

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



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LAND RETURNED TO DJA DJA WURRUNG TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The long-standing dream of a Dja Dja Wurrung cultural centre is a step closer with the official handover of a key site by the Andrews Labor Government to the Traditional Owners.

Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes joined Dja Dja Wurrung Elders and community leaders today for a ceremony to celebrate the return of the former Golden Square High School land in Hattam Street, Bendigo to the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.

With a grant of freehold title for the site handed over, work can begin on the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporate and Community Centre.

The establishment of the site was a recommendation made as part of Professor Mick Dodson's review of the 2013 Recognition and Settlement Agreement. In November 2020 the Labor Government announced funding of almost \$11.3 million to assist the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation to build the centre.

The centre will provide a permanent built-for-purpose home for the corporate and business operations of the Dja Dja Wurrung, and help to boost employment and economic development for the Bendigo community.

The centre will be designed for Dja Dja Wurrung members and provide spaces for learning and interaction, and honour the survival, growth and culture of the Dja Dja Wurrung.

It will also provide space for arts and cultural events, and incorporate the use of existing basketball and oval facilities for the wider public in Bendigo.

The Government supports self-determination and land justice for Traditional Owners in Victoria, and is currently in negotiations with the Dja Dja Wurrung on a revised Recognition and Settlement Agreement.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

"It's an honour and the right thing to do to return this land to the Traditional Owners, the Dja Dja Wurrung people, recognising their tireless fight for land justice."

"We are working with Traditional Owners across the state to support self-determination and create a strong future for their communities."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"The community centre will be a place where all Victorians can honour and celebrate the survival, growth and culture of the Dja Dja Wurrung people."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"This centre will celebrate the culture of Bendigo's Traditional Owners and help more people to understand the lessons of the Dja Dja Wurrung people's rich history."