

13 October, 2022

Heritage Council Western Australia
Bairds, Building Level 2/491 Wellington Street
PERTH WA 6000

To whom it may concern,

We, Elders and descendants of the oldest continuing Culture of earth, the rightful and continuing custodians of the lands, waters and skies across Ngoongar Boodja, representing many language groups and speaking on behalf of our families, our kin whose stories we carry forward for future generations, are writing to have our voices heard.

New Norcia was created as a place of violence for our ancestors, and we experience this violence on-going today. We were not invited to tell our story of this place and were shocked to learn of what the Heritage Council of Western Australia is proposing, and whose stories are being shared as "history" as it is not ours. This is not our story of WA and is not our story of New Norcia. We want our truth to be told.

We stand Baldja and reject the Heritage Council's proposal to have New Norcia listed on the State Register of Places without our truth being known, our ancestors' stories being told. We endorse the submission and recommendations within the attached.

Only our people can tell these stories and we can no longer wait for an invitation.

Sincerely,

Elders and descendants of the oldest continuing Culture of earth, of Ngoongar Boodja

THOMAS GARLETT

[Signature]

VINCENT S. RYDER

[Signature]
Nancy Davis

[Signature]
F. DAVIS

JOAN PARFITT
[Signature]

JOAN DAVIS
[Signature]

Johnny Garlett
[Signature]

[Signature]

Paul Parfitt - Garlett

JODY RYDER
[Signature]



Creating Empowerment and Wellness through Culture

AS ONE NYITTING LIMITED

Perth Metro & Wheatbelt

4/220 Star Street

WELSHPOOL WA 6106

13 October, 2022

Heritage Council Western Australia

Bairds, Building Level 2/491 Wellington Street

PERTH WA 6000

To whom it may concern,

RE: P2622 Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia – Response to proposed registration on the State Register of Places

Eldership Acknowledgement

As One Nyitting are guided by our Elders who hold a special place in our Culture as the custodians of our ancient knowledge and are the Cultural Authority of our families and our communities.

Our Elders Panel, established on Ballardong Country with connections to Whadjuk, Yuet and Yamatji Countries, provide the Cultural Authority and Governance for As One Nyitting to operate across Ngoongar Boodja.

We pay our respect to all our Elders and acknowledge their continuing contribution and wisdom that provides the foundation for all that we do and strive to achieve.

Introduction

This submission is prepared in response to the Heritage Council of Western Australia (HCWA) request for public submissions on the proposed listing in the State Register of Places, the Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia released on the 1 September 2022; 193 years after European invasion of sovereign lands¹.

I have seen aborigines, males and females, able to read and write quite correctly, as I thought, yet they were nothing the better for it. Reading and writing are things utterly useless to them as far as their living is concerned: for, to keep them from starving, they are obliged to return to the bush to live by hunting, as their forefathers did. "We look at them with European eyes, consider them as Europeans, and try to train them as such; but in doing so we delude ourselves. (Salvado 1871, 5)

The story of the lands, waters and skies that make up the gridlines of Western Australia as it is known today is ancient, born in the Nyitting (Dreaming) in Ngoongar way, or over 65,000

¹ Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)

years by western science. This story was violently interrupted in 1829 when European's invaded sovereign lands that preceded an intentional and systemic regime of religious colonisation of our children to erase us. This truth cannot be separated from the Benedictine story of New Norcia, nor can it be the only story of Western Australia to be told. First Nations peoples experience of New Norcia, the ideologies brought to Ngoongar Boodja is one of violence, dehumanisation, genocide and assimilation. Impacts of this continue today for our people. The story being told of New Norcia within the HCWA draft submission perpetuates this trauma for our people and denies our truth.

"We shall join the savages which we meet; we shall go with them and share their nomad life, until we are able to fix them in some favourable situation, when we propose to teach them, by our example, how to obtain their subsistence by Agriculture. We shall study their language, manners, and customs, in order that we may speak to them of religion, so as to find in the sons of Australia future fellow-laborers who may assist us in instructing their still savage brethren. This will leave us at liberty to advance further into the interior, and to win other savages to the habits of industry, and to the faith of Jesus Chris" (Garrido 1871, 8)

This is the context in which the New Norcia mission was established, and it is in this context that our people experienced the European invasion. Our children were removed by the thousands, stolen from their families, their Country to be placed in colonial institutions such as New Norcia mission intentionally designed to erase their identity. The violence, subjugation, and dehumanisation our people experienced at the hands of the Benedictine Community is well documented in their own writings within the colonial records (Haebich 2016) that must be critically researched. The experiences not written about are carried by our people whose voices must be heard.

