

Natural Values Report for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair National Park

**Natural Values Survey – Proposed
Windermere Hut Area Redevelopment**



Biodiversity Monitoring Section

Biodiversity Monitoring Ecologist – Steve Leonard

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1. Introduction

Natural Values Conservation Branch received a request from Parks and Wildlife, Northwest Region, to undertake a natural values survey for a proposed replacement of the Windermere Hut and construction of associated infrastructure (Rangers' hut, toilets, tent platforms). An initial desktop assessment by Biodiversity Monitoring Section Staff identified no potential threatened species or communities within the general area of the proposed works. An on ground survey was conducted to provide a more detailed assessment of values within the site.

2. Activity Description

The concept plan for the site redevelopment indicates the following works to take place (Inspiring Place 2019; Figure 1):

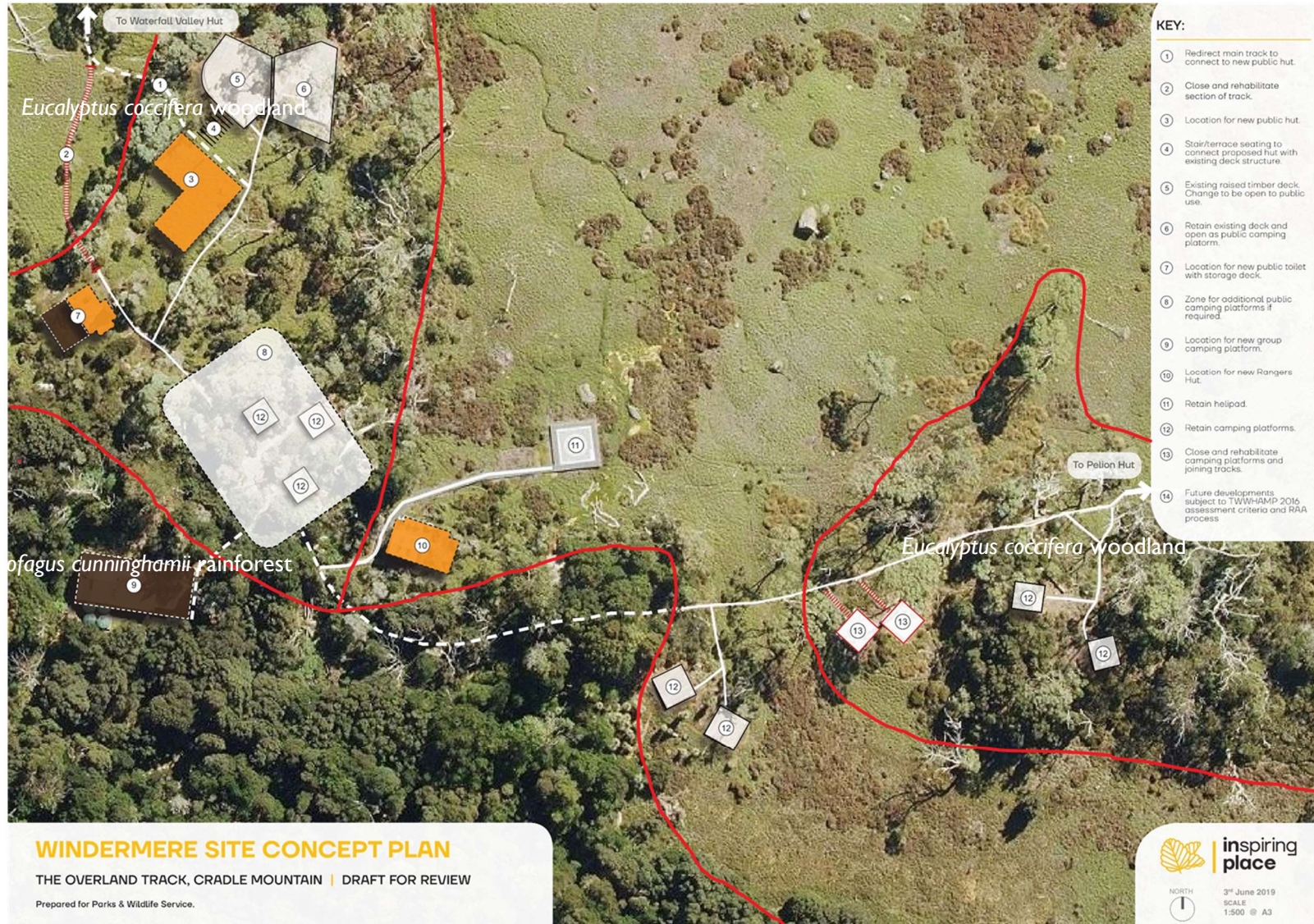
- Removal of the existing hut and replacement with new group camping platforms.
- Construction of a new hut adjacent to existing group camping platforms.
- Construction of a Rangers' hut on the site of the existing toilets.
- Construction of new toilets at the site currently used to store gas bottles.
- Removal of two existing camping platforms
- Construction of additional camping platforms between the proposed Rangers' hut and new hut.
- Construction of tracks/boardwalks connecting the above as required.

