



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT

CASCADES FEMALE FACTORY HISTORIC SITE PROPOSAL FOR A HISTORY AND INTERPRETATION CENTRE

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Port Arthur Historic Sites Management Authority (PAHSMA) is responsible for the management of visitor services and conservation for three of the sites listed as part of the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage Property. These sites are:

Port Arthur Historic Site (PAHS) – Arthur Highway, Port Arthur, Tasmania;

Coal Mines Historic Site (CMHS) – Saltwater River, Tasmania;

Cascades Female Factory Historic Site (CFFHS) – Degraeves Street, Hobart, Tasmania.

PAHSMA is seeking to design and develop a history and interpretation centre at the CFFHS that will:

enhance the appearance and presentation of the Site;

be sensitive to the heritage values of the Site and consistent with interpretive design elements in Yards 1 and 4;

provide opportunities for further interpretation of the Site;

allow opportunities to review the current presentation of exposed archaeological excavations in Yard 3;

enhance facilities for staff, including a new and extended office area; and

enhance facilities for visitors, including a new information and interpretation centre.

A brief for the design of the History and Interpretation Centre is currently being prepared.

Inspiring Place were employed by PAHSMA to conduct an engagement program with identified stakeholders likely to be interested in the future plans for the development of a History and Interpretation Centre at the CFFHS.

The purpose of the stakeholder consultations was to identify the opportunities and constraints for the project design brief to help inform the project implementation process. The intention was to ‘involve’ the community and stakeholders in accordance with the IAP2 public participation spectrum¹. This level of engagement is iterative and ensures that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

1.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The key stakeholders invited to be involved in the engagement process are identified in Attachment 1. They include:

- heritage/cultural and Consent Authorities;
- local community;
- education and community groups;
- tourism operators;
- internal stakeholders (CFFHS and PAHSMA); and
- individuals with a known interest in the future of CFFHS.

PAHSMA were responsible for contacting and discussing the project with the Heritage/culture and Consent Authorities. This was arranged through past and ongoing consultations and this report does not include their responses.

The engagement program with the other listed stakeholders involved:

- sending out emails and/or making phone contacts with stakeholders about the project and how they could get involved;
- letter-boxing ~150 residences living within proximity to the site inviting involvement in a community walk and talk;

¹ IAP2 refers to the International Association Public Participation Spectrum of Public Participation

promoting the community walk and talk via membership databases of the South Hobart Progress Association and South Hobart Sustainable Community inviting participation in a community walk and talk;

running the community walk and talk on the evening of Wednesday 2nd March;

facilitating a discussion forum with education and community groups;

facilitating a discussion forum with tourism managers and operators;

facilitating a discussion forum PAHSMA staff and volunteers;

follow-up emails to those that could not attend the forums inviting their input; and

arranging individual meetings or discussions with the selected individuals.

The engagement program was organized during the three-week period of 23rd February to Friday 11th March.

PAHSMA staff attended all of the discussion forums and some of the individual meetings.

1.3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the time and contribution of views made by PAHSMA staff and stakeholders to the engagement process. Lucy Burke-Smith, Conservation Manager with the PAHSMA, managed the project with the Project Control Group:

- Dr Jane Harrington, Director of Conservation & Infrastructure
- Anne McVilly Director of Tourism Operations
- Greta McDonald, Manager Cascades Female Factory Historic Site
- Dr Jody Steele, Heritage Programs Manager

- Kate McCarthy, Sales & Marketing Officer
- Gemma Davie, Heritage Programs Officer

2 REVIEW OF THE STAKEHOLDER VIEWS

This report is based on an analysis of the stakeholder views expressed during the group forums, individual meetings and from the community walk and talk. It acknowledges where there may be commonly held views or differing views.

The six core messages from the stakeholder engagement process were:

agreement to develop a History and Interpretation Centre;

agreement to demolish the existing building;

the Centre must be planned, developed and managed with respect to its' history, significance, urban setting and issues;

the siting options range from aspirational to pragmatic;

the Centre must be designed to accommodate multi-use functions and activities; and

the garden is not vital but shelter and reflection space are.

2.1 AGREEMENT TO DEVELOP A HISTORY AND INTERPRETATION CENTRE AT THE SITE.

All stakeholders expressed support for the proposal to develop a History and Interpretation Centre for the Cascade Female Factory Historic Site. The reasons given included:

the site's listing in the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage property;

it has the potential to provide a gateway to the Tasmanian Convict World Heritage Sites;

the women's story needs to be told soundly and profoundly;

visitor expectations are changing - they would expect to find high quality facilities and services at World Heritage sites;

the need to have a better arrival experience into the Site with good orientation;

good synergy with promoting Tasmania and Hobart visitor experiences; and

it will integrate with other interpretative projects.

