

Lennox Head Public School

Community Update

December 2021

Update on the upgrade project

The Department of Education remains committed to delivering appropriate and well-resourced local school infrastructure to support student learning.

Following extensive stakeholder engagement, the department has determined that the project to upgrade Lennox Head Public School cannot proceed on the current site.

The school site's unique cultural heritage, along with strong population and enrolment growth in the Ballina and Lennox Head area, means that new solutions need to be explored to ensure the best long-term outcome for generations of students in the region.

We will now fast-track plans to identify other options that will meet the educational needs of students across the region in the long term.

The cultural significance of the existing school site cannot be understated given the nature of the historical sites, artefacts and the connections between them.

This cultural significance has been a growing focus since the discovery of artefacts on the school site, and the cultural and historical importance of the site has been emphasised throughout continuous engagement between the department and representatives of the local Aboriginal community.

The department has not taken this decision lightly but it is in the best interest of all stakeholders and will be the best outcome for students in the long term.

This decision also aligns with the department's Aboriginal Education Policy and upholding the department's Partnership Agreement with the NSW AECG to ensure quality outcomes for Aboriginal people.

The focus of a capital works project will now move to a new school on a new site for Lennox Head, sized appropriately in consideration of the population data for the whole school community group. This new project is subject to site availability, funding and planning approval.

This work involves a feasibility study and needs analysis, and is an opportunity to consider the needs for the school in its entirety, and also take into account other schools in the local area.

Ongoing maintenance at the current Lennox Head Public School

While this work is underway, we all acknowledge that the current school site cannot adequately accommodate the growing student numbers for the school.

The department will put in place measures to manage this, ensuring the wellbeing and best learning outcomes for students currently enrolled, as well as considering management of this significant cultural site.

For more information contact:

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Over the school holidays an additional temporary classroom will be installed next to the front building (block E) of the school to accommodate students enrolled for Day 1 Term 1 2022.

A program of maintenance works will also start, including replacing the playground soft-fall, guttering and roof repairs, and painting. This maintenance ensures that the school facilities continue to support the educational learning outcomes of students whilst other options are being explored.

We know adding additional demountables to this site beyond Term 1 2022 is not feasible due to site constraints.

Until an alternate site is identified, Lennox Head Public School will continue to operate from the existing site, being completely respectful of this important place.

The department will work with the school executive to find the best short term solutions and we will provide more certainty to the school community in 2022.

Keeping you informed

Changes to the intake area for Lennox Head PS will need to be made in 2022. We are working through this with Principals in the region and will update the community early next year to provide certainty for the remainder of 2022 school year and beyond.

We will continue to collaborate with key stakeholders in the Aboriginal community on the management of the site and will be undertaking additional archaeological investigations to report to Heritage NSW.

We will ensure the community is kept informed of progress.

Thank you for your patience

We are committed to supporting student learning outcomes and Aboriginal cultural heritage in Lennox Head and surrounds. We thank everyone for their ongoing patience.

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