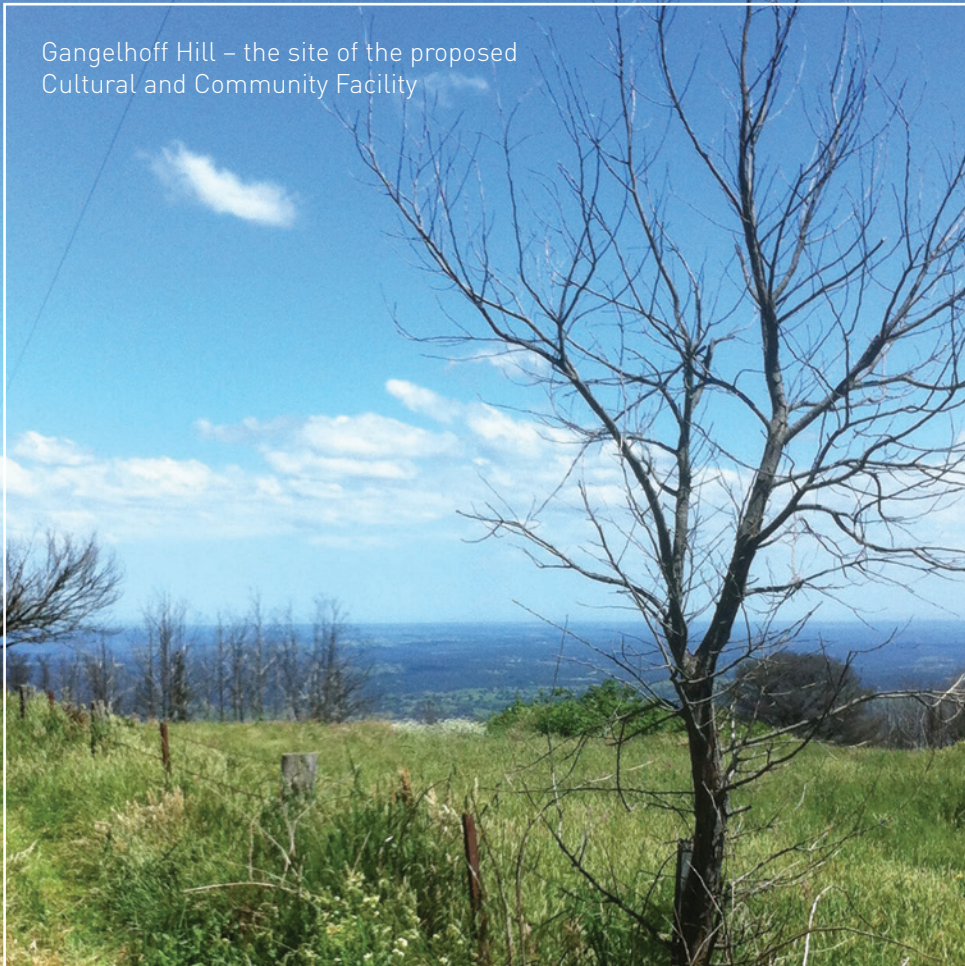




KINGLAKE RANGES CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITY

Gangelhoff Hill – the site of the proposed
Cultural and Community Facility



KINGLAKE RANGES CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITY

The Project

Identified as a key community recovery project following the 2009 bushfires, the Kinglake Ranges Cultural and Community Facility will meet community aspirations for a highly functional and visually striking asset for the region and its residents.

It will be developed in partnership with Parks Victoria who will co-locate the new Kinglake National Park Visitor Information Centre as well as its rebuilt depot and offices alongside the community facility.

The vision is for a flexible, sustainable, multi-purpose group of buildings with spaces for live performances and other events, combined gallery, exhibition, meeting and learning spaces, a cafeteria, offices, public amenities and car parking.

To be built on Gangelhoff Hill, beside the iconic Kinglake National Park and adjacent to the locally significant Frank Thomson Reserve, the Cultural and Community Facility will act as a gateway to the Kinglake Ranges, complementing and blending with the natural surroundings and stunning views.

The Vision

Many in the community have for some time envisioned improved cultural and performing arts spaces in the Kinglake Ranges.

Following the bushfires, the Kinglake Ranges Visual and Performing Arts Alliance (Arts Alliance) discussed the concept of a home for the arts in the Ranges, as part of an 'arts-led' recovery involving exhibitions, workshops, performances and community events.

