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**LIBBY COKER MP
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**THE HON GAYLE TIERNEY MP
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MEDIA RELEASE

TWELVE APOSTLES PRECINCT REDEVELOPMENT MOVES AHEAD

The Twelve Apostles Precinct Redevelopment is moving towards construction phase with the search now on for the right builder to bring the much-anticipated Visitor Experience Centre to life – backed by the Albanese and Allan Labor governments and the City of Greater Geelong through the Geelong City Deal.

The tender for shortlisted candidates to submit their proposals to build the world-class centre will go live in early June.

Development Victoria recently led a three-month local engagement process involving 270 local residents to ensure community input informs the final project.

Seen as the jewel in the crown of the Great Ocean Road, locals were strongly supportive of the need for the Visitor Centre to complement the unique natural environment around it.

Feedback from community members supported further consultation before progressing with any future development on this culturally significant site.

Following engagement with the community, the project will also upgrade the parking spaces and pedestrian access to the Visitor Centre, to improve safety and accessibility for all visitors – supported by an additional \$18 million from the Victorian Labor Government.

As part of engagement, Development Victoria sought input from project partners, the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

A new Welcome Garden will celebrate the rich bio-cultural heritage of the Eastern Maar community, while a garden rooftop lookout will offer breathtaking views over the ocean.

Nearby, other Victorian Government-led projects are being delivered as part of a \$24.5 million investment to support sustainable tourism in the area, including a new lookout at the 'Saddle' in the Twelve Apostles Precinct and a pedestrian bridge over Port Campbell Creek to connect people to the national park. Construction of a lookout at 'The Blowhole' at Loch Ard Gorge is also underway.

The Twelve Apostles Visitor Experience Centre is part of the Geelong City Deal – a partnership between all three levels of government that is revitalising the city and regional economy while encouraging people to spend more time in the region.

For more information on the Geelong City Deal visit www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/cities.

To read a summary of the community's feedback on the Twelve Apostles Precinct Redevelopment visit engage.vic.gov.au/twelve-apostles

Quotes attributable to Federal Minister for Regional Development, Kristy McBain MP:

"The Visitor Experience Centre will provide a gateway to the Shipwreck Coast and strengthen the region's reputation as a leading tourism destination.

"It will help celebrate the region's rich cultural, historical and environmental values, and ensure this beautiful part of Victoria continues to be a magnet for domestic and international visitors."

Quotes attributable to Victorian Minister for Regional Development, the Hon Gayle Tierney MP:

"The Twelve Apostles Precinct Redevelopment will transform this iconic tourism destination, ensuring it remains a much-loved Victorian landmark to be enjoyed by generations to come."

"The community has told us how they want the Visitor Experience Centre to look and feel, and we have listened. We're supporting development that is sustainable with as little impact on the precious natural coastline as possible."

Quotes attributable to Federal Member for Corangamite, Libby Coker MP:

"The Visitor Experience Centre will encourage people to stay longer and explore more of the region, which is expected to generate hundreds of millions of dollars each year for our local economy.

"The project will help stimulate local businesses and communities all along the Shipwreck Coast, while supporting local jobs during construction and once the site is operational."

Quote attributable to Victorian Minister for Development Victoria, the Hon Colin Brooks MP:

"Despite opposition from the Liberal Party, we're getting on with delivering the Visitor Centre the community has told us they want – boosting tourism and the local economy, while protecting the natural environment."

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