

Wybalenna

HEALTHY COUNTRY PLAN 2015

This is our healthy country plan. It is what our community wants to see happen at Wybalenna to make sure the land is healthy.

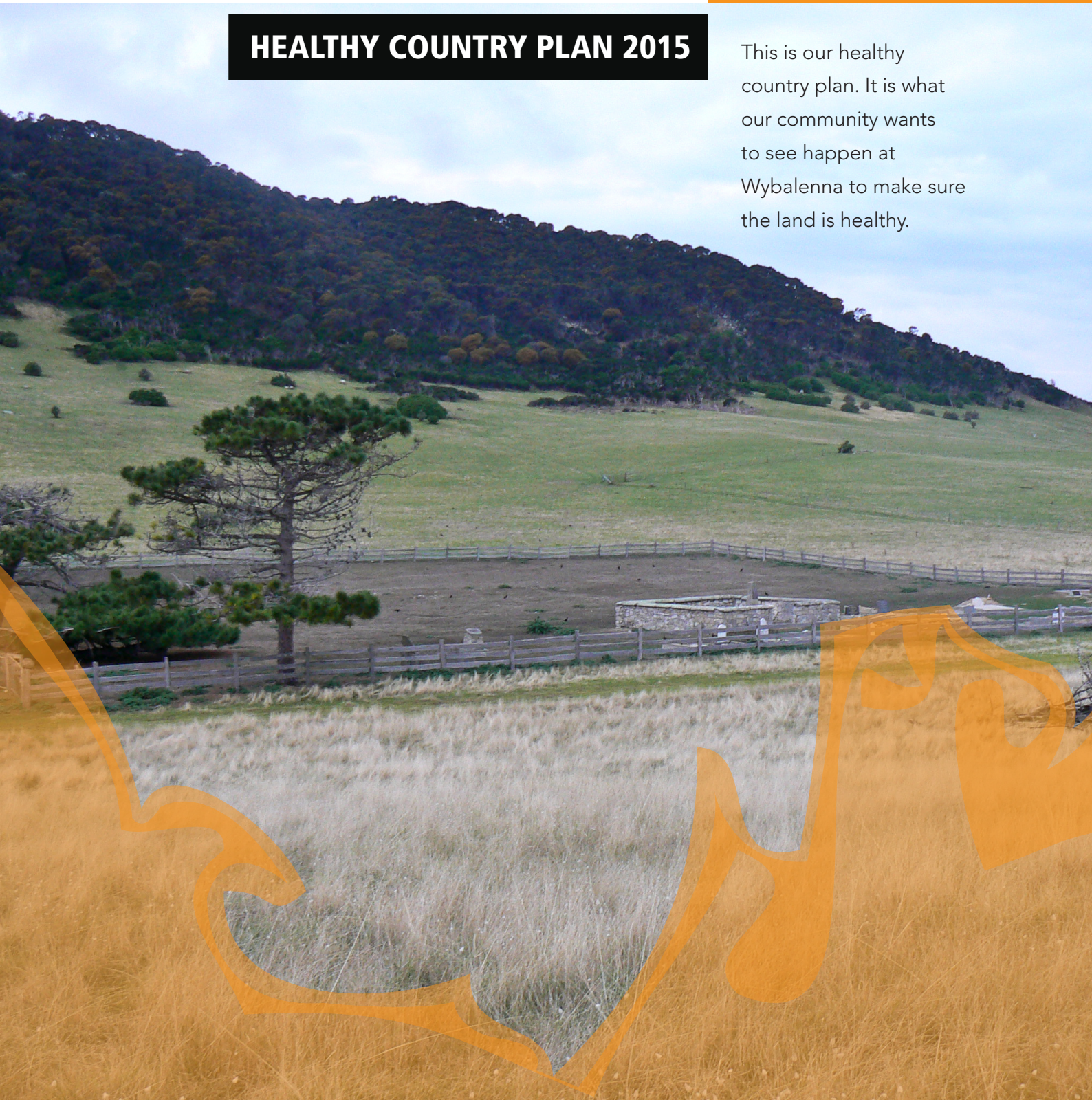


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WARNING:

Community members are warned that this document contains images of our people who have passed away.

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WORD LIST:

Throughout this plan, we have used palawa kani. Here is a list of the words we have used and their English meanings.

