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ADELAIDE HILLS, FLEURIEU AND KANGAROO ISLAND

Media release

RDA AHFKI Named Finalists in 2024 National Economic Development Awards

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Regional Development Australia Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu, and Kangaroo Island (RDA AHFKI) has been named a finalist in the 2024 National Economic Development Awards for Excellence in the "Economic Development Strategic Thinking" category. This recognition highlights RDA AHFKI's ongoing commitment to innovative solutions for regional challenges, building on its 2023 win for the Hills & Coast Business Grant and finalist position in 2022 for its work with the Strathalbyn Abattoir and the Fleurieu Community Cooperative.

This year's nomination recognises RDA AHFKI's leadership in addressing Kangaroo Island's critical housing shortage, a major hurdle to the region's economic recovery following the 2020 Black Summer bushfires. The Parndana Housing Development Project was born from a pressing need to support industry growth and community rebuilding on the island, where the loss of homes and the conversion of existing houses to short-stay accommodation had constrained economic expansion.

RDA AHFKI played a pivotal role by bringing together key stakeholders—including Kiland, the Kangaroo Island Community Club (KICC), local council, and state government ministers—to develop a collaborative, strategic approach. Through ideation modelling, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy, RDA AHFKI facilitated the development of new housing solutions that met both community and industry needs. Notably, the project saw the commitment of significant private investment from Kiland, a \$1 million grant from the State Government, and critical infrastructure support from local council.

Outcomes from this strategic initiative are transformative: the project will double the housing stock in Parndana, accommodating up to 123 people, and provide 24 beds for transient workforces. The development is set to attract over \$128 million in direct and indirect capital investment, creating 115 direct jobs and

significantly boosting local employment. Additionally, Kiland's plans to establish the world's largest biochar facility on the island align with sustainability goals, promising further economic and environmental benefits.

"Being recognised as finalists for this award is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our team and partners. RDA AHFKI's role in this project was to lead with vision, persistence, and a commitment to practical solutions.

Navigating complex regulatory and political landscapes, we facilitated a groundbreaking partnership that helped underpinned industry investments and stalled projects. This project demonstrates that strong leadership and partnerships can create impactful change that benefits everyone involved."

~ Steve Shotton, Director of Regional Development RDA Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island

The winners of the 2024 National Economic Development Awards for Excellence will be announced later this year.

For more information, visit <https://rdahc.com.au/projects/regional-housing-kangaroo-island>

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