It is in the interest of every West Australian, from the original custodians, our First Peoples to our newest, that the story of Western Australia be recorded as it was experienced by the people, not simply how the dominant colonial narrative would want it to be recorded. A story that recognises our First Nations peoples deep spiritual connection to the lands, waters and skies, and the violent interruption of European colonisation. The Yuet land on which New Norcia Precinct sits was not settled, it was stolen. Our children were not 'cared for', 'educated', 'protected' by the Benedictine Community, they were stolen from the love of their family, their Culture, their Community with the sole purpose to erase their identity. Today we understand this as genocide² and the process of removing our children continues today. In 2022 the truth must be told.

² The United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1949, Article II defines genocide as:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Purpose

The purpose of this submission is to highlight the inconsistencies with the objectives and functions of the *Heritage Act 2018* (WA) within the *Draft Assessment Documentation - P2622 Benedictine Monastery Precinct- New Norcia* and to demand decolonial truth telling that recognises the voices and lived experience of our First Nations people and descendants who survived the New Norcia mission and the subjugation of an imperial regime that was designed to erase their Culture.

Aims

The aims of this submission are:

1. Stop on-going colonial violence and perpetuation of intergenerational trauma for First Nations people through the constant denial of lived experience; and
2. To have First Nations peoples truth be recorded and told for future generations, allowing space for healing to begin.

Inconsistency with the Heritage Act

The Heritage Council of Western Australia is the State Government's advisory body on heritage matters. It is vested with functions and powers under the *Heritage Act 2018* (WA), including: s.17(k) *to promote public awareness and knowledge*; s.17(l) *to provide and encourage education and training and to arrange*; and s.17(m) *to conduct research and investigations in relation to Western Australia's cultural heritage* consisted with the objectives of the Act.

The HCWA has failed in its statutory functions under the Act and are doing a gross disservice to all Western Australian's whose story is connected to this place. The present submission constitutes an act of colonial violence and 2022 and must be subject to critical decolonial review, consultation and research as required under the Act.

Specific statutory breaches identified within the submission are summarised within the below table.

Table 1 – Heritage Act 2018 (WA)

Sections of the Act	Evidenced breaches of the Act
<i>s.3 (a) to promote understanding and appreciation of Western Australia's cultural heritage</i>	<p>New Norcia Mission designed to erase First Nations Culture and civilise the native savages operated for almost 130 years c.1847 to c.1974.</p> <p>65,000 years of continuous custodianship and connection with lands, skies and waters of First Nations Culture</p> <p>127 years of New Norcia operation</p> <p>32 business days of HCWA consultation feedback accompanied by 48 pages of <i>Draft Assessment Documentation - P2622 Benedictine Monastery Precinct- New Norcia</i></p> <p>1000's of First Nations people and their descendants living with intergeneration trauma handed down by survivors of the New Norcia mission due to white supremacist ideology that underpinned it and the violent invasion of sovereign lands.</p> <p>Whose understanding and appreciation is the HCWA seeking to promote through this listing?</p>
<i>s.3 (b) to recognise the importance of places of cultural heritage significance and their stories in understanding the course of Western Australia's history</i>	<p>New Norcia mission and the ideology that was brought to the lands, waters and skies of First Nations sovereign lands was one of violence, dispossession, and genocide. The importance of New Norcia and its cultural heritage significance of New Norcia for First Nations people of Western Australia is at opposition to the story the HCWA and Benedictine Community is proposing to tell.</p> <p>Of the 48 pages of <i>Draft Assessment Documentation - P2622 Benedictine Monastery Precinct- New Norcia</i>, Aboriginal History is first recognised on page 17 and is summarised with 196 words that talks about archaeology and settlers exploring.</p> <p>Substantive acts of colonial violence and omission of First Nations experience are summarised within Table 2 of this submission.</p>
<i>s.3 (c) to provide for the identification and documentation of Western Australia's places of cultural heritage significance</i>	<p>How can this objective be met when the HCWA has not engaged with the very people and their descendants who the New Norcia Precinct was designed to erase their Culture?</p>

