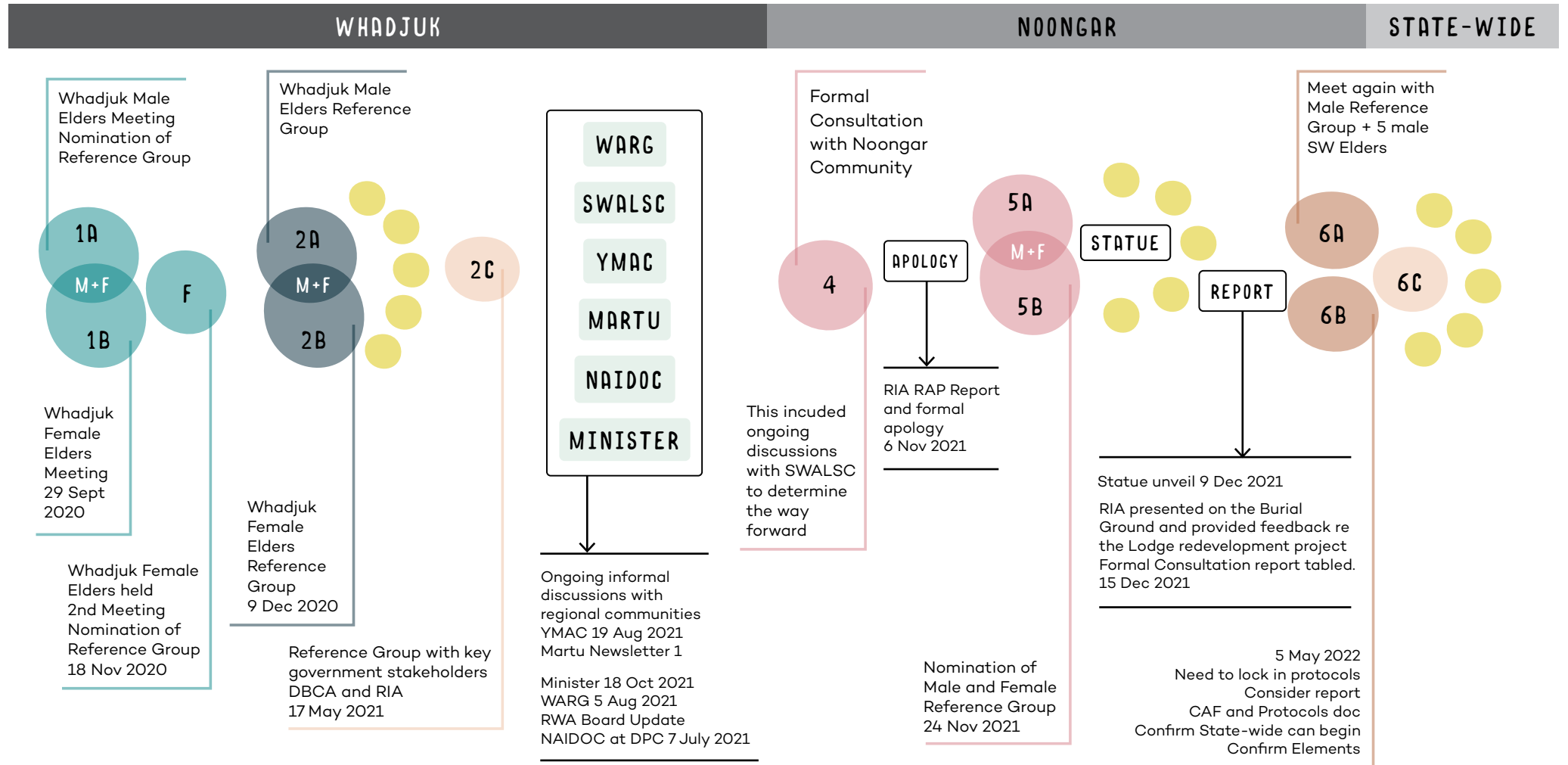
#### Onsite Project Team:

1. Contract Manager & Civil Engineer  
- Dale Blackman
2. Site Supervisor – Ezra Jacobs
3. Labourer & roller operator -Kevin  
Bynder
4. Labourer - Aaron Wilkes
5. Labourer & bobcat operator -  
Adrian Wilkes
6. Labourer & bobcat operator -  
Jamie Miller
7. Labourer - Clinton Wilkes
8. Labourer - Bruce Kearing
9. Labourer - Sam Jacobs
10. Labourer - Elisha Jacobs
11. Labourer - Shannon Kearing
12. Bobcat & Roller operator - Rod Di  
Giuseppe

