

# Strategic Plan

2021 - 2025







Zoodoo acknowledges the Palawa people of Lutruwita, Tasmania, and pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise the Traditional Owners of the area, particularly the Mumirimina people of Oyster Bay territory who have cared for this Country for thousands of years.

We recognize the truth of the impacts of invasion and colonisation upon Aboriginal people, resulting in the forcible removal from their lands. Zoodoo stands for a future that profoundly respects and acknowledges Aboriginal perspectives, culture, language and history as well as a continued effort to fight for Aboriginal justice and rights, paving the way for a strong future.

**Sunset Sisters – paliti aura (good spirit aura)**  
*Bianca Templar and Jasmine Mansell.*

We are proud palawa luna's (aboriginal women). We work together to tell stories through digital art, created from acrylic paintings. Although a variety of different guiding methods are depicted in this painting, paliti aura represents how our old people used stars in the night sky to guide them. Sadly, the meanings of the Petroglyphs were lost due to colonisation. The Petroglyphs shown in this painting by the Sunset Sisters, represents our old people. The sun, moon and the stars were used for navigation, as a seasonal calendar and to tell the tides. Telling the tides is an important aspect of Tasmanian Aboriginal knowledge, as it tells us when the best time is to collect shells. Shells for necklace making and bull kelp for basket making. The Sunset Sisters acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, Elders past, present and emerging.



# Introduction

Zoodoo, originally named Zoodoo Fun Park, was opened to the public in 1999 by my father and his wife, Trevor and Pauline Cuttriss. Through their hard work and dedication, the Zoo became a successful entertainment destination.

After 20 years of operations, it was time for a change. In 2019, I took over management of the Zoo. At the time, many Zoos around the world had already transformed their role in conservation, and we were only beginning. We realised we too had a bigger role to play.

Looking to the future, we held a visioning workshop in 2020, engaging a cross section of stakeholders from a variety of professions to help articulate a new vision for Zoodoo. I'd like to thank the visioning workshop participants and contributors for their dedication and support, in particular Graeme Phipps for facilitating.

Their challenge was "nothing has to be as it is", everything could be re-imagined. Our only givens were the Wildlife Refuge on the Coal River Tier, building a strong relationship with the local Tasmanian Aboriginal community, and operations that deliver community and wildlife benefits. An exciting and ambitious plan emerged; our 5-year Strategic Plan. I'm extremely pleased to introduce our new vision for the Zoo which will form the foundation for future business and master planning. I invite you to be a part of the adventure as we bring this new plan to life!



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Donna Cuttriss'.

Donna Cuttriss  
Owner & Managing Director



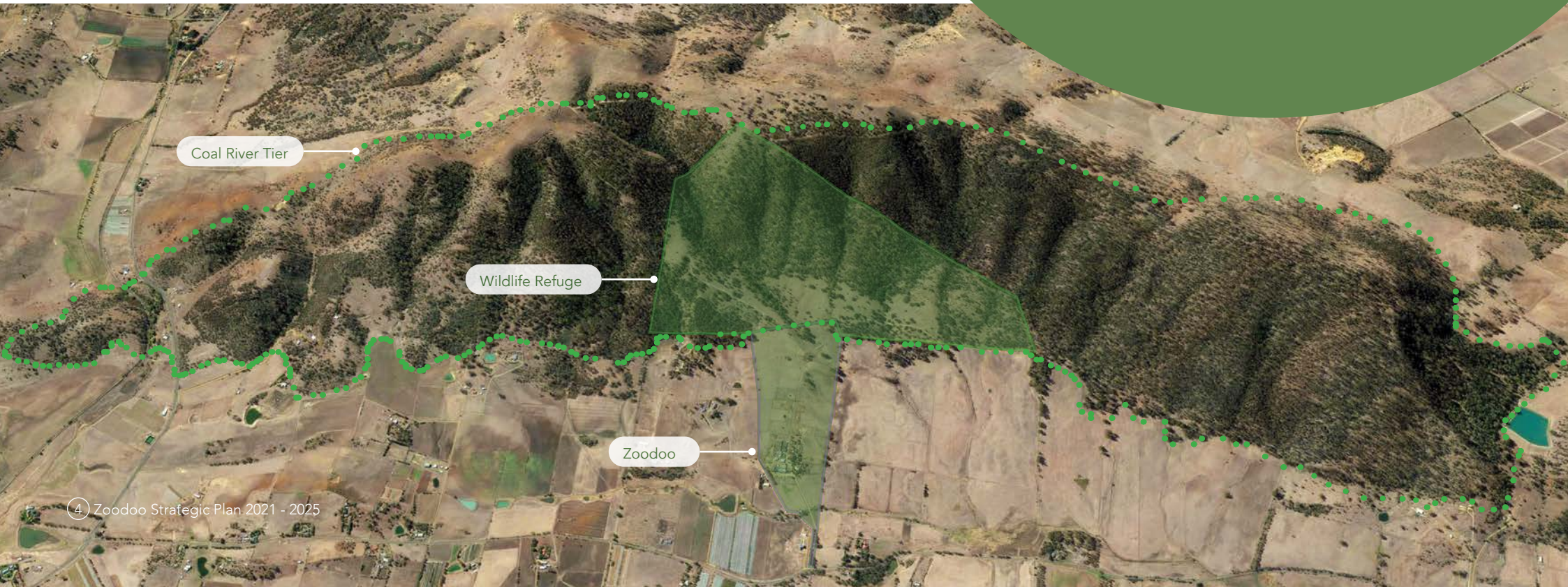
Common Wombat, *Vombatus ursinus tasmaniensis*, Cover image: Spotted-tail Quoll, *Dasyurus maculatus* ③



