

Article shared from front page Wauchope Gazette, June 7, 2018

The Hastings Co-op's Department Store will temporarily close to enable the replacement of storm-damaged flooring.

The landmark building, first occupied in the 1880s as JN Parker & Sons, suffered severe water damage during a storm on Boxing Day 2017.

Extensive renovations have already been completed at the store, including shop fittings, painting, new lighting, signage, dressing rooms and a large circular counter at the entrance.

The store is likely to be closed between 12 weeks and 16 weeks while the entire floor is replaced.

In the interim, the Department Store will operate from a warehouse-style site at 202 High Street, next to Momentum 4x4.

Department Store manager Judy Standring said she understands that some customers may be inconvenienced by the decision.

"Our last day of trading from the current location is July 7 and we will need at least two weeks to get stock shifted to the temporary site," she said.

"The replacement of the floor means that all stock needs to be moved and we are still working through some of those details, including trading days and times.

"We will certainly have a smaller sales area (at the temporary site), but it will have a real warehouse-feel to it.

"We appreciate that this is an inconvenience, however, this new flooring is urgently needed and is the final piece in the jigsaw for the upgrade of the flagship building."

Mrs Standring said she was looking forward to the flooring being completed.

"It will be fantastic and will make a huge difference to the already completed renovations to the building," she added.

While the temporary location will be operating, Mrs Standring said the Department Store also had a Port Macquarie outlet in the Palm Court Centre, opposite Australia Post.

"The Port Macquarie store carries all the Department Store labels customers love," she added.

Despite the disruption, no staff will be affected by the renovation works.

The store manager said the decision to close for between 12 to 16 weeks was the best solution.

Chief executive officer Allan Gordon explained that the scale of the project required the store to temporarily close.

“Due to the size of the store, and the magnitude of the project, the store will be closed for approximately 12 to 16 weeks,” he said.

“We appreciate the inconvenience, but encourage customers to continue to support the store during this time.

“I would also take the opportunity to explore the new Port Macquarie Department Store in the Palm Court Centre.”

In 1882, JN Parker commenced business in premises leased from W Suters on Cameron Street before moving to a shop owned by CE Wright.

When that building burned down and Parkers moved their operation to a shop on High Street owned by E Stan Suter.

Eventually JN Parker & Sons moved to the Department Store building on High Street.

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