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FEDERAL CABINET IN TASMANIA



Federal Environment, Heritage and Arts Minister, Peter Garrett with Bass Labor MHR Jodie Campbell discussing the \$1 million upgrade of the Albert Hall. Picture: PAUL SCAMBLER

Albert Hall to undergo major refurbishment

By LUKE SCOTT

LAUNCESTON'S historic Albert Hall will undergo a major refurbishment after the Federal Government committed \$1 million to the project yesterday.

The funding was part of a \$5.8 million package for nine heritage conservation projects in Tasmania.

The package includes \$604,545 for Longford's historic Brickendon and Woolmers Estates, and \$796,000 for Clarendon House near Evandale.

Federal Heritage and Arts Minister Peter Garrett was taken on a tour of the Albert Hall by Launceston Mayor Albert van Zetten yesterday and said

the funding package was "the largest investment ever made in Australian heritage conservation".

Mr Garrett said the nine projects would create an estimated 104 new jobs in Tasmania.

"This funding supports local jobs and training through community projects in regions hardest hit by the economic downturn," Mr Garrett said.

"Tasmanian communities will benefit from this conservation work through employment of track workers in the short term, and longer term through provision of appropriate amenities that underpin the tourism

industry that supports many small business in the area."

Launceston Mayor Albert van Zetten said the funding for the Albert Hall would allow the refurbishment of backstage dressing rooms, an upgraded loading dock and an increase to the size of the venue's stage.

"This project will also enable us to attract more state, national and international events and conferences which will help create and retain more local jobs, particularly in the arts, tourism and hospitality industries," Alderman van Zetten said.

"These are in addition to the jobs which will be created during the construction phase."