

# Emerald Hill Library & Heritage Centre Upgrade

## Information sheet

### Background

Council plans to expand and refurbish the current Emerald Hill Library to become the Emerald Hill Library & Heritage Centre. This project will provide:

- more space for library services
- more books, DVDs and CDs
- a new focus for local history and cultural heritage services
- better access for community groups
- improved disability access.

Council is inviting community feedback on the proposal.

### Building heritage

The 1912 and 1918 buildings on the Emerald Hill Library site are an important part of the Emerald Hill precinct. Council intends to safeguard and celebrate the heritage of the buildings. This project has been designed to meet Heritage Victoria requirements. The 1912 building was formerly a post office, an important example of a public building in the Beaux-Arts style. There is an adjoining building, the annexe, which was built in 1918 and originally used as a pension office. A modern addition was added to the building complex in the 1970s, including toilets and a staff room.

As part of this project, the City of Port Phillip is taking the opportunity to reinstate two original features of the buildings. On the front portico entrance, a blank window on the left side of the front portico façade will be restored to match the blank window on the right side. In the annexe building, a doorway will be reinstated as the original shaped window.

## Artist's impression of the Emerald Hill Library & Heritage Centre – view from Bank St



### Expanded library services

The proposed redevelopment provides more space for library services including:

- new children's area
- more books, DVDs and CDs
- more space for casual seating with wireless access, including a new courtyard
- six more PCs for public access, including four public access PCs in the heritage services area
- more space for programs and workshops – a new program space is included, plus most library shelves will be on wheels to allow easier use of the library area when needed for larger events.

### Focus for cultural heritage and local history services

It is proposed that Council's Local History Librarian and the Cultural Heritage Officer will be principally based at Emerald Hill Library & Heritage Centre, although they will still have meetings and other duties elsewhere.

The local history and cultural heritage services at Emerald Hill will include:

- research areas for public use, including PCs, and access to microfiche and microfilm
- meeting space for heritage and history related groups, eg. Middle Park Historical Society
- lockable desk & cabinet for use by local historical society
- drop in service (limited hours per day) including:
  - ♦ photo reproduction service
  - ♦ guided walks bookings and self-guided walks information
  - ♦ assistance with research
  - ♦ schedule appointments with Cultural Heritage Officer and Local History librarian
  - ♦ access point for Local History Collection items.
  - ♦ possible expanded volunteer program.



Artist's impression of the interior, Emerald Hill Library & Heritage Centre





### Meeting and program space

A new program space with access to kitchenette and toilets will be available for library and heritage programs and workshops run by the City of Port Phillip, and for community-run programs and meetings.

There will also be a meeting room in the heritage area for about 10-12 people. This will be available for history and heritage related groups and meetings.

### Technology

The project will include:

- a total of 10 public access PCs (six PCs in the library spaces, plus four new PCs in the local history and cultural heritage area). This is an increase of six PCs from the current four. There will also be IT capacity to add additional PCs in the future if required.
- wireless access throughout the building and in the immediate outside area, with additional casual seating inside and out
- access to microfiche and microfilm readers
- self service options.

### Sustainability

Sustainability measures will include the collection of stormwater from the roof, stored in rainwater tanks. This will irrigate the 'green walls', the two vertical garden walls in the front courtyard adjoining Bank Street.

### Improved disability access

The existing building has a ramp into the library portico, which does not meet current accessibility standards. Existing access between the library and the annexe is via a stairway. The new design has proper ramp access into the building as the main entrance, along with ramp access between the annexe and the rest of the building. Public toilets will also be built to meet accessibility standards.

### More information and to have your say

For more information or to have your say, please refer to the enclosed FAQ sheet or visit [www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay). Alternatively, contact Libby Hart on [lhart@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:lhart@portphillip.vic.gov.au) or 9209 6615. Consultation closes Monday 28 November.

