

Celebrating Aboriginal Culture Through Art

The Reid Highway Dual Carriageway Project offers an engaging interpretation of local history and culture through Aboriginal artwork.

Aboriginal artwork is incorporated in the project design to ensure stories of the local Whadjuk Noongar people are celebrated and shared for generations to come. The artwork reveals the meaning and significance of heritage places in a memorable and enriching way.

The Noongar people have inhabited the Swan Coastal Plain area for more than 40,000 years. The land provided a natural abundance of food and water resources and the traditional owners maintain a strong connection to the area. Artworks and cultural marker points recognise the area as a place of shared history.

The artworks and design concepts for the project were developed in consultation with the Reid Highway Whadjuk Noongar Reference Group comprising members of local Whadjuk Elders including representatives from the Bropho, Coruuna, Garlett, Wilkes, Warrell and Jacobs families, whose time, knowledge and contribution is greatly appreciated.

Underpass artwork

The existing pedestrian underpass that links Grandis Road Arthur Street, and the new underpass below the new westbound carriageway of Reid Highway has received a colourful makeover. The artwork for the underpasses was developed by professional street artist Drew Straker, and well known Noongar artist, Shane 'Yondee' Hansen.

The entrances to the underpasses feature landscape paintings capturing the hills of Midland and the six Noongar annual seasons, each representative of the environmental and seasonal changes we see annually. These are Birak (Summer), Bunuru (second summer), Djeran (cool), Makuru (rainy, cold and wet), Djilba (cold with second rain and growing season) and Kamarang long dry periods and weather warming). The artworks are designed to camouflage the entry walls, merging them into the surrounding landscape.



Artist impression: entry wall representing Djeran – cool, pleasant, light southern breezes with red flowering gums and banksias in bloom.

Within the underpasses there are murals depicting flora and fauna, which have been designed to be viewed by people moving through the underpass by foot or on a bicycle. The murals are neon-style paintings replicating the appearance of true neon signs. The centre of each wall includes a neon-style version of Shane 'Yondee' Hansen's shields.



Artist impression: murals depicting flora and fauna with shield featuring as centrepiece of artwork.



Rock pitching around the underpasses includes a design representing camp sites.

Cultural markers and rest stops

Five cultural marker points, including two laser-cut steel shadow sculptures, have been installed along the new Principal Shared Path entries at Altone Road and West Swan Road, at Bennett Brook, at the underpass, and at a significant site near Arthur Street known as Jack and Mabel Moore's campsite.

The signage celebrates the lives of the Whadjuk Noongar people, tells stories about the local area, recollects the historical significance of the area and describes the local natural environment. The marker points provide information in Whadjuk Noongar language, with the same wording presented in English in the surrounding concrete.

There is seating provided along the path at the Bennett Brook bridge and Jack and Mabel Moore's campsite.



Cultural marker close to Altone Road

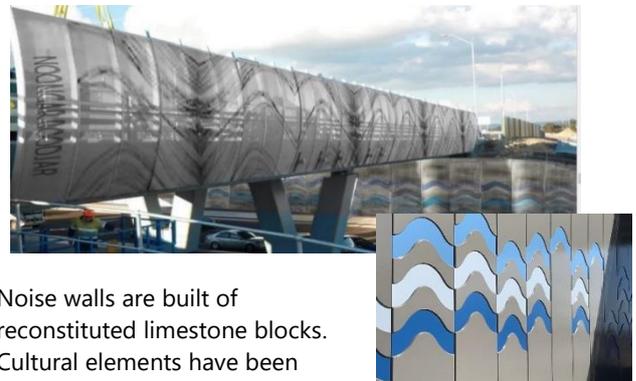
Screens, abutments and noise walls

The screens and abutment retaining walls on the Arthur Street Bridge over Reid Highway have provided another opportunity for the use of artwork to share traditions and stories essential to ensuring the continuity of Aboriginal heritage. The anti-throw screens on top of the bridge are made from perforated

mesh incorporating a randomised wave pattern, developed by Noongar Artist Barbara Bynder. The design for the screens reflect the story of moving water and women carrying water in coolamons (wooden bowls) on their heads to their camps.

The design in the screen and abutment walls on Arthur Street bridge reflects the story of moving water.

The bridge abutment retaining walls feature a pattern representing flowing water with three levels of depth. The installation of the abutment panels was randomised to give the water a sense of flow and movement. The effect of flow and movement will be best experienced when driving along Reid Highway.



Noise walls are built of reconstituted limestone blocks. Cultural elements have been included in the design of the walls through the use of local colours. The noise walls comprise three colours representing the main types of rock located in Noongar Country – Basalt, Limestone and Sandstone with the undulations representing the turmoil the Australian geological landscape has gone through over billions of years.



Noise walls along the southern side of Reid Highway.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to culture, community, land, sea and sky. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.