

THE BEAUTY OF ABORIGINAL DESIGN IN INFRASTRUCTURE

Pleasing and meaningful aesthetics have not been neglected in a \$365 million upgrade to one of Southwest Melbourne's important thoroughfares.

The Barwon Heads Road Upgrade features coloured wall panels incorporating a design that originates from Wadawurrung Country.

Formerly known as Marshalltown, the Geelong suburb of Marshall is part of the Armstrong Creek Growth Area, a southern extension to Geelong's urban growth boundary. It sits within the Wadawurrung area that covers 10,000 kilometres squared on the western side of Melbourne, including Geelong and Ballarat.

Consistent with the Growth Area's intent to developing physical and social infrastructure at an early stage – so as to build communities rather than just releasing land for development – an upgrade to Barwon Heads Road is taking shape.

BETTER CONNECTED AND SAFER COMMUNITIES

The Upgrade is a Major Road Projects Victoria initiative, jointly funded by the Australian and Victorian governments. With design informed by traffic modelling and community feedback, the works include removal of the level crossing and a new bridge over the rail line at Marshall.



PROJECT: Barwon Heads Road Upgrade
LOCATION: Barwon Heads, VIC
MASTER PRECASTER: The Reinforced Earth Company Australia

Once completed, the new 97-metre-long, approximately nine-metre-high bridge will better connect local communities and enhance traffic flow and predictability. It will also improve commuter safety.

ARTISTIC PRECAST PANELS

National Precast Master Precaster Reinforced Earth Company supplied 810 precast concrete wall panels in a Class 2 finish for the bridge's approach ramps. The whole pattern is made

up of only two different liners rotated around to make four different panel patterns.

The panels are a demonstration of how art can be incorporated into infrastructure and provide recognition to local Traditional Owners.

Incorporating designs by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC), the panels feature patterns that represent vertically broken boomerang flanks.

A rich earthy tone to reflect soils from the region was achieved by the use of pigment in the concrete mix. The panels are one of the many structures on the project that will incorporate Wadawurrung design and art.

SUCCESS ALL ROUND

Extensive collaboration and planning between the contractor, designers, other stakeholders and The Reinforced Earth Company has all contributed to the final result. All stages of the project development were simplified and that flowed on to reducing costs.

With early works commencing in July 2021, the project is expected to be completed by the end of 2023. It will create more than 570 direct jobs and will generate a further 1419 indirect jobs over the course of construction. ■



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