



Artist impression of the Hilltops library and community facility

Young High School upgrade and joint-use library and community facility

Project update

May 2020

Investing in our schools

The NSW Government is investing \$6.7 billion over four years to deliver more than 190 new and upgraded schools to support communities across NSW. In addition, a record \$1.3 billion is being spent on school maintenance over five years. This is the largest investment in public education infrastructure in the history of NSW.

The NSW Department of Education is committed to delivering new and upgraded schools for communities across NSW. The delivery of these important projects is essential to the future learning needs of our students and supports growth in the local economy.

Project overview

A project is underway for a major upgrade to Young High School which includes a new joint-use library and community facility for the school and local community. It will be located on school land and integrated with Carrington Park through landscaping which recognises and celebrates the Indigenous culture and heritage of the region. The library facility is jointly funded by the NSW Government and Hilltops Council.

The school facilities will also be upgraded and works include the delivery of a new amenities block, a refurbished music room, landscaping and a canteen.

When completed the project will provide students and the community with contemporary learning spaces with access to video conferencing and multimedia facilities, a multipurpose workshop, youth wellbeing hub and Wiradjuri learning and cultural centre.

Progress summary

The schematic design has been completed and endorsed. Early works on the school upgrade have been completed, resulting in a new amenities block and a refurbished music room.

A deed and lease agreement have been executed by Hilltops Council for the joint-use library and community facility and negotiations are underway with the NSW Department of Education.

Accelerated assessment

As part of the NSW Government's Planning System Acceleration Program, the assessment of the SSD application for this project was fast tracked by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE). The SSDA was approved on 21 May 2020.

Tendering for the main works construction contract has started, to appoint the main construction works contractor.

Next steps

Continue design development and appoint a contractor for the library construction main works.

Commence construction in mid-late 2020, with works expected to be completed late 2021.

Frequently asked questions

Why has the planning approval for this project been fast tracked?

Four schools are among the first wave of projects that will have their assessments fast tracked.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) made decisions on the State Significant Development (SSD) application for the first tranche of projects on 21 May 2020. This will mean the projects can get underway sooner and the overall construction pipeline can continue to grow.

Does this mean the usual checks and community consultation will be waived to fast track the projects?

The assessment process is being accelerated, not changed. The usual planning rules and policies will apply, and all projects will be assessed under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

Will the community still get to have a say on projects that are being fast tracked?

All of the projects being fast tracked have completed the substantive planning work and are post the exhibition and community consultation phase. School Infrastructure NSW will continue to engage and inform the community throughout the project.

Due to the need to meet requirements under Public Health Orders, a range of digital engagement tools will be used to communicate with the community and stakeholders to seek any comment or feedback. This will include digital project updates, online sharing of information session material, the School Infrastructure NSW website, community information line and mailbox.

There are reports of a historic tunnel under the school. How will this impact the project?

The design of the project has been developed in close consultation with heritage consultants GML Heritage and responds to the project brief, site opportunities and constraints, as well as the heritage significance of the site.

School Infrastructure NSW acknowledge that there is speculation that a prisoner transfer tunnel exits between the former courthouse (located within the school site) and gaol (located within the TAFE site). Investigations by the project team to date have not located the tunnel and no documentary evidence specific to the site has been found to-date.

Investigations so far have included:

- Ground penetrating radar scans to depths of four metres were completed in two locations identified by a member of the public as where the tunnel could be located.
- Site investigations undertaken beneath the floor of the former courthouse building.

Additional inspections and archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during the works. This will ensure that the tunnel will be identified if present.

School Infrastructure NSW have accepted the draft condition of consent recommended by Heritage NSW. If any evidence is found during excavation and construction, the project team will further consult with Heritage NSW on next steps.

We will keep the community informed of further investigations and next steps.

How does the school and local community provide input?

Following community engagement in 2017, a Community Project Steering Committee was set up by Hilltops Council to help capture local people's opinions as the project progresses.

A Project Reference Group has also been established. This comprises representatives from Hilltops Council, the NSW Department of Education, school principal, the school P&C committee, librarians, and the design team. This group will continue to meet to provide advice and endorsement as the project progresses.

Community and the general public are also invited to contact School Infrastructure NSW to provide feedback and comments via the details below.

For more information contact:

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