

Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan, No. 1

*Pomberuk Le:wunanangk
(Murray Bridge Railway Precinct and
Hume Reserve)*



June 2009

Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority Inc.

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Acknowledgment

The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority acknowledges and thanks David Altmann, Development Answers Pty Ltd and Steve Hemming, Flinders Partners (Flinders University) in assisting with the preparation of this report.



1. Vision statements, apologies – new beginnings

Background

The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority's (NRA) vision and management plan for Pomberuk Le:wunanangk (Murray Bridge Railway Precinct and Hume Reserve) adheres to and respects the laws and traditions of the Ngarrindjeri Creation Ancestors and the Old People.¹ These laws and traditions are reflected in the Vision Statement and Goals of the *Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarlumar-Ruwe Plan: Caring for our Sea Country and Culture* (2006).

The NRA wish to acknowledge the following apologies made by the Rural City of Murray Bridge (RCMB) and the Prime Minister of Australia . These historic apologies pave the way for a new relationship between Ngarrindjeri and non-Indigenous Australians. The core Ngarrindjeri values associated with Pomberuk Le:wunanangk include identity, culture, survival, education, economy and society. These values underpin improved understanding and better relations between Ngarrindjeri and non-Indigenous people in the Murray Bridge region.



Figure 1 - Karloan Ponggi (Albert Karloan), Ngarrindjeri elder – demonstrating Ngarrindjeri string games at Pomberuk in 1940.

Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan, No. 1 Pomberuk Le:wunanangk

A vision for land, waters, people and all living things – a place of new beginnings

The land, waters, people and all living things are connected. Pomberuk has deep spiritual, cultural and historical significance to the Ngarrindjeri people – past, present and future. It is an important place of cultural teaching on the banks of Murrundi (the Murray River) and on the nurseries (wetlands) created by Ngurunderi (the Creator and Lawgiver) and Pondi (the Murray Cod Ancestor). Pomberuk and Ngarrindjeri people are part of the same living body.

In the times before white invasion Ngarrindjeri leaders sent signals from the high point at Pomberuk all over Ngarrindjeri Ruwe calling meetings, ceremonies and sending news.

¹ Pomberuk is a key Ngarrindjeri name for the area and Le:wunanangk means sitting down at this place.

From this place Ngarrindjeri people witnessed the passing whale boat of Captain Charles Sturt, the coming of paddle-steamers and the building of the Railway Bridge.

Pomberuk has been a Ngarrindjeri place since time immemorial. It is a place of joy and also a place of suffering. In the 1940s Ngarrindjeri elders such as Karloan Ponggi (Albert Karloan) were forced from their homes here by the local council, the Hume Pipe Company and the South Australian Government. Ngarrindjeri people lived here under harsh racist laws. Ngarrindjeri elders want this area to be a memorial to the Old People, a place of remembrance and healing. But this memorial should also be a life-giving place - a place of education, business, trade, partnership, vision and reconciliation.

The Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan No. 1 is a commitment of the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority to work with the Rural City of Murray Bridge, the State Government and the Land Management Corporation, to break down barriers, to look to the past and the future, and to incorporate opportunities for the lands and waters to everyone's satisfaction. The Ngarrindjeri people acknowledge the importance of European heritage associated with Pomberuk.

Ngarrindjeri people encourage sensitive, culturally appropriate development, environmental rehabilitation, preservation, cultural awareness and education at Pomberuk. A series of zones have been identified in this plan that identifies preservation, rehabilitation and development.

The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority seeks a partnership, and a long-term cooperative relationship with regard to any future development and management of the land. Economic development opportunities must respect and acknowledge the unique spiritual and cultural connection of these lands and waters to Ngarrindjeri people.

It is the preference of the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority Inc. for the land to be returned to the Ngarrindjeri people - its traditional owners (this will be taken up in a separate approach to the State Government). The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority also seeks the re-incorporation of the associated wetlands/nurseries in the long-term management of Pomberuk.

The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority seeks the re-naming of Hume Reserve to Karloan Ponggi (Albert Karloan) Reserve in memory of the Old People who fought to stay in on their Ruwe.



Figure 2 - Ngarrindjeri ngowanthis (huts) at Pomberuk in the 1880s.

Ngarrindjeri Vision for Country

Our Lands, Our Waters, Our People, All Living Things are connected. We implore people to respect our Ruwe (Country) as it was created in the Kaldowinyeri (the Creation). We long for sparkling, clean waters, healthy land and people and all living things. We long for the Yarlumar-Ruwe (Sea Country) of our ancestors. Our vision is all people Caring, Sharing, Knowing and Respecting the lands, the waters and all living things.

Our Goals are:

For our people, children and descendants to be healthy and to enjoy our healthy lands and waters.

To see our lands and waters healthy and spiritually alive. For all our people to benefit from our equity in our lands and waters.

To see our closest friends - our Ngartjis (special animals) - healthy and spiritually alive.

For our people to continue to occupy and benefit from our lands and waters.

To see all people respecting our laws and living in harmony with our lands and waters.

Rural City of Murray Bridge – apology, 17 March, 2008

Sincere expression of sorrow and apology to the Ngarrindjeri People

To the Ngarrindjeri people, the traditional owners of the land and waters within the region. The Rural City of Murray Bridge expresses sorrow and sincere regret for the suffering and injustice that you have experienced since colonisation and we share with you our feelings of shame and sorrow at the mistreatment your people have suffered.

We respect your autonomy and uniqueness of your culture. We offer our support and commitment to your determination to empower your communities in the struggle for justice, freedom and protection of your Heritage, Culture and interests within the Council area and acknowledge your right to determine your future.

We commit to work with you. We acknowledge your wisdom and we commit to ensuring our actions and expressions best assist your work. We accept your frustrations at our past ways of misunderstanding you.

We are shamed to acknowledge that there is still racism within our communities. We accept that our words must match our actions and we pledge to you that we will work to remove racism and ignorance.

We will recognize your leadership, we honour your visions, and we hope for a future of working together with respect for each other.

We look forward to achieving reconciliation with justice.

We ask to walk beside you, and to stand with you to remedy the legacy of European occupation of your land and waters and control of your lives.

The work of the Rural City of Murray Bridge will be guided by your vision of a future where reconciliation through agreement making may be possible and we may walk together.

Prime Minister's apology, 13 February, 2008

"Today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations - this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.

A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.

A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia."

A full copy is contained in **Appendix A**.

2. Introduction to Plan

2.1 Background

The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority (NRA) has prepared the *Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan No. 1- Pomberuk Le:wunanangk* to clearly articulate the cultural and spiritual importance of this land to the Ngarrindjeri people.

The Plan will also guide the future management and development of the land in a spirit of cooperation and partnership with all levels of government.

The land has strong and unique spiritual and cultural significance to the Ngarrindjeri people as the last permanent Ngarrindjeri camp along the River Murray in Murray Bridge. The NRA has identified this area as a potential site of joint development.

2.2 Future opportunities

The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority (NRA) acknowledges that the Rural City of Murray Bridge wishes to work with the Ngarrindjeri people to identify and promote the future development of the land in a manner that protects, respects and enhances the culture and heritage of the Ngarrindjeri people – this is recognised by the signing of the *Kungun Ngarrindjeri Agreement* on 17 March 2008 (see Section 5.5 of this report and **Appendix B**). The NRA would like to protect, preserve, rehabilitate and develop the Pomberuk Le:wunanangk area in partnership with the Rural City of Murray Bridge and other non-indigenous interests.

The *Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarluwar-Ruwe Plan* (2006) outlines Ngarrindjeri plans for Ngarrindjeri Ruwe (Country) and highlights opportunities for the development of educational, research and tourism initiatives. This plan is officially recognised by the State and Federal governments and underpins a formal Regional Partnership Agreement (RPA) focusing on Caring for Country and Economic Development. One of the objectives in this RPA is the development of a Ngarrindjeri Wetlands Research Institute, which would incorporate educational and tourist oriented programs. The location of Pomberuk Le:wunanangk on the banks of Murrundi (River Murray), in the City of Murray Bridge, has meant that this area has been identified by the NRA as a potential site for Wetlands Research Institute and associated programs.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge has long recognised the ‘railway precinct’ has unique attributes that provide opportunities for future development and has resolved to support the future development of the land for Tourist Accommodation, Conference Facility and Cultural and Community Development. The land offers wonderful opportunities to deliver on a unique area of land, on the banks of the River Murray, in the heart of the Murray Bridge CBD. The Council’s leadership on this initiative was initially driven by the unmet need for quality tourist accommodation and conference facilities in Murray Bridge and to see the upgrading of a neglected area of land.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge approached the State Government in 2005 to encourage the delivery of the above vision. This approach came after the Council had been unsuccessful in multiple attempts to have the land gifted to Council and the community. Rather than see the land continue to be neglected in the ownership of the State Government, the Council lobbied for the land to be placed on the market on the proviso that Council and the Ngarrindjeri had an active input into the development of the agreed development scheme for the land.

This Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan No.1 outlines the Ngarrindjeri's blueprint for the land – the Land Management Corporation, on behalf of the State Government, has agreed that the Plan be made available to any future prospective owners of the land - so as to guide the sympathetic development and management of the land.

3. The land (Ruwe)

The land is located approximately 80 km from Adelaide, along the edge of the River Murray. Refer **Figure 3**.

