



# Media release

**The Hon Ted Baillieu MP**

Premier  
Minister for the Arts

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## **Coalition Govt marks start of work at world-class Eastern Plaza sporting precinct**

The Coalition Government has continued its support for world-class major projects by marking the start of work today at Victoria's latest major sporting facility, the Eastern Plaza tennis centre at Melbourne Park.

Turning the first sod at Eastern Plaza this morning, Premier Ted Baillieu, Minister for Sport and Recreation Hugh Delahunty and Minister for Major Projects Dr Denis Naphthine said the building would be vital in the development of new Australian sporting talent.

Joined by members of Tennis Australia's kids starter program MLC Tennis Hot Shots, Mr Baillieu said Eastern Plaza will provide training courts for future generations of young talent as well as elite tennis players.

"Tennis is a big growth sport in Victoria and the Australian Open at Melbourne Park is an enormously popular major event," Mr Baillieu said.

"Eastern Plaza will host elite tennis competitions as well as giving tennis players at all levels the opportunity to hire courts and enjoy the very best tennis facilities available."

Mr Delahunty said that Eastern Plaza would help ensure Victoria remained the home of Australian tennis.

"The Eastern Plaza is another step in the Government's multi-million dollar upgrade of the Melbourne Park sporting precinct that will keep the Australian Open in Victoria for years to come," Mr Delahunty said.

"Beyond the new courts and training facilities, the Eastern Plaza project will also greatly improve how people travel around Melbourne Park, providing a raised public plaza that will link with the MCG to the north and AAMI Park across the road and opening up the whole sports precinct for fans."

Major Projects Minister Dr Denis Naphthine said the new building was part of a plan to vastly improve the experience for fans at the Open and the hundreds of other events at Melbourne Park each year.

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“The Eastern Plaza design separates the public spaces from the operational areas underneath, improving safety and comfort for fans while enabling uninterrupted access for event operation and logistics personnel and equipment,” Dr Napthine said.

“This fresh, light and functional design will create a wonderful environment for players and fans, massively increasing the number of trees and gardens to improve the amenity of the area.”

Tennis Australia’s Chief Executive Officer Steve Wood said the new training facilities that are being built as part of the Eastern Plaza project will give tennis the opportunity to grow from the junior level through to the elite level in the years to come.

“We look forward to continuing to work closely with the Coalition Government and Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust on this project and securing the future of tennis in this country,” Mr Wood said.

The Eastern Plaza project will incorporate:

- eight new indoor tennis courts and 13 new outdoor courts;
- warm-up and warm-down facilities for athletes;
- an elevated plaza providing new public space and a new eastern entry to Hisense Arena;
- multi-level underground parking for up to 1000 cars and 30 buses;
- an upgraded western entry to Hisense Arena; and
- a pedestrian bridge over Olympic Boulevard completing a direct pedestrian link between the MCG, Melbourne Park and AAMI Park.

The Eastern Plaza is the second component of the \$363 million first stage of the Melbourne Park redevelopment project, which is scheduled to be completed in time for the 2015 Australian Open.

Major Projects Victoria (MPV) will continue to work with the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust and Tennis Australia to manage the redevelopment.

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