



Media Release

EMBARGOED until 10am 28 August 2021

City declares open its \$6m redevelopment of regional environment hub Cockburn Wetlands Precinct

The culmination of 20 years planning was celebrated at the City of Cockburn Wetlands Precinct today as the City officially opened its new look regional environmental hub after providing \$6m to fund the upgrade.

The unique precinct on the north eastern side of Walliabup-Bibra Lake is home to not-for-profit organisations WA Wildlife (WAW) – formerly Native ARC, The Wetlands Centre Cockburn (TWCC) and the Bibra Lake Scout Group (BLSG).

The City's investment in the precinct has delivered purpose-built community facilities for WAW, TWCC and BLSG and their wide range of clients, members and users who have been visiting the precinct for about 30 years.

The precinct was launched by Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett who planted a Doowart-Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) adjacent to an artwork and landscaped pathway by Nyungar artist Sharyn Egan and sculptor Jahne Rees, inspired by the Southwest snake-necked turtle which lives in local lakes and wetlands.

City of Cockburn Chief of Operations, Anton Lees, said the City-funded precinct's redevelopment aimed to create a state-of-the-art integrated education and rehabilitation hub featuring elements of Ecological Sustainable Design (ESD).

"Due to the lack of sewerage infrastructure in the area an Aerobic Treatment Unit has been installed to treat sewage and grey water on site," Mr Lees said.

Photovoltaic panels on site have increased from 8kW to nearly 30kW with an extra 157 panels added to the new WAW building roof. Other ESD elements include passive solar design, double glazing on selected windows, rammed earth walls, louvres, LED lighting, four-star rated plumbing fixtures and taps, and heat recovery variable refrigerant flow (VRF) air conditioning.

Mr Lees said a 100sqm artificial wetland and jetty would help educate students about the important functions of wetlands and their continuing cultural significance to the local

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Aboriginal community.

“As many trees as possible were kept on site to retain both the existing habitat and amenity of the area. Extensive bushfire wise landscaping will help to enhance the site for habitat value as well as showcase landscaping design and plant selection that minimises bushfire risk.”

Mayor Logan Howlett said it was important for the City to protect this beautiful natural resource for future generations.

“We think one of the best ways to achieve this, is by empowering local groups and organisations who are passionate and active in education and conservation,” Mayor Howlett said.

“Our wetlands, along with bushland and coast, form an important habitat for native fauna and flora. They are home to many species, including some protected and near-threatened animals such as the critically endangered Carnaby’s Black Cockatoo and near threatened Southwestern snake-necked turtle.”

The redevelopment has been enhanced by generous Lotterywest grants of more than \$2.2m for vital facility fit out and development of programs and training/education opportunities at WAW and TWCC, which received \$1.469m and \$800,836 respectively.

Every year, the City provides \$90,765.25 (ex. GST) each in funding and program support to WAW and TWCC. This funding follows a 5-year cycle and is indexed annually.

The main features of the redeveloped precinct are:

- A new WAW hospital and rehabilitation facility
- The existing WAW building renovated for use as a training and education centre
- TWCC building renovated and extended to include a new education room
- Construction of an artificial wetland, plant nursery and wetland care operations facility
- Construction of a new BLSG shed with dedicated Rovers den



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- Extra parking, improved traffic and public access, landscaped walkways and outdoor classrooms.

ENDS

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