2.2 AGREEMENT TO DEMOLISH THE EXISTING BUILDING

Stakeholders expressed unanimous support for the demolition and removal of the existing visitor centre/offices in Yard 3. The reasons given about the current building included it:

is no longer 'fit for purpose' and no longer adequate or appropriate for the historic site given World Heritage status;

was never built for visitor engagement and facilities but as a factory that now has served its time;

is unsympathetic/ugly and the exterior materials and finishes are inconsistent with the historic site;

does not cater well for the needs of staff, volunteers or visitors now or into the future e.g. too small, lacks sufficient visitor retail space, poor storage, OH&S issues, not an all-weather venue, lack of meeting rooms and staff facilities, poor air conditioning;

was identified as being inappropriate and requiring removal (UNESCO Inscription of the Australian Convict Sites - Decision 34 COM 8B.16);

involves uses that are incompatible with future use of site e.g. leasing of the commercial kitchen;

would free up valuable space in Yard 3 to allow better presentation and interpretation of the historic site; and

ongoing maintenance costs associated with the old building.

2.3 THE CENTRE MUST BE PLANNED, DEVELOPED AND MANAGED WITH RESPECT TO ITS' URBAN SETTING AND EXISTING ISSUES

The discussions with stakeholders identified a range of points about the general urban area and recognized that these were outside of the capacity of PAHSMA to alter with the proposed development. These points predominately related to traffic issues associated with the current street system and limited parking opportunities. They included the need to:

understand the existing traffic flows, traffic speed, use of large vehicles and parking issues associated with the use of Degraeves Street – especially as the exit route from the City of Hobart waste disposal site;

recognize that the existing heavy vehicle traffic creates safety concerns for street users, increased noise levels and possible vibration risk to old buildings in Degraeves Street;

the traffic issues have been added to by the development of Yard 5 site for Child Play Early Learning with drop-off and pick-up occurring in Degraeves Street (a proposed link through the site to aid drop-off and pick-up has not been developed to help address the traffic issues);

there is limited car parking capacity and so a more dynamic traffic approach to promoting access by visitors may be required;

the relatively poor bus access within the local area; and

potential for some safety concerns on Degraeves Street especially at the eastern end where the road pavement for vehicles, pedestrians and bike riders is narrow.

The engagement process identified two aspects that PAHSMA could consider within the design process for the proposed development:

reducing the potential noise or lighting impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding residential area;
and

assisting Council with improving wayfinding opportunities from the CBD (recognizing the proposed Footsteps to Freedom and planned upgrading of the Hobart Rivulet shared trail will help improve awareness and accessibility).

2.4 THE SITING OPTIONS FOR THE CENTRE RANGE FROM ASPIRATIONAL TO PRAGMATIC

The discussions with stakeholders indicated a willingness to consider all siting opportunities that may emerge through the design process. There were some common views expressed that help inform the siting and design approach:

all archaeological sensitivities must be addressed;

the siting must be located to address visitor flow from arrival to exit in order to deliver a powerful experience. This means catering for range of visitor types (e.g. schools, bus tours, independent visitors, site tours) and the range of times spent at the site. The Melbourne Migrant Centre was given as a good example of managing visitor flow;

the importance of the centre providing the orientation point with exposure to the historic site experience on offer, including access to a theatrette, retail and ticketing leading to tours and independent exploration of the site;

the value of getting a full impression of the whole site (Yards 1, 3 and 4) with recognition of Yards 2 and 5 were once part of the site;

building should tell a story in its own right;

height of any new building should not be higher than those of the original buildings on the site; and

it should have a 'wow' factor and should be 'clever' in administration, capacities, services and function.

Some of the possible sites identified for the proposed new History and Interpretation Centre included:

any future opportunity to acquire land to the northeast of the site that was formerly used as a factory and is now used for commercial/light industrial uses to allow for the construction of the new centre on this site with access and car parking via Tara Street;

placing the new centre forward of the existing visitor centre/offices to connect with the main entry while providing all weather protection for the exposed diggings;

access via Syme Street to the rear of Yard 3 or Yard 4;

the northern end of Yard 1 was considered to be problematic with Trugannini and associated Aboriginal cultural values linked to the site;

acquiring Yard 2 to the west of the site, albeit this was recognized as being outside PAHSMAs funding capacity when it was available for sale in recent years and has now been developed as a Child Play Early Learning Centre; and

on the current site of the existing visitor centre/offices.

2.5 THE CENTRE MUST BE DESIGNED TO ACCOMMODATE MULTI-USE FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The common views expressed about the role or facilities were that the History and Interpretation Centre should include:

more flexible space rather than fixed space;

history research room and library;

workshop/activity space for educational use, workshops and meetings (e.g. Female Convicts Research Centre, Community Advisory Committee, training, University specialized history seminars, other community interest groups);

all abilities access;

the capacity to separate a tour assembly area from visitor arrival e.g. capacity for multiple school groups at one time plus “Her Story” tours and regular site tours;

retail space, coffee outlet with small kitchen;

story telling opportunities – it should “tell the stories inside that the Yards cannot tell outside” – this includes exhibition space that can be rotated and programmed for different presentations, exhibitions and installations;

small theatrette linked to visitor arrival/orientation that could also be used with school groups or tour groups;

provision of shelter – both indoor and outdoor given rainy days, prevailing winds or exposure to hot sun;

facilities for staff - some separate and some open shared office spaces with a separate lunch break space for staff and volunteers;

better storage space for school bags (school visits), stock, records, and furniture; and

more toilets and clear directions to the toilets.