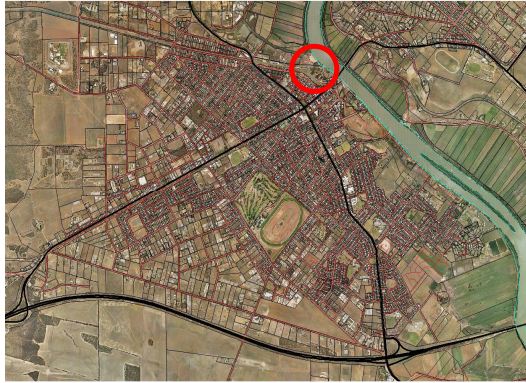


Figure 3 – the Land in context of Murray Bridge

The land is located directly adjacent the Murray Bridge CBD, Pomberuk Cultural Centre, the banks of the River Murray (Murrundi), Sturt Reserve and Wharf Hill, Adelaide-Melbourne railway line and the twin bridges linking road and rail between Adelaide and Melbourne.

Murray Bridge is a thriving regional centre of 18,000 people and is expected to double in population to 30,000 people by 2025 (Rural City of Murray Bridge Strategic Management Plan growth target).

The precinct, as depicted in **Figure 4**, contains a diverse range of features and facilities relating to the Ngarrindjeri cultural heritage, the early white settlement of Murray Bridge, use of the site as a boating port and slipway site, site of the first pumping station, railway barracks often called the single men's quarters constructed in approx 1959, Hume brothers pipe factory site, old railway cutting to Hume Reserve site of G Edwards house, irrigation channel, the old turn table opposite grain silos built in 1883, railway station refreshment rooms constructed in 1886; railway station ticket and dispatch office built in 1914, station masters house built in 1914, town hall and regional art gallery; pump house constructed in 1897, road bridge opened in 1879 and a railway tunnel, railway bridge constructed in 1925, the wharf precinct, Sturt Reserve. (Source:- *Railway Precinct Development Report by Consultants, 2003.*)



Figure 4 – the land

The land is noted for the cultural Ngarrindjeri heritage significance and importance of the land (part of the land is a registered Aboriginal site under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988* (SA). The Ngarrindjeri Native Title Management Committee has lodged a native title claim that covers the Lower Murray River and includes land discussed in this plan (Ngarrindjeri & Ors SC98/4).

Hume Reserve was the last permanent camp site of Ngarrindjeri people in Murray Bridge before being forced off the land by the Hume Pipe company. Important material remains survive on the site and the camping places of the Old People (middens) are also found across the Railway precinct and reserve. Indigenous plants, animals, fish, insects and all living things associated with the area are considered culturally significant to Ngarrindjeri people.

Important features of the precinct and surrounds include the access bridge from Bridge Street, the old Morris' garage on Bridge Street (now demolished), old railway cutting originally used for both rail and road traffic over the road bridge, the Round House which is State Heritage listed and built in 1873 owned by the Rural City of Murray Bridge, the railway cottages on top of the escarpment and local heritage listed, the railway cottages constructed in about 1930, the Pomberuk Aboriginal Cultural Centre to the east of the subject land, the railway spur line and Federation Trail along the bank of the River Murray constructed in 1886 to service the wharf area, SA Railway Institute Recreation area within the subject land, train control centre and old train control building, railway cottages, old marshalling yards, the old irrigation and drainage depot.

4. Ngarrindjeri philosophies, spiritual and cultural importance

The following information is of critical importance – it gives a valuable insight into the values, beliefs and culture of the Ngarrindjeri people – which frame the development of the Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan No.1.

4.1 Ngarrindjeri Yarluwar-Ruwe ²

Ngarrindjeri have occupied, enjoyed, managed and used our inhabited lands and waters, since Creation.

We were here when the sea level began rising about 18,000 years ago, and our ancestors watched the sea flooding over our coastal plains. We were here when the sea stabilised at its current level about 5,000 years ago. Our Creation stories record these dramatic changes. We were here when the European invaders began stealing our land and our resources; killing our people and our *Ngartjis*, such as *Kondoli* (whale) and *Paingal* (seal); polluting our rivers, lakes and Coorong; and draining our wetlands/nurseries. And we are still here!

Because of the richness of our natural resources and our sustainable use and management of them, our Sea Country supported among the highest density of Aboriginal population anywhere in Australia prior to European invasion. Our population at that time has been estimated to be about 6,000 people.

Our culture and economy have always depended on the resources of our *Yarluwar-Ruwe*. We used and continue to use the resources of the land, but it was the saltwater and freshwater environments that provided us with most of our needs. Such was the wealth of sea and marine life such as fish, shellfish, eels, waterbirds and water plants that we have always lived a settled lifestyle. Our knowledge of our Sea Country will continue to underpin our survival and our economy. Tendi, our formal governing council, ensured and will continue to ensure our stable and sustainable society, which maintains our obligations to Sea Country.

Our creation stories and oral traditions have been passed down from generation to generation and with them a detailed knowledge of our *Yarluwar-Ruwe*. We developed many tools and other equipment to harvest and process our Sea Country resources, including fish nets, fishing weirs, spears, lines, snare traps, decoys, bark canoes, reed rafts, large floating fishing platforms and woven baskets. Our capacity for storing food enabled us to organise large gatherings of Ngarrindjeri people to engage in trade, ceremonies and other social activities with neighbouring nations.

Ngarrindjeri people speak a common Ngarrindjeri language.

We comprise several peoples, each with particular knowledge about areas of Ngarrindjeri Sea Country. We are all linked through creation stories, creation trails and sites, ceremonies and sacred places. Central to our shared culture is our creator ancestor Ngurunderi whose travels and actions created the River Murray, the lakes, the Coorong and coastal Hummocks, our lands, waters, fish and resources.

Towards the end of his journey Ngurunderi placed his *Yuke* (canoe) into the dark night sky where it became *Warriewar* (the Milky Way). Like other creation stories,

² *Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarluwar-Ruwe Plan* (2006)

Ngurunderi's journey ended at Kangaroo Island from where he ascended into the sky and became the bright star in *Warriewar*. Ngurunderi's story also refers to the role of ancestral women (in this case Ngurunderi's two wives) in creating the Country we know today.

Both men and women hold special cultural and environmental knowledge and both men and women have always been involved, and continue to be involved, in passing down our knowledge between generations and in decision-making about Ngarrindjeri affairs, land waters and resources.

Ngarrindjeri people hold cultural and spiritual connections to particular places, to particular species of animals and plants, and all elements of the environment are part of our kinship system. Particular animal and plant species are the *Ngartji* (totem or special friend) of Ngarrindjeri people, who have special responsibility to care for their *Ngartji*. To care for *Ngartji* is to care for country.



Figure 5- Ellen Trevor, Ngarrindjeri Elder and basket weaver. Stories, laws and traditions are passed on through weaving.

4.2 Ngurunderi the Creator³

A long, long time ago Ngurunderi our Spiritual Ancestor chased Pondi, the giant Murray Cod, from the junction where the Darling and Murrundi (River Murray) meet. Back then, the River Murray was just a small stream and Pondi had nowhere to go.

As Ngurunderi chased him in his bark canoe he went ploughing and crashing through the land and his huge body and tail created the mighty River Murray. When Ngurunderi and his brother-in-law Nepele caught Pondi at the place where the fresh and salt water meet they cut him up into many pieces, which became the fresh and salt water fish for the Ngarrindjeri people. To the last piece Ngurunderi said, “you keep being a Pondi (Murray Cod)”.

As Ngurunderi travelled throughout our Country, he created landforms, waterways and life. He gave to his people the stories, meanings and laws associated with our lands and waters of his creation. He gave each Lakalinyeri (clan) our identity to our *Ruwe* (country) and our *Ngartjis* (animals, birds, fish and plants) - who are our friends. Refer **Figure 6**.

³ Ibid

Ngurunderi taught us how to hunt and gather our foods from the lands and waters. He taught us, don't be greedy, don't take any more than what you need, and share with one another. Ngurunderi also warned us that if we don't share we will be punished.



Figure 6 - Ngurunderi's Creation Journey

Ngarrindjeri respect the gifts of Creation that Ngurunderi passed down to our Spiritual Ancestors, our Elders and to us. Ngarrindjeri must follow the Traditional Laws; we must respect and honour the lands, waters and all living things. Ngurunderi taught us our *Miwi*, which is our inner spiritual connection to our lands, waters, each other and all living things, and which is passed down through our mothers since Creation.

Our Great Grandmothers, Grandmothers and mothers fought to protect our Spiritual waters from desecration when a bridge to Kumarangk (Hindmarsh Island) was to be built. Now we fear a new proposal to build a twin lakes system in Lake Alexandrina which would further destroy the creation of our lands and waters.

Ngurunderi taught us how to sustain our lives and our culture from what were our healthy lands and waters. Our lands and waters must be managed according to our Laws to make them healthy once again. As the Ngarrindjeri Nation we must maintain our inherent sovereign rights to our *Yarluwar-Ruwe*.

Ngarrindjeri people have a sovereign right to make our living from the lands and waters in a respectful and sustainable way.

5. Key document review

The following documents have been reviewed in relation to relevant key research and investigations undertaken about the land, including Indigenous studies, land use studies, statutory documents and visionary reports and strategic plans.

All of these documents provide *relatively consistent recommendations* in relation to the land.

5.1 Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarlwar-Ruwe Plan: Caring for Ngarrindjeri Sea Country and Culture

This is the primary Ngarrindjeri Nation planning document. It provides vision, policy, priorities and strategies emerging from the Ngarrindjeri Nation's responsibility for Ngarrindjeri Ruwe.

'The *Ngarrindjeri Sea Country Plan*⁴ has been prepared by Ngarrindjeri people to help government agencies, natural resource managers, researchers, industry and the wider Australian community to better understand and recognise rights and responsibilities to our *Yarlwar-Ruwe* (Sea Country), including the lower Murray River, Lakes, Coorong and adjacent marine and land areas. Our vision for our Sea Country is based on the relationship between our people and our Sea Country which goes back to Creation.

The river, lakes, wetlands/nurseries, Coorong estuary and sea have sustained us culturally and economically for tens of thousands of years.