- **Method**

The area of the proposed works was surveyed by Biodiversity Monitoring Section Ecologist Steve Leonard on 7th May 2019. The survey consisted of an area search of the proposed sites and surrounds (Figure 1), recording vegetation communities, vascular plant species and signs of threatened fauna species. The survey examined all vegetation communities/habitats in the area. Particular attention was given to the footprints and immediate surrounds of proposed structures. The survey was carried out over approximately three hours.

Figure I. Windermere site concept plan, construction works and vegetation types. Base

showing indicative locations of map from Inspiring Place (2019).



3. Results

Flora

There are three main vegetation communities within the survey area. The existing hut is situated on the margins of *Nothofagus cunninghamii* rainforest (TASVEG code RMU; see Appendix I for plant species common names). The remaining current structures on the site are situated within a patch of *Eucalyptus coccifera* woodland (TASVEG code DCO), while the broader surrounds consist of a mosaic of eastern alpine sedgeland, eastern alpine heathland, and eastern buttongrass moorland (TASVEG codes HSE, HHE, MBE respectively). The understorey of the woodland vegetation is dominated by *Gleichenia alpina*, *Boronia citriodora*, *Baeckea gunniana* and *Leptospermum rupestre*. Scattered individuals of the conifers *Athrotaxis cupressoides*, and *Phyllocladus aspleniifolius* are also present. The sedgeland vegetation is dominated by *Gleichenia alpina*, while the heath and moorland are dominated by *Richea scoparia* and *Gymnoschoenus sphaerocephalus* respectively.

In total 56 species of vascular plant were recorded during the survey (listed in Appendix I). No listed threatened plant species or plant communities were found within the survey area.

A number of individuals of the introduced grass *Poa annua* were present around the camping platforms near the current toilets. This species is associated with moist, high nutrient and disturbed sites and is present around several Overland Track huts/camping areas. It is possible that *P. annua* will colonise areas of bare soil created during the site redevelopment. However it is very unlikely to spread into intact vegetation, and any increase in abundance due to building-related disturbance is likely to be counteracted as native vegetation recovers. A potential precautionary measure to inhibit *P. annua* establishment would be to mulch disturbed soil with locally sourced leaf litter or other plant material.

Fauna

There were abundant signs (scats) of grazing marsupials (common wombat, Bennett's wallaby, Tasmanian pademelon) throughout the area. An eastern quoll scat was found adjacent to one of the existing tent platforms. No denning sites or potential denning sites for threatened Dasyurids were observed. All other threatened fauna species known from the region are unlikely to be directly impacted by the proposed works.

4. Outcomes and recommendations

The proposed works are unlikely to have any significant impact on state or federally listed threatened species or communities, or natural values generally. Mulching any bare soil created by building works will reduce spread of *Poa annua*. Apart from this, there are no specific recommendations relating to biological value conservation beyond the standard procedures relating to biosecurity and minimisation of disturbance during construction.

Appendix A — Vascular plant species recorded

Type	Family	Species name	Common name	
Dicotyledoneae	Apiaceae	<i>Trachymene humilis</i>	alpine laceflower	
		<i>Hydrocotyle sibthorpioides</i>	shining pennywort	
	Asteraceae	<i>Cotula alpina</i>	alpine buttons	
		<i>Erigeron bellidioides</i>	hairy mountain daisy	
		<i>Erigeron gunnii</i>	gunn's fleabane	
		<i>Euchiton traversii</i>	mat cottonleaf	
		<i>Ozothamnus hookeri</i>	scaly everlasting bush	
		Epacridaceae	<i>Acrothamnus montanus</i>	snow beard heath
			<i>Epacris gunnii</i>	coral heath
	<i>Leptecophylla parvifolia</i>		mountain pinkberry	
	<i>Richea gunnii</i>		bog candle heath	
	<i>Richea gunnii</i>		bog candle heath	
	<i>Richea pandanifolia</i>		pandani	
	<i>Sprengelia incarnata</i>		pink swamp heath	
	<i>Trochocarpa cunninghamii</i>		straggling purpleberry	
	Fabaceae		<i>Almaleea subumbellata</i>	wiry bush pea
			<i>Nothofagus cunninghamii</i>	myrtle beech
	Geraniaceae	<i>Geranium potentilloides</i> var. <i>potentilloides</i>	mountain cranesbill	
	Haloragaceae	<i>Gonocarpus montanus</i>	mountain raspwort	
	Myrtaceae	<i>Baeckea gunniana</i>	alpine heath myrtle	
		<i>Eucalyptus coccifera</i>	snow peppermint	
		<i>Eucalyptus subcrenulata</i>	alpine yellow gum	
		<i>Leptospermum lanigerum</i>	woolly tea tree	
		<i>Leptospermum rupestre</i>	mountain tea tree	
		Plantaginaceae	<i>Plantago tasmanica</i>	tasmanian plantain
		Polygalaceae	<i>Comesperma retusum</i>	mountain milkwort
	Proteaceae	<i>Orites revolutus</i>	revolute orites	
	Proteaceae	<i>Telopea truncata</i>	tasmanian waratah	
	Ranunculaceae	<i>Ranunculus collinus</i>	mountain buttercup	
	Rosaceae	<i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i>	common buzzy	
		<i>Rubus gunnianus</i>	alpine raspberry	
		Rubiaceae	<i>Coprosma nitida</i>	mountain currant
			<i>Galium gaudichaudii</i> subsp. <i>parviflorum</i>	rough bedstraw
	Rutaceae	<i>Boronia citriodora</i>	lemon boronia	
		<i>Boronia rhomboidea</i>	broadleaf boronia	
	Winteraceae	<i>Tasmannia lanceolata</i>	mountain pepper	
	Gymnospermae	Cupressaceae	<i>Athrotaxis cupressoides</i>	pencil pine
		Podocarpaceae	<i>Phyllocladus aspleniifolius</i>	celerytop pine
	Monocotyledoneae	Cyperaceae	<i>Carex gaudichaudiana</i>	fen sedge
			<i>Carex raleighii</i>	alpine sedge
			<i>Gahnia sieberiana</i>	redfruit sawsedge
			<i>Gymnoschoenus sphaerocephalus</i>	button grass
			<i>Lepidosperma filiforme</i>	common rapiersedge
<i>Oreobolus distichus</i>			fan cushionsedge	
Iridaceae			<i>Diplarrena latifolia</i>	western flag-iris
Juncaceae			<i>Luzula</i> sp.	woodrush
Liliaceae			<i>Astelia alpina</i> var. <i>alpina</i>	pineapple grass
Poaceae			<i>Microlaena tasmanica</i> var. <i>subalpina</i>	blue-green ricegrass
		<i>Poa annua</i>	winter grass	
		<i>Poa gunnii</i>	gunns snowgrass	
		<i>Rytidosperma</i> sp.	wallaby grass	
		Restionaceae	<i>Baloskion australe</i>	southern cordrush
			<i>Empodisma minus</i>	spreading roperush
		Pteridophyta	Dennstaedtiaceae	<i>Histiopteris incisa</i>
Gleicheniaceae			<i>Gleichenia alpina</i>	alpine coral fern
Lycopodiaceae			<i>Lycopodium fastigiatum</i>	mountain clubmoss

5. References

Inspiring Place (2019) Windermere site concept plan. Report to Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.