When we use palawa kani we do not use capitalise letters.

There are also some English words which have been defined too.

palawa kani words:

limuna	Sheoak (Allocasuarina)
lutruwitia	The Tasmanian mainland
lungtalanana	Clarke Island
raytji	White
tayaritja	The Furneaux Islands
tunapri	Knowledge

English words:

Pest plants	A pest plant is a native plant that is having a negative impact in the environment. This is opposed to a weed which is an introduced plant that has a negative impact on the environment.
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OUR PLACE: WYBALENNA



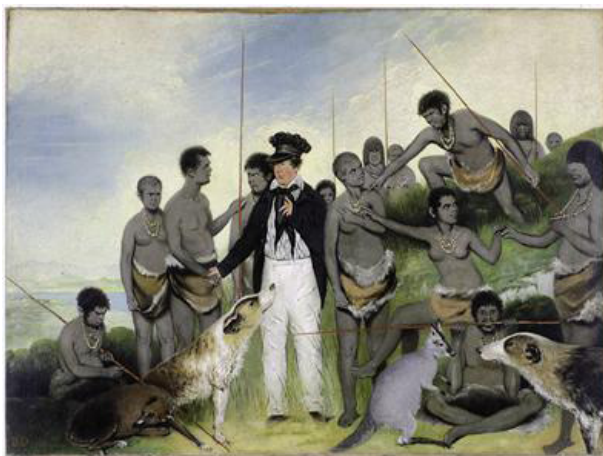
Context Map

Wybalenna is a very important place for our community. It is a brutal reminder of what the invasion of our country and colonisation has meant for our people.

Wybalenna is the place where George Augustus Robinson took our people, telling them that if they went with him, one day they would be free to return to their traditional lands.

Sadly, this was never to be.

The treatment our people received at Wybalenna and the poor conditions they were forced to live in only served to make many people sick. As a result of getting sick many of our people died at Wybalenna. The Aborigines who died at Wybalenna were buried there. Those who survived were taken to live in squalid conditions at putalina.



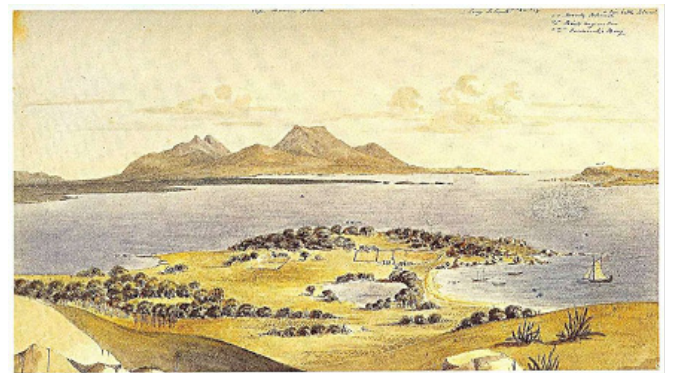
Historical depictions of
George Augustus Robinson with our ancestors



Our people at Wybalenna

At Wybalenna George Augustus Robinson tried to 'civilise and Christianise' our people. Wybalenna was a place where raytji overseers attempted to destroy our culture, our traditions and our language. They never succeeded.

Tasmanian Aboriginal culture continues to be strong and vibrant. Today, we continue to know our culture, practice our traditions and speak our language. We continue to stand strong on our land.



Historical depiction of Wybalenna



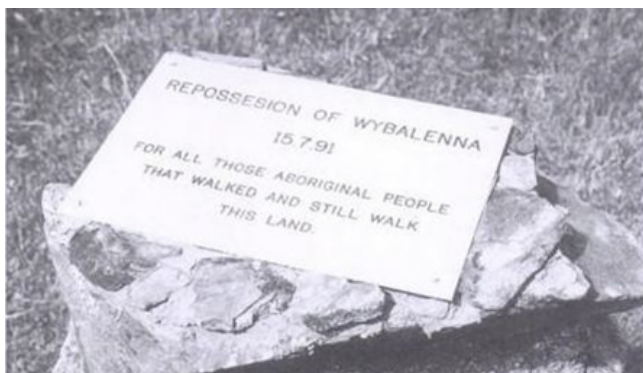
Site Map.