Owing to the abuse and misuse of Ngarrindjeri lands and waters by non-Indigenous people, and the denial of Ngarrindjeri rights and interests, we now find that, as the Traditional Owners of our land, sea and waters and all living things, we must stand up and speak out to save our *Ruwe* (Country) before we reach the point of no return.

Part 1 of the *Sea Country Plan* introduces our people and culture and explains our relationship with our Sea Country. Over the last 200 years, there have been attempts to break that relationship with our *Yarlwar-Ruwe* and we continue to feel the pain of these onslaughts.

We have been witnessing the destruction of our precious lands and waters by newcomers who do not understand their new surroundings and who do not or will not respect our rights and obligations to Country.

Part 2 describes the background and processes that led to the development of this *Sea Country Plan*, and outlines the major issues that are addressed later in the document. It explains that this is the second *Sea Country Plan* to be funded by the Australian Government's National Oceans 2 Office as part of the implementation of the *South-East Regional Marine Plan* that was released in 2004.

Part 3 outlines the issues, objectives, strategies and priority actions that we intend to address to realise our vision for the future of our Sea Country. While some of these strategies and actions may challenge existing management arrangements, they are all consistent with our human rights, cultural rights and cultural obligations, and they are

⁴ Extract from Page 1 of the Ngarrindjeri Sea Country Plan

laid out here in keeping with our values of caring and sharing that always has been the Ngarrindjeri way.

Part 4 explores opportunities for partnerships for implementing our *Sea Country Plan*. We review other major plans, policies and laws that have been developed for our Sea Country by government agencies and other organisations. We look for areas of common ground and explain how support for our *Sea Country Plan* can assist government agencies and others to meet their own objectives and commitments, and work towards a more sustainable future for humankind and all living things of creation.

We invite you to read our *Sea Country Plan* carefully and commit yourself to working with us for the benefit of our shared future and for our land and waters upon which we all depend.

5.2 Kungun Ngarrindjeri Mimir Yunnan: Listen to Ngarrindjeri women speaking (2008)⁵

This publication provides a specific focus on the views, priorities, objectives and visions of Ngarrindjeri women. It builds upon the *Ngarrindjeri Sea Country Plan* and identifies key opportunities and challenges for Ngarrindjeri people, and in particular women, with the development of a new Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority.

5.3 Murrundi Voices – Ngarrindjeri People’s Stories from the Lower Murray 1994

A wonderful collection of stories by Ngarrindjeri people from the Lower Murray Area produced in conjunction with the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

Developed and researched by Barbara Salgado and illustrated by Nellie Rankine.

The book gives a sensitive, warm and factual insight into the culture, beliefs and challenges of the Ngarrindjeri people – past and present.

5.4 Ngarrindjeri Heritage Program - annual report 2008-09 (Indigenous Heritage Program – Federal Department of Environment and Heritage)

As part of the Ngarrindjeri heritage program in 2008-09 surveys and a test excavation have been done on the Pomberuk/Hume Reserve area. This research has been conducted by Ngarrindjeri archaeologist Chris Wilson. This research is also part of his archaeology PhD thesis at Flinders University. So far the project has focused on physical evidence of Ngarrindjeri people’s lives at Pomberuk. This includes camping areas, food remains (middens), and more recent structures from the ‘fringe camp’ days (eg the base of a water tank associated with an Elder’s house). Part of the preliminary results of this research have been added as an appendix to this report (**see Appendix D**).

The Ngarrindjeri Heritage Report (2008-09) will contain a summary of results of research and some recommendation regarding the Pomberuk/Hume Reserve site. This has included a review of existing Aboriginal site cards (6727-2998: 1989, 1995) and

⁵ Bell, D. (ed.) 2008 *Kungun Ngarrindjeri Mimir Yunnan: Listen to Ngarrindjeri women speaking*, North Melbourne: Spinifex Press

related reports (see Woods 1995). It is noted that the existing site cards are not comprehensive and relate primarily to the physical/archaeological aspects of the area. Wilson's research is taking these preliminary investigations further, and importantly, in the course of the development of this management plan, the cultural and spiritual significance of the Pomberuk/Hume reserve area has been articulated by the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority and Ngarrindjeri elders.

5.5 Kungun Ngarrindjeri Yunnan / Rural City of Murray Bridge Agreement

This historic agreement was entered into between the Ngarrindjeri people and the Rural City of Murray Bridge on 17 March 2008, following some 5-7 years of negotiation. **Refer Appendix B.**



Figure 7 – the plaque honoring the signing of the Agreement

The Agreement is a good will and good faith agreement, that binds the Council to adopt good communication and management strategies with the Ngarrindjeri in relation to Highly Sensitive, Managed Areas and Sensitive Areas.

One main aspect of the Agreement relates to Clause 6.2, which requires the preparation of Management Plans for 'managed areas' including the Railway Precinct and Hume Reserve. The Agreement also promotes future amendments to the Development Plan to reflect the findings of the Plan, by best endeavors.

5.6 The Development Plan

The SA Development Plan is the statutory document which manages development under the SA Development Act. The subject land is Zoned, Urban Waterfront and seeks to:-

- Accommodate high quality detached and medium density housing, tourist accommodation, centre related facilities and recreational and community facilities, designed and constructed to a high standard to complement the River Murray environment without impairing the operational requirements of the railway.
- Enhance and improving public access to the River Murray
- Preserve the quality of the River Murray, and
- Exclude buildings and structures on land that is liable to flooding

5.7 Railway Precinct Business Case, 2006

Report by the Rural City of Murray Bridge, where Council resolved to approach the SA Government to facilitate the future sale and redevelopment of the site.

The report outlined a series of opportunities and threats for the land, and noted that the site was ideally zoned to accommodate the un-met demand and need for high quality tourism and conference facility development. Deliver economic, social and environmental benefits to at least the value of \$18.943 million and 135 new job positions (LaTrobe University Regional Economic Modelling Plan)

The report stated the site would realise a financial return via the sale, to the SA Government, and deliver a high order economic development project, creating jobs and value added benefits to the town and region. The report also stated that good environmental, social and cultural heritage outcomes would be achieved.

Specifically the report promoted that 'cultural and community' development outcomes were important, and that the project was not simply a tourism and conference facility project.

The report recommended that Council approach the Minister to commence a process for the sale of the land and include a process of consultation, engagement with the Ngarrindjeri community.

Subsequent to this report, the Minister engaged the Land Management Corporation to facilitate the sale of the land, and a process for the engagement of the Ngarrindjeri community.

5.8 The Railway Precinct Development Master Plan, 2003

Undertaken by Ochre Consultants in 2003 and followed detailed Community and Council consultation.

Key findings of the report included:-

- European heritage significance
- Indigenous heritage significance
- Tourism development potential
- Recreation and Cultural development potential

The Study clearly highlighted the Railway Precinct as an important place for Ngarrindjeri people and Hume Reserve as a registered aboriginal site. It also recognized the need for further consultation with the Ngarrindjeri community with regard to future development plans for the site.

The Study dedicated a chapter to the development options and issues and highlighted the potential for:-

- High quality accommodation
- Conference Centre
- Restaurant diversity
- Caravan Park and camping grounds

- Backpacker accommodation
- Mobile home and overnight parking
- Bed and Breakfast facilities
- Retail services
- Visitor Information Centre

Detailed discussion on the merits and issues associated with each heading were provided to assist in future discussions regarding development of the land.

5.9 Ngarrindjeri Vision for Country – Cultural Tourism Plan

This plan has been finalized in conjunction with the *Murraylands Integrated Regional Strategic Tourism* and provides an examination of opportunities and challenges for Ngarrindjeri tourism in the region. It specifically identifies the Pomberuk Cultural Centre as a potential hub for the Ngarrindjeri tourism trail.

5.10 Murraylands Integrated Regional Strategic Tourism Plan 2009-2011

The Murraylands Tourism Marketing Plan highlights the importance of the Murraylands Region as a premier day trip destination in South Australia, with various actions and recommendations surrounding marketing and business development.

5.11 Cultural Audit of Rural City of Murray Bridge – “Wanting to Wake Up”, Ochre Consultants 1999

The purpose of the cultural audit was to analyse the existing culture, cultural assets and cultural aspirations of the Community in order to establish a strategic framework in preparation of a cultural plan and cultural policy for the City.

The cultural audit presented a snap shot of the Rural City of Murray Bridge that was summarised by general observations.

- Murray Bridge has many unique cultural resources and acknowledge the importance of the railway precinct and river reserve precinct
- Murray Bridge cultural resources have unrealized potential – further highlighted in the opportunities associated with the railway precinct
- Murray Bridge has an identity problem
- Many people in the community generally care about Murray Bridge and want to be actively involved in its future development
- Murray Bridge needs a holistic, vision driven; long term master plan which is owned by the Community

The study then describes key principles with related strategies to determine a strategic frame work for future development of Murray Bridge, including:-

- Develop a cultural facility
- Project relating to the integration of the River, Railway and CBD precincts with an emphasis on local heritage and history
- Town gate way project for cultural resources of the people
- Develop and utilize heritage buildings and precincts

- Enhance aboriginal heritage
- Market the areas assets
- Undertaken community consultation
- Develop cultural policy

5.12 SA Government State Strategic Plan

The State Strategic Plan establishes a vision for South Australia's future. Key objectives directly relevant to this project include:

- Objective 1 – Growing Prosperity
- Objective 2 – Inject Well being
- Objective 3 - Attaining Sustainability
- Objective 4 – Fostering Creativity
- Objective 5 – Building Communities
- Objective 6 – Expanding Opportunity

Importantly key targets with regard to aboriginal culture can be realised here with regard to the cultural significance of the land and the sympathetic development of the land in consultation with the Ngarrindjeri community and links to the adjoining Pomberuk Cultural Centre and other culturally important sites and facilities in Murray Bridge.

