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MEDIA RELEASE

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WESTERN SYDNEY ABORIGINAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE ON TRACK TO OPEN NEXT YEAR

The Western Sydney Aboriginal Centre of Excellence will become a hub for young Aboriginal people to harness their aspirations and talents to create a rewarding future with the Centre to open its doors next year.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Sarah Mitchell and Minister for Western Sydney Stuart Ayres today announced the old Whalan High School site in Mount Druitt has been confirmed as the new home for the \$20 million project.

“The Western Sydney Aboriginal Centre of Excellence will encourage Aboriginal young people to dream big, while providing the tools and networks needed to make those dreams a reality,” Mrs Mitchell said.

“This project is a community partnership and the next stage of development will rely on the strengths of Western Sydney’s Aboriginal community, thanks to an Aboriginal-led advisory committee, who will guide the project.

“Valuing and celebrating Aboriginal identity is at the heart of this project, because excellence can only be built on a solid foundation of respect.”

Aboriginal Affairs NSW will coordinate establishment of the Aboriginal Centre of Excellence, while working with the local Aboriginal community to investigate long-term partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sector for the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence’s operation.

Minister for Western Sydney Stuart Ayres said the Aboriginal Centre of Excellence will seek input from young people and their families to identify current gaps in local services and partner with local enterprises and big business to meet those.

“By partnering with the private sector, Aboriginal people will be front and centre as opportunities arise in the fast-developing Western Sydney economy,” Mr Ayres said.

“The project is expected to create opportunities for Aboriginal businesses and suppliers at every phase, starting with the refurbishment of the Whalan site.

“With one-fifth of the State’s Aboriginal population calling the Greater Western Sydney region home – and more than 60 per cent of them aged under 24 – the centre is set to become an inspiring hub for our next generation.”

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