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Legislative Council Inquiry into Built Heritage Tourism in Tasmania.

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This is the Kickstart Arts submission to the Legislative Inquiry into Built Heritage Tourism in Tasmania, addressing the following terms of reference:

1. The current and future potential contribution that built heritage makes to tourism in Tasmania;
2. The role of Arts organisations

Tasmania attracts large number of visitors interested in cultural tourism, with the advent of Mona and the revitalized Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, and the increase in cultural events such as Dark Mofo.

Arts organisations such as Kickstart Arts provide an important service to the tourism industry by cultivating and initiating exciting arts projects.

Kickstart Arts at St Johns Park in New Town has developed a new vision for a creative living park for this historical precinct. This vision is bringing new life to the precinct and attracting local involvement, and potentially providing a new tourist experience in the Hobart area.

Kickstart Arts

Kickstart Arts is a leader in connecting communities all around Tasmania through innovative, thought provoking and heart-warming arts projects. Every year we foster the building of positive relationships, creativity, improved wellbeing and social change as our professional artists work with community members to share their stories in astounding ways through making high quality art.

Kickstart Arts has been acknowledged broadly for the quality of our work and for excellence in providing cultural access. Since 2010, we have won four awards for social inclusion in the arts, and were officially thanked in a Motion of Parliament for our contribution to the promotion of health and wellbeing in rural Tasmanian communities.

St Johns Park Creative Living Centre

Kickstart Arts has established a new Creative Living Centre at St Johns Park New Town (aka 'The Park'). St Johns Park has immense cultural and historical significance to Tasmania, especially the 1831 Orphanage buildings which were built by Governor Arthur around the same time as the iconic Port Arthur prison. Kickstart Arts Inc. has a long-term lease from Department of Health and Human Services of the 1831 Orphanage buildings for the establishment of an Arts and Health Centre. The intention being that the Centre sets the tone and leads the development of an Arts/Culture and health precinct or hub.

This site is central, attractive and accessible offering many layers of interest to visitors.

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We at Kickstart believe people are innately creative, kind and generous. Our art making process invites people to share these attributes with each other and ultimately the audience.



Visitors interested in colonial institutional and social history can view buildings from 1831 with stories from the incarceration of Mathina at the orphan school, to the pre-war tuberculosis quarantine sheds. However, the site lacks wayfinding and interpretation panels, these would greatly enhance the visitor experience.

The Creative Living Park concept value-adds to the tourist potential of this historical precinct by giving it vibrancy and interest, attracting tourists interested in healthy self sustainable lifestyles, creativity, cultural diversity and social enterprise.

The Park cultivates sustainable living solutions in the surrounding grounds, with a city farm and a community garden in residence, and other sustainable living enterprises planned. The city farm is attracting younger people to the area to learn old and new skills in market gardening, while the community garden provides a social focus for people from all parts of the community to come together, to celebrate and enjoy gardening together.

These activities are a revival of a past history of agricultural endeavours on this site. A nineteenth century government farm was located here to train orphans in agricultural pursuits and to supply food to the growing colony. Interpretation panels to explain the colonial agricultural history of this key site would greatly enhance the tourist experience.

The southern wing of the orphanage, or Kickstart Arts Centre, is being renovated to provide an inspiring and welcoming space for community groups to make art, gather, and stage cultural events.

The planned studios, rehearsal and performance spaces, a gallery, outdoor stage, funky café and emerging arts and craft retail space will make it attractive to tourists interested in exploring the emerging cultural edge of Hobart, as an alternative to Salamanca Place.

The northern wing of the Orphanage is presently unrenovated but contains a large kitchen and a theatrette – it has the potential to enhance the site greatly once renovated. There are no funds available for this at present.

Kickstart Arts CEO Jami Bladel has outlined the St Johns Park Creative Living Centre in a document that is available to the Inquiry on request.