Sections of the Act	Evidenced breaches of the Act
<i>s.3 (d) to encourage and facilitate the conservation, continuing use, development and adaptive reuse of places of cultural heritage significance in ways that represent high standards of heritage conservation and are in harmony with cultural heritage values</i>	<p>How does the HCWA expect to achieve this objective when the story being told is one of “<i>aspirational plan</i>” by the Benedictine Community who at the time</p> <p><i>We shall study their language, manners, and customs, in order that we may speak to them of religion, so as to find in the sons of Australia future fellow-laborers who may assist us in instructing their still savage brethren. This will leave us at liberty to advance further into the interior, and to win other savages to the habits of industry, and to the faith of Jesus Chris” (Garrido 1871, 8)</i></p>
<i>s.5(1) In this Act — cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for individuals or groups within Western Australia.</i>	<p>The cultural heritage significance of New Norcia for First Nations peoples can only be determined by First Nations peoples. How can this be recorded if the HCWA has extended a 32-business day campaign for consultation feedback without community engagement, without First Nation community engagement when New Norcia was “<i>established as a bush mission to the local Yued Noongar population</i>”</p> <p>It is fact sovereign lands were invaded by the Europeans in 1829. It is fact First Nations people were spoken of and treated as less than human and it is fact, that these events and ideologies, despite the belief of the invaders they were doing “<i>Gods work</i>” has lead to intergenerational trauma uniquely experienced by First Nations people today in 2022.</p> <p>HCWA cannot define the cultural and heritage value of an precinct such as New Norcia without the explicit engagement and Elder oversight with the communities who directly and indirectly experienced such a place.</p>
<i>s.5(2) Cultural heritage significance may be embodied in a place itself and in any of its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects</i>	<p>The cultural heritage significance captured in the records do not include First Nations voices and experiences. The records demonstrate colonial contempt for First Nations people and are representative of the colonial system designed to erase the oldest continuing Culture on earth.</p> <p>A.O Neville set out to write his own history that the HCWA today is sharing non-critically and without context.</p>

Sections of the Act	Evidenced breaches of the Act
	<p><i>"Neville was also positioning himself as the creator and gatekeeper of knowledge about Aboriginal people and their culture and history. He shaped public understanding of colonial history in lectures and journal articles..." (Haebich 2016, 88)</i></p>
<i>s.5(3) A place may have diverse values for different individuals or groups.</i>	<p>First Nations peoples have deeply different experience of New Norcia mission, Elders and descendants of survivors who share the stories of the place and experiences of and within the buildings erected in that place.</p> <p>This story is violently absent from the HCWA draft submission.</p>
<i>s.17(k) to promote public awareness and knowledge in relation to Western Australia's cultural heritage</i>	<p>65,000 years of continuous custodianship and connection with lands, skies and waters of First Nations Culture 127 years of New Norcia operation 32 business days of HCWA consultation feedback accompanied by 48 pages of <i>Draft Assessment Documentation - P2622 Benedictine Monastery Precinct- New Norcia</i></p> <p>How has the HCWA promoted public awareness and knowledge? In 2022 we as a nation are beyond ticking a box and accepted colonial truths. This function cannot be satisfied without First Nations Elders voices.</p>
<i>s.17(l) to provide and to encourage education and training in relation to Western Australia's cultural heritage;</i>	<p>How can the HCWA satisfy this function when the story of the European invaders is privileged over the original and continuing custodians who continue to live this trauma?</p>
<i>s.17(m) to arrange and to conduct research and investigations in relation to Western Australia's cultural heritage</i>	<p>The HCWA has failed in this function without researching, without First Nations community engagement and consultation.</p>

Specific Acts of Colonial Violence identified within *Draft Assessment Documentation P2622 Benedictine Monastery Precinct – New Norcia*

There are several omissions and blatant attempts to re-write history through an imperialist colonial lens littered throughout *Draft Assessment Documentation - P2622 Benedictine Monastery Precinct- New Norcia* that have been presented as fact without substantiative research and direct consultation with those who would share a violently different experience.

“The individual form of knowledge production has as its correlate the ‘radical absence of the ‘other’” and a denial of the ‘idea of the social totality’”(Quijano 2007, 173)

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of individual knowledge production that demonstrate an urgent need for decolonial truth telling; the experiential carried by our people must be recorded through the process of a Truth Telling Review led by the Cultural Authority and knowledge of First Nations Elders representing the communities directly and indirectly affected by the New Norcia mission.

Table 2 – Comments on the Draft Assessment Documentation - P2622 Benedictine Monastery Precinct- New Norcia

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
Entire document	Omission of First Nations Truth.	<p>No reference to <i>Bringing them home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families</i>.</p> <p>Section 7 of this Report (Commission 1997, 88-102) relates to the Western Australia context during the time New Norcia was established and operated. This truth is absent from the draft submission.</p>
11(a) <i>Importance in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Western Australia's history</i>	Omission of First Nations Truth.	<p>The institutions and underpinning ideology were rolled out across Western Australia to devastating consequence for First Nations people that experience these impacts today; initially by the various religious denominations and then by assimilation architect Henry Princep and his successor A.O. Neville who oversaw the systemic management of all Aboriginal children in Western Australia to the exclusion of their parents (Commission 1997).</p> <p>This was a well-orchestrated colonial machine that set about to erase Aboriginality through separating children from their families that was so violently legislation within the <i>Aborigines Act 1905</i> (WA) (in force 1906-1964) s. 8 “<i>The Chief protector shall be the legal guardian of every aboriginal and half-caste child until such child attains the age of sixteen</i>”</p> <p>Where is the story of this pattern of systemic child removals and imprisonment in institutions that included New Norcia?</p>