5.13 Rural City of Murray Bridge Strategic Management Plan

Key actions in the Plan relevant to this Plan include:-

- Developing the Murray Bridge Railway Lands Tourist Precinct
- Investigating walking trail development between Toora to Swanport and Avoca Dell to Swanport (both sides of the River Murray)
- Promoting and marketing the Regional Art Gallery and enhance interpretation of cultural heritage
- Acknowledging an understanding of the culture of the traditional Aboriginal landowners

5.14 Murraylands Regional Development Board Strategic Plan

Key goal's in the Strategic Plan include:-

- To ensure current and future infrastructure services are adequate for economic growth in the region.
- To establish clearly defined strategically located industrial areas throughout the region.
- To promote and foster emerging business opportunities.

6. Site Analysis

In addition to the documentation and information outlined in Section 1 to 5 of this Plan, Table 6.1 identifies and summarises various issues and opportunities in relation to the land.

Table 6.1 – Site analysis

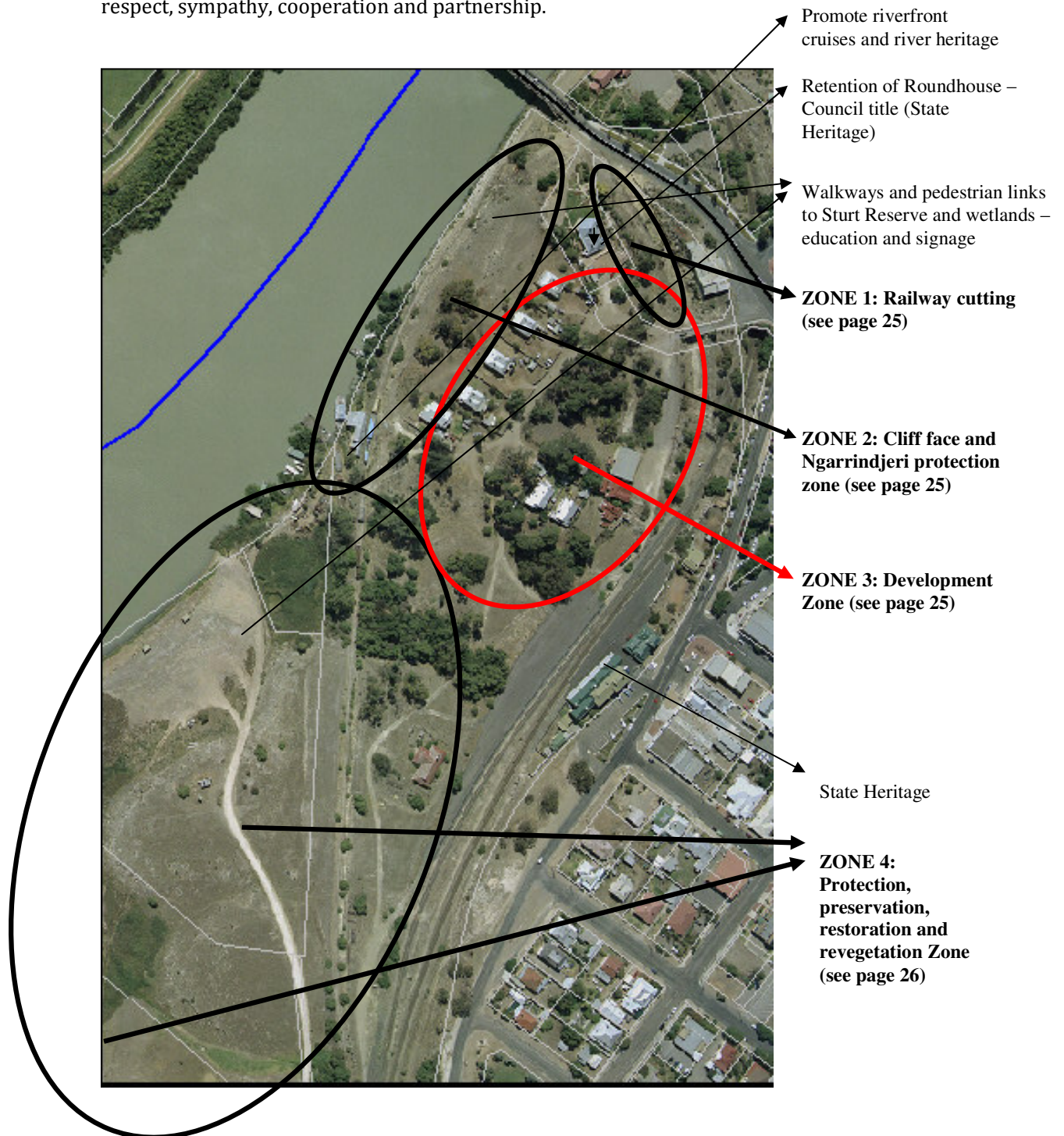
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ngarrindjeri cultural heritage significance, knowledge and commitment to the site</i> • <i>Strategic location - major regional centre adjacent River Murray and CBD</i> • <i>Access to road and rail, Adelaide – Melbourne route</i> • <i>Significant river views, river frontage and adjacent to wetlands</i> • <i>Adjacent to bridges and first bridge to cross River Murray</i> • <i>Significant Indigenous and European heritage</i> • <i>Development of Ngarrindjeri governance capacity – Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority – supports project development</i> • <i>Land already suitably zoned for major economic and community development</i> • <i>Land has good access to range of services</i> 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lack of proper management of sensitive Ngarrindjeri cultural sites</i> • <i>Vandalism and poor condition of buildings including vermin and pigeon infestation</i> • <i>Uncared for (and unsightly in places) nature of the land</i>
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strategic links to Pomeruk – Ngarrindjeri cultural centre, Sturt Reserve, Bridge Street, Regional CBD, major road and rail corridor</i> • <i>Recognition of Ngarrindjeri significance of land and Ngarrindjeri spiritual beliefs and culture</i> • <i>Potential for culturally appropriate joint development with Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority</i> • <i>Address poor Indigenous health indicators through employment, educational and economic opportunities</i> • <i>Access to River Murray for major recreation and tourism development</i> • <i>Further enhancement of Murray Princess wharf facility and access to Pomeruk Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Round House.</i> • <i>Ngarrindjeri links to river, flood plains, creeks, estuaries, history, education and further learning</i> • <i>To bring tourists to the land to learn and be educated about the Ngarrindjeri people– to respect and value</i> • <i>Deliver on economic development outcomes with tourism accommodation, conference</i> 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No action – land remains uncared for and lack of land management and maintenance</i> • <i>Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority excluded from management and maintenance</i>

<p><i>facility and other allied development - Major economic spin-offs benefits (multiplier effect) to Murray Bridge business and general community of \$18.943 million and a total of 135 new positions. (LaTrobe University Regional Economic Modeling Plan).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Link adjacent wetlands into the overall site development, enhancement, restoration and preservation. This will bring educational, tourist and research opportunities.</i> 	
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7. The Plan

The Plan is based on an analysis and synthesis of the research contained in this report. It is also based on the direct input and guidance of the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority, via various meetings and discussions over recent years and in more detail in recent months.

The Plan provides a balance between protecting and enhancing (and educating about) the Ngarrindjeri spiritual and cultural values in relation to the land and the broader region – it also provides a proactive and refreshing approach to embracing change and development opportunities over the land, provided this is undertaken in a manner of respect, sympathy, cooperation and partnership.



ZONE 1: Railway cutting

Objective 1 - To retain as a key pedestrian and walking trail entry into the precinct.

Objective 2 – To promote opportunities for walking trails, interpretive and educational signage regarding the Ngarrindjeri, the Creation Story of Ngurunderi and Pondi, the River, the Bridges, the Railway and Lavender Trail - will promote linkages to Sturt Reserve, the CBD and river corridor.



Figure 8 – former rail cutting looking towards the river/bridge.

ZONE 2: Cliff face and Ngarrindjeri protection zone

Objective 1 - To conserve and enhance the strong spiritual and cultural heritage significance adjacent to waters edge and exposed cliff area – this includes restoration of ecosystems.

Objective 2 – To provide opportunities for walking trails, open space, interpretive and educational signage regarding the Ngarrindjeri, the story of Pondi and Ngurunderi, the River, the Bridges, the Railway and Lavender Trail - promote Lavender trail and linkages to Sturt Reserve, the CBD and river corridor.

Objective 3 - A zone that promotes and provides commanding views of the river valley and the Twin Bridges – the Bridges and Railway are also an important feature of Ngarrindjeri heritage as many Ngarrindjeri people worked on the Railways and were affected by the Bridge construction. A Ngarrindjeri song was created that told the story of the bridge construction and reflected upon Ngarrindjeri creation stories.



Figure 9 and 10 – top of cliff/escarpment – links to river corridor

ZONE 3: Development Zone

Objective 1- A zone that allows for the future development of the land, including Tourism Accommodation, Conference Facility, wetland research centre, cultural and community development .

Objective 2 - All development to be undertaken in full cooperation, consultation and partnership with the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority and to incorporate best practise ecological sustainable systems.



Figure 11 and 12 – central part of the site

ZONE 4: Protection, preservation, restoration and revegetation Zone.

Objective 1 – A zone that protects, preserves, enhances and promotes the highly culturally sensitive area, also noting the importance of the Ngarrindjeri creation stories associated with this area. The Ngarrindjeri histories associated with this area and the historic camps will be a key feature of educational and interpretative programs. A memorial to the Old People is recommended. The Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority sees this area as an important site of Ngarrindjeri survival stories, crucial for research and the education of young Ngarrindjeri people. It also has potential to become a focus of reconciliation in Murray Bridge.

Objective 2 - To ensure considerable care (and full consultation with the Ngarrindjeri Heritage Authority) is taken with any activity due to burial sites, middens, remains of historic camps and the highly sensitive spiritual nature of the area.

