

Joint Media Release



The Hon Harriet Shing MP
Minister for Water
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy
Minister for Equality
Christine Couzens MP
Parliamentary Secretary for First Peoples
State Member for Geelong



Australian Government
The Hon Richard Males MP
Deputy Prime Minister
The Hon Kristy McBain MP
Minister for Regional Development,
Local Government and Territories



Cr Trent Sullivan
Mayor of Geelong

Friday, 11 August 2023

GEELONG'S FUTURE CONVENTION CENTRE TO BE NAMED NYAAL BANYUL

The official name of the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCEC) will be returning Wadawurrung language to Country – with a name gifted by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

Victorian Minister for Regional Development Harriet Shing joined the Member for Geelong Christine Couzens and City of Greater Geelong Mayor Trent Sullivan, alongside Wadawurrung Elders and family today to officially announce the new centre name – Nyaal Banyul - Geelong Convention and Event Centre.

With the meaning 'open your eyes to the hills,' the name Nyaal Banyul was chosen to encourage locals and visitors to appreciate the landscapes of Wadawurrung Country, a calling that many more will hear when visiting the much-anticipated precinct that is expected to be complete in 2026.

Geelong's Western Beach cliffs are an important cultural and spiritual place for Wadawurrung People. To the north, locals and visitors can see the Wurdi Youang (You Yangs) and Anakie Youang. The east is home to the hills of the Bellawiyn (Bellarine) while the Fyansford hill lies in the west and the Barrabul (Barrabool) hills to the south.

The precinct was historically a gathering place known as Baierr, with this official new naming celebrating the return of events and community gatherings to the site.

The precinct development is the centrepiece of the \$500 million Geelong City Deal, a collaborative plan to transform the region by the Australian and Victorian governments, and the City of Greater Geelong.

The Victorian Government is investing more than \$260 million to build the Nyaal Banyul | Geelong Convention and Event Centre precinct as part of the Geelong City Deal, with the Australian Government contributing \$30 million and the City of Greater Geelong contributing \$3 million.

The Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation have been important partners in shaping the precinct's design, identity and recognition of local cultural heritage. This co-design with the consortium, Plenary Conventions, will embed First Nations deep values and knowledge into the building and public precinct.

The Corporation will also work with the future operators of the centre, the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Trust, to celebrate and educate the public on Wadawurrung cultural history.

Construction of the purpose-built convention and event centre will commence soon and will be complete in 2026. The Centre will host a range of events from large corporate, sporting and entertainment events to international music and trade shows, through to public exhibitions.

There will be a 1,000-seat venue, two large exhibition spaces, meeting rooms, conference facilities and flexible event spaces.

New retail spaces will feature hospitality offerings, a large public plaza will become a feature of the Geelong waterfront and a new 200-room hotel under the Crowne Plaza brand will boost local visitation.

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For more information on the Geelong City Deal and precinct visit infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/cities.

Quotes attributable to Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Member for Corio, Richard Marles

"The project will transform the 1.6-hectare waterfront car parking site into a world-class precinct right here in Geelong."

"I thank the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and look forward to continuing to see this purpose-built convention and exhibition space take shape."

Quotes attributable to Federal Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, Kristy McBain

"The Nyaal Banyul - Geelong Convention and Event Centre will drive economic growth and social cohesion, supporting 600 jobs during construction, and 270 ongoing positions once the precinct is complete."

"Embedding Wadawurrung language in the name of this transformational project is part of our commitment to safeguarding First Nations culture and heritage into the future."

Quotes attributable to Victorian Minister for Regional Development, Harriet Shing

"We're honoured that the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation has gifted the name Nyaal Banyul to this transformative convention and event centre in Geelong."

"This project will deliver economic benefits to the region for generations, and it is fitting that a name has been chosen that reflects the site's cultural significance and history."

Quotes attributable to the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation Interim CEO Liam Murphy

"Naming in Wadawurrung language is a process only Wadawurrung Traditional Owners can do and we are grateful to have been given the opportunity to return language to Country."

"We also appreciate being invited to provide design principles to inform the concept of the GCEC on this part of Country, as the Western Beach cliffs, holds special cultural value to Wadawurrung."

Quote attributable to Victorian Member for Geelong Christine Couzens

"The Geelong region, like all of Australia, is rich in cultural history. We are proud to recognise, respect and celebrate this culture of the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners with locals and visitors for generations to come."

Quotes attributable to City of Greater Geelong Mayor Trent Sullivan

"Council is proud to celebrate the region's strong First Nations heritage when naming its own buildings and facilities."

"It's exciting that this centrepiece venue will further educate locals about the history and ongoing culture of the Wadawurrung people."

Quotes attributable to Chief Executive of Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Natalie O'Brien AM

"As the future operators of Nyaal Banyul – the Geelong Convention and Event Centre, continuous engagement with the Wadawurrung community is an important focus for MCET."

"We seek to strengthen our relationship with and honour First Nations knowledge, heritage and truth-telling in the venue's brand, throughout the centre and in future operations."