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
11(a), p6	<i>The monks of the Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia were among the first Europeans to settle in the district. The creation of a self-sufficient bush mission supported by orchards, garden and pastoral pursuits, evolved into a well established pastoral and agricultural centre pivotal in the development of the surrounding region, producing resources utilised by local pastoralists and settlers, and providing educational and religious instruction to Aboriginal, and later non-Aboriginal, children</i>	<p>The use of “<i>settle in the district</i>” and “<i>providing educational and religious instruction to Aboriginal ...</i>” is violently misleading as to the systemic invasion and taking of lands and then children for the religious colonisation and genocidal ambitions to erase their identity.</p> <p>These statements of colonial violence must be decolonised through extensive consultation and research as required under the Heritage Act 2018 (s.17(k), s.17(l), s.17(m)).</p>
11(a), p7	<i>Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia was first established as a bush mission to the local Yued Noongar population. The intent to provide education and care for Aboriginal children rather than non-Aboriginal children was unprecedented in Western Australia at the time, and demonstrated a rare aspirational</i>	<p>In the words of those with the “<i>aspirational plan</i>”:</p> <p><i>“It seems impossible to some people to believe a native of Australia capable of working or doing any real material good for himself; and if they hear that a native has ploughed his field, has reaped his wheat, has sold it, has with those means bought bullocks and even mares, of which he is the rightful owner, they still will say, "Impossible!" but against a fact no argument can stand. Surely, if the aborigines are left to themselves, they cannot but follow their forefathers' traditions and customs, but if properly and timely trained, I, for one, do not see the impossibility of their being truly civilised.”(Salvado 1871, 7)</i></p>

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
	<i>plan for the Yued Noongar people on behalf of Salvado. The nineteenth century model comprised a European-styled Aboriginal village where housing and work was provided for families, and from the turn of the twentieth century evolved into an institutional model aimed particularly at Aboriginal children. The place demonstrates the changing nature of the standard and style of care considered appropriate for Aboriginal children and families over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries</i>	<p><i>“Polygamy was universal, or rather marriage as a perpetual state was unknown to this degraded race. The whole country around was thus overrun by savages of a nomadic character; nowhere settled, but one day hunting, dancing, and fighting here, the next day elsewhere.” (Garrido 1871, 9)</i></p> <p>Is this aspirational or is this dehumanisation? These truths demand reconciliation in 2022. Our Elders and community must be given an opportunity to share this truth and experience of intergenerational trauma resulting from these ideologies that continue today.</p> <p>These statements of colonial violence must be decolonised through extensive consultation and research as required under the Heritage Act 2018 (s.17(k), s.17(l), s.17(m)).</p>
11(a), p7	<i>As the site of systemic physical and sexual abuse of Aboriginal and other students during the 1950s to 1970s, as documented in the 2017 Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia,</i>	<p>Aboriginal people were considered less than human from the moment of European invasion in 1829, yet reports of sexual abuse only exist between 1950 – 1970 ... why? This must be questioned.</p> <p><i>“The 2022 sale of the property”</i> – lands unlawfully dispossessed by Europeans to commit acts of genocide and assimilation, to later abuse Aboriginal children and then to have those stolen lands sold by the invaders to pay for their abuses over just a 20-year period ... this story is incomplete.</p>

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
	<i>demonstrates a pattern of behaviour of institutionalisation and abuse of Aboriginal children in Western Australia. The 2022 sale of property to fund redress to survivors of abuse and the 2020 installation of the Rock of Remembrance reflects actions undertaken by the Community to offer acknowledgement and apology.</i>	<i>“Rock of Remembrance reflects actions undertaken by the Community to offer acknowledgement and apology”</i> – where is the reference for this statement? Who has defined what this tokenism represents and what does this mean to the survivors of the institutional abuse?
Section 11(a), p7-8	<i>Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia was the site of the largest art theft in Western Australia, with the theft of 26 paintings from New Norcia’s European Art Gallery, taken during a daylight robbery, 25 of which were eventually found, though damaged, and later returned after restoration. The theft reflects the importance of the New Norcia art collection.</i>	Theft of artwork located within a colonial building built from Aboriginal child labour, on lands that were stolen by the Europeans. The irony of this statement is not lost of the Ngoongar community. How can the theft of art be spoken of without recognising the theft of First Nations land or the theft of First Nations children from their families?
Section 11(c)	<i>The ruins, foundations and sub-surface archaeological deposits associated with the former</i>	65,000 years of First Nations peoples oral histories passed down from generation to generation discounted and subordinated to western sciences in one violent sentence. Stories of ancient songlines severed by European “ <i>contact</i> ” and the

