

About Western Springs College

Western Springs College is a co-educational secondary school (years 9-13) in Auckland. It opened in 1903, has a Maori immersion-Rumaki unit, and a current roll of more than 1300 students.

In 2014, the school was announced as one of the priority schools for redevelopment, alongside Koru and Southern Cross schools, due to high growth in the surrounding area and a range of property-related issues.

The school's roll is projected to grow to 1700 students in the medium term, including the Rumaki which is projected to grow from the current 215 students to 340 by 2020.

The college has an impressive history of academic achievement of both mainstream and Rumaki classes.

What's the process from here?

A detailed timeline is being developed with the school. Final design, procurement, consenting and review are expected to be completed by mid 2017.

Based on current information available, the redevelopment will be completed by late 2018.

The final cost of the project will be determined once procurement processes are complete, but is expected to be approximately \$75 million for the school redevelopment, and approximately \$4 million for TAPAC.

Why has the decision on Western Springs College taken longer than expected?

This is the largest single investment in a school in New Zealand. It is the equivalent of two new secondary schools and reflects the significant complexities and challenges of the site and buildings.

We wanted to get it right for the school and address its property challenges in a way that would get the best outcomes for students.

The extent of site issues has required extensive specialist reviews and resulted in a long planning process.

We had to make sure that the chosen approach (via a business case) would deliver:

- a high-quality level of educational infrastructure that will meet the needs of the college and its wider community for many years
- an educational return on the investment through the creation of modern teaching and learning environments that support better outcomes for students
- the best value to the Crown on behalf of New Zealand taxpayers.

Western Springs College will be rebuilt on its existing site. What investigations/reports have been carried out regarding site stabilisation and safety?

There have been extensive geotechnical, engineering and environmental investigations carried out by experts since 2010, and a Health, Safety and Environment report was released in December 2014 addressing issues at the school. The Ministry has a good understanding of how issues can be managed.

Since 2009/10 around \$4.5 million has been spent on property at Western Springs, including an investment in roll growth, maintenance and seismic work.

The school also has a Health and Safety Policy to ensure a high level of attention to health and safety matters.

The Ministry has advised that they are putting in place additional specialist health and safety expertise and additional project support to complete the rebuild.

What options were considered?

Five options were included in the business case considered by Cabinet. These options ranged from the upgrade of existing facilities through to co-location on the Pasadena Intermediate site.

Why was the option announced today chosen?

The option chosen provides for a rebuild of most of the current school, with at least 80% of the existing teaching spaces replaced entirely, a new gymnasium built and the existing hall and administration areas upgraded. It also provides for a rebuild of the school's Maori immersion-Rumaki unit and will allow for a future roll of 1700 students.

This option represents an enhanced version to one presented to the school community in June.

One of the other options was a streetscape option, but this would have cost around \$120 million (ie, an additional \$45 million approximately – enough to build two new primary schools) and was not recommended by the Ministry.

The option chosen was recommended by the Ministry from the business case analysis and was compared with business cases of other school redevelopments.

Has the location of the new buildings on the site been decided?

There is a preliminary view of the location of the new buildings on the site based on the master planning undertaken to date and understanding of the ground conditions. Final decisions will be made as part of the design work that will be carried out with the school.

Will the Rumaki still retain its own separate identity on the site?

Yes, the Rumaki will maintain its own identity on the site. Twelve new teaching spaces will be provided for the Rumaki in the redevelopment including some specialist facilities. The redevelopment will also allow for the existing wharehau to be retained and upgraded.

What's happening with the Auckland Performing Arts Centre?

Investment of approximately \$4 million is now confirmed to upgrade TAPAC, the Auckland Performing Arts Centre. It is expected that this work will be carried out at the same time as the redevelopment.

How confident are you this timeline can be met?

Additional support is being provided by the Ministry for the project to ensure it is successfully delivered by the completion date of the end of 2018.

The Ministry will work closely with consultants and the school to ensure the timetable is met. School representatives and the project team will continue to meet and discuss issues relating to the work programme through Project Design Group meetings.

Why is the cost of Western Springs College a lot more than the other recent redevelopment announcements?

Western Springs College has a range of site-related issues due to being on a former quarry and landfill. A portion of the costs, which may vary, has been put aside to remediate site-specific issues.