

AHR Instrument: AHDR6040  
Applicant: Evie Drinnan and Quentin Smith  
Date: 21 September 2022

## RECORD OF ADVICE FROM ABORIGINAL HERITAGE TASMANIA

This document provides a record of advice relating to an application submitted in accordance with the [Aboriginal Heritage Standards and Procedures](#), as adopted by the [Guidelines](#) issued under section 21A of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975*.

Activity: AHDR6040 - Seymour Wetland Restoration Project - Seymour Swamp  
Advice: Please see next page.

All Aboriginal heritage is protected under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975*. It is an offence to destroy, damage, deface, conceal, or otherwise interfere with a relic (Aboriginal heritage) without a permit granted by the Minister. If at any time Aboriginal heritage is suspected, the process outlined in the [Unanticipated Discovery Plan](#) should be followed as there is an obligation to report findings of Aboriginal heritage as soon as practicable.

As explained in the Guidelines, obtaining this record of advice does not exempt a person from their obligations under the Act but is an important element of the actions summarised in the Guidelines. To be sure that you have “in so far as is practicable ... complied with the guidelines” (s.21(1) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975*), be sure to read the relevant part and take any other action that may be relevant to your situation.

This advice is valid for 12 months and only for the activity as described in the Aboriginal Heritage Desktop Review application.

Please contact Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania on 1300 487 045 or [aboriginal@heritage.tas.gov.au](mailto:aboriginal@heritage.tas.gov.au) if you require further information.

**Disclaimer** *The advice contained within this document is based on information available to Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania at the time of its preparation and is provided in good faith. It does not constitute legal advice, is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice and should not be relied upon as such. Proponents should seek specialist legal advice, if required, regarding the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975 when applying the information to their specific needs.*

Further advice or comments:

Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania (AHT) has completed a search of the Aboriginal Heritage Register (AHR) regarding the Seymour Wetland Restoration Project at Champ Street, Seymour (PID 6406669). AHT can advise that there is one Aboriginal heritage site recorded within the property (AH646), and one Aboriginal heritage site very close to the property (AH183). Several other Aboriginal heritage sites are also recorded in the surrounding area.

Both AH646 and AH183 are Aboriginal shell middens with associated isolated artefacts. Unfortunately the site recordings are quite old (AH183 was recorded in the 1978, and AH646 in the 1981), and the location information is poor. The Aboriginal heritage sites could therefore be between 50m and 250m of the locations shown in the attached map, however it is believed that both sites occur within the dune system that runs along the northeastern extent of the property. Furthermore, it is likely that additional unrecorded Aboriginal heritage may be present within the dune system.

Based on my phone conversation with Quentin today, it is understood that there are no ground disturbance works proposed for the dunes. Accordingly, we reiterate our advice from 27 June 2019:

The works should be strictly guided by the attached Unanticipated Discovery Plan.

Due to the presence of two registered Aboriginal heritage sites in the dune system, AHT consider the dune area to be of elevated cultural sensitivity. If there are any changes to the proposed works program to incorporate ground disturbance within the dune area, please contact AHT for further advice.

Attached are some fact sheets about the type of Aboriginal heritage you might expect to find in the area, shell middens and stone artefacts. These may also be distributed to your works personnel to assist them in recognizing these Aboriginal heritage site types.





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AHDR6040 - Seymour Wetland Restoration Project - Seymour

Evie Drinnan and Quentin Smith  
 Created on 21/09/2022  
 Created by Claire Keating

Legend:

- AH Item
- AH Instrument

This map is intended for use by the nominated recipient, for research purposes only. The map cannot be used for any other purposes without written permission from AHT.  
 Information about Aboriginal heritage sites and instruments issued by AHT is confidential and is not for public dissemination.



# Aboriginal middens

*lutruwita* is the Country of Tasmanian Aboriginal people and we all have a responsibility to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage.



*Aboriginal coastal midden*

## What are Aboriginal middens?

Aboriginal middens are distinct concentrations of shell, bone, botanical remains, ash and charcoal - evidence of past Aboriginal hunting, gathering and food processing activities within a particular area. The discarded shells and other materials may be the remains of a single meal or the result of repeated use of a particular location over thousands of years. Midden sites can range in size from small, discrete scatters to extensive deposits that run along a coastline for hundreds of metres. They are often associated with dark, ashy soil and can also be visible in eroded or collapsed sections of dunes where they may appear as a dark, ashy band with layers of shell throughout.

## Where are middens found?

Middens are one of the most prevalent Aboriginal cultural heritage site types found in Tasmania. They are typically found on elevated ground within coastal environments and areas where rivers enter the sea, and near headlands and rocky outcrops from which shellfish and molluscs could be collected. Other smaller midden sites have been found inland along major river systems and wetlands.

