

Media Release

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Federal Grant to help build new staircase to iconic Prospect Hill

At the recent opening of the Kangaroo Island Airport, Prime Minister the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP announced that the Federal Government would contribute \$750,000 towards the cost of rebuilding the Prospect Hill Staircase.

The funding commitment was awarded through the Building Better Regions Fund Round 2 to which Council submitted an application in December 2017. The project is expected to cost \$1 million.

Mayor Peter Clements said, "We are delighted to receive this Federal Government support for the project. It means we can reopen this top tourist destination to our local, national and international visitors, and ensure the preservation of this iconic heritage site."

"We are now looking to secure additional funds to help us reduce the remaining \$250,000."

There are a number of reasons contributing to the \$1 million dollar price tag.

The dune is a sensitive and protected environment and a special approach to construction is required. Not only does the land contain protected native fauna and flora but the dune is a fragile and naturally shifting site.

Roughly two thirds of the cost is in the labour and equipment required to complete the project. Building materials cannot be hauled up the hill like they originally were as this would be unacceptably damaging to the dune environment. In addition, part of the construction process may include helicopter pick up and drop offs of pre-assembled staircase sections, and because machine access is limited the work will be more labour intensive.

Instead of wood the staircase will be built from composite fibre and stainless steel - whilst more expensive initially, it provides significantly greater longevity with less ongoing maintenance.

The new structure has been designed in collaboration with Department of Environment and Water and will meet current safety and construction standards as well as being installed in a way that limits the issues associated with building on a moving sand dune.



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A portion of the land is owned by the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, and the Kangaroo Island Council is in the process of licencing this land to install the upper reaches of the stairs which will predominantly follow the existing alignment.

Council had to close the old staircase in 2016 due to structural concerns making the stairs unsafe.

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