



# TENDER AWARDED FOR WIRADJURI TOURISM CENTRE

Planning for the construction of the long-awaited Wiradjuri Tourism Centre has reached a significant milestone, with Dubbo Regional Council (DRC) awarding the successful tender to Peter Stutchbury Architecture. Mr Stutchbury has worked alongside Aboriginal Elder Uncle Max Dulumunmun for more than 23 years to come up with concepts that reveal the underlying characteristics of the site where buildings will be located. When tendering for the design of the Wiradjuri Tourism Centre, applicants had to fulfill a number of weighted criteria, which included strong cultural alignment and connection to country.

“We received 27 applications, which were then shortlisted to five firms. A thorough financial assessment process was undertaken, and the shortlist was presented to the Wiradjuri Technical Advisory Panel members for their feedback. It was an extremely competitive process; however, after seeing presentations from all the shortlisted candidates, the Wiradjuri Technical Advisory Panel had in-depth discussions about the designs, details and execution. In the end, the panel determined to award the tender to Peter Stutchbury Architecture,” said WTAP member and Co-Chair of the Dubbo Aboriginal Working Party, Ashleigh Knight.

Mr Stutchbury has spent a lifetime living in and learning from the land in the Western Division of New South Wales. Specifically, the ancient flood plain that runs south from the Darling, Cobar through to Hillston. He has walked the country and managed animals within its semi-arid domain over the last 60 years. Through his work with Uncle Max, Mr Stutchbury has learned about the Spirit Lines and the voices of the land, all living things, Grandfather Sun, Grandmother Moon, Mother Earth and Father Sky.

“Working with Uncle Max has allowed me to draw on the relationships between humans and their environment as an elemental way of being. Slowly, the language of the land is being revealed: “to keep knowledge you want, give it away,” said Mr Stutchbury.

The designs received as part of the tender process had to listen to community feedback, which was quite extensive. Some of the key outcomes of the initial consultation phase include a desire to award the tender to someone who considered community employment and indolent in the building process, strong cultural alignment and connection to country, and appreciation for the true demonstration of the art of listening – particularly to community.

Dubbo Region Mayor Stephen Lawrence said the initial consultation phase had a strong focus on ensuring the Indigenous community was consulted, including the Aboriginal Lands Council, Dubbo Aboriginal Working Party, and Traditional Owners.

“Now that the tender has been awarded, Council and community representatives are in the process of progressing the designs, and we hope to have more detailed design concepts to share with community in

the coming weeks,” said Councillor Lawrence.

The Wiradjuri Tourism Centre is part of the *Destination Dubbo: International Ready* project.

**Image caption:** Artist impressions of the Wiradjuri Tourism Centre



Last Edited: 31 Jul 2023