

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Monday, 2 August 2021

DEMONS, COMMUNITY TO WIN FROM GOSCH'S Paddock UPGRADE

Melbourne Football Club's training oval at Gosch's Paddock will be transformed in line with standards at other AFL clubs, with the Andrews Labor Government joining with the AFL and Melbourne to fund the project.

Larger dimensions and a new surface will also benefit the wider community with the Olympic Boulevard oval available for public recreation year-round when not in use by professional clubs.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula today confirmed the Government would contribute \$2 million towards the redevelopment of Gosch's Paddock oval, with the AFL and Melbourne combining to contribute \$1 million.

The oval is currently shorter and narrower than the MCG, where the Demons' AFL team plays the majority of its home games.

This project will increase the dimensions of the oval to better match the measurements of the MCG and Marvel Stadium as well as creating a surface to meet AFL/AFLW standards. Lighting will be improved and behind-goal netting and camera posts installed.

Extensive pre-planning has ensured the reconfiguration can be completed with no loss of trees. Work is due to start this month and be completed before the start of the 2022 AFL premiership season.

The Labor Government has funded a series of facility upgrades at AFL training bases, with many providing improved facilities for elite female players and all carrying significant community benefits.

These include major works at Geelong's Kardinia Park, Carlton's Princes Park, the Western Bulldogs' Whitten Oval, St Kilda's Moorabbin Oval, Essendon's Tullamarine base, North Melbourne's Arden Street HQ, Richmond's Punt Road Oval and Collingwood's Victoria Park AFLW home.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

"The remade oval will be a win for the many members of the community who use the area year-round to run, walk, throw a frisbee and have a kick."

"It means Melbourne's women's and men's teams will have an oval on par with other Victorian AFLW/AFL teams – and that's good for football."

Quote attributable to Melbourne Football Club Chief Executive Gary Pert

"With both our AFL and AFLW programs playing their home games on larger ovals – the MCG and Casey Fields – this upgrade will be critical to allow our coaches to run drills that replicate match-day conditions."

Quote attributable to AFL Chief Executive Gillon McLachlan

"On behalf of the AFL I want to thank the Victorian Government for their continued partnership and support – from the community level all the way through to the elite, they continue to make footy more accessible for all."

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