

NORFOLK ISLAND



**THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND**  
**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **More Questions and Answers on World Heritage listing**

Following is the third in a series of questions and answers about the implications of World Heritage listing for the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area, provided by the Minister for the Environment, Education and Social Welfare, the Hon Vicky Jack MLA. This information is presented to inform the Norfolk Island community about the significance and details of the nomination of KAVHA for World Heritage listing.

*Q. What are the benefits of World Heritage listing?*

A. World Heritage of a property can produce many benefits for Australia, and in particular for local communities. It can cultivate local and national pride in the World Heritage property and foster the development of national responsibility to conserve the area for future generations.

The heritage values of several of the World Heritage properties have been highlighted in tourist promotion campaigns of the area, resulting in marked economic benefits from the increased numbers of tourists.

In addition to possible increases in employment opportunities and income through increased visitor numbers, local communities could also expect to benefit from improved planning and management of the region, along with access to competitive grant programmes.

*Q. What implications does World Heritage listing have for land ownership?*

A. Australia's World Heritage properties encompass a wide variety of land tenures including freehold, perpetual lease, pastoral lease, town reserve, State forest, national park, national reserve, Aboriginal reserve and recreational reserve.

Ownership rights of areas remain unchanged after World Heritage listing, and State and local laws still apply. Properties placed on the World Heritage List do not automatically become Australian Government property, nor do ownership rights and control of the area pass to any international body or foreign power.

*Q. Are there opportunities to consult with government on proposed World Heritage nominations?*

A. The Australian and State and Territory Governments concluded an agreement in 1992, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment (IGAE), covering a wide range of environmental responsibilities, including cooperation on World Heritage matters.

Under the IGAE, the States recognise the Australian Government's international obligations to protect World Heritage properties, and the Australian Government agrees to consult the States and Territories on the identification and nomination of World Heritage properties.

State and Territory Governments are largely responsible for the preparation of nominations for World Heritage properties to the World Heritage List and agree to consult with local communities or interest groups which may be affected by a nomination.

*Q. What activities are allowed in World Heritage properties?*

A. Experience in Australia's World Heritage properties shows that a wide range of activities can be undertaken within the boundaries of the World Heritage area, provided that they are compatible with the conservation of the outstanding universal values for which the property is listed. For instance, on Lord Howe Island residents carry out normal day-to-day community activities. Grazing, recreational and commercial fishing, and tourism continue to operate in Australia's World Heritage properties.

The only reason this could change is if scientific and technical evidence clearly indicated that the continuation of certain activities on the property would threaten to damage its World Heritage values.

More information on World Heritage issues is available from the UNESCO World Heritage website <http://whc.unesco.org/en/about/> or the Department of the Environment and Water Resources site <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/worldheritage/>

Stephanie V Jack

**Minister for the Environment, Education and Social Welfare**

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