The following more specific suggestions were also made:

the building could have an indoor – outdoor space relationship;

the design options could consider the use of pavilions versus a single building i.e. functions could be broken up across site;

the opportunity for the story to be about hope and achievement not despair and victimisation– this may change how the visitor flow is promoted for the site (need not be presented in chronological way);

the need for activities and curriculum materials to be available for school groups as it is expected that there will be increased schools and visit times occurring with the new Centre;

the potential for running workshop sessions for people to get advice on searching family history using the available data base;

free wifi on the Site;

potential to host small events appropriate to the history and significance of the place;

the need for more external seating;

the possibility of including interactive opportunities;

shouldn't necessary be the PAHSMA home away from home but if so, then provide adequate office and multi-use meeting space;

better cater for non English speaking languages; and

limit the number of stairs in the building

2.6 THE GARDEN IS NOT VITAL BUT SHELTER AND REFLECTION SPACE ARE

The following points were raised by stakeholders:

The garden was originally created by Michael Carnes linked with the time of establishing the Fudge Factory and residential use – dug out asphalt/gravel and added soil without disturbing any footings. Plantings were in all corners of Yard 3 and across the current car park. Findings from archaeological dig in southwest corner were recorded. The garden has deteriorated over time and no significant attachment or reason to keep it as is. Some special plantings/memorials e.g. 'Mothers Love' rose linked with National Breastfeeding Association, Quentin Bryce tree planting in pot – all seen as being capable of being moved.

The existing garden softens the hard space and is used by some visitors but is out of character with the historic site and unable to tell the story of the place as a result.

The garden is not overly used but does provide shelter and a place for reflection – any new building should include somewhere for outside seating and shade to allow reflection.

In 1999 the National Women’s Association installed a seat and tree planting across Degraives Street (opposite entry gate) to celebrate centenary of the Association. The Association was also involved in the early 1980’s preparing a submission to save the historic site from being sold by the government.

3.0 DIRECTIONS FOR THE DESIGN PROCESS

The stakeholders welcomed the invitation to be involved in the earlier stages of the process for the History and Interpretation Centre and indicated a willingness to be involved during latter stages.

The core messages resulting from stakeholder consultation indicated:

expectations that the historic site will need to be improved to be an exemplar of its' World Heritage status;

the protection and interpretation of the historic site values are paramount to future decisions about the History and Interpretation Centre;

strong support for the History and Interpretation Centre and for the removal of the existing visitor centre/offices;

an openness to the possible siting and design of the Centre within or near the historic site;

the need to consider building design in relation to the broader setting – both the issues and opportunities influencing access and amenity within the local area;

desire for the Centre to be designed with multi-use functions and activities in mind; and

whilst the existing garden has limited heritage value there is the need for shade, shelter and seating on the Site.

Traffic remains a dominant issue of concern for the local community and a traffic management study is considered necessary to inform the design approach.

It would be desirable to undertake further surveys of visitors at the site to help inform an understanding of visitor expectations and views about the site experience. This could include how they arrive, who they are, their expectations and perceptions of the site, the quality of their site experience, what would trigger another visit etc.

ATTACHMENT 1

List of Stakeholders

List

List 1 - Heritage/Culture and Consent Authorities

Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre
Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania
Tasmanian Heritage Council
National Heritage Register
Parks and Wildlife Services
The Australian Convict Sites Steering Committee
Hobart City Council

List 2 – Local Community

South Hobart Progress Association
South Hobart Sustainable Community
Nearby residents to the Historic Site (~150) and South Hobart community generally by open invitation

List 3 - Education and Community Groups

Child's Play Early Learning
South Hobart Primary School
St Michael's Collegiate
Tasmanian History Teachers' Association
University of Tasmania
Australian Breastfeeding Association Tasmania Branch
Women's Electoral Lobby

List 4 - Tourism Operators

Tourism Tasmania
Live History
Red Decker Bus
Cascades Brewery
Experience Tasmania
Tasmanian Travel and Information Centre
Destination Southern Tasmania
Tourism Tasmania

List 5 – Internal Stakeholders

CFFHS/PAHSMA staff and volunteers
Community Advisory Committee

Individual Meetings

Christina Henri, Heritage Artist and Member of Community Advisory Committee
Jo Lyngcoln, Heritage Consultant and Member of Community Advisory Committee
Shirley McCarron, Past Manager of CFFHS, Heritage Adviser to Woolmers HS
Lucy Frost, Female Convicts Research Centre
Michael Carnes, Island Produce and Fudge Factory
Dianne Snowden, Heritage Lecturer and Chair of Community Advisory Committee
Linley Grant - National Council of Women Australia
Alison Alexander - Female Convicts Research Centre
Lisa Punshon and Christine Lane – Department of State Growth, Cultural and Tourism Industry Development