Objective 3 – To provide and implement opportunity to remove non-indigenous vegetation and revegetate with original vegetation of the area. To establish ground cover revegetation on the degraded site at Hume Reserve.

Objective 4 – To provide and establish walking trails in line with Caring for Country report, educational and awareness opportunities linking to other areas of the precinct and Murray Bridge.

Objective 5 - To promote river cruises and enhancement and maintenance of boat heritage precinct.



Figure 13 – River boat precinct



Figure 14 – Hume reserve, linking to adjacent Mobilong flat and river corridor

Objective 6 - To ensure Mobilong nurseries (wetlands) are preserved with key linkages to the overall site, and natural heritage and environmental improvements and links to Ngarrindjeri lands along length of River Murray. Teaching, research, educational and cultural precinct. To also enrich the habitat and breeding grounds for all living things.

Objective 7 – To develop links with industry, business and facilities immediately surrounding the precinct and investigate opportunities that mutually enhance future development, for example, water used by T and R Pastoral could be remediated and then returned to the river system via the wetland.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Rename Hume Reserve

That Hume Reserve be named ***Karloan Ponggi (Albert Karloan) Reserve***.

Hume Reserve has special heritage and spiritual importance. It was the last permanent camp site of the Ngarrindjeri people in Murray Bridge. The Hume Pipe Company forced Ngarrindjeri people to leave their land – the land was named after the Hume Pipe company.

8.2 Signage – Murray Bridge

That the Rural City of Murray Bridge builds on the excellent outcomes of the Kungun Ngarrindjeri Yunnan Agreement, and erects signage at the town entry points stating:-

“Murray Bridge - A multi-cultural community, proud of its Ngarrindjeri heritage and people who are the traditional owners of the land”

8.3 Adopt the Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan No.1, 2009

That the Rural City of Murray Bridge, the SA Government and the Land Management Corporation adopt the Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan 2009, and ensure that the land is managed, enhanced and developed in accordance with the Plan.

8.4 Returning the land to the traditional owners.

That the Ngarrindjeri separately considers and develops a strategy to submit to the SA Government for the land (or part thereof) to be returned to its traditional owners.

The Ngarrindjeri is prepared and willing to work in cooperation and partnership with the future development of the land, but it is the Ngarrindjeri's preference to have the land 'given back' to them by the Government. However this is not part of the brief for this Plan (this Plan sets out the desired management, preservation, educational and development options for the land) and the Ngarrindjeri will negotiate separately with Government regarding the 'ownership' of the land.

The Ngarrindjeri wish to be party to any discussions or negotiations in relation to the development and management of the land, in order to ensure and promote the delivery of the recommendations of this Plan.

8.5 Amend Development Plan

That in accordance with Clause 6.5.3, 6.5.4 and 6.5.5 of the Kungun Yunnan Agreement, the Rural City of Murray Bridge works with the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority to amend the Development Plan in accordance with this Ngarrindjeri Murrundi Management Plan, No. 1.

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Appendix A

Full copy of the Prime Minister's Apology, 13 February 2008.

Prime Minister of Australia

Speech

Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples House of Representatives Parliament House, Canberra

13 February 2008

E&OE

—I move:

That today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations—this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.

A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.

A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

There comes a time in the history of nations when their peoples must become fully reconciled to their past if they are to go forward with confidence to embrace their future. Our nation, Australia, has reached such a time. And that is why the parliament is today here assembled: to deal with this unfinished business of the nation, to remove a great stain from the nation's soul and, in a true spirit of reconciliation, to open a new chapter in the history of this great land, Australia.

Last year I made a commitment to the Australian people that if we formed the next government of the Commonwealth we would in parliament say sorry to the Stolen Generations. Today I honour that commitment. I said we would do so early in the life of the new parliament. Again, today I honour that commitment by doing so at the commencement of this the 42nd parliament of the Commonwealth. Because the time has come, well and truly come, for all peoples of our great country, for all citizens of our great Commonwealth, for all Australians—those who are Indigenous and those who are not—to come together to reconcile and together build a new future for our nation.

Some have asked, 'Why apologise?' Let me begin to answer by telling the parliament just a little of one person's story—an elegant, eloquent and wonderful woman in her 80s, full of life, full of funny stories, despite what has happened in her life's journey. A woman who has travelled a long way to be with us today, a member of the Stolen Generation who shared some of her story with me when I called around to see her just a few days ago. Nungala Fejo, as she prefers to be called, was born in the late 1920s. She remembers her earliest childhood days living with her family and her community in a bush camp just outside Tennant Creek. She remembers the love and the warmth and the kinship of those days long ago, including traditional dancing around the camp fire at night. She loved the dancing. She remembers once getting into strife when, as a four-year-old girl, she insisted on dancing with the male tribal elders rather than just sitting and watching the men, as the girls were supposed to do.

But then, sometime around 1932, when she was about four, she remembers the coming of the welfare men. Her family had feared that day and had dug holes in the creek bank where the children could run and hide. What they had not expected was that the white welfare men did not come alone. They brought a truck, they brought two white men and an Aboriginal stockman on horseback cracking his stockwhip. The kids were found; they ran for their mothers, screaming, but they could not get away. They were herded and piled onto the back of the truck. Tears flowing, her mum tried clinging to the sides of the truck as her children were taken away to the Bungalow in Alice, all in the name of protection.

A few years later, government policy changed. Now the children would be handed over to the missions to be cared for by the churches. But which church would care for them? The kids were simply told to line up in three lines. Nanna Fejo and her sister stood in the middle line, her older brother and cousin on her left. Those on the left were told that they had become Catholics, those in the middle Methodists and those on the right Church of England. That is how the complex questions of post-reformation theology were resolved in the Australian outback in the 1930s. It was as crude as that. She and her sister were sent to a Methodist mission on Goulburn Island and then Croker Island. Her Catholic brother was sent to work at a cattle station and her cousin to a Catholic mission.

Nanna Fejo's family had been broken up for a second time. She stayed at the mission until after the war, when she was allowed to leave for a prearranged job as a domestic in Darwin. She was 16. Nanna Fejo never saw her mum again. After she left the mission, her brother let her know that her mum had died years before, a broken woman fretting for the children that had literally been ripped away from her.

I asked Nanna Fejo what she would have me say today about her story. She thought for a few moments then said that what I should say today was that all mothers are important. And she added: 'Families—keeping them together is very important. It's a good thing that you are surrounded by love and that love is passed down the generations. That's what gives you happiness.' As I left, later on, Nanna Fejo took one of my staff aside, wanting to make sure that I was not too hard on the Aboriginal stockman who had hunted those kids down all those years ago. The stockman had found her again decades later, this time himself to say, 'Sorry.' And remarkably, extraordinarily, she had forgiven him.

Nanna Fejo's is just one story. There are thousands, tens of thousands of them: stories of forced separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their mums and dads over the better part of a century. Some of these stories are graphically told in *Bringing Them Home*, the report commissioned in 1995 by Prime Minister Keating and received in 1997 by Prime Minister Howard. There is something terribly primal about these firsthand accounts. The pain is searing; it screams from the pages. The hurt, the humiliation, the degradation and the sheer brutality of the act of physically separating a mother from her children is a deep assault on our senses and on our most elemental humanity.

These stories cry out to be heard; they cry out for an apology. Instead, from the nation's parliament there has been a stony and stubborn and deafening silence for more than a decade. A view that somehow we, the parliament, should suspend our most basic instincts of what is right and what is wrong. A view that, instead, we should look for any pretext to push this great wrong to one side, to leave it languishing with the historians, the academics and the cultural warriors, as if the Stolen Generations are little more than an interesting sociological phenomenon. But the Stolen Generations are not intellectual curiosities. They are human beings, human beings who have been damaged deeply by the decisions of parliaments and governments. But, as of today, the time for denial, the time for delay, has at last come to an end.

The nation is demanding of its political leadership to take us forward. Decency, human decency, universal human decency, demands that the nation now steps forward to right a historical wrong. That is what we are doing in this place today. But should there still be doubts as to why we must now act. Let the parliament reflect for a moment on the following facts: that, between 1910 and 1970, between 10 and 30 per cent of Indigenous children were forcibly taken from their mothers and fathers. That, as a result, up to 50,000 children were forcibly taken from their families. That this was the product of the deliberate, calculated policies of the state as reflected in the explicit powers given to them under statute. That this policy was taken to such extremes by some in administrative authority that the forced extractions of children of so-called 'mixed lineage' were seen as part of a broader policy of dealing with 'the problem of the Aboriginal population'.

One of the most notorious examples of this approach was from the Northern Territory Protector of Natives, who stated, and I quote:

Generally by the fifth and invariably by the sixth generation, all native characteristics of the Australian aborigine are eradicated. The problem of our half-castes—

to quote the protector—

will quickly be eliminated by the complete disappearance of the black race, and the swift submergence of their progeny in the white ...

The Western Australian Protector of Natives expressed not dissimilar views, expounding them at length in Canberra in 1937 at the first national conference on Indigenous affairs that brought together the Commonwealth and state protectors of natives. These are uncomfortable things to be brought out into the light. They are not pleasant. They are profoundly disturbing. But we must acknowledge these facts if we are to deal once and for all with the argument that the policy of generic forced separation was somehow well motivated, justified by its historical context and, as a result, unworthy of any apology today.

Then we come to the argument of intergenerational responsibility, also used by some to argue against giving an apology today. But let us remember the fact that the forced removal of Aboriginal children was happening as late as the early 1970s. The 1970s is not exactly a point in remote antiquity. There are still serving members of this parliament who were first elected to this place in the early 1970s. It is well within the adult memory span of many of us. The uncomfortable truth for us all is that the parliaments of the nation, individually and collectively, enacted statutes and delegated authority under those statutes that made the forced removal of children on racial grounds fully lawful.