## Aboriginal midden or deposit?

Concentrations of shells washed ashore by natural processes (such as strong tides or storms) can sometimes create mounds of shells that appear similar to an Aboriginal midden. These natural deposits are usually found at

## Identifying an Aboriginal midden:

Aboriginal middens are commonly identified by the following features:

- the dominant presence of the remains of specific edible shellfish and mollusc species, such as abalone, mussels, oysters, limpets, warreners and whelks;
- ash and charcoal;
- the bones of various birds, marsupials and seals;
- artefacts made from stone, bone and shell.

Artefacts and animal bones are not always immediately visible on middens, however the presence of a combination of the above features are key indicators of a midden site.



Aboriginal midden

the high tide mark and predominantly contain smaller shellfish species. In order to distinguish a natural shell deposit from an Aboriginal midden it is important to consider:

- whether there is a dominant presence of the remains of edible shellfish species;
- whether distinct layers of shell mixed with ash and charcoal can be seen in an exposed dune;
- whether any stone artefacts or bones can also be seen.

## Why are Aboriginal middens important?

The study of middens provides important information regarding past Aboriginal lifeways within a particular region. Scientific analysis of the materials found within middens helps researchers to reconstruct past environments and to understand Aboriginal occupation and land use patterns through time. In some instances, estimations can be made about the size of the group that used the site, how long they occupied the region and whether it was a regular campsite or the product of a single event. Charcoal samples may be tested to determine the age of each layer, and pollen samples may provide insight into past vegetation within the region.

Middens are a valuable archaeological resource, not only for what they reveal about Aboriginal dietary habits but also the technology that was utilised in gathering and processing food, seasonal trends in natural resource use and how humans adapted to environmental changes.

## Aboriginal middens are protected

Aboriginal middens are defined as relics under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975* and are therefore protected. It is an offence to destroy, damage, deface, conceal, remove or otherwise interfere with a relic. It is also an offence not to report the finding of a relic. If you suspect that an Aboriginal midden has been discovered during your activity, do not interfere with the site.

Report the location and provide images of the site by using the Aboriginal Heritage Site Reporting Form at: [www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au](http://www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au)

Forms can be forwarded to: [aboriginal@heritage.tas.gov.au](mailto:aboriginal@heritage.tas.gov.au)

Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania staff will provide further advice in accordance with the legislation.

**Please help to preserve Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural heritage sites by reporting their presence to Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania.**

Aboriginal midden (eroded dune)



### Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania

Natural and Cultural Heritage Division

Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment

GPO Box 44 Hobart TAS 7001

Telephone: **1300 487 045** email: [aboriginal@heritage.tas.gov.au](mailto:aboriginal@heritage.tas.gov.au)

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Tasmanian  
Government



# Aboriginal stone artefacts

*lutruwita* is the Country of Tasmanian Aboriginal people and we all have a responsibility to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage.



*Aboriginal stone artefacts (not to scale)*

## What are Aboriginal stone artefacts?

Aboriginal people quarried particular stone outcrops or collected stones from riverbeds and coastal zones to create a sophisticated set of tools from chert, quartzite, silcrete, spongolite and other types of rock. Stone artefacts are evidence of stone modified or used by Tasmanian Aboriginal people in the past. They were made by hitting a piece of modified stone (core) with a cobble held in the hand (hammerstone) to remove a stone fragment (flake). Tasmanian Aboriginal people traded stone resources over long distances and in the recent past, quickly adopted new materials such as glass to create tools.

## Features of Aboriginal stone artefacts

A flaked stone artefact is usually produced by striking a piece of siliceous rock (core) with force at an angle using a hammerstone. The flake's ventral surface was originally attached to the core, while its dorsal surface is the outer surface of the core (see illustration on page 2). The ventral surface may show where the hammerstone struck. A point of force application (PFA) is a bulb of percussion that reflects the force travelling through the stone, with fissures or ripple marks radiating out from the impact point. The dorsal surface may show cortex (weathering) on the original surface of the core. Negative flake scars show previous flake removal and flake scar ridges. A flake could be used immediately or may have been modified to form a sharper blade by retouching the margins in a process called reduction.

