

Ms Catherine Hull,
Secretary
Commonwealth Grants Commission
5 Torrens Street
BRADDON ACT 2612

Dear Catherine,

Please find our submission to Commonwealth Grants Commission.

I attach 4 pages to this document.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Denise Quintal". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Denise Quintal

Commonwealth Grants Commission
March 2006

If we are to believe that Norfolk Island is about living simply within a framework of limits and that the island is a very multi-cultural society built on multiple settlements and that it is about a community where sharing surpluses and caring for the less well off are important, then it would be hoped that any outcomes would leave the island community hopeful, yet pragmatic to the decisions in a way in which its members face the future.

Of greater urgency, it would be hoped that the decision makers would consider dedicating themselves to creating a peaceful island civilization based on principles of truth, justice, prosperity, and continuing advancement.

As national, religious, and ethnic conflicts divide peoples around the globe, it is imperative that all parties build bonds of reconciliation and understanding.

Fact 1:

20.02.2002 Norfolk Island Government accepted the Norfolk Island Plan (Attachment A: *The Map*)

Fact 2:

20.02.2006 Australian Government declared it was revoking Norfolk Island powers over Customs, Immigration and Quarantine that currently provide the island with its major sources of revenue.

Running Score: NI 10006 Commonwealth 10007

NI = Norfolk Islanders represented by N I Government Ministers/N I Administration

Commonwealth = Australian taxpayer represented by Federal Ministers/DoTaRs

Running Score financial estimate: - EURO 100000000.00 and counting

20.02.2020 Peace declared by all parties

We suggest that a strategy with long term benefits could be of advantage to all players in light of the fact that all communities are unique and that there is no such thing as a comparable community.

If the outcome is to be a vision of a mechanism promoting the ability to think and decide collectively then these attributes of an evolving island need to be part of the Policy, Plans and Programs (PPP's) that will only be seen by a deep Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

WHY SEA¹?

The formalized, systematic and comprehensive process of evaluating the environmental impacts of a policy, plan or programme and its alternatives, including the preparation of a written report on the findings of the evaluation and using the findings in publicly accountable decisions making is found by using an SEA.

Therefore, prior to the final outcome of either Option 1 or Option 2, importance should be given to applying a deep Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to specific sectors - especially those of consequence to not only Norfolk Island but Australasia in some such areas as Transport, Water, Culture, Tourism & World Heritage Areas on island.

Why is an SEA important for Norfolk Island?

The Commonwealth *EPBC Act 1999 (s146)* does contain formal recognition of the benefits of SEA by allowing the Minister to agree with persons responsible for the adoption of implementation of plans, policies and programs, that a strategic assessment should be made of the relevant impacts of actions that are controlled by the Act.

Some examples of relevant impacts of actions

Culture: As the island has a multi-cultural background it might be useful to think of a 'cultures world view' as the basic foundation of island culture in that it governs both perception and behavior in large and small ways. World view influences perception, beliefs, and values. A cultures world view even influences social, economic and political life.

Water: Bearing in mind that we are surrounded by water and that ninety percent of natural disasters are water-related events, and they are on the increase and many are the result of poor land use as discussed in the article, 'Water: a crisis of governance - the second UN World Water Development Report', consideration for the issue of who gets what water, when and how, and decide who has the right to water and related services are paramount." The report considers that such systems are not limited to 'government,' but include local authorities, the private sector and civil society. The United Nations report covers a range of issues intimately connected to water, from

¹ Extracts from: Strategic Environmental Assessment in Australasia. Editors: Simon Marsden – - Solicitor, Environmental Agency, UK & Stephen Dovers – Senior Fellow, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies – The Australian National University

health and food security, to economic development, land use and the preservation of the natural ecosystems on which our water resources depend.

Recognizing the vital part freshwater plays in human security and development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, adopted by Member States and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), called on countries to develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005. The report indicates that only about 12 percent of countries have done so to date, although many have begun the process.

World Heritage Listing: If both Governments long term vision is to obtain international listing, then the Heritage registers of both Governments, which presently differing in scope and definition; require clarification. The relevant impacts of the actions of both Governments to proceed towards UNESCO listing, without current clarification, should be clearly defined prior to continuation. (Attachment B UNESCO listing)

A vision to Unite the Island

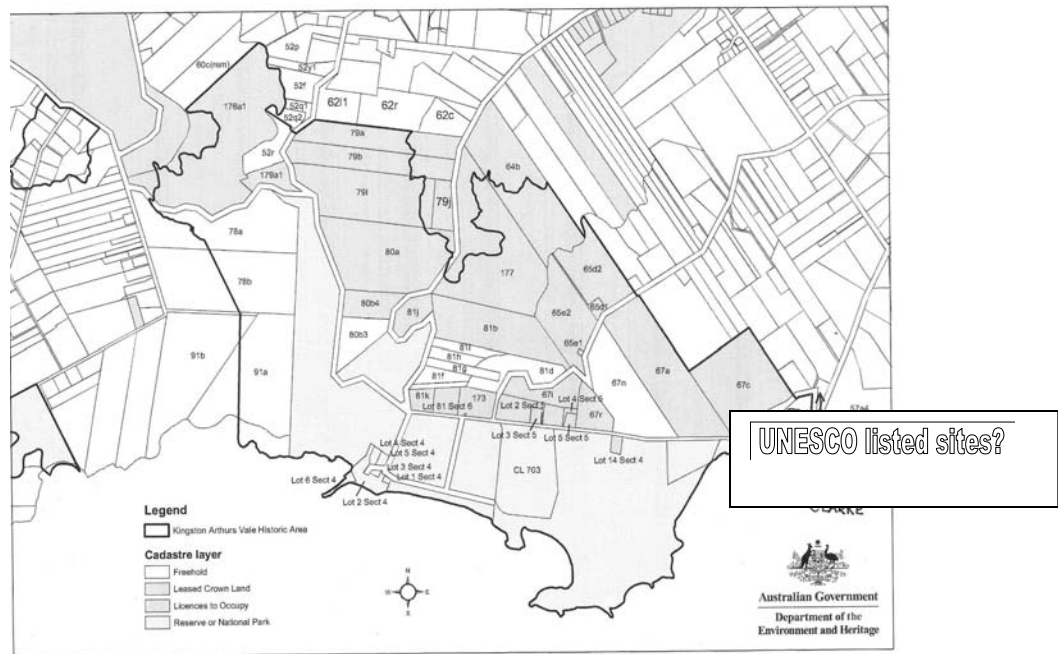
Both options 1 & 2 fail to address the long term sustainability of the island and whatever one is adopted then the core value of sustainability which is the triple bottom line needs to be paramount.

In conclusion, if both Governments agree that they are working towards a sustainable island then to utilize the islands' ecological footprint through a deep SEA prior to implementation of Option 1 or 2 would provide a mode of decision-making both inclusive and cooperative and could avoid adversarial posturing and partisanship whilst still democratic in spirit and method thus achieving a successful outcome uniquely admired by 'all peoples'.



Denise Quintal
Founder
EcoNorfolk Foundation
*A non profit organization
limited by guarantee*

ATTACHMENT B



ATTACHMENT A