There is a further reason for an apology as well: it is that reconciliation is in fact an expression of a core value of our nation—and that value is a fair go for all. There is a deep and abiding belief in the Australian community that, for the Stolen Generations, there was no fair go at all. And there is a pretty basic Aussie belief that says it is time to put right this most outrageous of wrongs. It is for these reasons, quite apart from concerns of fundamental human decency, that the governments and parliaments of this nation must make this apology. Because, put simply, the laws that our parliaments enacted made the Stolen Generations possible. We, the parliaments of the nation, are ultimately responsible, not those who gave effect to our laws, the problem lay with the laws themselves. As has been said of settler societies elsewhere, we are the bearers of many blessings from our ancestors and therefore we must also be the bearer of their burdens as well. Therefore, for our nation, the course of action is clear. Therefore for our people, the course of action is clear. And that is, to deal now with what has become one of the darkest chapters in Australia's history. In doing so, we are doing more than contending with the facts, the evidence and the often rancorous public debate. In doing so, we are also wrestling with our own soul. This is not, as some would argue, a black-armband view of history; it is just the truth: the cold, confronting, uncomfortable truth. Facing with it, dealing with it, moving on from it. And until we fully confront that truth, there will always be a shadow hanging over us and our future as a fully united and fully reconciled people. It is time to reconcile. It is time to recognise the injustices of the past. It is time to say sorry. It is time to move forward together.

To the Stolen Generations, I say the following: as Prime Minister of Australia, I am sorry. On behalf of the Government of Australia, I am sorry. On behalf of the Parliament of Australia, I am sorry. And I offer you this apology without qualification. We apologise for the hurt, the pain and suffering we, the parliament, have caused you by the laws that previous parliaments have enacted. We apologise for the indignity, the degradation and the humiliation these laws embodied. We offer this apology to the mothers, the fathers, the brothers, the sisters, the families and the communities whose lives were ripped apart by the actions of successive governments under successive parliaments. In making this apology, I would also like to speak personally to the members of the Stolen Generation and their families: to those here today, so many of you; to those listening across the nation—from Yuendumu, in the central west of the Northern Territory, to Yabara, in North Queensland, and to Pitjantjatjara in South Australia.

I know that, in offering this apology on behalf of the government and the parliament, there is nothing I can say today that can take away the pain you have suffered personally. Whatever words I speak today, I cannot undo that. Words alone are not that powerful. Grief is a very personal thing. I say to non-Indigenous Australians listening today who may not fully understand why what we are doing is so important, I ask those non-Indigenous Australians to imagine for a moment if this had happened to you. I say to honourable members here present: imagine if this had happened to us. Imagine the crippling effect. Imagine how hard it would be to forgive. But my proposal is this: if the apology we extend today is accepted in the spirit of reconciliation, in which it is offered, we can today resolve together that there be a new beginning for Australia. And it is to such a new beginning that I believe the nation is now calling us.

Australians are a passionate lot. We are also a very practical lot. For us, symbolism is important but, unless the great symbolism of reconciliation is accompanied by an even greater substance, it is little more than a clanging gong. It is not sentiment that makes history; it is our actions that make history. Today's apology, however inadequate, is aimed at righting past wrongs. It is also aimed at building a bridge between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians—a bridge based on a real respect rather than a thinly veiled contempt. Our challenge for the future is now to cross that bridge and, in so doing, embrace a new partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Embracing, as part of that partnership, expanded link-up and other critical services to help the Stolen Generations to trace their families, if at all possible, and to provide dignity to their lives. But the core of this partnership for the future is to closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians on life expectancy, educational achievement and employment opportunities. This new partnership on closing the gap will set concrete targets for the future: within a decade to halve the widening gap in literacy, numeracy and employment outcomes and opportunities for Indigenous children, within a decade to halve the appalling gap in infant mortality rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and, within a generation, to close the equally appalling 17-year life gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous when it comes when it comes to overall life expectancy.

The truth is: a business as usual approach towards Indigenous Australians is not working. Most old approaches are not working. We need a new beginning. A new beginning which contains real measures of policy success or policy failure. A new beginning, a new partnership, on closing the gap with sufficient flexibility not to insist on a one-size-fits-all approach for each of the hundreds of remote and regional Indigenous communities across the country but instead allows flexible, tailored, local approaches to achieve commonly-agreed national objectives that lie at the core of our proposed new partnership. And a new beginning that draws intelligently on the experiences of new policy settings across the nation. However, unless we as a parliament set a destination for the nation, we have no clear point to guide our policy, our programs or our purpose; no centralised organising principle.

So let us resolve today to begin with the little children—a fitting place to start on this day of apology for the Stolen Generations. Let us resolve over the next five years to have every Indigenous four-year-old in a remote Aboriginal community enrolled and attending a proper early childhood education centre or opportunity and engaged in proper preliteracy and prenumeracy programs. Let us resolve to build new educational opportunities for these little ones, year by

year, step by step, following the completion of their crucial preschool year. Let us resolve to use this systematic approach to building future educational opportunities for Indigenous children to provide proper primary and preventive health care for the same children, to begin the task of rolling back the obscenity that we find today in infant mortality rates in remote Indigenous communities—up to four times higher than in other communities.

None of this will be easy. Most of it will be hard—very hard. But none of it, none of it, is impossible, and all of it is achievable with clear goals, clear thinking, and by placing an absolute premium on respect, cooperation and mutual responsibility as the guiding principles of this new partnership on closing the gap. The mood of the nation is for reconciliation now, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The mood of the nation on Indigenous policy and politics is now very simple. The nation is calling on us, the politicians, to move beyond our infantile bickering, our point-scoring and our mindlessly partisan politics and elevate at least this one core area of national responsibility to a rare position beyond the partisan divide. Surely this is the spirit, the unfulfilled spirit, of the 1967 referendum. Surely, at least from this day forward, we should give it a go.

So let me take this one step further to take what some may see as a piece of political posturing and make a practical proposal to the opposition on this day, the first full sitting day of the new parliament. I said before the election the nation needed a kind of war cabinet on parts of Indigenous policy, because the challenges are too great and the consequences too great to just allow it all to become a political football, as it has been so often in the past. I therefore propose a joint policy commission, to be led by the Leader of the Opposition and myself and, with a mandate to develop and implement—to begin with—an effective housing strategy for remote communities over the next five years. It will be consistent with the government's policy framework, a new partnership for closing the gap. If this commission operates well, I then propose that it work on the further task of constitutional recognition of the first Australians, consistent with the longstanding platform commitments of my party and the pre-election position of the opposition. This would probably be desirable in any event because, unless such a proposition were absolutely bipartisan, it would fail at a referendum. As I have said before, the time has come for new approaches to enduring problems. And working constructively together on such defined projects, I believe, would meet with the support of the nation. It is time for fresh ideas to fashion the nation's future.

Today the parliament has come together to right a great wrong. We have come together to deal with the past so that we might fully embrace the future. And we have had sufficient audacity of faith to advance a pathway to that future, with arms extended rather than with fists still clenched. So let us seize the day. Let it not become a moment of mere sentimental reflection. Let us take it with both hands and allow this day, this day of national reconciliation, to become one of those rare moments in which we might just be able to transform the way in which the nation thinks about itself, whereby the injustice administered to these Stolen Generations in the name of these, our parliaments, causes all of us to reappraise, at the deepest level of our beliefs, the real possibility of reconciliation writ large. Reconciliation across all Indigenous Australia. Reconciliation across the entire history of the often bloody encounter between those who emerged from the Dreamtime a thousand generations ago and those who, like me, came across the seas only yesterday. Reconciliation which opens up whole new possibilities for the future.

For the nation to bring the first two centuries of our settled history to a close, as we begin a new chapter and which we embrace with pride, admiration and awe these great and ancient cultures we are blessed, truly blessed, to have among us. Cultures that provide a unique, uninterrupted human thread linking our Australian continent to the most ancient prehistory of our planet. And growing from this new respect, to see our Indigenous brothers and sisters with fresh eyes, with new eyes, and with our minds wide open as to how we might tackle, together, the great practical challenges that Indigenous Australia faces in the future.

So let us turn this page together: Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, Government and Opposition, Commonwealth and State, and write this new chapter in our nation's story together. First Australians, First Fleeters, and those who first took the Oath of Allegiance just a few weeks ago. Let's grasp this opportunity to craft a new future for this great land: Australia. I commend the motion to the House.

Video and Audio of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations is available on the [Australia.gov.au](http://australia.gov.au) website.

Appendix B

Kungun Ngarrindjeri Yunnan Agreement, 17 March 2008, as formally adopted by Council.

KUNGUN NGARRINDJERI YUNNAN AGREEMENT

This Agreement is dated the

17 March 2008

BETWEEN:

**NGARRINDJERI TENDI INCORPORATED, NGARRINDJERI HERITAGE COMMITTEE
INCORPORATED AND NGARRINDJERI NATIVE TITLE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE NGARRINDJERI PEOPLE** care of the *Ngarrindjeri Land
and Progress Association Incorporated* Camp Coorong Race Relations and Cultural
Education Centre of Post Office Box 126 Meningie SA 5264 ('Ngarrindjeri')

And

THE RURAL CITY OF MURRAY BRIDGE of 2 Seventh Street Murray Bridge SA 5253
(*'Council'*)

BACKGROUND

1. The Council is a statutory body constituted under the Local Government Act 1999 for its Council Area (*'the Council Area'*)
2. The Ngarrindjeri are the Traditional Owners of, and assert control under traditional laws over their land and waters (*'Lands and Waters of the Ngarrindjeri'*).
3. The Council and the Ngarrindjeri wish to protect Aboriginal sites, objects and remains of the Ngarrindjeri across the Council Area in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement, and set in place agreed consultative mechanisms.
4. The agreement may be referred to by the title: "Kungun Ngarrindjeri Yunnan Agreement", which translates to mean, "Listening to Ngarrindjeri People Talking Agreement".