# Our unique location

Zoodoo is located in southern Tasmania, between Brighton and Richmond in the Coal River Valley catchment. Rising 350m behind the Zoo, the tier's 1200 acre forested slopes formed millions of years ago. The tier's biodiversity evolved with fire. First Nations Australians managed the landscape with fire for thousands of years, shown by heritage-registered artifacts occurring in the refuge. The Coal River Tier and wildlife refuge is isolated by agriculture from other surrounding natural habitats, placing additional stress on its biodiversity and ecosystems. Combining both new and old land management techniques sets the scene for an interpretation of humans, forests, fires and farming in the landscape; our past, present and future.

The tier is home to two endangered plant communities and threatened wildlife including Swift Parrots, Tasmanian Devils and Spotted Tailed Quolls. The Zoos Wildlife Refuge is part of both the Land for Wildlife and Wildlife Land Trust Programs, and Zoodoo hopes to facilitate understanding of the tier's biodiversity and heritage values by working in partnership with an assortment of collaborators whilst engaging the broader community in the process.





Our vision



# Re-wilding ourselves: home for wildlife, wild places and people.

As part of its commitment to biodiversity, UNESCO recognises that halting or reversing the decline in biodiversity, transforming people's roles, actions and relationships with biodiversity is vital.

As a key narrator of Tasmania's environmental and cultural stories, Zoodoo is the pride of our community. Our unique southerly location and ancient landscape sets the scene for an immersive story that began millions of years ago. After separating from the great super-continent Gondwana and drifting northward from Antarctica, millions of years of isolation resulted in the evolution of Tasmania's unique flora, fauna and biomes - some of which are found nowhere else on earth. Understanding our ancient past helps us understand and value Tasmania's unique native species, their ancient connections with the exotic species at the Zoo and our role in valuing and protecting biodiversity.

We are uniquely placed to be an advocate for the importance of maintaining ecosystems through preservation of biodiversity in all its forms. By 're-wilding' ourselves, we aim to nurture a community that is conscious that their future is intertwined with biodiversity and climate, and act collectively to create a future where wild places, wildlife and people exist in harmony and balance.





# Why do we care?

We live in awe of biodiversity. Our unique position on the foothills of the Coal River Tier means we are surrounded by a diversity of plants and animals, with new species still being discovered. Sadly, some local populations have declined or become extinct, as they have around the world. We're working to safeguard biodiversity and share it with the community. Here are just some of our incredible neighbours that inspire us:



**Stubble Quail**  
*Coturnix pectoralis*

The grassy woodland habitat of this cryptic little bird was converted to wheat fields by early European settlers in the Coal River Valley. The quail adapted, but when sheep grazing replaced wheat, they lost their habitat a second time.



**Southern Bell Frog**  
*Litoria raniformis*

One of the few remaining populations of these frogs within southern Tasmania, occurs within the Coal River watershed, along Pages Creek and the nearby Ramsar-listed Pitt Water-Orielton Lagoon wetlands.



**Forester Kangaroo**  
*Macropus giganteus*

Still widespread on mainland Australia, this kangaroo's range in Tasmania was reduced to less than 15% by the 1960's. Overhunted as a source of protein, the species has disappeared from much of its former range.



