

## **Proposal – Heritage Tasmania Tourism Award: Adaptive Heritage**

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### **Proposal**

Trial an award sponsored by Heritage Tasmania for the most successful adaptive reuse of a heritage building (listed?) for a tourism purpose within the Australian Tourism Awards system, at the State level. The one award could be offered to entrants across a number of existing categories including: Tourist Attractions/Ecotourism/Heritage and Cultural Tourism/New Tourism Development/Qantas Award for Excellence in Sustainable Tourism.

A key criterion for entry would be that the tourism activity was related to the adaptive re-use of a heritage-listed building/structure.

The underlying principle of this award is the need to recognise and protect the values of significant cultural places in order to enhance tourism product development and the management of places in the long term – sustainable tourism.

### **Aims**

The Adaptive Heritage award aims to:

- Reinforce the value of heritage within the tourism industry
- Provide a benchmark (and models) for best practice in adaptive reuse of heritage buildings within the tourism industry
- Reinforce the value of adaptive reuse of heritage buildings as a sustainability strategy.

The current Heritage and Cultural Tourism award category focuses on the interpretive value of the tourism operation – “tourism operations that foster a greater understanding of history, heritage and/or culture”. A consequence of this focus is that large, well-known and well-funded sites such as Port Arthur become serial winners.

### **Adaptive Heritage**

The proposed award would allow for a specific focus on the economic value of, and encouragement of, adaptive reuse of heritage structures for tourism purposes.

The messages of the Adaptive Heritage award could include:

- The heritage values of a building/structure can be protected, while enhancing the potential for a viable economic return from use of the structure in a tourism operation.
- Adaptive reuse of an existing historic building can be more environmentally sustainable than demolition and construction of a new building on the same site.

The target clients for such an award would include, for example:

- Listed property owners that adapt and use their buildings for B&B or boutique accommodation operations,
- Listed buildings adapted for interpretive, exhibition and/or performance activities,
- Listed buildings adapted for a tourism support/retail function

The proposed award would piggyback on an existing, high profile award program with all award advertising, administration, judging etc. being coordinated by the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania; which should minimize the resources and involvement of Heritage Tasmania while allowing for maximum return in terms of coverage and outreach.

### **Relevant award examples**

#### **1. 2013 West Australian Heritage Awards - Excellence in adaptive reuse: The Gerry Gauntlett Award.**

This award recognises excellence in adapting a place entered in the State Register of Heritage Places. The project should respect significant heritage fabric and demonstrate a creative blend of old with new. The project must have been completed in the last three years.

(<http://awards.stateheritage.wa.gov.au/WAH2013/categorydetails.asp?id=4985>)

#### **2. Property Council of Australia Innovation & Excellence Awards, S4B Studio Award for Best Heritage and Adaptive Reuse**

This award recognises excellence in heritage related development or adaptive reuse projects. The award recognises outstanding conservation projects, adaptive reuse of existing buildings/sites or high-quality infill development within an historic context. Projects involving the renewal of historic precincts are also eligible.

The award is open to members of the Property Council of Australia only and who have not won the award previously.

(<http://www.propertycouncil.com.au/awards/awardCategories8.html>)

### **Synergy**

Travel and Cultural tourism is one of the few sectors which has major growth potential. For example, it provides opportunities for job creation and economic development; enhances social progress and strengthens communities; encourages the protection of the environment and contributes actively to conservation." (United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development) Tourism is arguably the largest industry in the world, generating upwards of 250 million jobs. (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization In cooperation with the Nordic World Heritage Foundation) The restoration of a building should not be seen in isolation. The landmark building acts as an entry point for development by helping to attract attention and resources.

Building construction consumes 40 percent of the raw materials entering the global economy every year. 85 percent of the total embodied energy in materials is used in their production and transportation. Up to 25 percent of the total waste generated in the United States, India, and other countries is directly attributed to building, construction, and demolition activities. (*Building Green*

*via Design for Deconstruction and Adaptive Reuse* by Tarek M. Saleh) Adaptive Reuse of building materials usually involves a saving of approximately 95 per cent of embodied energy that would otherwise be wasted (Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts).

Adaptive re-use of heritage places may provide an opportunity to conserve these places. In the pursuit of sustainable development, communities have much to gain from adaptively re-using historic buildings. Bypassing the wasteful process of demolition and reconstruction alone sells the environmental benefits of adaptive re-use. Environmental benefits combined with energy savings and the social advantage of recycling a valued heritage place make adaptive re-use of historic buildings an essential component of sustainable development.

### **Project progression**

Information which would be required as a starting point for further discussion with the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania, in order for them to consider a trial award, would include:

- Name, background and aims of the sponsor
- Nature of the sponsorship – cash prize or other
- Contribution to administrative support
- Provision of a judge
- Synergy between tourism and the award

### **Tourism Industry Council Tasmania**

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