IT IS AGREED:

1. Definitions and Interpretations

'Aboriginal object', 'Aboriginal site' and 'Aboriginal remains' have the same meaning in this Agreement as prescribed in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988 (SA).

'Agreement' refers to this Agreement and includes the schedules;

'Commencement Date' is the date of execution of this Agreement;

'Development' as defined by the Development Act, 1993.

'Highly Sensitive Areas' refers to an area or areas of high cultural and/or heritage importance to the Ngarrindjeri; set out in Schedule 3

'Managed Areas' refer to an area or areas for which the Council and Ngarrindjeri will devise an indigenous management plans to ensure that Aboriginal sites, objects and remains are protected and/or managed;

'Parties' shall mean the Council and Ngarrindjeri;

'Schedule' means a schedule to this Agreement;

'Sensitive Area' refers to the lands and waters and adjacent lands and waters of the River Murray within the Council Area; and Council and the Ngarrindjeri will determine in consultation with each other the definition of sensitive sites and/or area with this area – that is, determine a defined zone'

'Traditional Owners' refers to the Ngarrindjeri People as represented by the Ngarrindjeri Heritage Committee Incorporated, Ngarrindjeri Native Title Management Committee and the Ngarrindjeri Tendi Incorporated, within the meaning in the Aboriginal Heritage Act, 1988 (SA).

2. Apology

- 2.1 The Council apologises to the Ngarrindjeri as the Traditional Owners as expressed in the statement in Schedule 1 of this Agreement and the Ngarrindjeri accept the apology as expressed in Schedule 2.
- 2.2 The statement in Schedule 1 is an aspirational document and does not create any legal obligations or give rise to any claims of any nature whatever and however arising, on the part of either the Council or the Ngarrindjeri.

3. Acknowledgement

- 3.1 The Council acknowledges that the Ngarrindjeri are the Traditional Owners of land and waters within the Council Area and that according to their traditions, customs and spiritual beliefs its lands and waters remain their traditional country.
- 3.2 The Council acknowledges that the Recitals referred to in the Background are true and correct.

4. Commitment

- 4.1 The Parties commit to seek ways together to uphold Ngarrindjeri rights and to advance Ngarrindjeri interests when decisions are being made about their traditional country, lands and waters.
- 4.2 The Parties commit to work together to advance harmonious community relations and promote the interests of the whole community.
- 4.3 The Parties commit to develop greater community understanding of Ngarrindjeri traditions, culture, laws and spiritual beliefs in the Council Area.
- 4.4 The Parties commit to work together to determine, and to advance the community recognition of a framework agreement for the protection of objects, articles and remains in the possession of the Council.
- 4.5 The Parties commit to the formulation of a model or models of best practice for consultation in relation to development assessment within the meaning of the Development Act 1993 (SA)

to occur in the Council Area, which reflects the rights, interests and obligations of the Ngarrindjeri.

- 4.6 The Parties via the Ngarrindjeri will establish a joint committee comprising equal numbers of Ngarrindjeri and Council representatives to develop a strategy for the implementation of the commitments expressed herein, whose name will be determined by the committee.
- 4.7 This Clause 4 is made as an act of good faith and is not intended to affect the legal rights, powers, obligations or interests of either Party.

5. Communication

- 5.1 The Council, Ngarrindjeri Heritage Committee Inc, Ngarrindjeri Native Title Management Committee and Ngarrindjeri Tendi Incorporated acknowledge that the relevant bodies to communicate in relation to the issues that may affect Ngarrindjeri interests within the Council Area are:

- 5.1.1 For Aboriginal Heritage:

- 5.1.1.1 Ngarrindjeri Heritage Committee Inc.
Chairperson: Mr Thomas Trevorrow

- 5.1.2 For Native Title:

- 5.1.2.1 Ngarrindjeri Native Title Management Committee
Chairperson: Mr Mathew Rigney

- 5.2 Ngarrindjeri Tendi Incorporated is the relevant body with which to communicate in circumstances in which directions are to be taken from elders.
- 5.3 The Council and Ngarrindjeri shall develop a communication protocol for the purpose of facilitating the communication process referred to in this Clause 5.

6. Development

6.1 Highly Sensitive Areas

- 6.1.1 It is agreed that Council and Ngarrindjeri shall use their best endeavours to ensure that no development or disturbance will occur on or near the Highly Sensitive Areas referred to Schedule 3.
- 6.1.2 In addition to Clause 6.1.1, it is agreed that from time to time Ngarrindjeri shall at its sole discretion advise, and Council shall at its sole discretion consider and agree to acknowledge and classify additional areas within the Council Area as being Highly Sensitive Areas, and in which case, Clause 6.1.1 applies to those areas.
- 6.1.3 Under no circumstances whatsoever, shall the Ngarrindjeri be prejudiced in any of its dealing with Council or any other third party by its decision to classify or not to classify any additional areas as being Highly Sensitive Areas.

6.2 Managed Areas

- 6.2.1 The Ngarrindjeri in consultation with Council shall devise mutually agreed indigenous management plans for the Managed Areas referred to in Schedule 4.

- 6.2.2 The purpose of the indigenous management plan referred to in Clause 6.2.1 shall be for development to proceed in the Managed Areas in a manner consistent with Ngarrindjeri cultural and heritage interests. For example: defining areas for which development can proceed without restrictions or effect upon Ngarrindjeri cultural or heritage interests, where some restrictions or strategy to minimise risk applies, or where no development should occur. Development Plan objectives to be acknowledged in the development of such Plans so as not to prejudice development per se.
- 6.2.3 Neither party shall be obliged to enter into an indigenous management plan for any Managed Areas.
- 6.2.4 In addition to Clause 6.2.1, it is agreed that from time to time Ngarrindjeri shall at its sole discretion advise, and Council shall at its sole discretion consider to agree to acknowledge and classify additional areas within the Council Area as being Managed Areas, and in which case, Clause 6.2.1 applies to those areas.
- 6.2.5 Under no circumstances whatsoever, shall the Ngarrindjeri be prejudiced in any of its dealing with Council or any other third party by its decision to classify or not to classify any additional areas as being Managed Areas.
- 6.2.6 It is acknowledged that Managed Areas may contain Highly Sensitive Areas.

6.3 Sensitive Areas

- 6.3.1 Ngarrindjeri and Council shall by mutual agreement and consultation determine a process for proceeding with development in Sensitive Areas which results in compliance with the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act, 1988 (SA). Council to ensure conditions or notes are placed on all Development Approvals noting the developer's responsibilities in relation to the Native Title Aboriginal Act and Aboriginal Heritage Act.
- 6.3.2 Under no circumstances whatsoever, shall the Ngarrindjeri be prejudiced in any of its dealing with Council or any other third party by its decision to classify or not to classify any additional areas as being Sensitive Areas.
- 6.3.3 It is acknowledged that Sensitive Areas may contain Highly Sensitive Areas.

6.4 Open Spaces and Zoning

- 6.4.1 Ngarrindjeri and Council shall discuss endorsement of Open Space as being accessible by Ngarrindjeri for cultural uses (such uses being consistent with the use of Open Space by other members of the public).
- 6.4.2 Ngarrindjeri and Council shall discuss the introduction into zoning or planning criteria within the Council Area criteria capable of minimising the risk of interference with, or disturbance to Aboriginal Sites, Aboriginal Objects and Aboriginal Remains.

6.5 Development Plan

- 6.5.1 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in clauses 6.1 to 6.4, those clauses are subject to the provisions of this clause 6.5.
- 6.5.2 Without detracting from the generality of clause 6.5.1, no agreed outcome of any consultation or discussion under this clause 6 will become operative or binding on Council unless and until any amendment to the Plan undertaken pursuant to this

clause 6 is finally approved according to the procedures in the *Development Act 1993* (SA) and Regulations.

- 6.5.3 Council must use its best endeavours to amend the Development Plan – Murray Bridge (RC) (**Plan**) to reflect the proposals in this clause 6.
- 6.5.4 Council specifically commits to use its best endeavours to amend the Plan to include within it a table or tables and associated maps, following Table MuBr/4 which identify or identifies Highly Sensitive Areas and Managed Areas.
- 6.5.5 Council specifically commits to use its best endeavours to amend relevant zoning and planning provisions of the Plan to reflect the agreed outcomes of consultation and discussion between the Ngarrindjeri and Council pursuant to this clause 6.

7. Heritage and Native Title

- 7.1 This Agreement is made as an act of good faith and is not intended to affect, extinguish, or derogate from any subsisting legal rights, powers, interests or obligations of the Ngarrindjeri People, including, but not limited to any such Ngarrindjeri native title rights and interests, or rights under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act*, (SA) 1988 or *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act* 1984 (Cth).
- 7.2 This Agreement does not comprise an indigenous Land Use Agreement as defined the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), nor comprise an agreement to alter, extinguish, surrender or derogate from common law, equity or statutory native title rights of the native title applicants to assert native title for and on behalf of the native title claimant group.
- 7.3 The definition of Highly Sensitive Areas, Managed Areas, and Sensitive Areas in this Agreement shall not stop or inhibit in any manner whatsoever the Ngarrindjeri from referring to other areas of importance to the Ngarrindjeri.

EXECUTED as an Agreement.

