



# Media Release

15 July 2021

## **Proposed Aboriginal Cultural and Visitors Centre receives \$1.5m Lotterywest boost**

The City of Cockburn has welcomed a \$1.5m Lotterywest grant that will help fund a unique \$11m Aboriginal Cultural and Visitors Centre on the western side of Walliabup-Bibra Lake on Whadjuk Nyungar Boodja (Country).

Planned for completion by late 2023 on City controlled land adjacent to Bibra Lake Regional Playground on Progress Drive, the centre will include cultural education, meeting spaces, art and performance spaces, a visitors information centre and a café.

Its design is inspired by the area's native Southwestern snake-necked turtle, making it unique in metropolitan Perth with projected annual visitors of about 20,000.

City of Cockburn Chief of Community Services Gail Bowman said the City's Aboriginal Reference Group and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community saw the centre as a way to showcase the area's rich Nyungar history and living culture of stories, music, dance, language and art.

"The area around Walliabup is as significant to the Nyungar people as Kings Park," Ms Bowman said.

"Evidence of a 55,000-year-old Aboriginal site in the area is just one element of its cultural, environmental and heritage value.

"A feasibility study identified Aboriginal community members, school students, residents, businesses seeking cultural awareness training, and local, intra and interstate and overseas visitors will be attracted to the centre.

"The centre's aim is to provide a meeting place for members of the local Nyungar community, to offer a range of cultural events and activities, promote Cockburn as a tourist destination providing authentic Aboriginal cultural experiences and as a visitor centre supporting the region's tourism industry."

The centre was identified as part of the City's first Reconciliation Action Plan in 2011



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and \$500,000 allocated in budgets in subsequent years has enabled completion of preliminary designs, site studies and community consultation for the proposal.

In December 2020, award-winning Fremantle-based Officer Woods Architects was appointed to complete the centre's final design in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders, Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members.

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