

2025 Case Study: A partnership that tells truth and (em)powers Musselroe Wind Farm on Tebrakunna Country



Warning to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders that this story contains the images, voice and name of someone who is with the Ancestors





On Tebrakunna Country

On the far northeast tip of Trouwerner/ Lutruwita/ Tasmania, the Melaythenner Teeackana Warrana (Heart of Country) Aboriginal Corporation has formed a unique and fruitful partnership with the Musselroe Wind Farm – developing a relationship that is one of respectful partnership, belonging and exploring opportunities.

The Melaythenner Teeachana Warrana Aboriginal Corporation (MTWAC) has over 400 members, with many linked via their ancestry to the famed warrior, clan leader and negotiator, Mannalargenna. He was the leader of the Pairrebeener/Trawlwoolway clan on Tebrakunna Country, upon which the Musselroe Wind Farm stands.

Now owned by Woolnorth Renewables, the 168 MW wind farm was built and commissioned in 2013 by Hydro Tasmania and provides five percent of Tasmania's energy in an average year. For MTWAC members, to be on their ancestral homeland is incredibly significant. MTWAC's co-founder and highly regarded Elder, Aunty Patsy Cameron AO, approached Hydro Tasmania in the early planning stages and has stewarded the relationship from the outset. Collaboration started during the heritage studies of the wind farm planning phase and continued with Woolnorth Renewables.

The parties formed a strong working relationship, with Woolnorth Renewables' Robert Barbour, emphasising the importance of the relationships first approach and Aunty Patsy agreeing "it has been respectful and genuine from the beginning".

Their collaborative process has revealed important cultural and ecological sites, and the parties have worked together to determine how to best manage them. The resulting partnership has led to many initiatives over the past 12 years.

Meaningful outcomes

Tebrakunna Visitors Centre

In the early stages of the planning process, Aunty Patsy put it to the CEO of Hydro Tasmania, that the 25-year lease of Tebrakunna Country should be acknowledged by honouring the ancestors and the people today who care for Tebrakunna Country.

Upon being asked what MTWAC wanted, she requested an education and information centre, to which he readily agreed. The resulting Visitors Centre was developed in partnership and represents a traditional half moon-shaped stone structure, and is surrounded by cultural plantings.

“...it has been respectful and genuine from the beginning

— Aunty Patsy Cameron
MTWAC elder, historian and educator

With a commanding view, it overlooks the historically significant coastline of Little Musselroe Bay and Swan Island, where the Pairrebeener people and their leader Mannalargenna were first exiled in 1830 during colonisation.

Its significance can't be overstated: the Centre has given MTWAC a place to bring people, to share culture, tell truth and run education activities. It has been a central enabler for performing and sharing living culture, and was the site for the first annual Mannalargenna Day celebration.



Mannalargenna Day

Each year the two organisations work together for Mannalargenna day, celebrating the history and living culture of the Pairrebeener people. It attracts up to 1,000 people each year, bringing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together on the birthday of ancestral clan leader Mannalargenna.

The Musselroe staff contribute to organising and running the day and providing amenities alongside the MTWAC community.

Visitors witness and can experience yarning circles, dancing, art exhibitions, demonstrations, language learning and cultural food as well as tours of the wind farm. They learn about culture, honour truth-telling and build positive connections in community and to Country.

The day is reconciliation in action, where an inclusive environment is created by the Musselroe-Tebrakunna partnership to share culture and stories.

Land access & ranger program

In another important step, MTWAC and the wind farm have worked on finding and formalising access to an 80-hectare piece of land, with a long-term vision of the freehold title being returned to the Pairrebeener people.

Access to this land has enabled MTWAC to build a base for the Tebrakunna Rangers to care for Country and build sustainable employment for Aboriginal people within the region. Access has also enabled MTWAC to gather for cultural ceremonies, and foster aspirations for commercial activities including tourism, accommodation and marine enterprises.

The Tebrakunna Ranger Program now employs 12 people and is training 14 people in ecosystem and conservation land management, and is working towards caring for the coastal areas of the wind farm. Land access has been a key enabler to rebuild connections to Country, sustain cultural practices and develop financial security

Impact

For MTWAC and the Pairrebeener people, the biggest outcome has been the ability to reconnect with Country, to rekindle and share their cultural and spiritual practices.

From Woolnorth's perspective, the partnership has helped the wind farm to navigate cultural heritage requirements smoothly and build social licence.

“It's valuable to be a part of a team that values community... this has really been a two-way relationship. We get help around the heritage side of things, to fulfil our regulated requirements, we get access to that technical knowledge... It's also part of building the social licence needed to get a project like this off the ground, in a very genuine way. That has really enabled us to do our wind farm planning and construction smoothly and quickly”

— *Bob Barbour*
Head of Risk, Compliance & Systems
Woolnorth Renewables

“It gave us a physical space to be on Country. Just to be on our ancestral homeland is just so significant... we belong - we can go there to walk, to laugh, to cry, to share, to feel our ancestors and to care for our ancestral lands”

— *Aunty Patsy Cameron*
MTWAC elder, historian and educator

Renewables done well, for mutual benefit.



Musselroe Wind Farm on Tebrakunna Country

With grateful thanks and heartfelt acknowledgement to:

Aunty Patsy Cameron AO, Elder and Nick Cameron, Chair and CEO
Melaythenner Teeackana Warrana Aboriginal Corporation

Robert Barbour, Head of Risk, Compliance & Systems
Woolnorth Renewables/Musselroe Wind Farm

Melaythenner Teeackana Warrana Aboriginal Corporation

Pairrebeener people of Tebrakunna Country

Woolnorth Renewables

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