

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Outdoor Recreation



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WADAWURRUNG'S RICH HISTORY HONOURED AT KARDINIA PARK

Thousands of visitors will pay tribute to the history, legacy and future of First Nations People in Geelong for generations to come, with the official opening of Djilang Plaza at Kardinia Park, thanks to the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today joined Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust to officially open the new public space, delivered as part of the Labor Government's \$142 million Kardinia Park Stage 5 Redevelopment.

Kardinia Park has been a meeting place for Wadawurrung for thousands of years. As spectators from across Victoria and interstate flock to this iconic new meeting place, Djilang Plaza will honour Traditional Owners of the land on which the venue sits and ensure the story of the land is told for generations to come.

The Plaza honours the layers of Wadawurrung Country and all that belongs to its people, with Wadawurrung artwork and Ngarra Kalk (knowledge sticks) by Corrina Eccles celebrating First Nation People's rich connection to the land.

Meaning a "Tongue of Land," Djilang is the Traditional Wadawurrung title for Geelong and represents the unique way Geelong and the Bellarine sits on the edge of the bay.

Djilang Plaza is one of several key features of the redevelopment including the Joel Selwood Stand which has boosted the stadium's overall capacity to 40,000 people and the soon to be opened Geelong Sports Museum and the indoor Barwon Regional Cricket Centre.

Patrons can now enjoy world-class facilities all year round with the venue set to host a packed schedule of events of Australian Football, T20 cricket, football, concerts and many other community activities which makes Kardinia Park so important to Geelong and the entire region.

Construction on the redevelopment managed and delivered by the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust is a culmination of five separate stages of upgrades with the Labor Government investing \$121 million in Stages 1 to 4 between 2003 and 2017.

More than 120 full-time jobs were created during construction, with the stadium remaining operational throughout in a boost for events, local jobs and the economy.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"This land has been an integral part of Wadawurrung culture for thousands of years and Djilang Plaza is an important way to honour this legacy in the heart of Geelong."

Quote attributable to Member for Geelong Christine Couzens

"Djilang Plaza will be a vibrant and welcoming space for visitors from across Australia and around the world – honouring the incredible history and legacy of the Wadawurrung people across the region."

Quote attributable to Member for Lara Ella George

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“Djilang Plaza will connect locals and visitors as they come together to celebrate and enjoy events at this beautiful space for generations to come.”

Quote attributable to Member for Bellarine Alison Marchant

“Kardinia Park has been a meeting place for thousands of years and this new plaza reflects the importance of forming a brand new meeting place at Kardinia Park for everybody to enjoy.”

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Gayle Tierney

“It’s great to see this plaza open which honours Geelong’s First Nations People and thousands of Victorians will enjoy every year.”

Quotes attributable to Wadawurrung Woman and Artist Corrina Eccles

“Kardinia Park has always been a place for Wadawurrung People to come together and gather for ceremony, dance and celebration. Our stories and knowledge continue to be told here.”

“My installation ‘Ngarrwa Kalk (knowledge sticks) artwork tells the Wadawurrung stories of the place and layers of Country. Each of the seven poles represents a different part of Wadawurrung Country.”

Quote attributable to Kardinia Park Stadium Trust Chief Executive Officer Gerard Griffin

“With mindful consultation and deep listening with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, we worked together to achieve this significant community outcome. The Djilang Plaza with two significant Cultural artworks, leading to the Polly Farmer gate show respect to and for our First Nations people.”