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
	<i>Mission Cottage sites have importance for the potential to provide information not available from any other source regarding the way of life for the Aboriginal people who lived and worked in and around the Mission during the period 1847 to 1891.</i>	<p>establishment and continued presence of New Norcia mission, have continued to be shared over the generations. These oral histories exist today and demand to be recognised.</p> <p>First Nations oral histories are recorded as truths within selective references cited by the HCWA within the draft submission (see https://www.noongarculture.org.au/).</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive consultation with descendants of Yuet Peoples on the way of life of their people prior to and post New Norcia mission including the on-going impacts and experience of trauma as a direct result of this institution and the ideology that operated it.</p>
Section 11(d), p10	<i>The orphanages and educational buildings at Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia, in particular, St Joseph's Girls School Group, comprising St Joseph's School and Orphanage for Aboriginal girls and associated convent and educational buildings, and the</i>	<p>The use of “<i>care and education of Aboriginal children</i>” is violently misleading as Aboriginal people were seen as <i>uncivilised savages</i> by the Europeans who imposed their system of “<i>care and education</i>” that today is recognised as genocide and assimilation. These acts were perpetrated by the colonists and the Benedictine community. Their aims so violently captured in legislation, colonial and Benedictine records³.</p> <p>Six sisters share their experience of being stolen as young girls from their loving parents, only to be placed in an orphanage at New Norcia in <i>Our Story: Six Sisters</i></p>

³ An Act to Prevent the Enticing Away the Girls of the Aboriginal Race From School or From Any Services in Which They Are Employed 1844, Preamble states: “Whereas laudable efforts have been made to introduce Christianity and civilisation amongst the aboriginal race of this Colony by instructing their youths of both sexes in schools, and admitting them as domestic servants into families of the colonists...”

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
	<p><i>Education Centre associated with the former St Mary's School and Orphanage for Aboriginal boys, are substantial representative examples of the type of institutions established for the care and education of Aboriginal children, including those that were not orphaned, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The buildings are representative of a number of similar facilities for Aboriginal children established and maintained by religious institutions in Western Australia and Australia.</i></p>	<p><i>of the Stolen Generation</i> (McMullan 2012. Stories of being beaten until bleeding by the nuns, yet their parents never raised a hand toward them. The Warrell sister's truth is one of thousands not recorded.</p> <p>The HCWA's draft submission intentionally silences the true experience of First Nations children who were stolen from their families and placed at New Norcia mission and later schools without their or their parents' consent, as it was not required by the laws at the time. The white invaders knew best.</p> <p>Recommendation: These statements must include First Nations experience to contextualise these colonial truths. Extensive consultation with First Nations Elders and communities of survivors must be included.</p>
Section 11(e)	Omission of First Nations Truth.	<p>The Yuet Peoples have occupied the lands the Benedictine Precinct was built for some 65,000 years or more. Their deep spiritual connection to place and ancient songlines were interrupted by European presence and the Benedictine Precinct that occupies ancient landscape today. The institution has a special meaning to First Nations people across Western Australia who survived. It is an ancient place, but one of deep hurt and colonial violence.</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive consultation with First Nations Elders and communities of survivors of New Norcia and their descendants to record their social, cultural and spiritual associations with the place.</p>

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
Section 11(f)	Omission of First Nations Truth.	<p>European aesthetics and architecture are in opposition to First Nations Culture, rigid lines, long straights versus circular and communal mia mias. European villages erected on ancient lands, fences, square structures, high steeples.</p> <p>Questions of First Nations peoples experience, and interpretation of “aesthetic” and “characteristics” of the place are essential to complete this story of Western Australia’s history.</p> <p>How were these aesthetic characteristics interpreted and experienced by the First Nation children who were stolen from their families and imprisoned within?</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive consultation with First Nations Elders and communities of survivors of New Norcia and their descendants to inform truth telling.</p>
Section 11(g)	Omission of First Nations Truth.	<p><i>... with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance to Western Australia’s history</i></p> <p>The history of Western Australia is ancient for First Nations peoples or over 65,000 years to western science. The “<i>Benedictine Monastery Precinct was originally established as a bush mission to the local Yued Noongar population</i>”. New Norcia was established in 1847-1849, during a time of violence, of</p> <p>The institution for its original dispassion and institutions and subsequent sexual abuse, compounded by the laws of the day have a present-day impact for all First</p>

