



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION**

### **11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

The wording of this document has been adapted from “Nanutarra Homestead Conservation Plan” prepared by Eastman & Poletti Pty Ltd Architects and Lucy Williams, Historian, in March 2003, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### **PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)**

- 3.5.1 Grazing stock
- 3.6 Recruiting labour

#### **HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)**

- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 106 Workers (including Aboriginal, convict)

#### **11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\***

The homestead of *Nanutarra Station Complex* is a simple example of Victorian Georgian architecture, featuring two detached wings connected by a covered area. (Criterion 1.1)

The individual components of *Nanutarra Station Complex* collectively form a substantial cultural environment as a collection of vernacular pastoral buildings located in a picturesque setting close to the Ashburton River, dating primarily from the 1880s. (Criterion 1.4)

#### **11.2. HISTORIC VALUE**

*Nanutarra Station Complex* was developed from c.1878 as part of the early pastoral development of the Ashburton region. (Criterion 2.1)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

The historical development of *Nanutarra Station Complex* demonstrates the characteristic expansion of remote pastoral properties, particularly in the State's north west, from simple nineteenth century family homesteads to the large pastoral complexes of the present (2005). (Criterion 2.2)

*Nanutarra Station Complex* is associated with the development of coastal shipping ports, stock routes and overland travel in the north west of Western Australia in the mid nineteenth century. (Criterion 2.2)

From the 1870s to the 1930s, *Nanutarra Station Complex* was owned and predominantly managed by members of the Higham family, who were a prominent early family in the colony and especially in the Ashburton region. (Criterion 2.3)

*Nanutarra Station Complex* is representative of stations in the State's northwest that were run and overseen by European pastoralists and supported by an Aboriginal population, who with their families both lived and worked on the station, and were an integral part of its successful operation from the late nineteenth century until well into the twentieth centuries. (Criterion 2.3)

### **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

*Nanutarra Station Complex* has the potential, through its built fabric from several eras and the sites of demolished buildings, to yield information regarding the evolution of pastoral industry practices from the 1880s to the present (2005). (Criterion 3.2)

### **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Nanutarra Station Complex* is highly regarded in the Ashburton region as an important pastoral property, as indicated by its inclusion in the Shire of Ashburton Municipal Inventory. (Criterion 4.1)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

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### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Nanutarra Station Complex* is a good representative example of a pastoral station complex dating from the late nineteenth century.

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

The buildings of *Nanutarra Station Complex* are in fair to poor condition, with a few parts in very poor condition. Areas of masonry and render have deteriorated due to rising damp and moisture ingress, and minor cracking has occurred in the original walls as a result of movement. All windows have deteriorated with use and exposure to the elements. The roofs are in poor condition. The interior fittings are relatively intact and in good condition, as are the internal surfaces and finishes.

#### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

The place has a high degree of integrity. *Nanutarra Station Complex* continues to be used for its original purpose and will continue to be used as such in the short to medium term.

Maintenance, restoration and servicing are required to enable the continued use of the buildings for accommodation.

#### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Nanutarra Station Complex* has undergone a significant number of changes, although through the recycling of materials, much of the extant fabric remains from the original structures. The place retains a moderate degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Supporting evidence has been taken from “Nanutarra Homestead Conservation Plan” prepared by Eastman & Poletti Pty Ltd Architects and Lucy Williams, Historian, in March 2003.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to “Nanutarra Homestead Conservation Plan” prepared by Eastman & Poletti Pty Ltd Architects and Lucy Williams, Historian, in March 2003, pp8-38.

*Nanutarra Station Complex* is located on the traditional lands of the Thalanyji people.

During the nineteenth century, many northwest pastoral communities brought Chinese workers into Australia under labour contracts in response to the extreme labour shortages in the region. After instances of mistreatment were reported, the government facilitated this scheme and provided some regulation, until 1898 when legislation changes brought it to an end. It is not known whether any of these indentured labourers were employed at Nanutarra, but given the local labour shortages of the northwest pastoral industry in the nineteenth century and the availability of cheap imported labour, it is likely that there were at times Chinese workers employed at the station.<sup>1</sup>

#### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence, refer to “Nanutarra Homestead Conservation Plan” prepared by Eastman & Poletti Pty Ltd Architects and Lucy Williams, Historian, in March 2003, pp38-54.

#### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the physical evidence, refer to “Nanutarra Homestead Conservation Plan” prepared by Eastman & Poletti Pty Ltd Architects and Lucy Williams, Historian, in March 2003, pp59-60.

There are 98 pastoral stations on the HCWA database, 65 of which feature buildings constructed before 1900. Twelve of these 98 stations are on the State Register. Seven of these 12 places have buildings constructed before 1900.

Two of these 12 places are located in the Pilbara region, similar to *Nanutarra Station Complex* :

1743 *Tambrey Station Homestead Ruins* (1893; c. 1925; c.1930; 1973) comprises the ruins of a single-storey mud brick and iron dwelling, and associated bush timber and iron buildings including the meathouse, kitchen buildings, storeroom and carriage shed. It also includes a grave, the slab floor of the shearer's kitchen and sheep yards. The place was vacated in 1950.

3376 *Cooya Pooya Station*, (c. 1882; c. 1907; 1939; c. 1950) consists of single-storey stone and iron homestead, detached kitchen and shearer's kitchen, meat house, poultry shed, stables, shearing shed and shearers'

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<sup>1</sup> Anne Atkinson, *Asian Immigrants to Western Australia 1829-1901*, The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians Volume V, UWA Press, Nedlands WA, 1988, pp. 3-5.

quarters. The place is noted as having design features responsive to the North-West climate, innovative concrete work and fine stone work. It is vacant and has a high degree of authenticity.

The HCWA database notes 18 pastoral stations in the Pilbara region which feature buildings that were constructed before 1900.<sup>2</sup>

#### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

“Nanutarra Homestead Conservation Plan” prepared by Eastman & Poletti Pty Ltd Architects and Lucy Williams, Historian, in March 2003.

#### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

The significance of the bough shed, fencing, machinery shed (c1960s), workers accommodation transportables, vehicle shed, bathroom building (c1990s), fuel tanks, chicken run, tack room shed, toilet transportable, and water tanks.

Further research is required to determine if the place has rarity value as one of the few pastoral homesteads held in freehold title.

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<sup>2</sup> HCWA database 5/5/2004