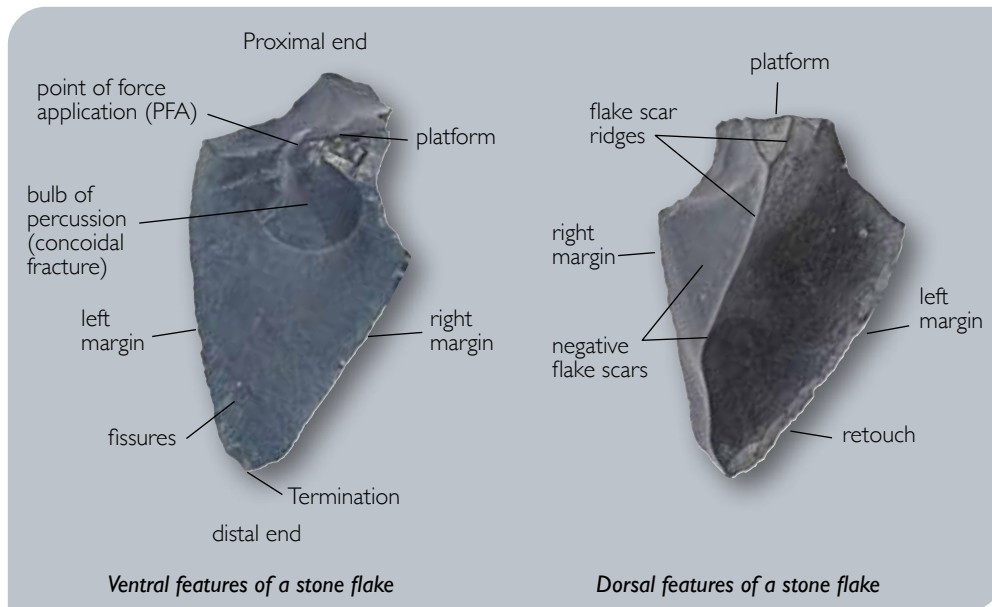
## Summary:

### A core:

- has a platform or multiple platforms from which flakes are struck;
- may have one or more negative flake scars (from flake removal);
- may show cortex (weathering) on the surface.

### A flake:

- exhibits any of the attributes illustrated on page 2;
- may be used immediately as a tool;
- may have retouch along one or both edges;
- often exhibits a bulb of percussion below the platform;
- stone type may be different to the natural stone in the area.



Other artefacts may be hammerstones; grinding stones or anvils (showing depressions or pitting); or river cobbles with a chopping edge.

### How to distinguish Aboriginal stone artefacts from natural stone fractures

Natural processes or recent land-use activities, for example, extreme changes in temperature, a rock fall, chemical processes, stock trampling, ploughing, river action, or modern quarrying can result in fractured stone that resembles Aboriginal artefacts. For this reason, it is important to establish the context of a stone.

- Was it found on an upgraded track?
  - Are there attributes to indicate it has been deliberately modified?
- Features of stone deliberately modified by Aboriginal people can be seen in the diagram above.

### Where are Aboriginal stone artefact sites found?

Thousands of stone artefacts can be found throughout Tasmania, from coastal zones and elevated dry areas near water sources to more remote elevations. Stone (lithic) artefacts are often recorded with other evidence of Aboriginal living areas, such as shell middens, rockshelters and at quarry sites. This includes single artefacts in the landscape or higher density

artefact concentrations (scatters) where several activities were undertaken in the past, for example, food and material preparation, quarrying and tool making. Stone artefacts tend to be more visible in areas of lower vegetation cover, erosion or ground disturbance.

### Why are Tasmanian Aboriginal stone artefacts important?

Stone artefacts provide Tasmanian Aboriginal people today with an important link to their culture and demonstrate the diversity of the stone toolkit available in the past. They may represent the only physical evidence of Tasmanian Aboriginal living places in a region. Stone artefacts also provide tangible evidence of how Aboriginal people manufactured tools, obtained resources, processed plants and animals, or used tools in ceremonies. Traces of wood, plants or animal blood can survive on the edges of stone artefacts. Edge damage can reveal how artefacts were used for different functions, such as cutting, scraping, hammering or grinding.

Comparative analysis of the source quarry and the artefact (often located a considerable distance from the source) has the potential to tell us about Aboriginal systems of exchange and social relationships. Modifications to a stone artefact can provide insight into past environments, changes to diet or strategies to manage artefact use.

### Aboriginal stone artefacts are protected

Aboriginal stone artefacts are defined as relics under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975* and are therefore protected. It is an offence to destroy, damage, deface, conceal, remove or otherwise interfere with a relic. It is also an offence not to report the finding of a relic, so if you suspect that an Aboriginal stone artefact has been discovered during your activity, do not interfere with the site.

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Forms can be forwarded to: [aboriginal@heritage.tas.gov.au](mailto:aboriginal@heritage.tas.gov.au) Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania staff will provide further advice in accordance with the legislation.

### Please help to preserve Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural heritage sites by reporting their presence to Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania.

**Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania**  
Natural and Cultural Heritage Division  
Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment  
GPO Box 44 Hobart TAS 7001

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# Unanticipated Discovery Plan

Procedure for the management of unanticipated discoveries of Aboriginal relics in Tasmania

For the management of unanticipated discoveries of Aboriginal relics in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975* and the *Coroners Act 1995*. The Unanticipated Discovery Plan is in two sections.

## Discovery of Aboriginal Relics other than Skeletal Material

### Step 1:

Any person who believes they have uncovered Aboriginal relics should notify all employees or contractors working in the immediate area that all earth disturbance works must cease immediately.

### Step 2:

A temporary 'no-go' or buffer zone of at least 10m x 10m should be implemented to protect the suspected Aboriginal relics, where practicable. No unauthorised entry or works will be allowed within this 'no-go' zone until the suspected Aboriginal relics have been assessed by a consulting archaeologist, Aboriginal Heritage Officer or Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania staff member.

### Step 3:

Contact Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania on **1300 487 045** as soon as possible and inform them of the discovery. Documentation of the find should be emailed to

**aboriginal@dpac.tas.gov.au** as soon as possible. Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania will then provide further advice in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975*.

## Discovery of Skeletal Material

### Step 1:

Call the Police immediately. Under no circumstances should the suspected skeletal material be touched or disturbed. The area should be managed as a crime scene. It is a criminal offence to interfere with a crime scene.

### Step 2:

Any person who believes they have uncovered skeletal material should notify all employees or contractors working in the immediate area that all earth disturbance works cease immediately.

### Step 3:

A temporary 'no-go' or buffer zone of at least 50m x 50m should be implemented to protect the suspected skeletal material, where practicable. No unauthorised entry or works will be allowed within this 'no-go' zone until the suspected skeletal remains have been assessed by the Police and/or Coroner.

### Step 4:

If it is suspected that the skeletal material is Aboriginal, Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania should be notified.

### Step 5:

Should the skeletal material be determined to be Aboriginal, the Coroner will contact the Aboriginal organisation approved by the Attorney-General, as per the *Coroners Act 1995*.



## Guide to Aboriginal site types

### Stone Artefact Scatters

A stone artefact is any stone or rock fractured or modified by Aboriginal people to produce cutting, scraping or grinding implements. Stone artefacts are indicative of past Aboriginal living spaces, trade and movement throughout Tasmania. Aboriginal people used hornfels, chalcedony, spongelite, quartzite, chert and silcrete depending on stone quality and availability. Stone artefacts are typically recorded as being 'isolated' (single stone artefact) or as an 'artefact scatter' (multiple stone artefacts).

### Shell Middens

Middens are distinct concentrations of discarded shell that have accumulated as a result of past Aboriginal camping and food processing activities. These sites are usually found near waterways and coastal areas, and range in size from large mounds to small scatters. Tasmanian Aboriginal middens commonly contain fragments of mature edible shellfish such as abalone, oyster, mussel, warrener and limpet, however they can also contain stone tools, animal bone and charcoal.

### Rockshelters

An occupied rockshelter is a cave or overhang that contains evidence of past Aboriginal use and occupation, such as stone tools, middens and hearths, and in some cases, rock markings. Rockshelters are usually found in geological formations that are naturally prone to weathering, such as limestone, dolerite and sandstone

### Quarries

An Aboriginal quarry is a place where stone or ochre has been extracted from a natural source by Aboriginal people. Quarries can be recognised by evidence of human manipulation such as battering of an outcrop, stone fracturing debris or ochre pits left behind from processing the raw material. Stone and ochre quarries can vary in terms of size, quality and the frequency of use.

### Rock Marking

Rock marking is the term used in Tasmania to define markings on rocks which are the result of Aboriginal practices. Rock markings come in two forms; engraving and painting. Engravings are made by removing the surface of a rock through pecking, abrading or grinding, whilst paintings are made by adding pigment or ochre to the surface of a rock.

### Burials

Aboriginal burial sites are highly sensitive and may be found in a variety of places, including sand dunes, shell middens and rock shelters. Despite few records of pre-contact practices, cremation appears to have been more common than burial. Family members carried bones or ashes of recently deceased relatives. The Aboriginal community has fought long campaigns for the return of the remains of ancestral Aboriginal people.

*Further information on Aboriginal Heritage is available from:*

Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania  
Community Partnerships and Priorities  
Department of Premier and Cabinet  
GPO Box 123 Hobart TAS 7001  
Telephone: **1300 487 045**  
Email: **[aboriginal@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:aboriginal@dpac.tas.gov.au)**  
Web: **[www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au](http://www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au)**

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