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
		<p>Nations families across Australia. This institution and the violence it is responsible continues today with the denial of truth and lived experience.</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive consultation with First Nations Elders and communities of survivors of New Norcia and their descendants to inform truth telling.</p>
Section 11(h)	<p><i>“While acclaimed Catalan architect Enrique Sagnier assisted Bishop Torres with the design of St Ildephonsus’, other buildings within Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia were designed and built by monks of the community”</i></p> <p>Omission of First Nations Truth.</p>	<p>The statement “<i>designed and built by monks of the community</i>” must be critically challenged by the HCWA.</p> <p>Is it reasonable to accept this statement as truth when the colonial records, legislation and practice recognise First Nations children were kept as servants and labourers after being stolen from their families?</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive consultation with First Nations Elders and communities of survivors of New Norcia and their descendants to inform truth telling.</p>
Section 13.1, p17	<p><i>It is a place that reflects and represents the merging of as well as the divisions between the Traditional Owners and European migrants and the attempts of the Europeans to impose many of their own values, spiritual beliefs and social systems into the landscape and livelihoods of the Aboriginal people in the years of</i></p>	<p>A step towards truth telling that falls short of truth. There was no “” of, there was violent subjugation by force and coercion, dispossession, and removal of children.</p> <p>Recommendation: Statement to be reviewed and developed with direct experience of Elders and descendants of survivors of New Norcia. This truth must then be imbedded throughout document where a colonial truth is stated as “fact”.</p>

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
	<i>European colonisation of Western Australia from the 1840s to 1970s.</i>	
s.13.1, p18	<i>Aboriginal people lived virtually undisturbed in the area until the late 1830s, when colonial settlers began exploring the region. The establishment of the Aboriginal mission at New Norcia had a profound effect on the lives of the local Aboriginal people the Yued people of the Noongar nation.</i>	<p>The colonists were killing Aboriginal peoples to claim lands and resources, using convert tactics to gain trust and this is described as “<i>settlers began exploring the region</i>”. This is a statement of colonial violence that demands truth telling context (s.17(m)).</p> <p>“<i>had a profound effect on the lives of the local Aboriginal people...</i>” In the context in which this is written, this implies a positive effect, yet in the lived experience of our First Nations people who survived the abuse, the separation from family and attempted Cultural genocide, these stories live on today and do not align with the HCWA narrative. First Nations truth telling context must be imbedded in this statement.</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive consultation with First Nations Elders and communities of survivors of New Norcia and their descendants to inform truth telling.</p>
s.13.1, p18	<i>Between 1841 and 1845, land in the district taken up by the earliest settlers to area, Captain John Sculley and James Drummond and sons, was used mainly for sheep grazing under the care of Aboriginal shepherds employed by the early settlers.</i>	<p>Use of “<i>earliest settlers to area</i>” negates the violence and dispossession of lands that were occupied as evidenced in by the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Cth) and the words of the Benedictine Community shared within this submission.</p> <p>Use of “<i>employed by earlier settlers</i>” is misleading as this implies a consensual relationship where services are remunerated by some means. The settlers invaded sovereign lands and imprisoned and enslaved First Nations people, if not with shackles but through removal of their children.</p>

Document Reference	Relevant Text and/or Omission of Truth	Consultation Feedback / Recommendations
		<p>We know at the time Aboriginal peoples were in-fact forced into labour arrangements without consent following the unlawful dispossession of their lands in 1829 and following.</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive consultation with First Nations Elders and communities of survivors of New Norcia and their descendants to inform truth telling with decolonial research of government records (s.17(m)).</p>
s.13.1, p18	<p><i>Charged with establishing a 'Mission of the Centre' north of Perth for the purpose of 'civilising and converting' the Aboriginal people in an area unsettled by Europeans, Salvado and Serra set out with small party of lay brothers in February 1846. Entering the Victoria Plains district, they made contact with an encampment of local Aboriginal people, gaining their trust.</i></p>	<p>Truth statement must be included to acknowledge the violence of this 'charge' of "civilising and converting". Converting to what? An ideology that believes in supremacy above all?</p> <p>The Benedictine Order understanding of "gaining trust" was using deceit. The Benedictine Monks explain how this trust was gained.</p> <p><i>The fact was that the inhabitants of those forests appeared then to be quite astonished at a thing which they had perhaps never witnessed before, and throwing down their spears, accepted from the two Priests some sugar, which they, with great repugnance, tried to taste. No sooner had they put it into their mouths, than they spat it on the ground, evidently suspecting that it was some poisonous food. To convince them that such was not the case, the Missionaries ate a little more sugar and invited them again to take some of it: then they did so, and found it so sweet and pleasing to the palate, that indeed they would have eaten much more than the new comers had to spare. From that happy interview they won their confidence, and became great friends with those Aboriginal Natives. Profiting, then, by such a favorable opportunity, the Ministers of Christ endeavored as well as they could to explain to them why they had come to live among them, and how much they wished to ameliorate their miserable state; and succeeded at last in at least partially</i></p>

