

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



Friday, 20 May 2022

SOVEREIGN HILL STRIKES GOLD WITH NEW EVENT SPACES

Sovereign Hill will soon boast new cultural and event spaces, generating jobs and attracting more visitors, thanks to a \$6 million investment from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula visited the historic Ballarat tourist attraction today to announce the upgrade, funded from the Labor Government's *Regional Tourism Investment Fund*.

This project will deliver the Waterside and Wadawurrung Cultural Precinct – a state-of-the-art space to encourage people to learn about the Wadawurrung people – the Traditional Owners in the Ballarat region.

A new pavilion will cater for corporate functions or events for up to 500 people and also be used for education purposes and community groups.

Sovereign Hill's famous gold panning precinct is set to be rejuvenated, with upgrades focused on enhancing events and experiences at night time, encouraging visitors to stay longer in town. Accessibility to the area will be improved so more people can visit the much-loved attraction.

Funding will also contribute to a new 'Valley of Light', set to attract events of up to 5000 people.

The two-year project will generate up to 69 construction jobs and 11 ongoing employment positions. It is expected to be complete by mid-2024.

The redevelopment will provide significant benefits to the Ballarat economy by attracting up to 83,400 new visitors per year to the region by 2040.

The *Regional Tourism Investment Fund* is helping entice more visitors to Victoria's regions, driving private investment and accelerating the recovery of the tourism sector.

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

"We're investing in these projects to make sure Sovereign Hill remains one of Victoria's favourite tourist attractions well into the future."

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas

"We're giving visitors even more reason to come and experience everything Ballarat has to offer – creating more jobs for locals."

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"These upgrades will attract more business events to the Ballarat region and encourage visitors to have more overnight stays, which is a huge win for local businesses and local jobs."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"Sovereign Hill is a huge drawcard for Ballarat and this funding will help to deliver upgrades to ensure it entices visitors to our city for years to come."

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