**Blue Gum**  
*Eucalyptus globulus*

In Tasmania this threatened native vegetation community has been extensively cleared. The trees provide habitat for the Critically Endangered Swift Parrot that have been recorded visiting the Coal River Tier.



**New snail species**  
*undescribed*

This newly discovered snail is one of 12 native snails species recorded to date within Zoodoo's wildlife refuge. Diverse and persisting snail populations are great indicators of a healthy and functional ecosystem.

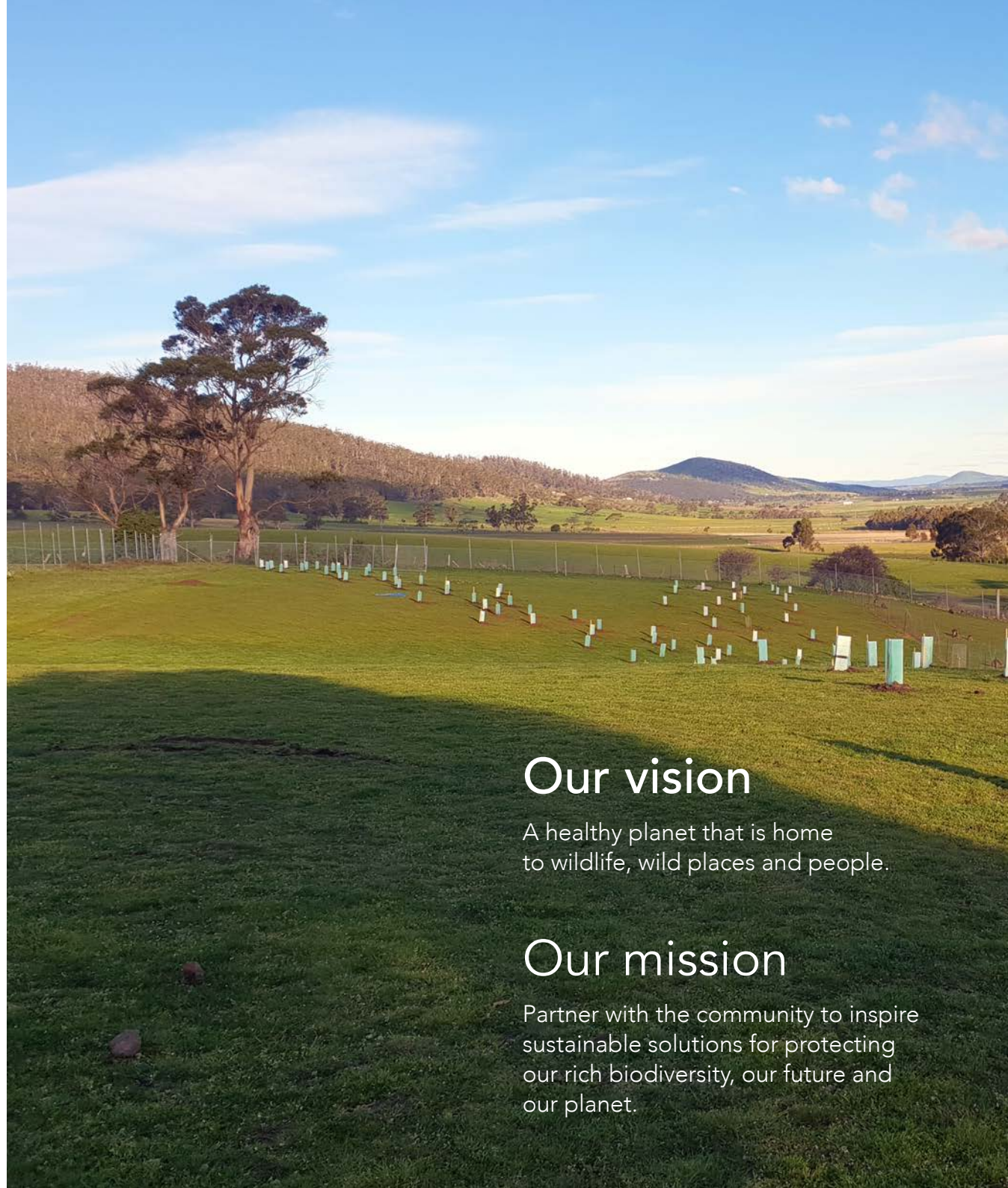
# A catalyst for community change

Zoodoo connects people with the natural world through engaging wildlife experiences in a unique, zoological, agricultural, and bushland setting.

