

# Rebuilding Richmond River High Campus

Stage 1 Consultation | June – August 2023

The Rivers Secondary College Richmond River High Campus (RRHC) was extensively damaged by floods in early 2022. The NSW Government is committed to making sure that the school and relevant stakeholders are consulted in all aspects of rebuilding the campus – from understanding aspirations for secondary education in Lismore through to design and construction.

The preferred solution for rebuilding RRHC will need to be flood resilient, economically feasible and support a community vision for education in Lismore and surrounding areas.

As well as the outcomes of consultation, other considerations in determining where and how RRHC will be rebuilt, will include:

- ✓ a review of the long-term educational need in Lismore and surrounding communities
- ✓ School Infrastructure NSW policies and criteria for the selection of school sites
- ✓ information from the NSW Reconstruction Authority and Lismore Council about future housing and infrastructure planning.

Once a preferred option is identified and planning approvals are in place it is anticipated that it will take around 2 to 3 years to build the campus. In the interim School Infrastructure NSW, Department of Education and college staff are continuing to work hard to ensure RRHC is a great place for learning and teaching.

## Who we consulted with

Stage 1 of consultation between June and August 2023 focussed on what's important for the future of secondary education in Lismore and the role of RRHC. We talked to staff, students, parents, primary schools and key organisations in the Lismore community through workshops and an online survey.

### Workshops with over 110 representatives from the following key groups:

- RRHC teachers and staff
- students from RRHC
- The Rivers Secondary College (TRSC) Principals
- TRSC teachers and staff
- TRSC students
- partner school Principals
- P&C representatives from
  - RRHC
  - TRSC
  - Partner primary schools
- Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.










### Discussions with representatives of:

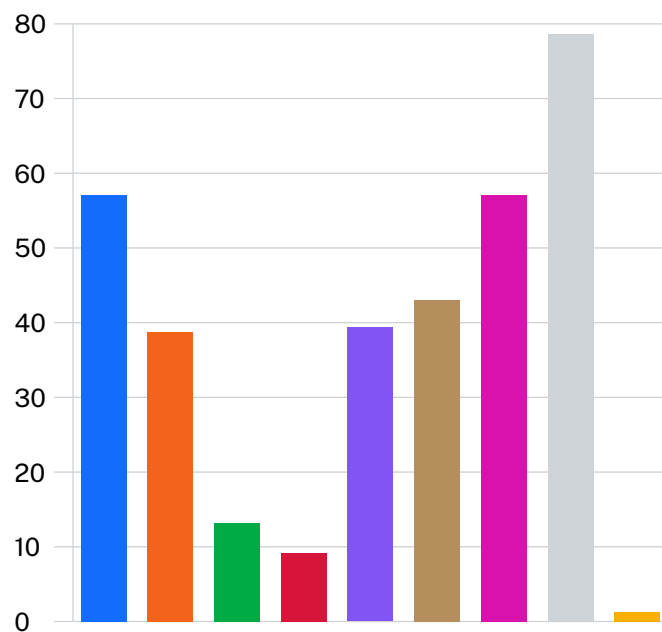
- Lismore City Council
- TAFE NSW
- Southern Cross University



## Feedback from 350 people via an online survey and project email

Table 1: Breakdown of survey respondents

	67 A parent of a current student
	38 A parent of a primary school student
	13 A student at RRHC
	9 A student at TRSC
	39 Staff member at RRHC
	43 Staff member
	67 A community member
	78 A former RRHC student
	2 Other



## What we heard

### Theme 1: Choice - three unique campuses within the one college

There was strong support for the college system and the choice it offers, providing a system with differing:

- school communities and cultures
- focus and strengths i.e. sport, agriculture, trade skills, arts and performance, digital media and technology
- locations across Lismore placing schools at the centre of the communities they serve.

The college system also combines the choice a larger school can offer, with the holistic student focus and sense of community a smaller campus can provide. Most participants did not want to see campuses merged as part of the rebuild.

People were also keen to see equity maintained between the campuses within the college if RRHC is rebuilt.

### Theme 2: Flood free and accessible schools

It is critical that any new school is planned around flood areas to minimise ongoing interruptions to education.

A distributed network of school campuses throughout the area would:

- enable students to temporarily use a nearby school as a learning hub in the event that floods prevent them from accessing their usual school
- support the growth of new residential communities that will be built as part of recovery
- maintain connections with partner primary schools.



### Theme 3: Schools embedded in, and reflective of, a diverse Lismore community

Schools in Lismore should be:

- embedded in the community and the facilities they offer should be available as a resource for communities to use
- serve as a hub for the communities they are part of and be geographically aligned with their specific partner school network
- places where local Indigenous knowledge and understandings of Country could be shared with young people and greater involvement of elders in mentoring, teaching, and learning.

### Theme 4: A system that responds to varied student needs and interests

Education in Lismore needs to:

- have a holistic focus on the student as a person, as well the student as part of a community
- cultivate a desire to learn, collaborate and adapt to changes
- go beyond “academic learning” to address wider interests including creativity and expression, environment and agriculture, and health and wellbeing
- provide a combination of skills-based training and academic learning to cater for diverse student interests and these differing pathways should be valued equally.

### Theme 5: Environments that support different ways of learning and interacting

The Campus of the future will need to:

- provide a range of learning spaces and not be one size fits all
- have learning spaces that can be easily reconfigured to suit different learning styles including collaborative, group, and individual learning.

### Theme 6: Good schools and great learning are about more than buildings

While participants wanted to see high quality, sustainable and fit for purpose school buildings, they noted that this was only one part of building a new campus. Schools across Lismore should:

- be resourced to operate well and ensure that both students and staff are supported
- rely less on casual staff and have more permanent teachers who can build strong relationships with students and the school
- have the administrative, classroom and professional development support to help teachers do their jobs well
- be places where students can be linked into other services they or their families may require.



## Other considerations for rebuilding Richmond River High Campus

### The things people said they really like about RRHC are:

- it is safe happy and inviting
- it is a diverse and inclusive place
- it is strongly connected to the partner school network
- it has a strong focus on arts and creativity and farming
- the resilience of the school community in the face of the floods
- its sense of history
- the historic buildings at Lake St and the calm, green grounds.

### Things people said we need to consider when rebuilding RRHC campus:

- connecting with Bundjalung country
- linking school buildings with the environment
- buildings that are there for the long term and have a sense of permanence
- sustainability and using natural materials
- having both indoor and outdoor learning spaces to make the most of the Lismore environment and climate
- calm green school grounds with different scaled open spaces
- having a campus that is technologically enabled
- flexible and adaptable classrooms that aren't just big empty boxes
- placing the cultural and community life of the school on display
- creative reuse of some materials /features of the old RRHC
- ensuring that agriculture and farming remain a core school offering
- making new facilities available for use across the college.

## What's happening next?

The feedback received in Stage 1 has given the team much to consider. Over the next few months, School Infrastructure NSW will continue to investigate potential school sites and work with architects and others to assess sites' suitability to accommodate a new campus. School Infrastructure NSW and the Department of Education will then identify a preferred option for a new RRHC campus.

It is expected that consultation on the preferred option will occur in late 2023 or early 2024.

## Stay informed

We will continue to update the community about the next steps in rebuilding RRHC. You can stay informed and find our Planning Updates and FAQs and upcoming consultation on the [School Infrastructure website](#) or by scanning the QR code below:

