



Media Release

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Coogee Maritime Trail wins environmental and sustainability award

The City of Cockburn's popular Coogee Maritime Trail has been recognised for its environmental and sustainability excellence by the WA Division of the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia Western Australia (IPWEA).

The North Coogee trail adjacent to the 1905 Omeo shipwreck, which opened in 2016 with the installation of a 33-piece artificial reef and artwork for snorkelling and diving, is popular with Cockburn residents and visitors alike.

The City received the 2020 Excellence in Environment and Sustainability Award for the unique 230m trail at the IPWEA WA awards event on 13 March.

The City now qualifies for the IPWEA Australasian awards which will be presented at the biennial International Public Works Conference in Adelaide in August 2021.

City of Cockburn Parks & Environment Manager Anton Lees said the award recognised the underwater trail for boosting sustaining marine biodiversity, stabilising the seabed, and reducing habitat loss in an urban marine environment.

The trail's reef structures were increased to 55 in November 2019 with the donation of reef modules valued at \$100,000 by Henderson-based company Subcon, creating a living harbour right on Perth's doorstep.

"This ocean garden features world first structures made from ultra-low carbon geopolymer concrete," Mr Lees said.

"These reefs are made by reacting industrial byproducts such as fly ash that, unlike standard concrete, are not made using cement which has a high carbon footprint," Mr Lees said.

The trail highlights the 1858-built Omeo shipwreck's conservation value and the need for it to be protected. It also provides important university and industry study and research opportunities in the fields of marine archaeology, shipwreck conservation,



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marine science, ecology and engineering.

Snorkelers and divers can observe a variety of marine life along the trail including more than 45 species of fish, sea stars, cuttlefish, nudibranchs, sea squirts and corals, with many making their homes on the reefs and underwater art gallery sculptures.

Safe access to the trail and beach was greatly improved in October 2017. In a manufacturer world first, stairs using fibre reinforced plastic spanning 23m up and over a breakwater without additional supports, were installed at the trail site.

The trail, which celebrates the Omeo as the metropolitan area's most accessible shipwreck snorkel site just 25m offshore in depths of 2-9m, is protected by State Government sanctioned 'no boating' and 'no fishing' zones.

Apart from encouraging visitors to stay active while learning about local maritime history and the coastal environment, the trail has boosted trade at nearby shopping centres, cafes and businesses, in turn increasing employment for manufacturers and suppliers.

"The City is very proud of the work that has gone into creating this world-class maritime trail for swimmers and walkers alike, where they can immerse themselves in some of Cockburn's unique maritime history in a way that protects the environment and promotes sustainability," said Mayor Logan Howlett.

The trail was also named joint winner in the Coastal Design, Heritage and Tourism category of the Western Australian Coastal Awards for Excellence in October 2019.

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