In July 2009, the Kinglake Ranges Community Recovery Committee (KRCRC) and Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (VBRRA) organised a Remake Kinglake community forum, with more than 200 residents attending. The aim of the forum was to identify key projects that would assist the community to recover and rebuild after the fires.

A sustainable multi-purpose arts, cultural and educational centre was put forward by community members as a priority project. It was envisaged as a catalyst project that would underpin and progress community recovery, while providing an exciting and iconic multi-purpose facility for local residents and visitors to the region. Work has been underway to progress this project ever since.

The vision is for a Community Cultural Facility that showcases and connects the environment, arts, culture, learning and history of Kinglake Ranges to provide opportunities for creativity, reflection, education and an uplifting and enjoyable experience for local communities and visitors.

An enhanced experience for visitors to the Ranges

After losing its local depot and office in the bushfires, Parks Victoria has put considerable thought into replacing and expanding its facilities to include improved visitor information at Kinglake National Park, as well as contemporary educational displays about the park and the recent impact of the bushfires.

Through 'Remake Kinglake', and subsequent consultations with the community, the Arts Alliance, KRCRC, Murrindindi Shire Council and other community groups, there was support for combining both the multi-purpose arts, cultural and educational centre and the new Parks Victoria facilities to create multi-use space that could not only support community recovery but also act as an iconic centrepiece for the Kinglake Ranges region.

There is now the opportunity to forge a unique partnership between Parks Victoria and the local community – and in doing so, develop an iconic, sustainable facility that will deliver many benefits to the region and its residents.

The History of the Project

Prior to the bushfires, the Arts Alliance, together with other community groups, was exploring the concept of a multi-purpose facility for artists in the Kinglake Ranges.

In March 2009, the Arts Alliance initiated a workshop with Arts Victoria, Regional Arts Victoria, the Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres, Regional Development Victoria, the Department of Planning and Community Development and Murrindindi Shire Council to discuss an arts-led recovery and a home for the arts in Kinglake.

In July 2009, community members at the 'Remake Kinglake' forum identified a multi-purpose arts, cultural and educational centre as one of their key recovery priorities.

At the time, there was support for combining the centre with the new Parks Victoria offices, depot and visitor centre planned for Kinglake.

In December 2009, the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund (VBAF) made a preliminary allocation of \$5.8 million towards an iconic public space for community, cultural and educational activities to assist with the ongoing recovery of the Kinglake Ranges. The funding allocation is in line with VBAF's commitment to set aside 20 percent of February 2009 bushfire donations to community-wide recovery projects that support impacted communities into the future.

Parks Victoria also committed \$2.2 million towards their component of the project.

Community members and stakeholder groups across the Kinglake Ranges were invited by the KRCRC and VBRRA to take part in developing the concept for the facility.

A series of roundtable discussions were held in March 2010 with stakeholders representing the National Park, arts, environment and learning sectors.

Local residents were invited to a public meeting in April 2010 to have their say on the preliminary concept. Around 40 people attended the meeting with the majority supporting all or most of the concept.

Community aspirations for the facility included:

- Building community capability through arts and education
- An iconic building that celebrated and brought attention to the Kinglake Ranges
- Multiple uses for the local community and visitors
- A facility that reflected the community's aspirations for the future
- A gateway to the Kinglake Ranges and its natural and cultural assets

A preliminary business case for the facility was prepared by Deloitte in June 2010.

In July 2010, a 10-hectare parcel of land was purchased by the State Government at 265 Whittlesea-Kinglake Road for the facility, jointly funded by the Victorian Government and VBAF.

The land is currently managed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. Once the project is completed, the site of the Cultural and Community Facility will be granted in freehold to the Murrindindi Shire Council and the depot site will be managed by Parks Victoria.

The Council has agreed to take ownership of the Cultural and Community Facility on the basis it is financially self-sustaining.



The site of the proposed Cultural and Community Facility is at 265 Whittlesea-Kinglake Road, alongside the Frank Thomson Reserve and the Kinglake National Park.

It commands a sweeping view down to Melbourne and sits among one of the most beautiful landscapes in Victoria.

With the vision for a landmark, contemporary facility that works in with its natural surroundings and takes full advantage of its stunning views, it will be a place for the community to gather together, to create, to learn, to enjoy and to heal.

It will enter into a five-year lease agreement with the Kinglake Ranges Foundation which will manage and operate the facility.