In the late 1980s our community started a prolonged campaign to have Wybalenna handed back. For many years our community living in tayaritja worked to protect the Aboriginal burial sites in the cemetery from being trampled by wandering cattle. As community we mapped and marked the graves and fenced the cemetery - only to have the fences and grave markers ripped out again.

During this time, our community occupied Wybalenna. People would stay in the homestead with their families for long periods of time, and camps were organised to bring people from lutruwita to stay at the site.

At the time, the broader Flinders Island community were divided about Aborigines seeking to have Wybalenna returned. Despite this, Wybalenna was officially returned to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community in 1995.

ALCT holds the title to Wybalenna on behalf of all Tasmanian Aborigines.



Wybalenna

Community gather at Wybalenna.



"Tasmanian Aboriginal culture continues to be strong and vibrant. Today, we continue to know our culture, practice our traditions and speak our language. We continue to stand strong on our land."

COMMUNITY VISION:

Aboriginal people can manage Wybalenna for the betterment of all Tasmanian Aborigines in line with community values.

The Tasmanian Aboriginal community's connection with Wybalenna continues to be strengthened.

The significance of Wybalenna as a burial ground is respected, the land is rehabilitated and the Aboriginal story of the place is shared.

WHAT IS HEALTHY COUNTRY PLANNING?

Healthy country planning is a method used by Aboriginal communities around Australia to identify how they want to manage their land. It is part of a planning process used around the world called open standards and it is used for the practice of conservation and aims to balance environmental values with cultural *tunapri* and community values.

Unlike a traditional land management plan, a healthy country plan looks at what is important to the Aboriginal community and places a higher value on those things, rather than only valuing things considered important by scientists and conservationists.

Our healthy country plan started with community effort. We had a meeting on Flinders Island and a lot of people shared their *tunapri*, thoughts and feelings on how they thought Wybalenna should be managed.

Healthy country planning works by identifying targets and threats and sets goals to either protect our targets or to eliminate our threats.

The plan is only part of the healthy country planning process. It is important that we have continued community input throughout the cycle.



The Healthy Country Cycle

TARGETS

WHAT IS A TARGET?

A target is a feature of Wybalenna that the community wish to focus their energy and resources on protecting to make our vision real.

A target can be either tangible or intangible. Tangible targets are things in the landscape that you can see and touch. Examples of tangible targets at Wybalenna are the cemetery and the homestead. An intangible target is something in the landscape that cannot be seen or touched. Examples of intangible targets at Wybalenna are the feeling of the place and the community's tunapri about Wybalenna. Intangible targets may also include the potential for something to happen in the future. In the case of Wybalenna the community identified the possibility of making money from the place as a target. In the plan, this is described as financial opportunity.

HOW WE IDENTIFIED OUR TARGETS?

We spoke to people at community camps, community meetings and individually to help us identify what features in the landscape the community considered the most important. We also held a community meeting on Flinders Island in August 2014.

In this meeting we made lists of things that the community felt were important to the islands.

We then grouped those things together under headings like 'community use' and 'tunapri'. From our list we were able to set priorities on what we should focus on first of all.

This is how we identified our targets.



A map of our tangible targets at Wybalenna.

TARGET 1 CEMETERY

POOR HEALTH

Why is the cemetery a target?

The cemetery is a sacred place. It is important to the community because it is a burial place for many of our people. Prior to the community reclaiming Wybalenna cattle were often left to graze on the cemetery. As a part of reclaiming the site the community fenced the cemetery as well as marked the graves of the people who were buried there. However, vandals pulled out the markers and the graves have remained unmarked since.



Cemetery at Wybalenna

Why is the cemetery rated as being in poor health?

The cemetery is considered in poor health because at present the graves remain unmarked, there is a lot of animal disturbance (especially from wombats) occurring and there are weeds growing on the graves and throughout the cemetery ground, particularly slender thistle.



GOALS:

Cemetery at Wybalenna

- By 2020 the animal disturbance on the cemetery has been reduced.
- By 2018 the cemetery is free of weeds and mature boxthorn has been eliminated from Wybalenna.
- 2025 the graves are marked with the names of the people who are or were buried there.

TARGET 2

SACRED FEELING

GOOD HEALTH



Wybalenna landscape.

Why is sacred feeling a target?

