



Richmond & Coal River Valley Promotions Inc
PO Box 119 Richmond, Tasmania 7025

SUBMISSION
February 24, 2015

TASMANIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL INQUIRY INTO HERITAGE AND TOURISM

This submission is prepared on behalf of the Richmond and Coal River Valley Promotion Group Inc.

This association has 60 members consisting of local business owners and is based in the historic village of Richmond in the Coal River Valley. Our aim is to increase visitation to and visitor expenditure within Richmond Historic Village and the Coal River Valley through a number of different avenues.

We write to highlight the importance of heritage tourism to the Tasmanian economy and to local businesses.

We appreciate the past efforts of the State Government and its tourist and heritage departments and advisory processes to identify heritage as a special feature of Tasmania in its overall tourism strategy. However, we consider that there is a need for a more targeted approach to linking heritage and tourism that requires greater emphasis in promoting the state.

Visitors to Tasmania are of course attracted to the state for a diverse range of special features including its natural environment, food and wine, special events, cultural and sporting activities. Nevertheless its history and unique built environment are highly regarded and visitor numbers to Port Arthur and other heritage sites reflect considerable interest in Tasmania's history.

In Richmond we recognize that it is our heritage focus that provides a particular advantage as tourists enjoy the experience of walking around an intact colonial village that has retained so many original buildings and churches. The Richmond Bridge, the oldest in Australia is a magnet for tourists who want to be photographed at this historic landmark. Visitors are fascinated to learn that convicts had to pass through the village on their way to Port Arthur long before there was a road across the causeway.

While local businesses and residents together with the Clarence Council work to protect and promote the heritage features of Richmond, we receive little recognition from the State Government and would like to see this enquiry recommend a greater engagement by State Government and its agencies in regional areas.

We understand the limits within the State Budget but would like to see a greater transparency about how State Government tourism and heritage expenditure is targeted to the benefit of small businesses trying to maximize heritage tourism in our region.

As a representative business association we have a number of recommendations that could enhance the State Government's promotion of heritage as a special aspect of tourism.

We would welcome the Legislative Council Committee visiting Richmond to hear first-hand the ideas of the Richmond and Coal River Valley Promotions Group.

We look forward to hearing the outcome of this important enquiry.

Recommendations

1. The State Government release a Heritage and Tourism Strategy for public consultation to engage all Tasmanians in a discussion about the best way to promote heritage and tourism over the next five years.
2. The State Government ensure greater transparency in the way financial resources are allocated to particular projects or regions so that all Tasmanians can enjoy some benefit from the heritage and tourism dollar.
3. The State Government reconsiders its promotions policy so that visitors can more readily identify the region or experience they are seeking in Tasmania.
4. The State Government initiate discussions with Cruise Ship Management to offer a wider range of potential visitor experiences during the summer cruise ship schedule.
5. The State Government ensure its Heritage and Tourism Strategy is well presented on its website, in all promotions, at gateways to the state and in social media.
6. The State Government allocate a small budget for innovative local government and community grants that recognize and enhance heritage tourism throughout Tasmania.

Sincerely,

John Pooley
Chair
Richmond and Coal River Valley Promotions Group