

New southeast Queensland high school to be built 14 years early

CONSTRUCTION of a new high school is expected to start next year in one of the state's fastest growing master-planned communities.

The high school will come on the heels of the Coles supermarket, medical centre and McDonald's that opened in Yarrabilba in November, with a new state primary school opening in the New Year.

Residents of Yarrabilba, near Jimboomba in Logan, joined members of the Yarrabilba Community Association, Cr Laurie Koranski, and State Member Linus Power earlier this year to successfully petition the state government to bring the school plans forward from 2032.

"Yarrabilba has very strong growth," Mr Power said.

"It's 20km to the nearest high school so the government has now agreed to bring forward the high school from their original date of 2034.



More than 45,000 people are expected to live in Yarrabilba by 2041. Picture: Liam Kidston. Cr Koranski said the construction of the high school was a "game changer" for the area.

"We've got some kids who are travelling on buses an hour each way to attend high school," she said.

The Yarrabilba Estate spans 2222ha and was declared a Priority Development Area in 2010.

Development started in 2011 and 25 per cent of the community was dedicated to recreational areas and environmental corridors.

The community's anticipated completion date is 2041, at an overall estimated cost of more than \$11 billion.

More than 45,000 people in 17,000 residential dwellings are expected to live in the self-made suburb by that time.

Although people of all ages live in the estate, there is an abundance of young families feeding the increasing demand for everything from child care centres and schools to restaurants and entertainment precincts.

Coles has recently opened in Yarrabilba. Picture: Liam Kidston.

A second childcare centre opened during the year while construction of a tavern is also expected to start in 2018.

The Brisbane CBD is about 45 minutes' drive from Yarrabilba along the Pacific Motorway, while Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast is about an hour's drive and Tamborine Mountain is about 25 minutes away.

Springfield Central, with its large shopping centre, is 30 minutes away along the Mount Lindsay Highway.

In early November, Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk promised to boost funding for the Building Future Schools for Queensland fund from \$500 million to \$808 million to build seven secondary schools, one special school and two primary schools, which included the Yarrabilba High School.

Construction of the high school is scheduled to take place throughout 2018 and 2019, with the first intake of pupils now anticipated to be in 2020.

Mr Power said the high school would cost \$60 million and will cater for up to 1500 students.

It is expected to include everything from a multi-purpose hall to coding and robotics laboratories.

The new \$40 million Yarrabilba State Primary School, which will cater for Prep to Year 6, will open its doors next year, with about 300 children already enrolled.

It is the second of 11 primary and secondary schools slated for the community, with a small Catholic primary school already open.

Cr Koranski said there were four prep classes planned, with a fifth one expected to be added.

"That's on top of the two already at the existing Catholic primary school," she said.



Leila Watson (front) with her daughters, Amy, 8, and Hannah, 5. Picture: Supplied

Leila Watson, 29, and her daughters, Amy, 8, and Hannah, 5, moved to the area from Underwood about two years ago.

She said Amy should start high school in 2021 so the timing of the opening would be perfect for her family.

“Otherwise I may have to take her down to Browns Plains or Marsden for high school,” she said.

The daycare educator said she and her family moved to Yarrabilba for the affordable new houses with fenced yards but said the friendly community was a bonus.

“We know the neighbours and the area has a real community feeling,” Ms Watson said.

“We have never known our neighbours in other suburbs, so this is a completely different feeling.”

Ms Watson said she felt safe leaving her house, knowing the neighbours kept an eye on each other and on their properties.



Residents say they were drawn to Yarrabilba because of the affordable new houses and big yards. Picture: Liam Kidston. Having grown up in Brisbane and Logan, Ms Watson said she had been ready for a more relaxed, open-space environment with less traffic and “chaos.”

Although she still works in Daisy Hill in Logan City Ms Watson said she did not mind driving along Waterford-Tamborine Rd to get to work as she enjoyed the scenery of open fields and animals along the way.

The family also enjoyed being able to splash around at Darlington Parklands, also known as the Yarrabilba Water Park, at the front of the estate.

Lendlease Communities managing director Matt Wallace said Darlington Parklands was a major drawcard for many residents and for others outside the area.

Darlington has water fountains, shallow pools, playground equipment, forts, a flying fox, a basketball court, cricket pitch, bike paths and more.

Mr Wallace said a lot of money was invested into creating the water park as well as making the entire community walkable.



Adam Phelps, 38, and his partner Jacinta Brumby, 38, with their children Ethan, 3, and Kasha, 6, at Darlington Parklands. Picture: Liam Kidston.

He said Yarrabilba also had a few rapid-charging bays for electric cars as well as a training centre, called The Exchange, that offers training and job leads in the local area.

“We have already connected more than 250 locals to either training or employment in various industries,” he said.

The master-planned community also has a veterinary hospital , IGA and other shops like a bakery, restaurants, take away shops health food store, bottle shop and more.

Cr Koranski said the state government had committed \$2 million towards a police station, as well as \$5 million to the redevelopment of the auxiliary fire and rescue station just outside of the Yarrabilba estate on Waterford-Tamborine Road.

“That’s one thing we’ve really been pushing for, is an increase in policing in the area, but we don’t have any more details yet,” she said.

Logan’s population is predicted to rise to 586,000 from 313,800 by 2041, partly due to Yarrabilba, according to the South East Queensland Regional Plan. The estate welcomed their 5000th resident in October.

Mr Wallace said it normally takes about 10 years to reach the growth stage the master-planned community had already achieved in its first five years.



Children utilising the Yarrabilba bike tracks. Picture: Liam Kidston.

He said there had already been about 3000 land sales, which had exceeded expectations since the first release, with the momentum predicted to continue.

Mr Wallace said people were attracted to Yarrabilba because of its proximity to nearby amenities, the nearby natural area and its affordability.

Although families of all ages had already moved into the estate, Mr Wallace said the majority of residents so far were those with young children.

“I think a lot of real estate decisions have been driven by family shape and size,” he said.

“The Brisbane market started to mature 15 years ago, so I think we’re seeing a first wave of urban professional dwellers moving for a yard and greener spaces and where they can walk everywhere.”



A quarter of Yarrabilba is dedicated to recreation space. Picture: Liam Kidston.
Scott and Fiona Roebig opened their business, Thom and Ann's Restaurant and Deli, in Yarrabilba about a year and a half ago.

Mr Roebig, a chef, said he grew up in Jimboomba so it was a natural progression to return to the area to open their business.

"We haven't looked back," he said.

"We have a food and coffee van as well ... and are attached to local community groups."

Mrs Roebig, who is also a Yarrabilba Community Association member, said the couple and their two young children enjoyed the sense of community in the area.

"We might be outside and serving a customer and you get a beep or a wave," she said.

"Or you're delivering food for lunchtime and you're always getting a wave or people saying g'day."

Originally from Canberra, Mrs Roebig said she grew up with a sense of community.

"We always had our own little community there, so that is one of the things we wanted to create here, and is part of the reason we started our business here," she said.

Mrs Roebig said the community association held regular events, such as barbecues, markets and other events that encourage residents to come together to meet others.

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