

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy

Minister for the Environment and Climate Action

Minister for Solar Homes



Saturday, 8 October 2022

NEW ELEPHANT TRAIL TAKES FORM AT WERRIBEE ZOO

The expansion of Werribee Open Range Zoo into a world-class destination in the heart of Melbourne's west is underway, as part of the Andrews Labor Government's \$88 million redevelopment.

Minister for the Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio today unveiled a prototype for perimeter fencing of the new Asian elephant habitat as part of the upgrade.

The five-kilometre perimeter fence will keep the new Asian elephant herd safe and secured and must be engineered to withstand the weight and force of a herd of adult Asian elephants.

The fence is being built from repurposed construction materials that have been donated by government agencies including VicTrack, Victoria's Big Build, Bushfire Recovery Victoria and commercial companies from across Melbourne.

The repurposed rail track from Level Crossing Removal Project and elevator cable will be used to construct the perimeter fencing for the Elephant Trail and the Asian wild horse, American bison and Southern white rhinoceros's facilities.

The repurposed timber will be used to construct animal enrichment structures, boardwalks and gates, and visitor amenities.

The new Elephant Trail will become home for the herd currently living at Melbourne Zoo, which includes three pregnant females with calves expected to be born in the coming months – one of which is Mali, the first ever elephant to be born at Melbourne Zoo.

The habitat is expected to be complete for Zoos Victoria's Asian elephant herd to move in 2024.

Expanding Werribee Open Range Zoo will provide a significant boost for the local economy with the creation of 350 jobs, including 90 jobs to care for animals and enhance visitor experience.

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

Quote attributable to Minister for Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio

"We're preparing a safe and secure environment for our precious new arrivals as well as giving a second life to old construction material that have been kindly donated from across Victoria."

Quote attributable to Member for Werribee Tim Pallas

"The expansion will provide a boost to jobs and economic activity during construction, and significant ongoing benefits by attracting more local and international visitors. It's a boon for the west."

Quote attributable to Zoos Victoria CEO Dr Jenny Gray

"The purpose-built Elephant Trail at Werribee Open Range Zoo will be the gold standard in animal welfare, with the herd able to roam across 21 hectares."

Media Contact: Siobhan McKenna 0480 147 921 | siobhan.mckenna@minstaff.vic.gov.au