The sacred feeling at Wybalenna is difficult to describe, but it is a central part of what makes Wybalenna so important to our community.

Why is the sacred feeling rated as being in good health?

The sacred feeling of Wybalenna is considered to be in good health because the community feels that it has not been impacted on a great deal. The community identified that there has been no inappropriate development at the site, and any improvements, such as the recent works on the homestead, have been done in a way that is sensitive to the significance of the place.

GOALS:

- The community did not have a specific goal for the sacred feeling only to say that encouraging continuous connection and understanding of the significance of the site was important.

TUNAPRI

TARGET 3

FAIR HEALTH

Why is tunapri a target?

tunapri is our knowledge and our stories. The community identified this as an important target, as without continuous passing on of tunapri, the significance of Wybalenna could be lost. tunapri involves telling our contemporary stories of the site as well as making sure our history of the site is known.

Why is tunapri rated as being in fair health?

The tunapri of Wybalenna is considered to be in fair health because it is felt that although there is an interest in visiting Wybalenna and learning the story of the place, this could be improved upon. The community feels that more of an organised effort should be made with getting people back on country, particularly young people, so they better understand the significance of Wybalenna and what the site means for our people.



Community camp fire at Wybalenna.

GOALS:

- Each year there are at least 4 Flinders Island Aboriginal community visits organised to Wybalenna and 2 mainland Tasmanian Aboriginal community visits organised to Wybalenna where information and stories can be shared.

TARGET 4 COMMUNITY USE

FAIR HEALTH

Why is community use a target?

Community use of our land is important because it strengthens our connection to these places. We see community use as a target, because gathering on land as a community is a way to strengthen our ties to each other, as well as to our country. We want to encourage our community to use our lands, especially our young people. This way our young people can know the story of Wybalenna and be proud of who they are as Aboriginal people.

Why is community use rated as being in fair health?

Community use of Wybalenna is considered to be in fair health because the community feels that although some Aboriginal people are using and visiting the site, the number of people doing so could be improved upon.

GOALS:

- Each year at least 4 community working bees are held which will focus on achieving the goals outlined in this plan.



Community gather at Wybalenna.

CHAPEL AND HOMESTEAD

TARGET 5

FAIR HEALTH

Why are the chapel and homestead targets?

The chapel and homestead are important to the community as they are embedded in the landscape at Wybalenna. Although the homestead is not the original homestead lived in by George Augustus Robinson, its presence at the site is representative of lutruwita's history of colonisation, and is considered to be an integral part of our story of Wybalenna.

Why are the homestead and chapel rated as being in good health?

The chapel and homestead are rated as being in good health. This is because despite their age, both buildings are structurally sound. Additional maintenance works are currently being undertaken by ALCT to stabilise the buildings and ensure they do not fall into a further state of disrepair. For the health status of very good to be achieved, the homestead would require a functional kitchen and bathroom. It was felt that for the chapel to reach the status of very good health any brick rot and rising damp would need to be addressed and any culturally insensitive displays inside the building would need to be removed.

GOALS:

- By 2025 there is culturally sensitive and accurate interpretation of the buildings at Wybalenna.



The homestead, chapel and signage.

TARGET 6

CELL BLOCK FOUNDATIONS



Historical depiction of the cellblocks, and what remains of the cellblocks today.

POOR HEALTH

Why are the foundations a target?

The foundations of the cell block tell an important part of our story. The cell block stood at Wybalenna until it was demolished and the bricks used to rebuild parts of the chapel. The cell block was where our people were housed when they were taken to Wybalenna by George Augustus Robinson. Historical records tell us that the cell block was a sad and desperate place for our people. It was dark, cold and damp. These terrible conditions caused many of our people to die from illness.

At present, all that remains of the cell block are some remnant bricks on a grassy knoll that people drive over.

Why were the foundations of the buildings considered to be in poor health?

The foundations of the cell block are considered to be in poor health. The community feels that this rating was two-fold. Firstly, because people drive their cars over the area and a makeshift track was beginning to form. Secondly, because there is no interpretation of the area and its significance.

GOALS:

- By 2020 vehicles will no longer be driving over the foundations of the old cell block.



FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITY

TARGET 7

POOR HEALTH

Why is financial opportunity a target?

