

22 December 2020

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **NEW SWAN REACH DEEP RIVER MOORING SITE READY TO WELCOME CRUISE VISITORS**

Swan Reach is ready to roll out the welcome mat for tourists onboard large river cruise vessels before Christmas following the completion of a new \$536,000 deep river mooring facility.

The new marine facility allows large commercial vessels such as the PS Marion, PW Mayflower, Proud Mary and Murray Princess to dock easily, even in times of fluctuating river levels.

It was built with funding of \$402,263 from the Australian Government through the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF), which contributes to a total \$1 million program of works including the Swan Reach deep mooring facility, along with upgrades to the Darling Wharf and Herrmanns Landing.

Constructed near the town's old wharf, the Swan Reach deep mooring facility improves access for the commercial boats, makes disembarking safer for passengers and minimises the impact of the visiting vessels on the nearby Len White Reserve riverfront recreation area.

With the final landscaping touches being made to the riverfront site in early December, the new mooring facility is expected to welcome its first commercial riverboat visits before Christmas.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said the facility would improve the visitor experience at Swan Reach and make it a more attractive destination for commercial cruising boats.

"Our region is well known for its unique river cruising experiences and marine history, and Swan Reach is already a popular destination," Mayor Burgess says.

"This facility will provide increased vessel visitation opportunities, with the potential to further boost tourism and visitor spend in the town.

"Now that it's in place, it will be easier and safer to welcome these large riverboats to Swan Reach, regardless of changes in river level. Passengers will also have a more enjoyable visit, with the new pontoon and gangway significantly improving accessibility."

With large vessels expected to moor at the new site on weekdays and weekends, the Council has also introduced a houseboat exclusion area immediately surrounding the deep mooring site to enhance river safety. Council consulted with the Swan Reach Progress Association, Houseboat Hirers Association and the wider public prior to agreeing on the proposed private vessel mooring zone.

"We know visitors love stopping at Swan Reach and we want to continue to encourage their stays in the town," Mayor Burgess says.

"We've worked closely with the local community and Houseboat Hirers Association and will also develop a designated private houseboat mooring site that is a safe distance from the new mooring facility, but still ideally situated adjacent to the commercial precinct to take in the serenity and beauty of the Swan Reach riverfront and give passengers easy access to the town and its businesses."

Riverfront signage will be installed to mark the houseboat mooring and exclusion zones.

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**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Mid Murray Council Director of Infrastructure and Field Services David Hassett

P: (08) 8569 0100 | E: [postbox@mid-murray.sa.gov.au](mailto:postbox@mid-murray.sa.gov.au)