We use this heightened level of 'connectedness' to help raise awareness about conservation and sustainability, empowering our community to take actions that have a measurable and positive impact.

In the coming years, we will realise our potential as a unique recreation, conservation, and education hub. We will drive a deeper love of biodiversity, in all its forms, and cultivate a common understanding that we hold the future for wild places, wildlife and people in our hands.

We will be a catalyst for community change. We will be a source of inspiration, working with our community to find sustainable solutions to protect our rich biodiversity.



## Our vision

A healthy planet that is home to wildlife, wild places and people.

## Our mission

Partner with the community to inspire sustainable solutions for protecting our rich biodiversity, our future and our planet.



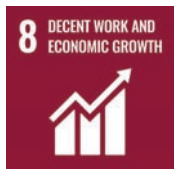
# United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

At the heart of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development plan, are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These are an urgent call for action by all countries.

The SDGs provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

The World Zoo and Aquarium Association recognises that the commitment of zoos and aquariums to the SDGs has the potential to significantly contribute to the global achievement of these goals.

Zoodoo will integrate the following SDGs into how we think and act.



Plains Zebra - *Equus burchelli* ⓘ



# Our values

## Proudly Tasmanian

We lovingly embrace Tasmania's unique personality, embedding it into all that we do.

## Authentic

We are true to our word, make evidence-based decisions, and we accept responsibility for our actions.

## Collaborative

We recognise preserving biodiversity and viable ecosystems is a team effort, we actively build networks and partnerships.

## Always improving

We strive to continually improve everything we do, and we always learn from our mistakes.

## Safe and considerate

We always consider each other's wellbeing and safety.

## Sustainable

We aspire to being an environmentally sustainable business, and share our successes to inspire the community to do the same.

## Wildlife-friendly

We support biodiversity conservation by participating in specialised animal breeding, research, habitat restoration and stewardship.





# Our strategic priorities







## Setting a new direction

Four strategic priorities will guide our growth and development through to 2025.

We thank everyone that has played a part in shaping our new vision, and look forward to working with our community and stakeholders to deliver our exciting plan for the future.

### Community hub

Empowering our community to shape a sustainable future

### Biodiversity advocates

Helping protect biodiversity nationally and internationally

### Animal care specialists

Ambassadors for animal welfare excellence

### Thriving Tasmanian business

Sustainable operations aligned to our conservation ethos





# Community hub

Empowering our community to shape a sustainable future

## Our goals

1

Our compelling guest experiences empower the community to take actions that benefit wildlife, people and the planet.

2

We are one of southern Tasmania's 'must-do' experiences. Interaction with staff and wildlife are hallmarks of a visit.

3

Collaborate with First Nations people through meaningful, respectful and mutually beneficial partnerships.

4

Zoodoo is celebrated as an inclusive and accessible destination for all guests, regardless of age, culture, background or ability.

5

School programs provide engaging, active, and memorable learning experiences, aligned with relevant curriculum frameworks.

6

We are a shop front for like-minded organisations, engaging the community in collaborative programs.

## What we'll deliver

- Work with the community to explore and co-design a 'community hub'.
- Develop a comprehensive guest experience and interpretation plan.
- Undertake audience research to better understand guest needs and interests.
- Develop the Zoo's master plan to guide all future infrastructure developments.
- Develop an accessibility plan with partners and consultants.
- Work with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community to develop and deliver cultural awareness initiatives for staff, guests and the broader community
- Embed learning into all future developments at the Zoo.
- Expand the volunteer program to provide new community engagement opportunities
- Explore the possibilities of a learning and education outreach service.
- Identify organisations and sustainability initiatives that can be showcased as part of the Zoo's community hub.





# Animal care specialists

Ambassadors for animal welfare excellence

## Our goals

1

Evidence-based welfare and husbandry ensures wildlife in our care thrives in a positive welfare environment.

2

All species at the Zoo align with our vision and mission.

3

Zoodoo is an advocate for animal welfare, and a trusted advisor for local wildlife, agricultural and domestic animal welfare.

4

We proudly maintain accreditation with Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia.

