

Media Release

The Hon John Eren MP

Minister for Tourism and Major Events

Minister for Sport

Minister for Veterans



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Monday, 15 October 2018

VISITORS TO SAY HELLO TO THE GEELONG BOLLARDS

The Andrews Labor Government is bringing Geelong's famous bollards to life with new funding for the Say Hello to the Geelong Bollards project.

Minister for Tourism and Major Events John Eren visited the Geelong waterfront today to announce Geelong and the Bellarine had received a grant through the new \$2 million *Regional Events and Innovation Fund*.

Created by artist Jan Mitchell in 1999, the 103 bollards carved from pier pylons are located around Corio Bay. The painted figures represent a range of local characters from the original indigenous inhabitants to explorers, opera singers and life savers, with each telling the story of a historic local event.

This project will use augmented reality to animate the bollards and bring to life their stories. Visitors will be able to use their smartphones to watch animated content of the bollards as they walk around the bay.

The Labor Government's \$2 million *Regional Events and Innovation Fund* adds to the \$20 million *Regional Events Fund* which has helped deliver more than 180 local events throughout regional Victoria.

For nearly two decades Geelong's bollards have been a key tourist attraction for the region which welcomed 5.1 million total visitors who spent an estimated \$936 million in the year ending March 2018.

This funding comes on top of the Labor Government's recent announcement that the Big Bash League will be back in Geelong with GMHBA Stadium hosting the Melbourne Renegades WBBL and BBL teams in two double headers in January 2019, along with Geelong celebrating its first ever White Night on the weekend.

The Labor Government is also making it easier than ever to get to Geelong – from December, Avalon Airport will become Victoria's second international airport when Air Asia X commences flights between Avalon and Kuala Lumpur, bringing over 400,000 international passengers through the airport each year.

The Labor Government has also kick-started work for a high-speed rail link between Geelong and Melbourne, committing \$50 million towards the planning for the major project.

The new high-speed rail link and Air Asia X flights will slash travel times to the region and open up Geelong and the Bellarine to more visitors, boosting tourism and the local economy.

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism and Major Events John Eren

"Geelong and the Bellarine offer so much to see and do – this project will give locals and visitors alike the opportunity to explore the area and learn more about the local history."

Quote Attributable to Member for Geelong, Christine Couzens

"This project will breathe new life into the already popular Baywalk Bollards, attracting a new generation of visitors to the region and reminding people to take a second look at a beloved local attraction."

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