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Media release



The Australian Garden is growing...

Excavation work on the second stage and completion of the award-winning Australian Garden, Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne began on Monday 1 June.

The works will complete the award-winning landscaped native botanic gardens, adding 9 hectares that will feature garden displays and include an extended visitor centre.

Costing \$30 million and funded by Government, philanthropic and private donations, the second stage of the Australian Garden has been designed by Taylor, Cullity and Lethlean with Paul Thompson. It is due to open late-2011.

Chris Russell, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne said: "We are thrilled to be commencing the second stage of the project. It represents the culmination of many thousands of hours of planning, preparation and design works.

"We know that once complete, visitors will be delighted with the opportunity to explore and learn more about Australia's native plant life."

Features include the Ian Potter Lakeside Precinct with space for 1,500 people to enjoy cultural events, the Weird and Wonderful Garden, the River Walk and more display gardens providing innovative examples of the "how to" for home gardeners.

"The emphasis will be on completing the journey from the arid inland of Australia to the coastal edge of the continent," said Mr Russell.

"The additional themed gardens, as well as the new recreational facilities for families will undoubtedly boost the tourism experience at the Australian Garden, attracting more visitors to the gardens."

There will also be additional educational visitor programs about planting and conserving native plants and sustainable gardening practices, including water conservation.

The extended Visitor Centre, due to open spring 2009, has been designed by Kerstin Thompson Architects Pty Ltd. It includes an auditorium for talks, workshops and displays, a private function room and an extended café.

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