## Artist's impression of the Emerald Hill Library & Heritage Centre – view from Perrin St



## Frequently Asked Questions

### When will construction begin?

Construction could begin as early as September 2012. However, timelines depend on the outcomes of the community consultation and statutory planning processes. Construction is likely to take around 12 months.

### Will the library be closed during construction?

Temporary library services throughout the construction period will be provided from the South Melbourne Town Hall, in the theatrette. Council will work with groups that usually book the theatrette to seek alternative venues for them.

### Will the new building look different from the outside?

The existing heritage buildings will have two heritage features reinstated and restored. At the portico entrance, a blank window on the left hand side was punched through many years ago to allow a ramp to go through. This blank window will be reinstated to match the blank window on the other side, as it originally did in 1912. In the annexe building, the project will reinstate the window on the annexe where a door was punched through many years ago, so that it reverts to its 1918 design.

The 1970s modern extension which houses a corridor, toilets, and a staffroom will be demolished. In its place will be built a new extension which includes a new children's area, a program space for events, and new toilets with disability access.

### Will there be more library space?

Yes, space for library services will increase significantly. Currently, the central library room is 175 square metres. The new development will see a new childrens area (additional 84 square metres) and a library and heritage extension area (additional 58 square metres). There will also be additional areas of seating with wireless access in a new courtyard (additional 65 square metres) and in the portico (26 square metres). Members of the public and community groups will also have access to additional space in the Heritage service area and in the new Program space.

### Will there be more books, DVDs and CDs?

Yes. When the new Library & Heritage Centre opens in 2013, the collection of books, DVDs and CDS will be increased by about 25% compared to the current collection. The project also allows room for future growth in later years.

### How will the meeting room and program space be booked?

This has not been finalised yet. Feedback and ideas are welcome.

### How much will the project cost?

Design, construction and landscaping costs are projected to cost about \$3.46 million.

### What happens to the consultation feedback?

Council will consider the feedback received at its meeting on 28 November 2011. In December 2011, Council will finalise its requirements for the building. This is with a view to submitting a statutory planning application by the early months of 2012.

Some decisions about the shape of future services may need to wait until further budget processes for 2012/13 or 2013/14. All feedback considered as part of this process will inform those future decisions.

### Will there be a statutory planning process?

Yes, it is expected that a statutory planning application will be formally lodged in the early months of 2012. The public consultation process will commence in line with statutory requirements soon afterwards. This consultation process will be focused on statutory planning matters. Any member of the public can make a submission as part of this process, and address the Statutory Planning Committee of Council.

### What happened to the previous plans to build an Urban Studies Centre?

In 2009, Council decided not to proceed with plans to build an Urban Studies Centre at the site. Instead, Council wishes to build an expanded Library & Heritage Centre at Emerald Hill.

## Have Your Say

**You can have your say in a variety of ways.**

### **View the proposed plans**

Proposed plans and other information will be available from the Council website and at Emerald Hill Library during opening hours from 14 to 28 November. Plans will also be available at other Port Phillip library branches and town halls. There are a variety of ways you can have your say.

### **Attend a session at Emerald Hill Library**

Community information sessions (drop in any time during the session):

- Monday 14 November, 4 pm – 5.30 pm
- Tuesday 22 November 6 pm – 7.30pm

### **Make a submission**

- Fill out a written feedback form at Emerald Hill Library, other library branches or at town halls
- Fill out the online feedback form on Have Your Say at [www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay)
- Attend the Council meeting at 6 pm, Monday 28 November, St Kilda Town Hall. At this meeting, Council will receive community feedback about the project and members of the community may formally address Council.

**All comments are welcome. Consultation closes Monday 28 November 2011.**

For more information, please contact Libby Hart on [lhart@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:lhart@portphillip.vic.gov.au) or phone 9209 6615. Please advise if you have any hearing, access or interpretation requirements for any of the above sessions.

Artist's impression of the  
Emerald Hill Library &  
Heritage Centre – aerial view

