



# MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 21 May 2024

For Immediate Release

## **COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO ISLAND HOUSING UNWAVERING DESPITE GROWING REGIONS APPLICATION OUTCOME**

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King Island Council has been advised that its application to the Growing Regions Program to develop 32 worker accommodation beds in collaboration with the owners of Ocean Dunes Holdings was not successful.

When reflecting on this news, King Island Mayor Marcus Blackie said, "We are obviously disappointed that our application was not successful this time around. However, we will continue to seek out opportunities to grow our housing capacity and grow our population overall. To that end, worker's accommodation still remains the highest priority, in order to build development recently approved and future developments in the works. I highlight the commercial opportunity this again presents".

Council's Strategic Plan, adopted in April 2022, includes reference to the importance of balancing the accommodation supply for both visitors and workers on King Island as a key to ensuring the successful growth of the visitor market and the broader King Island economy. It further refers to advocating to state and federal bodies to develop an Island-specific housing strategy, to support the development of King Island as a destination for visitors, and to promote, support and investigate opportunities to seek private sector investment opportunities on the Island.

Ocean Dunes Holdings have been advised of the outcome of this grant application and have also expressed their disappointment. Mr Philip Kennedy, CEO, said, "This decision is a lost opportunity to solve a broader issue of a shortage of suitable worker accommodation for the King Island community but will have little impact on our plans for the development of accommodation, restaurant and enhanced golf facilities at Ocean Dunes. Of the 80 new jobs we create with the development, fortunately we are confident that we can develop alternate plans to accommodate those employees that are not local residents, leaving the chronic worker accommodation shortage an ongoing KI concern."

The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, issued a media release on Thursday 16 May confirming the 40 projects funded through Round 1 of this grant program. These are available via the Growing



Regions website here: <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/regional-australia/regional-and-community-programs/growing-regions-program>

Further information:

King Island Council

Website: [www.kingisland.tas.gov.au](http://www.kingisland.tas.gov.au)

Ph: 6462 9000

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Name

**MAYOR**

[cr.mblackie@kingisland.tas.gov.au](mailto:cr.mblackie@kingisland.tas.gov.au)

0484 717 230

