

Media Release

20 May 2026

Cockburn ARC Oval to host Dockers AFLW home games from August

The Fremantle Dockers will play AFL Women's home matches at the Club's Cockburn headquarters for the 2026 NAB AFLW Season, in a move set to support future growth and elite standards for the program.

While Cockburn ARC Oval has previously hosted AFL and AFLW pre-season matches, Fremantle's opening home game of the season in August will be the first time official AFLW premiership matches are played at the venue.

Fremantle Chief Executive Officer Simon Garlick said the decision to move AFLW matches to Cockburn is part of the Club's Redevelopment Masterplan of Cockburn ARC Oval and reflects the need to continue to invest in our women's program from a high-performance perspective.

The masterplan, which was endorsed by the City of Cockburn at its Ordinary Council Meeting on 12 May, involves the development for recreation, education and community uses in a three-stage approach, including the achievement of hosting AFLW home matches at the facility for the upcoming season.

"Across three stages until 2029 we plan to create an indoor training facility for elite and community use, provide more venue and spectator infrastructure, plus mixed-use health, education and community facilities," Garlick said.

Recent facility upgrades at Cockburn ARC Oval in 2025, which included dedicated AFLW changerooms, additional community changerooms and an undercover 250 seat spectator terrace, were prioritised with the specific intent of supporting AFLW matches in future years.

Since the women's team's inception into the AFLW, Fremantle has played its home matches at Fremantle Oval, a shared community venue that has played an important role in the competition's growth.

The Club's identity, history and deep connection to Fremantle and the Port community remain central to who it is, but Garlick said there was a need to prioritise the growth of its players.

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“As the AFLW competition continues to grow, it’s essential that we provide elite high-performance facilities for our athletes that reflects the professionalism of the game and the people playing it and that is what Cockburn ARC Oval provides,” Garlick said.

“Our connection to Fremantle, as a place, is part of our DNA and that will never change. Fremantle Oval and the City of Fremantle have played an important role in our AFLW journey, and we will continue to work closely to ensure we maintain a meaningful Club connection to Fremantle.”

Fremantle AFLW captain Ange Stannett said the opportunity to tap into new growth markets within the Cockburn Area will be great for the game.

“We represent Fremantle wherever we play, and hosting home games at Cockburn gives us the chance to play in a state-of-the art facility and align with the broader growth of the competition overall,” Stannett said.

The milestone to host games in Cockburn in 2026 also celebrates the strong partnership between the Fremantle Football Club and the City of Cockburn, underpinned by a shared vision for the Cockburn ARC precinct to be the heartbeat of the Cockburn community.

City of Cockburn Chief Executive Officer Daniel Simms said the relocation of Freo’s AFLW matches to Cockburn ARC Oval was testament to the City and Club’s successful Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2023.

“The City’s endorsement of the masterplan will now address critical infrastructure gaps and unlock strategic opportunities for regional growth, particularly women’s sport. “Cockburn’s reputation as Perth’s playground continues to grow, and anchored by Cockburn Central Station, the Cockburn Central precinct offers direct north–south rail connectivity and growing east–west links.

“Providing world-class facilities for women’s football is another step in our ongoing local government role in creating a cohesive, engaged and active community.”

City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett said the City was excited to continue its partnership with Fremantle Football Club to benefit the wider community and grow the women’s game.

“Cockburn is a place of firsts, and offering AFLW games in Central Cockburn, one of Perth’s designated Strategic Metropolitan Centres and a key gateway for the south metro region, is something to celebrate,” Mayor Howlett said.



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The announcement comes on the eve of the AFLW fixture release, with match dates and timings at Cockburn ARC Oval to be confirmed following the AFLW's official schedule on Wednesday 20 May at 10am WST.

Further details regarding match day operations, ticket sales, fan access and community activations will be shared in the lead up to the 2026 AFLW season in August.

Caption: L-r Fremantle Chief Executive Officer Simon Garlick, City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett, Fremantle AFLW captain Ange Stannett and City of Cockburn Daniel Simms at Cockburn ARC Oval.

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