This governance arrangement will enable the Kinglake Ranges Foundation to attract donations and raise philanthropic funds for the operation of the facility, similar to arrangements in other community facilities including the Burrinja Arts Centre in the Yarra Ranges and Gasworks Park in South Melbourne.

A Project Control Board, consisting of the major project partners, is progressing work on the facility. A Community Reference Group has been put in place to provide input into its design and construction on behalf of the community. This group was formed after expressions of interest were sought and its membership officially endorsed by the Council.

Together these groups have identified the following objectives for the project: to create a destination attractive to local people and visitors to the Kinglake Ranges; to provide benefits for local communities; to create an experience and motivate people to explore the National Park and to engage with what Kinglake Ranges has to offer; to be an iconic landmark that is a sanctuary - educative, informing and sustainable - in harmony with its surrounding environment; and to optimise features including views, multi-use spaces, flexibility and sustainability through exemplary design.

Project Timeline

2008

July Kinglake Ranges Visual and Performing Arts Alliance established, with over 130 members prior to the bushfires.

2009

7 February The bushfires

March Arts Alliance initiates workshop to discuss arts-led recovery and a home for the arts in Kinglake.

9 June Parks Victoria (PV) consults with staff and community about rebuilding destroyed office and depot. Need for visitor facilities identified.

19 July Remake Kinglake community forum run by Kinglake Ranges Community Recovery Committee (KRCRC) and Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (VBRRA). Multi-purpose arts, cultural and educational centre identified as recovery priority. Idea to combine it with PV facilities first raised.

September/October Further PV consultations with staff, stakeholders and community.

1 December The Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund (VBAF) sets aside funds for an iconic public space in the Kinglake Ranges for community, cultural and educational activities.

2010

March VBRRA and KRCRC hold stakeholder roundtable discussions to progress Cultural and Community Facility (CCF) concept.

13 April VBAF agrees to fund feasibility and options analysis for the facility.

28 April VBRRA and KRCRC hold community workshop with strong support for CCF.

May-June Market research about facility in Melbourne and Kinglake identifies potential markets.

25 June Preliminary business case for CCF.

14 July Murrindindi Shire Council (MSC) agrees to consider CCF proposal, so long as it is financially sustainable.

21 July Land bought beside Frank Thomson Reserve, jointly funded by VBAF and State Government.

July-August Extensive consultation with stakeholders and broader community to develop CCF concept.

September Kinglake Ranges Cultural and Community Facility Working Group set up to further develop concept.

2011

25 January PV holds further discussions with Kinglake National Park staff to finalise arrangements for office, depot and Visitor Centre co-location with CCF.

28 January Kinglake Ranges Foundation (KRF) established - amongst other initiatives, plans to manage facility on behalf of Council.

27 April MSC agrees to proceed with development of CCF so long as facility does not rely on Council resources.

June Project Control Board established, made up of major partners in the project.

12 October Community information session to update community and advise of Expression of Interest process for Community Reference Group.

7 November Design team Taylor Cullity and Lethlean, along with architect Peter Elliott, appointed to develop Master Plan and design brief.

29 November First meeting of Community Reference Group.

2012

February Draft Master Plan and design brief due to be presented to the community for feedback.

Where to now

The design firm, Taylor Cullity and Lethlean, with Peter Elliott Architecture and Urban Design has been appointed to develop a draft Master Plan for the facility which will then be presented to local residents for their consideration and feedback before the project is finalised.

The design firm is working closely with the Project Control Board and the Community Reference Group to come up with options for the draft Master Plan and design brief for the project.

The Master Plan will consider aspects of the project such as siting and orientation of buildings to take in the best views and make the best use of local climatic conditions, the size and use of spaces, and requirements for services and parking.

More Information

For updates go to: Murrindindi Shire Council website www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au, the Fire Recovery Unit website www.rdv.vic.gov.au/fire-recovery-unit or the Kinglake Ranges Foundation website www.krffoundation.org.au.

For more information visit the Kinglake Ranges Rebuilding Advisory Centre or call the Fire Recovery Unit on 1800 055 714.

Having Your Say

A draft Master Plan and design brief will be presented to residents and key stakeholders for comment in February. This feedback will be incorporated into the final Master Plan, which will be on display prior to 31 March, before being endorsed by the project partners. Planning for the design and construction of the facility will then take place, including a further business case based on the final design to ensure the project is sustainable.