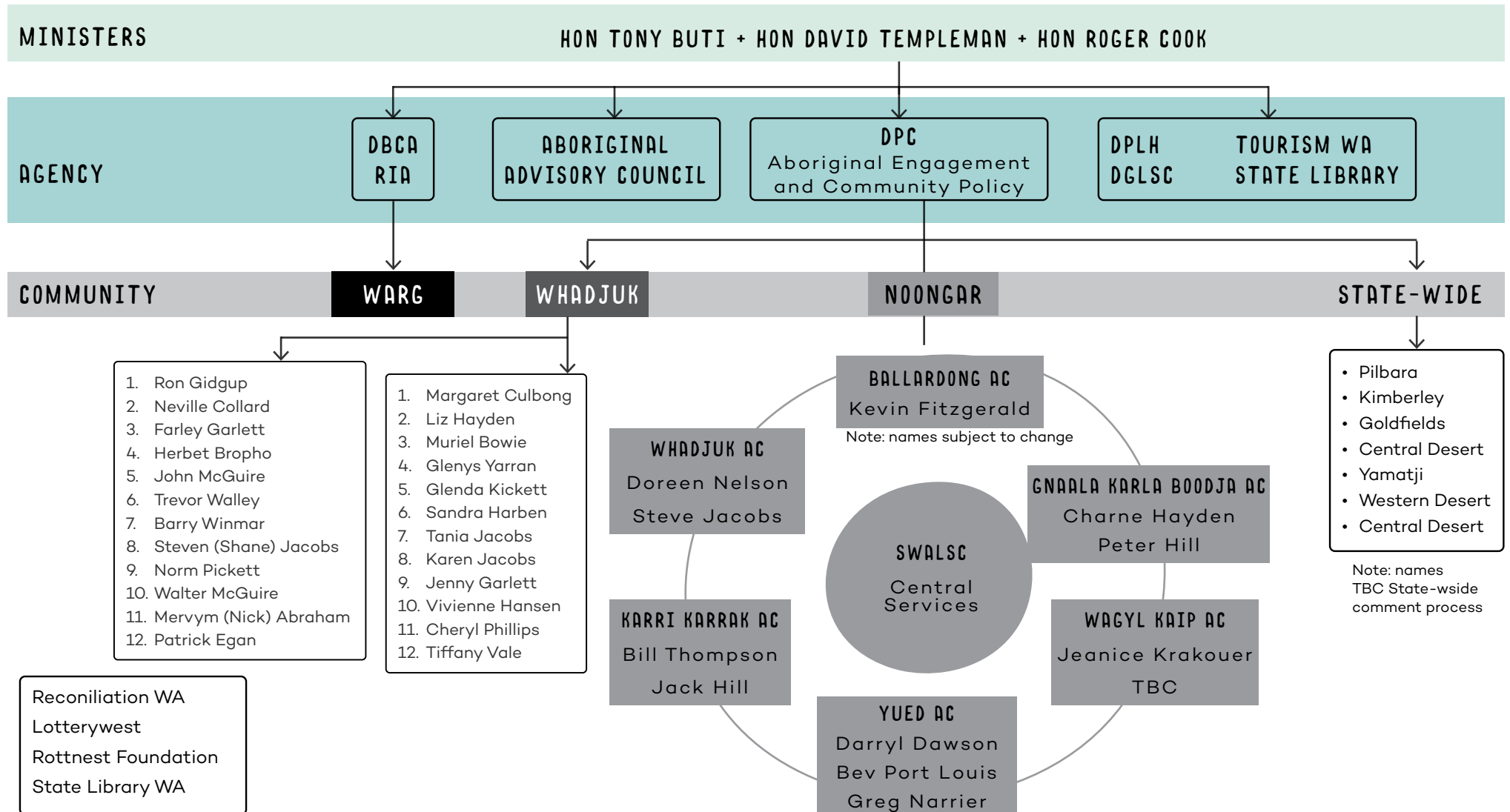
#### Site Monitors

- Cedric Jacobs
- Nigel Wilkes Senior
- Ron Gidgup Senior
- Peter Garlett
- Kevin Cameron - RIDG

APPENDIX K THE ACTUAL PROCESS AS THE PROJECT IS UNFOLDING IN KEEPING WITH BEING LED BY ELDERS



APPENDIX L PROJECT CONNECTIONS FROM COMMUNITY TO GOVERNMENT



## APPENDIX M LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	EXPLANATION
APP	Aboriginal Productions and Promotions
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
GPR	Ground Penetrating Radar
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
LGM	Last Glacial Maximum
NSHA	Noongar Standard Heritage Agreement
RF	Rottnest Foundation
RIA	Rottnest Island Authority
RIDGAC	Rottnest Island Deaths Group Aboriginal Corporation
Settlement	Southwest Native Title Settlement
SWALSC	Southwest Aboriginal Land and Sea Council
WARG	Wadjemup Aboriginal Reference Group
WWCA	Wadjemup Whadjuk Cultural Authority





Image credit TourismWA

