



# Ballarat GovHub

**The Ballarat GovHub will be home to up to 1,000 government employees, including 600 new positions to the city, and will help revitalise the CBD, generate long-term jobs growth, increase business confidence and further private sector investment in Ballarat.**

The GovHub will be an iconic, architecturally designed building that complements Ballarat's rich heritage.

The GovHub design includes:

- An active ground floor with spaces for commercial/retail and public use that will be refined as the design progresses. The ground floor podium will carry the bricks and masonry theme of the surrounding precinct through its design;
- A new glassed conservatory between the Civic Hall and the GovHub that will create a welcoming microclimate and a strong public link between Civic Hall and the new office building;
- A reconstructed lower hall space equivalent to the existing lower hall in volume. This will be a public space that might be used for a café/bar, gallery space, live music venue or gathering space;
- A new civic plaza on Mair Street and a central plaza that will connect the GovHub, Civic Hall and the library;
- Strong pedestrian links to the Ballarat CBD and Ballarat Station;
- Five storeys of office space with large windows to the north and south offering lots of natural light and creating a strong visual connection to the Ballarat CBD;
- Basement carparking and end-of-trip facilities to encourage walking and cycling.

Development Victoria is managing the delivery of the project on behalf of the Victorian Government, in partnership with Regional Development Victoria, the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Ballarat City Council.

## Local benefits

The primary driver for the Victorian Government's investment in Ballarat's Civic Hall precinct and the consolidation of Victorian public sector positions to Ballarat is to ignite and grow the local economy.

Ballarat is an employment centre for a large regional labour market and population forecasts for the region show a need to create an additional 15,900 jobs over the next 15 years. The development of the GovHub will help ensure that this need is met.

Consolidating up to 600 public service positions from Melbourne to Ballarat will provide knowledge-intensive services and jobs that align with Ballarat's labour market profile. The new jobs will be integrated with 400 Ballarat-based jobs to create a new government facility driven by an operating model that encourages collaboration and innovation in government services.

The project will deliver a major boost for the construction industry over the two-year build. It is estimated that it will create up to 500 jobs during construction and it drive at least \$82 million in construction activity.

The Civic Hall site has been under-used for more than 10 years and is ideally suited to redevelopment to house up to 1,000 staff. It also paves the way for the Ballarat City Council to proceed with the adaptive re-use of the Civic Hall building as a multi-use community space and improved outdoor public realm.

## Community feedback

In November 2017, Development Victoria and Regional Development Victoria met with key stakeholders from Ballarat's commerce and community sectors to gain a broad understanding of the Ballarat community's views and perceptions of the GovHub project. Stakeholders participated in targeted focus group discussions where they had the opportunity to meet with the architects and provide feedback on themes around the design. Where possible, this feedback has been incorporated into the concept design and will continue to be considered as designs progress.

Participants included representatives from Commerce Ballarat, Committee for Ballarat, adjacent traders, Ballarat Arts Foundation, Ballarat Arts Alive, City of Ballarat Disability Advisory Committee, Child Friendly Ballarat Advisory Group, Ballarat's Multicultural Ambassadors and heritage group representation.

## Architectural design

John Wardle Architects are leading the design of the project. They are joined by ASPECT Studios as landscape architects and leading interior design practice Geyer.

The Ballarat GovHub design is sensitive to its context and recognises the important cultural and community significance of the existing Civic Hall and library within the City of Ballarat.

Architecturally, the GovHub respects and responds to the scale and form of the neighbouring civic buildings. The design orchestrates the internal program, by drawing collaborative activities to the façade of the building and thereby revealing the work of those serving the public to the broader community. The intention is to heighten the sense of openness between the local community and government.

Materially, locally manufactured brick will connect the ground plane with the brick tone of the Civic Hall and entwine the stories of old and new. The external metal cladding system above ground will help to control heat load through an outer skin with a pattern of integrated windows.

The new workplace is rapidly evolving, with work often occurring outside the typical office space as technology increases mobility. The place where people work has become a home base, a place where interaction is the most valuable activity. The GovHub design is therefore atypical of an average office building - it has been scaled to suit the precinct and city of Ballarat with a pitched roof that evokes a more domestic atmosphere.



## Next steps

The Minister for Planning will be asked to facilitate planning approval for the new building in consultation with Ballarat City Council.

Due to the significance of the project to Ballarat and Victoria, Development Victoria (on behalf of the Minister for Regional Development) intends to request that the Minister for Planning use his powers under section 20(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to exempt the project from the notice and exhibition requirements normally applied to planning approvals of this type. The planning submission will include a site-specific Incorporated Document which will also exempt the project from relevant provisions of the Ballarat Planning Scheme, particularly relating to permits for work.

Development Victoria will provide the community with an opportunity to view the concept designs and provide feedback before its planning application is submitted.

The planning application will include the following documentation:

- Explanatory Report
- Incorporated Document
- Supporting guiding material including a concept design, traffic report, heritage report and other relevant technical reports related to the proposal.

Development Victoria is anticipating a decision from the Minister for Planning in February 2018. Following that, detailed plans will be prepared and submitted for endorsement in consultation with Ballarat City Council.

Construction is expected to begin in the second half of 2018 and be complete in 2020.

## More information

To learn more about Ballarat GovHub visit [developmentvictoria.engagementhub.com.au/ballarat-govhub](http://developmentvictoria.engagementhub.com.au/ballarat-govhub) or contact us via email at [enquiries.engage@development.vic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries.engage@development.vic.gov.au).