



Media Release

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Revised Aboriginal Cultural and Visitors Centre endorsed with construction due to start next year

Cockburn Council has endorsed a revised concept for the \$12.5m Aboriginal Cultural and Visitors Centre with its construction on the western side of Walliabup-Bibra Lake due to begin in the first half of next year.

Planned for completion in 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 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.

It will also provide employment and small business opportunities for Aboriginal people through the creation of dedicated Aboriginal positions which recognise the need to have particular activities delivered by Aboriginal people.

The revised project outline came before Council following a concept design review by the architect, project manager and quantity surveyor in early 2021.

The review revealed a significant capital works cost estimate increase compared to the 2019 cost estimates, and the current estimate now includes a 15 per cent contingency, depreciation charges and escalation.

Head of Community Development and Services, Karoline Jamieson, said costs had significantly increased due to current market conditions and increased resource demand in the construction sector.

"The City has worked closely with the Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) and the architect to make design changes that will provide cultural and environmental benefits while also achieving cost savings," Ms Jamieson said.

The building and car parking has been reoriented to significantly minimise tree removal,



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taking advantage of an area of land that is already degraded.

The reworked design has been developed with the ARG and the City's Aboriginal Community Development Officers consulting with Aboriginal Elders, Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community members. A working party has also been formed to continue providing cultural advice throughout the design process.

The City will apply for corporate sector and federal government funding but if further capital works funding cannot be obtained, it will loan \$4.07m from the WA Treasury Corporation, which will increase the project cost to \$13.02m+.

"The facility will require an ongoing operational subsidy from the City but in return, it will provide a unique and highly valuable cultural and community asset which was identified as part of the City's first Reconciliation Action Plan in 2011," Ms Jamieson said.

The project attracted a \$1.5m Lotterywest grant which was announced in July.

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For more information contact:
Media and Communications Officer
City of Cockburn
T: 08 9411 3551
E: media@cockburn.wa.gov.au