



Mark Speakman
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MEDIA RELEASE

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MAJOR UPGRADE FOR GRIFFITH COURTHOUSE

Work has commenced on a \$1.5 million upgrade of Griffith Courthouse – the largest renovation in more than three decades.

Attorney General Mark Speakman and Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier and Member for Cootamundra Steph Cooke said the five-month project is part of the NSW Government's \$148 million package to appoint seven extra District Court judges, including in five regional courthouses.

Ms Cooke said the major upgrade is great news for the local community.

"These improvements will significantly improve safety and deliver a new foyer area, as well as dedicated rooms for victims, witnesses, jurors, Sheriff's Officers and legal professionals," Ms Cooke said.

The work will include an extension at the front of the courthouse to accommodate the increase in security including the installation of an airport style scanning machine, extra CCTV cameras, a Sheriff's Office and a search room.

Mr Speakman said the arrival in February of Judge Sean Grant, the first resident District Court judge on the Albury-Griffith circuit, means more jury trials in Griffith Courthouse.

"Appearing in court can be one of the most stressful things a person can do. That's why the improvements to Griffith Courthouse include the transformation of the old jury room into a sanctuary for vulnerable victims and witnesses," Mr Speakman said.

"There also be a new jury assembly room, two interview rooms and a waiting area which will provide a more welcoming and comfortable space for court users."

The improvements are also bringing more full time jobs to the region. Two additional Sheriff's Officers will join the team at Griffith Courthouse, taking the number of officers to four.

"The Sheriff's Officers will undergo seven weeks of rigorous training in over March and April including the use of communication skills to resolve conflict without force and defensive

tactics,” Mr Speakman said.

District Court Judge Sean Grant’s chambers and his associate’s room will undergo a refurbishment. In addition, external security fencing will be installed along with new gates into the staff car park. There will also be some minor landscaping after the build has been completed.

There will be no impact on sittings during construction. Court users can continue to access the courthouse via Ulong Street. The entrance at Banna Avenue will be closed for the duration of the upgrade which is due to finish at the end of July.

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