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		<p><i>persuading them to remain with them. "Give us to eat," the savages often said,— "and we will not go to the bush." (Garrido 1871, 8)</i></p> <p>Recommendation: Truth statements must accompany colonial ‘truths’ informed by the oral histories of the Yuet and broader Ngoongar community who share stories today about these experiences.</p>
s.13.1, p20	<p><i>1849 - Salvado departs to Europe in January with Aboriginal boys Francis Xavier Conaci and John Baptist Dirimera. Mission’s education services suspended.</i></p> <p>Omission of Truth.</p>	<p>Salvado writes about interactions with boys Conaci and Dirimera within his 1851 memoir (Sylvia 1978). Key facts of this trip, including questions of sovereignty raised by the boys and their early death due to disease (Conor 2018) are violently absent from the ‘story of WA’ that is being proposed in this draft submission.</p> <p>Boys Concaci and Dirimera lost their lives before their time due to European intervention. They are named only in the draft submission to support a narrative centred around Salvado and his ambitions on their land for their people. The story of Concaci and Dirimera and their people must be told and Salvado’s role in their early death must be recorded in the ‘story of WA’ being told by the HCWA.</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive research and consultation (s.17(m)) with Yuet Elders and kin of boys Concaci and Dirimera to ensure their truth is known, their names and stories respected by the colonial records the HCWA is responsible for sharing, promoting and educating on.</p>
s.13.1, p21	<p><i>Local Aboriginal population decimated by disease. Mission’s</i></p>	<p>“We bought the disease” (Keating 1992)</p>

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	<p><i>education focus broadens to take on Aboriginal children from all over the State.</i></p> <p>Omission of First Nations Truth</p>	<p>Recommendation: The disease came with the Europeans. Why were Aboriginal populations decimated and not the Europeans? Were they given medical treatment or excluded from medical treatment? Why or why not?</p>
s.13.1, p21	<p><i>Bob Nogolgot becomes first Aboriginal man from mission to be granted a cottage and small plot of land (15 acres) at New Norcia, rent free, for his exclusive farming use in 1867. Soon followed by Benedict Cuper, Tom Yawel, and Albert Turgiel.</i></p> <p>Omission of First Nations Truth</p>	<p>As an Aboriginal man, Bob Nogolgot's ancestral lands were invaded and dispossessed, his ancestors displaced, subjugated, and dehumanised by the European invaders who saw them as non-human 'savages'. 38 years after his ancestral lands were disposed Mr Nogolgot was "<i>granted a cottage and small plot of land ... rent free...</i>". This narrative is a blatant example of colonial violence and must be called out.</p> <p>Recommendation: The narrative presented is violent in its implication and absence of truth and must be contextualised with direct input from Nogolgot's ancestors and truth.</p>
s.13.1, p.23	<p><i>Phase III – Redevelopment and redirection under Torres, 1900-1914</i></p> <p><i>Torres introduced new rules, routines and physical barriers that would control and regulate the daily interactions of the whole New Norcia community so that it would conform more closely with traditional European standards</i></p>	<p>This time period also saw sweeping changes in legislation with the expansion of government powers under the Aborigines Act 1905, s.8 that placed all Aboriginal children under the guardianship of the 'Chief Protector'.</p> <p>The movement of Aboriginal people and children were dictated to under this act and would have had a profound consequence for treatment at New Norcia. This timeline cannot be separated from the New Norcia Precinct, it is interdependent of and must be recognised in the truth telling of this place.</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive consultation with survivors of New Norcia mission and descendants of Yuet, Yamatji, Ballardong and all Ngoongar</p>

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	<i>and ultimately that would see the missionary work downgraded and the monastic life prioritised. He oversaw a shift towards the elite education of white children.</i>	Nations to inform the recorded experience of these changes on First Nations people.
s.13.1, p.24	<i>‘White Australia Policy’ comes into effect with introduction of the Commonwealth Immigration Restriction Act (1901), designed to limit non-British migration to Australia. Aboriginal people and visitors to New Norcia no longer free to move through monastery and interact with monks. Visitors begin to be accommodated in Novitiate. Infirmary cell converted to dispensary for distribution of food to Aboriginal people.</i>	<p>Words of Australia’s first Prime Minister following Federation, Edmond Barton on 7th August 1901 makes the national white supremacy views violently clear when speaking about the non-white race:</p> <p><i>“I do not think either that the doctrine of the equality of man was really ever intended to include racial equality. There is no racial equality. There is basic inequality. These races are, in comparison with white races—I think no one wants convincing of this fact—unequal and inferior.” (Barton)</i></p> <p>The violence in the white supremacist views were driven down to Aboriginal people across the nation who experienced this violence at the hands of the colonists and institutions. What must the experience of our children in this place have been when the leaders of the nation are speaking like this? Why is this truth so violently absent from the HCWA story of the place that is New Norcia?</p> <p>The New Norcia mission and subsequent schools, orphanages cannot be removed from this context which must be acknowledged within the ‘story of WA’.</p> <p>Recommendation: Extensive research (s.17(m)) on the views of the European colonists and the experience of First Nations peoples as a result of these views</p>