## What we'll deliver

- Develop and deliver ongoing animal welfare training for all staff, and specialist training for staff that provide animal care.
- Conduct a welfare audit of all husbandry and animal habitats at the Zoo.
- Review the species at the Zoo to identify their conservation and advocacy value, and alignment with our vision and mission.
- Ensure animal wellbeing through passive and active animal enrichment.
- Share our animal care with guests, as part of our guest experience and interpretation plan.
- Create opportunities for guests to participate in our welfare and conservation programs.
- Extend welfare focus to empower the community to care for pets and agricultural animals.
- Maintain our accreditation with the Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia.





# Biodiversity advocates

Helping protect biodiversity nationally and internationally

## Our goals

1

The Coal River Tier is a valued wildlife refuge, and a beacon for local native species conservation.

2

Zoodoo is recognised for its participation in state, national and global conservation.

3

Create an inventory of biodiversity within the Coal River Tier and its watershed through citizen science and engagement with academic institutions.

## What we'll deliver

- Broaden our network of partners for conservation breeding, insurance population support, re-wilding, habitat creation and restorative farming programs.
- Develop conservation messages aligned with the Coal River Tier and surrounds, as part of our guest experience and interpretation plan.
- Inventory the biodiversity of the Coal River Tier with Citizen Science programs and engaging UTAS.
- Develop a plan for cultural burning regime with the Aboriginal community.
- Work collaboratively with Landcare, Tas Land Conservancy and other stakeholders to develop and action plan for land and biodiversity management in the Pages Creek catchment and Coal River Tier.
- Participate in species specific and locally relevant recovery and advocacy programs
- Host the Community Nursery Association Nursery at the Zoo and collaborate with their propagation and growing activities to create wildlife corridors and agricultural shelter belts that create habitat for wildlife.
- Engage with surrounding landowners to increase level of awareness of the biodiversity values of their land.





# Thriving Tasmanian business

Sustainable operations aligned to our conservation ethos

## Our goals

1

We are recognised and celebrated as a valued member of the Tasmanian tourism industry.

2

Our environmentally sustainable operations set a community benchmark.

3

Zoodoo has the financial capacity to deliver its strategic initiatives.

4

We are regarded as a valuable community partner, and our diverse partnerships support all aspects of our operations.

5

Business excellence is achieved through a program of continuous improvement.

## What we'll deliver

- Review the Zoo's name and branding in line with the Strategic Plan 2021-2025.
- Develop a plan to improve the environmental sustainability and long-term security of the organisation for key operations such as water and energy use.
- Develop a business plan that identifies and diversifies revenue streams to ensure financial growth of the organisation, providing diverse community services.
- Determine and establish a model to fund and deliver the Zoo's conservation programs at a local, national and international level.
- Develop a partner engagement plan that identifies the nature and opportunities for partnerships, across conservation, research, community engagement, inclusion, procurement, and revenue.
- Develop a membership plan to grow and engage members.
- Host community events based on audience interests as part of the Zoo's business plan.
- Align staff position descriptions and performance plans with the Zoo's strategic plan.
- Review all safety and business procedures as part of a continuous improvement process.
- Review our procurement and purchasing to favour local and Aboriginal businesses and suppliers.
- Review and strengthen the participation of guests and the community in the 'doing good by doing good' initiative.



A photograph of two men standing on a grassy hill, looking out over a vast landscape. The man on the left is wearing a dark shirt and jeans, with his hand on his head. The man on the right is wearing a dark shirt and dark pants, pointing towards the distance. The landscape features a patchwork of agricultural fields, scattered trees, and distant mountain ranges under a clear sky. A large, dark, charred log lies on the ground in the foreground.

Your future zoo



# Imagining a new zoo

The Strategic Visioning workshop culminated in a draft concept plan, that began to articulate how the site could be transformed to reflect the Zoo's new vision. This plan provides a foundation on which we will re-imagine the Zoo through developing a comprehensive master plan that refines the concept further. We'd like to thank Jon Coe for his support and work in helping develop this site plan.

The proposed site concept plan divides the Zoo into eight precincts. Guests are immersed within a cultural and wildlife experience and discover the interconnectedness of all life. Capitalising on the unique agricultural and bushland setting, the site plan transforms the zoo into a community conservation hub, and brings guests face-to-face with native and exotic species.

**Key:**

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Public Precinct                       | 4. Animal Care Precinct |
| 2. Tasmanian Nature and Culture Precinct | 5. Service Precinct     |
| 3. Hilltop Farm                          | 6. Safari Precinct      |
|  | 7. Safari Camp          |
|  | 8. Wildlife Reserve     |

