



Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area Advisory Committee Communique

The Advisory Committee for the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area (Kingston) met this week via videoconference to discuss a range of new opportunities and priorities for the site in the year ahead.

Advisory Committee members were thrilled with the Australian Government's announcement of an additional \$7.9 million of funding for Kingston in the 2020-21 Budget, bringing the total investment in the site's conservation, interpretation and museum services to \$10.65 million over the four years to 2023-24. This is a significant achievement for site management and will support longer-term strategic planning and project implementation.

The Advisory Committee recognises the key role that Kingston will play in reinvigorating the Norfolk Island tourism economy in COVID-19 recovery. The Norfolk Island Regional Council (NIRC) Tourism and Heritage Team Leader Rose Evans and Community Advisory Group Chair Helen Pedel, discussed ideas for positioning the site to support local tourism and employment opportunities.

Enhancing the ways visitors understand and interact with the site is recognised as a key element to develop Kingston's tourism offering. The additional \$770,000 funding from the COVID 19-Relief and Recovery Fund will improve visitor information infrastructure to showcase the stories of the site's fascinating and colourful history. This builds on the substantial work undertaken to date by the Commonwealth Heritage Manager, Martin Purslow, to refresh signage and visitor materials to feature the Kingston branding, new imagery and Norfolk language. The project will include updated signage to communicate the site's stories and values, and the design and development of experiential waypoints that will inform visitors of the visible, and invisible, history around them.

In a boost for local employment, a local project coordinator/researcher will be engaged to collect new oral histories, work closely with key stakeholders to implement the project, and ensure it complements other related research and interpretation projects across the island. This position, and the new archaeologist under recruitment, will provide valuable support to the Heritage Manager in unlocking the site's potential.

The Advisory Committee recognises that water quality and site governance remain two important priorities that require coordinated action to effectively address. Members understand that water quality issues are complex, with multiple parties holding various responsibilities. Planned maintenance on Kingston's sewerage assets and the proposed installation of a sewer line through the site will help contribute to improved water quality outcomes.



Australian Government
Kingston Cultural Area
Norfolk Island

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Australian Convict Sites
inscribed on the World
Heritage List in 2010



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With many of these issues intertwined, the Advisory Committee supports the development of a Site Master Plan to holistically set out a strategic vision for Kingston that outlines the best purpose and use of precincts and buildings into the future. It is critical this project builds on prior consultations and engages the community's desire to see Kingston develop to further benefit the island and its visitors. The Site Master Plan will be developed in 2021 in tandem with the five-year review of the Heritage Management Plan, providing an important opportunity for all stakeholders to pause and reflect, before resetting the course for Kingston for the next five to ten years.

Options for improved governance will also be discussed with the Norfolk Island community in early 2021. Finding the right governance model for Kingston is important for enabling the site to better respond to opportunities and challenges as they arise, and to guide its own future. Thank you to those community members who contributed to the early stages of this project, which has helped inform the identification of a number of potential governance options for the site.

The Committee would like to thank Martin Purslow, Jimmy Quintal, Rose Evans and the broader site management, maintenance and museum teams for the significant achievements over the past year in improved site conservation and presentation, and in developing an inclusive visual identity and approach to Kingston's interpretation. Members also recognised the important contribution of the Community Advisory Group in informing and guiding these projects to help ensure they deliver the best possible outcomes for the Norfolk Island community.

The Advisory Committee includes three local members (Duncan Evans, David 'Dids' Evans and Susan Prior), three expert members (Kristal Buckley, Kevin Sumption and Jane Harrington) and is chaired by the Administrator of Norfolk Island.

For further information or discussion, please contact Martin Purslow (phone 52462 or 23115; email martin.purslow@infrastructure.gov.au) or the Office of the Administrator (phone 22152 or email office.administrator@infrastructure.gov.au).

Eric Hutchinson

Chair, Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area Advisory Committee