

Aboriginal Historical Places

lutruwita is the country of Tasmanian Aboriginal people and everyone has a responsibility to protect our heritage.



Aboriginal historical places are locations that have significance to Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

An Aboriginal historical place could be the site of ancestral life, a colonial era massacre, or another significant historic

event. It may have associations with an important person or be an example of wider political, social, spiritual, economic or historic events or trends.

An Aboriginal historical place could have a physical artefact (tangible heritage) such as a rock marking, shell midden, foundations, burial or a building. The significance may be in the intangible heritage of ceremony, story or song of a place. The historical place may have both tangible and intangible heritage.

Aboriginal historical places are identified through research that may include oral histories, archival sources, historical records and archaeological investigations.



A Tasmanian Aboriginal historical place may be a site of

- pre-colonial Aboriginal life
- past interactions between Aboriginal people and colonists
- a Government policy or action towards Aboriginal people
- association with a significant Aboriginal person or group



How are Aboriginal historical places protected?

Aboriginal historical places are protected by a range of laws that apply in Tasmania and across Australia.

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975* applies to 'relics' created by Aboriginal people that are of significance to the Aboriginal people of Tasmania. This includes Aboriginal traditions, knowledge, observance, custom or beliefs of Aboriginal people generally or of a particular community or group of Aboriginal people. Significance may relate to the Aboriginal tradition, contemporary history of Aboriginal people or the anthropological, archaeological or scientific history of Aboriginal people. The Act states that 'no person shall destroy, damage, deface, conceal, or otherwise interfere with a relic.'

Three areas of land in Tasmania have been declared as 'Protected Sites' under the Act. These are the Sundown Point Aboriginal Site, West Point Aboriginal Site and the Maxwell River Archaeological Site.

The *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995* applies to land that has been returned to the Aboriginal community by the State Government. These places are managed by the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania and include:

- *piyura kitina* / Risdon Cove
- *putalina* / Oyster Cove
- Wargata Mina Cave
- Ballawinne Cave
- Kutikina Cave
- *preminghana* / Mount Cameron West
- *lungatalanana* / Clarke Island,
- Steep (Head) Island
- Mount Chappell Island
- Badger Island
- *truwana* / Cape Barren Island (part of)
- Great (Big) Dog Island
- Babel Island, and
- Wybalenna (Flinders Island)

Indigenous Protected Areas are areas that are voluntarily dedicated by Aboriginal groups as part of the National Reserve System.

In Tasmania these are:

- *preminghana* / Mt Cameron West
- *putalina* / Oyster Cove
- *piyura kitina* / Risdon Cove
- Mount Chappell Island
- Badger Island
- Babel Island
- Great (Big) Dog Island, and
- *lungatalanana* / Clarke Island

The **National Heritage List** is administered by the Commonwealth Department of Environment. It lists natural, historic and Indigenous places that are of outstanding significance to the nation. In Tasmania these are:

- The Western Tasmania Aboriginal Cultural Landscape
- North-east peninsula of Recherche Bay
- *kutalayna* – Jordan River Levee

The **Tasmanian Heritage Register** operates under the *Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995* and protects built heritage. In Tasmania, an Aboriginal historical place on the Register is the Former Methodist Church at Nicholls Rivulet.

Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania

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