

# Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP  
Premier



Friday, 22 November 2024

## NEW BENDIGO HOME FOR FIRST NATIONS CULTURE AND BUSINESS

Traditional Owners have a new hub for business and cultural gatherings in Bendigo thanks to the work of the Dja Dja Wurrung people and the support of the Allan Labor Government.

Premier Jacinta Allan and Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards today joined members of the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA) to celebrate the opening of the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporate and Community Centre on Hattam Street in Bendigo.

The Labor Government contributed \$16.3 million to the construction of the centre which provides a permanent base for DJAARA, contributing to their growth and ability to support the Bendigo region.

The purpose-built centre will be the base for DJAARA's corporate and business operations, including land management, the corporation's emerging agricultural business and expansion of their natural resource management services.

The Centre will also be an important cultural resource for the Dja Dja Wurrung people, strengthening community and connection to Country through art and cultural events, and providing a home for DJAARA's management of cultural heritage materials.

Importantly, it will also provide a space where First Nations peoples and the wider community can come together to collaborate on cultural activities and build strong relationships.

A series of *Wartaka* sessions – meaning 'coming together with purpose' – ensured that Dja Dja Wurrung voices and culture are embedded in the Centre's design and construction.

Artwork and design weave storytelling throughout, while green spaces around the Centre reflect the beauty and diversity of Dja Dja Wurrung Country, rehabilitating and healing a landscape disturbed by the region's history of goldmining.

The Labor Government returned freehold title for the site on Hattam Street to DJAARA in 2022.

### Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East and Premier Jacinta Allan

*"This centre honours the rich history of the Dja Dja Wurrung people and provides a space where their strong culture is recognised, protected and promoted for the benefit of all Victorians."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

*"This new home for Dja Dja Wurrung People is a permanent, purpose-built Centre for culture and First Peoples businesses, helping to drive cultural and economic prosperity for the whole Bendigo region."*

### Quote attributable to Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter

*"Our new home is Dja Dja Wurrung self-determination in action. The Dja Dja Wurrung Corporate and Community Centre honours the resilience of our People. It's a place to celebrate our Culture, strengthen our community and realise economic opportunities."*

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