

Next phase for Kingston Arts Precinct

Released 01/07/2019 - Joint media release

Kingston Arts Precinct has taken a significant step forward today with an agreement signed for Geocon to deliver the highly anticipated project in partnership with the ACT Government.

This project has been more than 20 years in the making and today's announcement represents a significant milestone in delivering a project which will transform the Kingston area into a world class arts and cultural hub.

Following the successful tender, the Suburban Land Agency will manage the next stage of consultations with the tenderer. A formal community engagement process will run in parallel with ongoing consultation between Geocon, Arts ACT and local art organisations who will move into the precinct once completed.

Minister for Urban Renewal Rachel Stephen-Smith said progressing with the next stage of community consultation was an exciting milestone for residents, art groups and the wider Canberra community.

"Through the Suburban Land Agency and artsACT, we will work very closely with Geocon to ensure arts organisations, stakeholders and the community are provided the best possible opportunity to engage in the design process."

"The Kingston Arts Precinct will further add to the vibrancy of the Kingston Foreshore and the character of Kingston and Canberra more broadly. We'll continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure we deliver a precinct of the highest quality with excellent design outcomes," Minister Stephen-Smith said.

The ACT Government has approved a budget of up to \$78 million for the Kingston Arts Precinct development works as part of the urban renewal delivery of Kingston Foreshore.

This includes \$50 million for purpose-built art facilities for resident art organisations and accommodation for visiting artists.

Minister for Arts and Cultural Events Gordon Ramsay said the Kingston Arts Precinct will transform the area into a hive of creativity.

"The Kingston Arts Precinct will be home to some of Canberra's leading arts organisations, with some organisations enjoying purpose-built facilities for the very first time.

"This will be a place for the the community to live, work, visit, create and collaborate. We want this to be a place where locals and visitors can come together to experience the very best of our arts and culture scene," Minister Ramsay said.

Geocon has engaged Architects Fender Katsalidis and Oculus for the project. Fender Katsalidis is well known for creating vibrant and inspirational spaces, including the New Acton Precinct and the Mona Museum.

The first stage of community consultation will be a design briefing with key resident groups, art organisations and Fender Katsalidis to be held in two weeks.

For more information visit: suburbanland.act.gov.au/kingston
(<https://suburbanland.act.gov.au/kingston>)

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Kingston Arts Precinct moves to next phase

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Since the announcement of Geocon's successful tender in July, the Kingston Arts Precinct proposed design has been shared through the first phase of community engagement which focussed on informing interested community members and organisations about the project. This first 'Tender Concepts release' phase is now complete.

Retaining 'the Chapel' will form part of the Tender Concepts design review. Both Geocon and SLA have agreed to look more closely at the 1948 Switch Room, commonly referred to as 'the Chapel', that was approved for demolition in October 2014.

Consequently the approved Development Application for the demolition of the Chapel will expire in early October and will not be relied on when Geocon's development proposal is assessed on its own merits.

Other questions raised during engagement conversations with the architect and the project team have highlighted a number of other considerations which will also feed into the next stage of Tender Concepts design development as well. It is anticipated that this phase will take more than six months to allow further studies to be undertaken to inform ongoing discussions with the community and regulatory agencies.

ArtsACT, SLA, Geocon and Fender Katsalidis have also worked with arts organisations that will move to the precinct in developing their design requirements of the arts buildings. The 'resident arts organisations have a pivotal role in collaborating on the design directly with the architects to ensure their current and future needs are met.

A Community Panel will be established by end of September as an effective forum that will remain throughout the life of the project and will include a broad cross section of community representatives.

A dedicated community engagement site has been established where Architect's presentation of Tender Concepts, upcoming events and project development can be found. Community is encouraged to participate through www.kingstonartsprecinct.com.au (<http://www.kingstonartsprecinct.com.au>) to find out more.

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