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Stockland and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation sign landmark partnership

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Stockland and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC) have signed a landmark Partnership Agreement at Stockland's Cloverton community in Kalkallo, marking the first-of-its-kind collaboration for both organisations in Victoria.

The agreement builds on a decade of collaboration at Cloverton and will strengthen Stockland's commitment to embedding Wurundjeri culture, stories and heritage into one of Melbourne's largest masterplanned communities.

Under the partnership, there are plans to deliver joint projects and activities in Cloverton that celebrate Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural heritage, knowledge, values, language, arts, and traditional practices, while supporting self-determination, inclusion, and long-term social, environmental, and economic outcomes.

The signing of the agreement was held at Cloverton's newest park – a community space co-designed with WWCHAC through a 'Design with Country' approach. The park represents an important milestone in creating culturally inclusive and meaningful spaces for residents, while acknowledging Country and caring for place.

Spanning 1.81 hectares, the park incorporates local River Red Gums believed to be more than 500 years old, along with a stony knoll preserved during construction. Artistic elements pay tribute to the shortfin eel, honouring its role in Wurundjeri waterways and knowledge-sharing, and the growling grass frog, a Merri Creek species.

The official name for the park will be announced following a collaborative naming process with WWCHAC.

The signing event featured a traditional Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country, followed by the joint signing of the Partnership Agreement and the official opening of the park. Local school children participated in planting Manna Gums – a powerful symbol of growth and renewal – and the celebration included a performance by Wurundjeri singer Claire Garvey.

Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Tony said the partnership seeks to establish an ongoing strategic relationship that shares WWCHAC's core values.

"This partnership represents a great opportunity for Wurundjeri. All us Elders work so hard to ensure that Wurundjeri have a seat at the table and opportunities to participate and engage with the major stakeholders and projects that are operating on Wurundjeri Country. To be able to stand here today to celebrate the formal signing of a partnership agreement with Stockland is a recognition of these efforts and an exciting omen for the future," Uncle Tony said.

Stockland CEO Development, Andrew Whitson, said the partnership reflects Stockland's commitment to respectful collaboration and embedding culture into the way communities are planned and designed.

"We are committed to continuing to listen and ensuring the voices of Wurundjeri Elders and people inform our work at Cloverton and reflect their values, perspectives, and aspirations. This partnership helps us to achieve positive outcomes that meet the needs of the Cloverton community, together and for all to benefit," Mr Whitson said.

"Just last week, we launched Stockland's first Indigenous Procurement Policy, which sets clear expectations for how we engage with Indigenous suppliers – both directly and through our broader network. At Cloverton, we have already engaged the Narrap Team for conservation management works, commissioned local Indigenous artists to create sculptures, and are working closely with the Wurundjeri on road naming within the community, with a future focus on identify key contracting opportunities for Indigenous businesses."

Stockland plans to build on this milestone by exploring similar collaborative and genuine partnerships with other peak Indigenous organisations across Victoria in the future.

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