

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Crime Prevention

Minister for Corrections

Minister for Youth Justice

Minister for Victim Support



Wednesday, 20 January 2021

MIDDLETON PRISON EXPANSION TO DELIVER REGIONAL JOBS

Work is set to start on a major construction project in Castlemaine, with the Andrews Labor Government signing a \$37.6 million contract to expand the capacity of Middleton Prison by 39 beds.

The project is expected to create 165 jobs during construction, including around 50 in the Bendigo area and generate opportunities for a range of local contractors.

As part of the Labor Government's contract with successful tenderer, Bendigo-based construction firm Fairbrother Pty Ltd, the project will also see targeted investment in social enterprises and jobs for disadvantaged Victorians.

The Dja Dja Wurrung, traditional owners of the land on which the prison sits, have also been involved in planning upgrades to the prison's indigenous garden and other landscaping, as well as on prison education and cultural awareness programs.

Alongside the new cell accommodation being constructed, a number of supporting buildings will be refurbished, and security systems will be upgraded.

Construction will start soon and the new beds at the minimum-security facility are expected to be operational in mid-2022 - increasing the capacity of the prison to a total of 287 prisoners.

The expansion is part of the government's \$1.8 billion investment in delivering flexible prison capacity, boosting programs to break the cycle of reoffending and keep people out of prison.

Middleton Prison is the second site a program to expand the capacity of five Victorian prisons, which includes:

- Barwon Prison and Marngoneet Correctional Centre in Lara
- Middleton Prison in Castlemaine
- Hopkins Correctional Centre in Ararat
- Metropolitan Remand Centre in Ravenhall

Construction across the five sites is expected to be completed in 2023, as part of a program delivered by the Community Safety Building Authority.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Corrections Natalie Hutchins

"These infrastructure projects are creating thousands of local jobs and a more secure prison system that boosts community safety."

"This is the second of five sites that are being upgraded, creating local jobs in Geelong, Central Victoria and Melbourne."

"Our investment in prisons will support the rehabilitation of prisoners and help keep staff and the community safe."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"This expansion will help create local jobs across Bendigo through design and construction of these improved facilities. I'm looking forward to seeing this investment help our area thrive."

Media contact: Jamila Fontana 0409 741 279 | jamila.fontana@minstaff.vic.gov.au