Architect's view of the Highlands Trade Skills Centre to open at Chevalier College in 2015.

Photo supplied

By Ash Mumford

A new Trade Skills Centre, to be the only one of its kind in the Highlands, is under construction at Chevalier College.

The Centre will consist of a primary industries component, offering Certificate II in agriculture, and a construction component, offering Certificate II in construction pathways.

Chevalier community liaison and development manager Paul McShane said the centre would provide a great increase in the standard of facilities at the College.

"The current facilities go back about 30 years," he said.

The Construction Centre will have two large workshops as well as an outdoor covered work area, and the Primary Industries Centre will provide a livestock theatre, holding pens and a classroom.

Mr McShane said the Centre may also offer other courses in the future. "The centre has the potential to offer certificates at a higher level. We plan to make it available to other providers such as TAFE, so other courses could be offered that way," he said.

Mr McShane said the centre could also be available to students from other schools.

Chevalier received a $1.5 million grant for construction of the centre from the Federal Government, but as the centre has a value of $2 million, Mr McShane said he hoped the shortfall would come in the form of donations from the community.

The centre is set to be operating by the start of next year.

Mr McShane said scholarships would be offered to new students who are starting Year 11 at Chevalier next year to study primary industries. Mr McShane said he hoped local businesses and industry would lend their support to the centre.