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		must inform critical contextual truth telling to support these colonial statements.
s.13.1, p.24	<i>1906 Frustrations and tensions surrounding reduced opportunities for employment at the mission come to a head, with more than 30 Aboriginal people descending on settlement on 31 December. Three Aboriginal men charged and later imprisoned.</i>	<p>The Benedictine Monks in 1846 introduced sugar as a means of convincing the Yuet Peoples to abandon their traditional life so that the monks could pursue their violent agenda.</p> <p>The European invaders established a paternalistic relationship with First Nations people of Western Australia from the very early days. In 1906 when the new Abbot Fulgentius Torres decides to make some changes to this relationship, suddenly the Aboriginal people “<i>descending on settlement</i>”. The HCWA must recognise the violence in the narrative being put forward in contrast to the contextual truth that must also be shared.</p> <p>Recommendation: Critical research (s.17(m)) and truth telling. Negative statements supporting present mainstream prejudices about First Nations peoples must be challenged.</p>
s.13.1, p.29	<i>Phase VI: Repurposing and tourism 1980s – 2022 Benedictine Monastery Precinct, New Norcia, began to offer Indigenous language research, cultural education at secondary and tertiary level, recreational projects for youth and self-employment opportunities for the unemployed</i>	<p>Under whose Cultural Authority and for what purpose after 130 years of trying to erase First Nations identity and Culture?</p> <p>Recommendation: Critical questions must be asked of these overtly positive statements in the context of the violence this institution has perpetrated toward First Nations peoples who survive New Norcia and those who did not.</p>

Conclusion

The HCWA's draft submission for the Benedictine Monastery Precinct at New Norcia released for public consultation on the 1 September 2022 constitutes an act of colonial violence, 193 years after European invasion of sovereign lands and should not be listed on the State Register of Places without Truth Telling.

The HCWA has failed its functions under the Act including s.17(k) *to promote public awareness and knowledge*; s.17(l) *to provide and encourage education and training and to arrange*; and s.17(m) *to conduct research and investigations in relation to Western Australia's cultural heritage* with the story being told one of individual knowledge production at the sole exclusion of First Nations peoples lived experience of this place (s.3(b)).

Several acts of individual knowledge production have been identified within this submission with a number of recommendations that can be summarised within four actions the Heritage Council of Western Australia has a statutory obligation to consider:

1. Extensive consultation and deep yarning with the survivors and descendants of First Nations community who experienced life at the New Norcia mission during its years of operation from establishment in 1847 to closure in 1974.
2. Establishment of an Elders Panel with representatives from all First Nations language groups who carry the stories of their people who were impacted by the New Norcia mission either through direct or intergenerational experience. The Elders Panel provides the Cultural Authority and governance to ensure engagement is respectful, truthful and Culturally safe.
3. The process must be led by the Elders Panel and given the necessary time, for healing and truth telling unbound by political agendas or election cycles.
4. HCWA to not proceed with Ministerial recommendation without the explicit consent of the Elders Panel as representatives of the communities directly and indirectly impacted by the New Norcia mission and the ideology that was brought to Western Australia in 1829. First Nations people are the custodians of their story and retain sovereignty of how and when these stories are shared. This must be respected.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with the Heritage Council of Western Australia in support of a Truth Telling Review and on-going consultation.

Sincerely,

Robert Davis (*Yamatji, Whadjuk and Yuet
Maaman*)
Director, Co-Founder, Program Director
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

Zoe Davis (*Wilman and Badamia Yorga*)
CEO
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

Trevor Davis (*Ballardong Elder*)
Elder, Cultural Authority
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

Nancy Davis (*Yamatji, Yuet and Ballardong Elder*)
Elder, Cultural Authority, Team Leader
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

Gladys Spratt (*Ballardong Elder, 5th Generation Stolen*)
Elder, Bidi (Journey) Coach
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

Olive Donaldson (*Ngadju / Ballardong Yorga*)
Program Coordinator
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

Danny Fleming (*Non-First Nation connections to Whadjuk and Ballardong Country*)
Project Manager
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

Leah McLernon (*Non-First Nation connections to Whadjuk and Ballardong Country*)
Bidi (Journey) Coach
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

Melissa Madden (*Non-First Nation connections to Whadjuk and Ballardong Country*)
Employment and Training Manager
AS ONE NYITTING LTD

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