

It's a big deal



■ Grand plan ... St Laurence's old boy legends Laurie Lawrence, above, and Michael Kearney, far left. The artificial turf playing field will be a world-class facility, left.

By LUKE ROYES

THE State Government will exchange the breeding ground of sporting legends for a \$37 million auditorium to provide car parking for the new Queensland Children's Hospital.

The St Laurence's College oval, where former Wallaby Dan Crowley and Melbourne Storm star Cooper Cronk honed their skills, will be replaced by an artificial

Turf laid for Lauries' future stars

turf playing field, to be laid on a five-storey hospital car park.

The college also counts swimming coach Laurie Lawrence, former Olympian Mark Stockwell and weightlifter Damon Kelly among its old boys.

Old Boys' Association president Michael Kearney said the proposal garnered positive feedback when

outlined to the school community.

"I believe this development is a fantastic opportunity for the college ... this project provides a mutual benefit to the Mater Hospital with the necessary parking facilities in an area where land is scarce," Mr Kearney said.

The State Government will build the South Brisbane college the

world-class facilities, in return for the lease of their school oval for the Hancock St car park - due for completion in November. The Raymond Tee car park will be demolished.

St Laurence's principal Ian McDonald said the school would retain ownership of the land and, instead of rent for the next 30 years,

would acquire the 1500-seat auditorium and a 100m long artificial turf sports field. It would also have the use of 150 car parks for staff.

"I think it's a huge bonus; it will give us car parks, a field and an auditorium we couldn't get any other way without saving up for the next 20 years," Mr McDonald said.

■ To page 3

For information on the project phone 1800 285 839 or email buildingqch@health.qld.gov.au.

More than one winner

■ From page 1

The synthetic turf will be laid by a Brisbane company after extensive research to find the best, which included consultation with the Australian Cricket Board and the AFL.

While the excavation was being conducted last year, Mr McDonald said noise mitigation methods, including class rescheduling, were employed to minimise disruption to students.

Bees Nees City Realty principal Rob Honeycombe said the 9000sqm "beautiful spot" could be listed for at least \$10 million.

"It would have to be somewhere in excess of \$10 million but it would depend on what council would let you build on it whether it was residential or commercial space," he said.

The auditorium - which will also be used by the children's hospital - is expected to be completed in April next year.