



27/01/2025

Michelle Cushnie

fyi-request-29471-abd8ecfb@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Michelle

OIA: 1341149 – Negotiations for a new high school in Northwest Auckland

Thank you for your email of 6 December 2024 to the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) requesting the following information:

*What does MOE consider a "reasonable time frame" for the negotiations for the proposed new Highschool for NorthWest Auckland? *This will have been in negotiations for 2 years by February 2025.*

Travel to Massey is getting harder for students from many areas within its huge catchment. This is taking a toll on local families. The community would really like some more reassurance that everything possible is being done to get our Highschool built in the NorthWest in a timely manner.

Could you please also advise of what the next steps with negotiations are (including dates) so the Northwest community has a bit more transparency as to what is going on, and so we can feel some progress might be made.

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

The Ministry first indicated the potential requirement for a new state secondary school in the Kumeū/Huapai catchment in 2020. Ongoing increases in local school-age population, driven by significant residential development continues to support this requirement with updated National Education Growth Plan forecasts showing that a secondary school will be required in 2029. Subject to funding, the Ministry of Education is continuing to work towards this date. While the Ministry has identified a potential location for a school, we have not yet acquired the land necessary for its development.

The Ministry initiated negotiations for a Kumeū site in February 2023. There are two sites that comprise the potential secondary school site. I can confirm that negotiations have been ongoing with one landowner for some time, but have not yet reached a conclusion. This is due to a large variance in valuation advice, which has resulted in delays to the negotiation process. Negotiations with the second landowner are subject to the progress of negotiations on the first site and have not yet commenced. Generally, land acquisition and designation can take between 18 months to three years, depending on the complexities involved.



Information about the location of the potential secondary school site is not publicly disclosed, to protect the interests of the landowners. Any further details relating to these negotiations are withheld under section 9(2)(j) of the Act, to enable the Ministry to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations.

As required under section 9(1) of the Act, I have considered the public interest in releasing the information withheld. I do not consider that the public interest considerations favouring the release of this information are sufficient to outweigh the need to withhold it at this time.

In parallel with the acquisition process, the Ministry will continue to monitor school-age population growth in the Kumeū/Huapai catchment and other development triggers, as this may affect the timing of the Ministry's response.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review my decision on your request, in accordance with section 28 of the Act. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or to Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sam Fowler'.

Sam Fowler
Head of Property
Te Pou Hanganga, Matihiko | Infrastructure and Digital