Signed for and on behalf of the NGARRINDJERI
TENDI INCORPORATED for and on behalf of the
Ngarrindjeri People


Signature of authorised person

FRANK GEORGE TREVORROW
Name of authorised person
(BLOCK LETTERS)


Witness

Signed for and on behalf of the NGARRINDJERI
HERITAGE COMMITTEE INCORPORATED for
and on behalf of the Ngarrindjeri People


Signature of authorised person

THOMAS E. TREVORROW
Name of authorised person
(BLOCK LETTERS)


Witness

Signed for and on behalf of the NGARRINDJERI
NATIVE TITLE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE for
and on behalf of the Ngarrindjeri People


Signature of authorised person

MATTHEW RIEVEY
Name of authorised person
(BLOCK LETTERS)


Witness

Signed for and on behalf of the RURAL CITY
OF MURRAY BRIDGE by:


Signature of authorised person

ALLAN E. RABON (MAYOR)
Name of authorised person
(BLOCK LETTERS)


Witness

17/3/2008

SCHEDULE 1 APOLOGY

Sincere expression of sorrow and apology to the Ngarrindjeri People

To the Ngarrindjeri people, the traditional owners of the land and waters within the region, the Rural City of Murray Bridge expresses sorrow and sincere regret for the suffering and injustice that you have experienced since colonisation and we share with you our feelings of shame and sorrow at the mistreatment your people have suffered.

We respect your autonomy and uniqueness of **your** culture. We offer our support and commitment to your determination to empower your communities in the struggle for justice, freedom and protection of your Heritage, Culture and interests within the Council area and acknowledge your right to determine your future.

We commit to work with you. We acknowledge your wisdom and we commit to ensuring our actions and expressions best assist your work. We accept your frustrations at our past ways of misunderstanding you.

We are shamed to acknowledge that there is still racism within our communities. We accept that our words must match our actions and we pledge to you that we will work to remove racism and ignorance.

We will recognise your leadership, we honour your visions, and we hope for a future of working together with respect for each other.

We look forward to achieving reconciliation with justice.

We ask to walk beside you, and to stand with you to remedy the legacy of European occupation of your land and waters and control of your lives.

The work of the Rural City of Murray Bridge will be guided by your vision of a future where reconciliation through agreement making may be possible and we may walk together.

Signed for and on behalf of the Rural City of Murray Bridge by



Mayor Alan Arbon



Witnessed for the Council by the Chief Executive Officer, David Altmann

Witnessed for the Ngarrindjeri People by the Rupelle of the Ngarrindjeri Tendi,



Mr George Trevorrow



Witnessed for Ngarrindjeri People by the Chair of Ngarrindjeri Native Title Committee Mr Matthew Rigney



Witnessed for the Ngarrindjeri People by the Chair of Ngarrindjeri Heritage Committee Mr Tom Trevorrow

SCHEDULE 2

Acceptance of Apology

To the Rural City of Murray Bridge

The Ngarrindjeri people acknowledge the sorrow and regret expressed by the Rural City of Murray Bridge SA Council for the suffering and injustice experienced by our people since colonization.

We respect your commitment to work with us and your offer of support to empower our communities in the struggle for justice, freedom and protection of our heritage.

We embrace your vision of a future where reconciliation may be possible and offer our commitment to achieving this common goal.

We acknowledge that you recognise our connection to the land and waters and appreciate your commitment to fostering respect for our culture and interests.

Signed for and on behalf of the Ngarrindjeri Tendi by the Rupelle
Mr. George Trevorrow



Witnessed for the Ngarrindjeri People by the Chair of the Ngarrindjeri Native Title
Committee Mr. Matthew Rigney



Witnessed for the Ngarrindjeri People by the Chair of the Ngarrindjeri Heritage
Committee Mr. Tom Trevorrow



Witnessed for the Rural City of Murray Bridge
By Mayor Allan Arbon.



Witnessed for the Rural City of Murray Bridge
By Chief Executive Officer David Altmann.



SCHEDULE 3
HIGHLY SENSITIVE AREAS

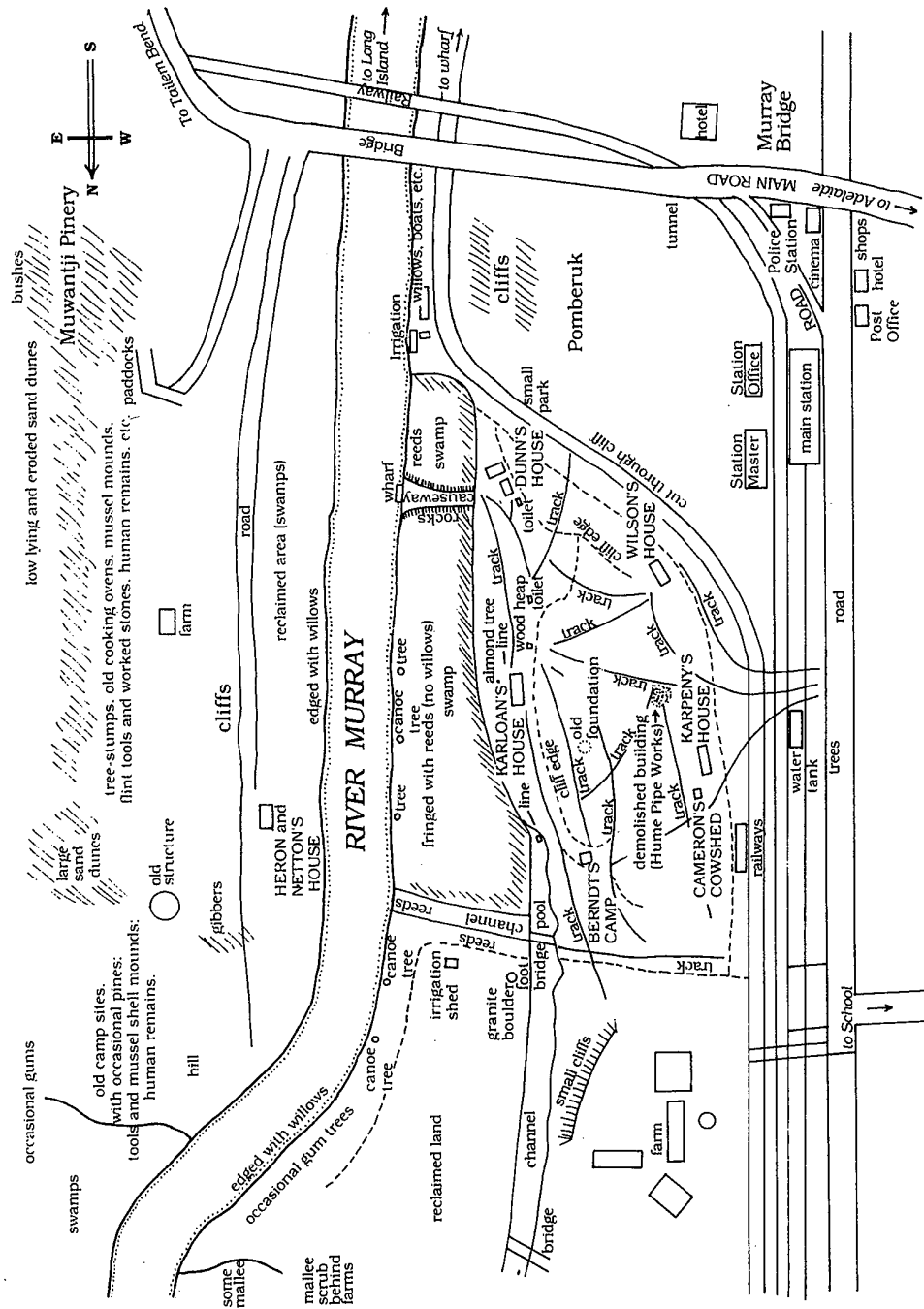
1. Long Island (as described in Appendix A hereto)
2. Granite Outcrop on both sides of River Murray adjacent to new Swanport Bridge.
(as described in Appendix B hereto)

SCHEDULE 4
MANAGED AREAS

1. Narooma Reserve (as described in Appendix C hereto)
2. Railway Precinct (as described in Appendix D hereto)
3. Sturt Reserve (as described in Appendix E hereto)

Appendix C

Sketch plan of Ngarrindjeri settlement at Pomberuk, Murray Bridge in 1942.

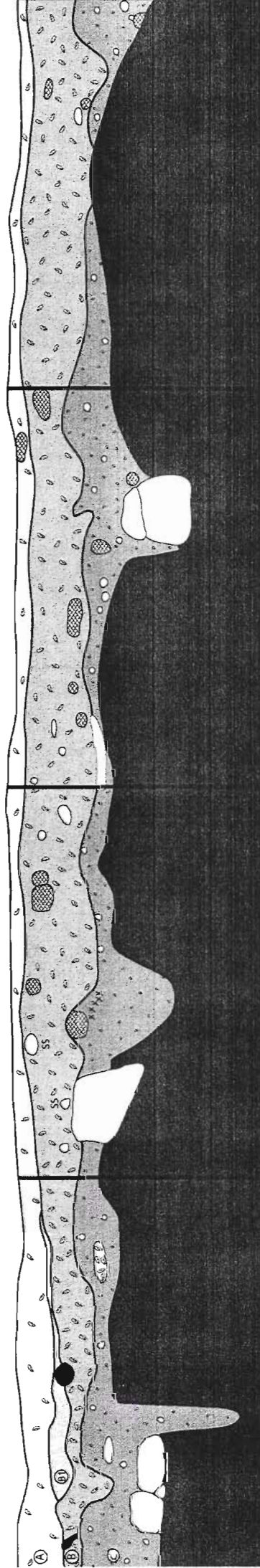


Appendix D





Recent mapping by Christopher Wilson, Ngarrindjeri Heritage Team, Indigenous
Heritage Program (Commonwealth Department of Environment and
Heritage funded project 2008-2009)

Pomberuk (Hume Reserve Midden and Historic Campsite) Square A

North Face East Face South Face West Face



Key

-  Holes & intrusions
-  Shell
-  Charcoal
-  Sandstone

- A: 4140 ± 70 years BP
- B: 4295 ± 50 years BP
- C: 5575 ± 50 years BP

0 10 20 30 mm

Total Depth: 600 mm