Financial opportunity is our community's ability to make money off our lands and become more economically independent. Exploring the potential for any financial opportunity is important to us as a community because we would like to move away from reliance on funding grants and be self-determining in how we use our land.

Why was financial opportunity considered to be in poor health?

The community considered financial opportunity to be in poor health because currently nothing is being undertaken to raise an income from Wybalenna. It is felt that Wybalenna is not being used to its best potential because there is a lack of infrastructure, and a lack of initiative to undertake money-making activities.

GOALS:

- By 2020 have ongoing employment for at least one Aboriginal community member based at Wybalenna

TARGET HEALTH RANKING:

A quick view of how we ranked each target's health:

Targets	Indicators	Poor Health	Fair Health	Good Health	Very Good Health
Cemetery	Graves marked	None			Graves Marked
	Animal damage	Lots > 50%	Some > 20%	Little <10%	None
	Weeds	Lots >50%	Some > 20%	Little <10%	None
Sacred Feeling	Authentic appearance	Over development		Some non-intrusive Interpretation	No intrusive development
tunapri	Organised visits	None	2 per year	4 per year	6 per year
	Interpretation	None	1 or 2 signs designed by community	3 signs designed by community	4 signs designed by community
Community use	Community visits	None	Weather tight but needs a lot of work	4 per year	6 per year
Chapel and Homestead	Well maintained	Not weather tight Falling down Structurally unsound	Weather tight but needs a lot of work	Minor maintenance issues	No pressing issues
Cell block foundations	Driven over	Driven over regularly		Rarely driven over	Never driven over
	Interpretation	none			Signs
Financial opportunity	People Employed	None		1 person employed	2 people employed
	Funded projects	None		1 funded project	2 funded projects

A health ranking table is an easy way to see how the community ranks the health of each target. We have used indicators which show what it takes for target to be considered in very good health.

WHAT IS A THREAT?

A threat is something that impacts negatively on the health of one of our targets. A threat can be either tangible or intangible. A tangible threat is a thing in the landscape that you can see and touch. Examples of tangible threats at Wybalenna are weeds, animal disturbance and lack of infrastructure. An intangible threat is something that cannot be seen or touched, such as a lack of community interest or loss of tunapri.

THREATS

UNDERSTANDING THREAT RANKING:

LOW:

- The problem is only likely to slightly harm some or part of the target.
- The problem is likely to be very local and only affect very few places in the project area, and;
- The problem is easily fixable at a fairly low cost and with little effort from workers.

MEDIUM:

- The problem is likely to moderately harm some part of the target.
- The problem is likely to be somewhat local and affect the target at some places in the project area.
- The problem can be fixed with a reasonable commitment of funds and effort from workers.

HIGH:

- The problem is likely to seriously damage or destroy some part of the target.
- The problem is likely to be widespread and affect the target wherever it is in the project area.
- The problem is either really expensive to fix or it's not fixable at all.

THREAT RANKING TABLE:

TARGET	CEMETERY	SACRED FEELING	TUNAPRI	COMMUNITY USE	CHAPEL HOMESTEAD	FOUNDATIONS	FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITY	THREAT RANK
THREAT								
LACK OF COMMUNITY INTEREST	Medium		High	High	Medium		High	High
LACK OF FUNDING				Medium	High		High	High
LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE				High			Medium	High
LACK OF KNOWLEDGE		Medium	High	Medium				Medium
DISRESPECTFUL USE	Low	Medium			Low	High		Medium
ANIMAL DISTURANCE	Medium	Low				Low		Medium
WEEDS	Low	Low				Low		Low

A threat ranking table is an easy way to see what the community's targets are, what threats are impacting on those targets and how much of an impact each threat is having.

LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE

HIGH

Lack of infrastructure is considered a threat as the community felt that it was impacting significantly on the way people use Wybalenna.

At the community meeting, people expressed concern that the lack of infrastructure, such as not having a functioning kitchen and bathroom at Wybalenna, negatively impacted on the community using the site for extended stays. The community feels that if better infrastructure was put in place our people would be more inclined to use the homestead.

LACK OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

HIGH

Lack of community interest was identified as a threat, especially with our young people. It was felt that without a proactive approach to engaging our youth with Wybalenna (especially our youth who do not live on Flinders Island) the significance of the site might be lost for future generations.

