



33 Saxon Street Cultural and Community Hub

33 Saxon Street is strategically placed in Melbourne's unique creative neighbourhood of Brunswick, at the doorstep of Melbourne's growing northern region.

Located 5km from Melbourne's CBD, Brunswick plays an oversized role in creative industries and the production of culture for Melbourne and Australia.

The State Government has recognised the role of Brunswick and the opportunity for growth by the designation and support of the Brunswick Design District (BDD) – a partnership between Creative Victoria, RMIT and Moreland City Council.

With the BDD also identified within the current North and West Melbourne City Deal process, the framework exists for significant Federal and State contributions towards this once in a generation opportunity.

Council has kickstarted the project by committing the early funds needed to undertake design, feasibility and engagement to make the redevelopment of 33 Saxon Street a reality. The final concept plan is now complete, with a current estimated project cost of \$22.6 million, taking into account the impacts of Covid-19 on construction costs over the past 18 months.

Brunswick

Our ask:

Federal and State Government investment of \$6 million towards the delivery of the 33 Saxon Street Cultural and Community Hub by 2024.

Our aim:

To deliver a flagship creative industries COVID-19 recovery and growth project in the Brunswick Design District, starting the next chapter of the unique creative industries cluster of Melbourne's inner north.

Moreland Council has committed \$13.4 million towards the project but cannot do it alone, so is seeking:

- Federal and State investment of \$6 million, to add to Moreland Council's commitment of \$13.4 million, to help us deliver this \$22.6 million transformational project for the people of Brunswick and our creative communities by 2024.

Creative industries employment

Creative neighbourhoods enliven communities, foster new ideas, collaborations and opportunities to flourish, attract visitation and stimulate commercial and communal activity¹.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Victoria's creative industries and their impact were fast growing. In 2019–20 they contributed \$31.6 billion in gross value added to the Victorian economy – up \$5.7 billion in four years. By 2019–20, 292,000 Victorians were employed in the creative industries, 8.6 per cent of the total state workforce².

Almost 3% (2,325) of Moreland's local jobs are associated with the arts and recreation industries (compared to 2.1% across Greater Melbourne), with 2.3% (346) of local businesses also associated with the creative sector (compared to 1.4% across Greater Melbourne)³.

BDD encompasses RMIT University's School of Art, Photography Architecture and Made in Brunswick Studio; Counihan Gallery, Brunswick Mechanics Institute, the Brunswick Business Incubator, the Sydney Road Street Festival and Brunswick Music Festival. It is a vibrant creative precinct which proudly supports a variety of businesses, start-ups, designers, artists, makers, musicians, venues, manufacturers and world-class education, employing over 1,800 creative workers, or 8.4% of jobs in Brunswick, in 217 creative spaces⁴.

Redevelopment of 33 Saxon Street is the next key pillar for BDD, thoughtfully planned over the last six years and is now 'shovel ready'.

Redevelopment benefits

The project will deliver a new anchor creative space, as a campus of buildings and outdoor spaces, in the heart of one of Australia's most creative neighbourhoods. Over 3,500sqm of internal floorspace and over 2,000sqm of external public spaces with a vision to enhance creative industries and strengthening diverse communities.

Redevelopment will provide:

- Affordable creative production spaces
- A First Nations gallery
- First Nations research and teaching spaces
- Commercial creative industries spaces
- Short term hire spaces for community and creative activities
- Maternal and Child Health facilities
- Adaptive re-use of significant heritage elements of the site
- A café space
- Significant and diverse public outdoor spaces for gathering, making and small-scale performance.

With Brunswick's vital creative communities having been some of the hardest hit by the pandemic, 33 Saxon Street provides the flagship opportunity to help support COVID-19 recovery efforts for our local and regional creative industry.



33 Saxon Street from Sydney Road
(artist impression)

¹ Engage Victoria, [Creative State 2021-2025](#) [Online]

² Creative Victoria, [Creative State 2025](#) [Online], p8

³ ABS and id consulting (2016) '[Moreland Industries by Jobs](#)' and '[Moreland Industries by Businesses](#)' [Online]

⁴ [Creative Moreland](#) and [Brunswick Design District](#) (2020) [Online]

Key benefits of the project are:

- Opportunities for strong economic growth and attraction of talent with over 100 jobs in the creative industries and community sector expected on site.
- More robust, diverse and innovative creative industries in inner Melbourne.
- Keeping Brunswick's strong creative culture alive and thriving through cross-subsidised spaces.
- Prioritisation of First Peoples arts, cultural and creative leadership, driven by self-determination. The project will provide a long term and secure future for Blak Dot Gallery and Blakacademy, one of the contemporary First Nations Art galleries in Australia
- A new creative and community-use facility that will house multipurpose community rooms, Maternal and Child Health facilities, and space for the commercial end of the creative industries.
- A large (2,000sqm) public open space to host outdoor events, community recreation and creative activities of the site. Enhancing the impact and reach of creative activity within the broader community providing citizens the opportunity to engage and participate socially and culturally.

- Demonstration of environmental design excellence.
- Providing a catalyst project to enhance the potential of the Brunswick Design District.

Ready to deliver

This project is ready to deliver and will play a critical part of rebuilding Brunswick's local economy, supporting additional construction jobs, and in sustaining Moreland's broader cultural wellbeing.

With construction expected to commence in early 2023, Council has already conducted extensive community and stakeholder engagement, including with traditional owners, endorsed the vision, uses and concept plan for the site, engaged a design team led by local design firm Kennedy Nolan Architects, endorsed a specialist site operator, or Precinct Manager, being local creative infrastructure team 'These Are The Projects We Do Together'. A planning permit application is being lodged in February 2022

Acknowledging the unprecedented local and global circumstances we face, our call to action could not be any clearer or more urgent. Now is the time to safeguard jobs, develop employment pathways and invest in the next generation of creative leaders. Now is the time to innovate and create boundary-pushing creative product and experiences that strengthen Victoria's position at the leading edge of the creative industries⁵.



⁵ Creative Victoria, [Creative State 2025](#) [Online], p11

To find out more:

If you would like further information on this project, or would like to request a briefing, please contact:

Jenny Hay, Advocacy Lead

Visit our website:

moreland.vic.gov.au

Email

jahay@moreland.vic.gov.au

Call us

9355 4228

Moreland Language Link

廣東話 9280 1910
Italiano 9280 1911
Ελληνικά 9280 1912

عربي 9280 1913
Türkçe 9280 1914
Tiếng Việt 9280 1915

हिंदी 9280 1918
普通话 9280 0750
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 9280 0751

All other languages
9280 1919