

# Media Release

**Ingrid Stitt MP**

Minister for Early Childhood & Pre-Prep  
Minister for Environment



Friday, 24 March 2023

## MAJOR MILESTONES FOR WERRIBEE OPEN RANGE ZOO EXPANSION

The grounds of Werribee Open Range Zoo are rumbling under the charging hooves of American bison and Asian wild horse, marking a major milestone in the Andrews Labor Government's \$88 million expansion project.

Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt today announced the completion of Stage 1 of the Werribee Open Range Zoo Expansion, which includes two management yards, new paddocks and veterinary facilities for the two priority conservation species.

The Zoo will now begin to migrate the American bison and Asian wild horse to their new facilities. This will enable works to commence on the 21-hectare Asian elephant habitat at Werribee Open Range Zoo, which will house the new herd that is currently at Melbourne Zoo.

Australian company Fairbrother has been appointed to deliver these works, as well as a pedestrian walking trail as part of the \$88 million project.

Last year Fairbrother celebrated 50 years in construction and have worked to deliver major projects in Victoria including Werribee Police Complex and Bendigo GovHub.

The purpose-built 21-hectare elephant habitat is expected to be complete and ready for its new residents in 2024.

The project was designed by award-winning Victorian landscape architecture practice TCL and prioritises animal welfare while providing an immersive experience that connect more visitors with Zoos Victoria's fighting extinction work.

Expanding Werribee Open Range Zoo will also provide a significant boost for the local economy with the creation of 118 jobs.

Once complete, Werribee Open Range Zoo's redevelopment is expected to contribute more than \$17.8 million annually to Victoria's economy.

For further information regarding the Werribee Open Range Zoo Expansion, visit [development.vic.gov.au/WerribeeZooExpansion](https://development.vic.gov.au/WerribeeZooExpansion)

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt**

*"This expansion will deliver a world-class experience for visitors and ensure our wonderful new Asian elephants and their calves have access to the best standard of care possible."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Point Cook Mathew Hilakari**

*"The Werribee Open Range Zoo expansion will provide a significant boost for the local economy during its construction and well into the future."*

### **Quote attributable to Zoos Victoria CEO Dr Jenny Gray**

*"Werribee Open Range Zoo's expansion will allow even more people to experience the wonder of wildlife in a safari setting, while they learn how they can contribute to fighting wildlife extinction."*

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