Community interest was also seen as reflecting the preparedness of community to give their own time to undertake any works that might need doing in the absence of paid workers.



Community at Wybalenna

LOSS OF TUNAPRI

MEDIUM

Loss of tunapri was deemed a threat, because without tunapri being passed down through our generations our connection to Wybalenna may be lost. For example, the story of our struggle to have Wybalenna handed back to the community is not as well known in our younger generations as we would like, especially, among our youth who do not live on tayaritja. This is an important part of our tunapri and the community feels more effort should be made to pass down these stories.



Community at Wybalenna

DISRESPECTFUL USE

MEDIUM

Disrespectful use is considered a threat because it undermines the importance of Wybalenna through people being culturally inappropriate. Disrespectful use can mean people either intentionally or unintentionally damaging the site. Examples of disrespectful use might be inappropriate displays and interpretation, dumping of rubbish and driving over the cell block foundations. especially, among our youth who do not live on tayaritja. This is an important part of our tunapri and the community feels more effort should be made to pass down these stories.



Aunty Ida West Garden at the
Wybalenna chapel



TASMANIAN
ABORIGINAL
CENTRE INC.

ANIMAL DISTURBANCE

MEDIUM

Animal disturbance is considered a threat especially in the cemetery. Wombats digging burrows have the potential to do irreversible damage to graves. Animal disturbance was also considered a low level threat to the remaining cell block foundations.

WEEDS

LOW

Weeds are considered a threat to Wybalenna because of their invasive nature. If action is not taken to rid the land of weeds they have the potential to take over and cause a lot of damage to the landscape. The main weeds that pose a threat at Wybalenna are African boxthorn and slender thistle.



Slender thistle



African boxthorn

WORKING ON TARGETS AND WORKING ON THREATS.

There are two main approaches used for ensuring a target is healthy. Those approaches are either threat focused or target focused.

A threat focused approach concentrates on managing threats and minimising the impact those threats have on target health. Whereas a target focused approach means efforts go towards improving the health of the target by undertaking works which focus directly on improving the target itself.

This can seem confusing at first because often the desired outcome of the strategies are the same, but depending on which approach is taken the strategies used will differ significantly.

EXAMPLE:

Community use:

Community use was a target that was identified as something that should be focused on in the case of Wybalenna and lack of infrastructure at the site was something the community felt was a major threat to this.

A threat focused approach would require workers to look at the threats impacting on the target and work towards fixing them. In this case, that would mean working towards fixing the lack of infrastructure at Wybalenna and/or improving what is already there in order to encourage community to use the site more. Strategies might include:

- Making sure tank water at the site is drinkable.
- Ensuring there are toilet and bathroom facilities available.
- Ensuring the kitchen is usable with suitable benches and a working stove.

A target focused approach means that workers focus their efforts on improving and/or maintaining the target itself, rather than removing or fixing any particular threats. Strategies that fall under a target focused approach for improving community use at Wybalenna might include:

- Organising community day trips to the site.
- Starting an Aboriginal community working group to do simple maintenance works.
- Circulating flyers to Aboriginal community members to let them know they are able to stay at Wybalenna whenever they want.

Why bother breaking down whether a strategy is target focused or threat focused?

Breaking things down in this way helps ensure any work being undertaken is meaningful because it addresses community concerns. It also allows for the community to come up with achievable strategies that take into account any relevant limitations, such as the skill base of available workers or budgetary restraints.

For instance, carrying out major infrastructure works to fix the kitchen at the Wybalenna homestead would involve spending a lot of money, as well as employing workers who have skills in carpentry and building. These skills are skills that are not always readily available in our community.

Even though undertaking works to improve infrastructure would increase community use, simply organising a day trip would also increase community use. This strategy would also cost a lot less money and the skills required to organise a community trip to Wybalenna are skills widely available in our community.

Monitoring and action plans.

It is important to check that strategies and an action plan are put in place to make sure we are on track to achieving our goals and our vision.

We need to work out how healthy things are at Wybalenna today and then keep measuring them. Collecting this information will allow us to check that our targets are getting healthier (or at least, make sure that they are not getting worse).

Ongoing input from our community is important as well. An essential part of healthy country planning involves reviewing and updating plans on an ongoing basis.

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