

PERTH CULTURAL CENTRE PRECINCT

354. Ms J.J. SHAW to the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's investment in revitalising and rejuvenating the Perth Cultural Centre. Can the minister update the house on how this investment will increase the vibrancy of the city, improve safety and deliver more activation?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills. It is a very important question.

As members would be aware, the Perth Cultural Centre Precinct is the beating heart of our cultural life in Perth. The precinct contains our significant monuments and cultural institutions such as the State Library of Western Australia, the Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip, the State Theatre Centre of WA, the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts. It is a very important centre for Perth. For the cultural centre to deliver the cultural aspirations of Western Australians, it needs to be upgraded and revitalised. I want to thank the members for Swan Hills and Perth, who both chaired the Perth Cultural Precinct Taskforce that was established to create the plan to oversee the transformation of the Perth Cultural Centre. I thank them both for that. As my parliamentary secretary last year, I very much appreciated the member for Swan Hills' stewardship in completing the strategy.

I was very pleased that this project initially attracted \$10 million each from the federal government and the state government as part of the Perth City Deal, securing a total of \$20 million. As the member for Swan Hills is aware, in the 2022–23 budget that was recently announced by the Treasurer; Premier, the securing of an additional \$15 million means that for \$35 million we will transform the Perth Cultural Centre. I know that the member worked hard with a number of stakeholders on that task force to develop the plan and that she essentially advocated strongly for the total build.

I want to paint a picture for members. Artworks will be commissioned for the northern and western side of the main gallery that will transform the visitor passage entry to the gallery. A new, shady central space will be developed, which will look quite spectacular. The central aspect of the cultural precinct will be a centre of activity for people entering the cultural precinct. It will include a new focal point and the creation of a new children's play space. That means that children will again be front and centre of attraction to the cultural precinct. The interesting amphitheatre will be demolished and a more accessible greater streetscape will be developed. People who know the history of James Street know of the historical photographs. James Street was a street at that point at one stage, but was changed. The amphitheatre will go. At the eastern end of the cultural centre the Art Gallery of WA car park will be demolished and a better connection from Beaufort Street will be introduced. Enhanced lighting, security wayfinding and the opening up of underused spaces will create a better environment for families and visitors. We want the Perth Cultural Centre to be a beacon and the beating heart of the Perth city centre that emanates to Yagan Square in nearby Northbridge and beyond.

This is a great opportunity to transform and enhance the cultural precinct and underpin the importance of our cultural institutions to Western Australian life and to our heritage. This is being done in very close consultation with the First Nations people, the Whadjuk Noongar people, through reference groups and direct consultation, because that place was a very special place, particularly for Indigenous women.

Point of Order

Mr R.S. LOVE: This is a very lengthy answer. We have some other important questions that we would like to ask. Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Order, member for Swan Hills and minister! Minister, just wait two seconds. There is no point of order. The minister is getting to his concluding remarks, I am sure.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I will conclude my remarks, but it is disappointing that the member for Moore does not understand the importance of our cultural institutions or culture and arts to the lifeblood of Western Australia. It is sad that he does not support that. I pity him and think perhaps that the member for Swan Hills' description is not far off the mark.

We are proud that this government delivered not only Boola Bardip—the new Museum for Western Australia—enhanced the rooftop of the Art Gallery of Western Australia and completely revamped its interior, but also we believe in and value the importance of culture and arts infrastructure, activity and projects to the life of Western Australia throughout Western Australia, be it in regional WA or in the Perth metropolitan area. We are proud of this project, unlike the member for Moore, and we will continue to highlight why there is a vast cultural difference, among other things, between members on this side of the house and those on the other side.