(No. 50)



# PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

# SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY TRAINING CENTRE (STHTC) WELLINGTON SQUARE

Presented to His Excellency the Governor pursuant to the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1914.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

House of Assembly

Mr Harriss (Chairman) Mr Hall Mr Best Mr Green Mrs Napier

2009

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# INTRODUCTION

To His Excellency the Honourable Peter George Underwood, Officer of the Order of Australia, Governor in and over the State of Tasmania and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

# MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

The Committee has investigated the following proposal: -

# • Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre, Tasmanian Polytechnic Wellington Square campus, Patterson Street, Launceston

and now has the honour to present the Report to Your Excellency in accordance with the *Public Works Committee Act 1914*.

The Submission of the Department of Education was as follows:-

# POLICY AND PLANNING INITIATIVES

The aim of the project is to develop a contemporary, sustainable training space to meet the needs of the growing Tourism and Hospitality Industry in Northern Tasmania.

A recent perception study carried out by the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania in Northern Tasmania sited Tourism as the number one driver for economic growth in the region. Eco Tourism is the key area of growth in the industry and one of the main drivers for Tourism growth throughout Australia. The demonstration of environmental considerations and sustainability in all aspects of tourism training cannot be delivered in current facilities which are outdated and insufficient to meet the needs of growing demand for staff.

One plank of the Tasmanian Government's vision for Tasmania is a Culinary Centre of Excellence to promote and develop gastronomy in Tasmania. This will promote and grow the food industry providing more jobs of higher status in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry as well as a better community understanding of the link between food and wellbeing. This facility will enable part of that vision to be realised for the benefit of the Tasmanian community.

The close proximity to the Launceston CBD and other educational facilities will maximise community access to this facility. The project will provide state of the art facilities for the delivery of training in Tourism and Hospitality.

The prime objectives of the capital investment are to deliver assets that support and enhance contemporary teaching and learning practices. A working party consisting of members from Tasmanian Polytechnic and Tasmanian Skills Institute has worked in conjunction with ARTAS and reported progress and invited feedback from teaching staff in all aspects of planning and design.

- Green Building Councils Education Assessment Tool;
- Flexible learning areas (3);
- Shared use of facilities;
- Commercial standard pod designed training kitchens (2) and associated storage;
- Bar and coffee service training areas;
- 50 seat restaurant/café with flexibility to seat 100;
- Reception and staff offices;
- Staff facilities;
- Student facilities and change rooms; and
- Dedicated storage for Eco-tourism guiding equipment.

ESD principles will be applied throughout the design, construction and operation of the facility. The project will introduce and implement Green Technology, not only in the infrastructure and fabric of the new building, but also in the training of Tourism and Hospitality which will in turn influence attitudes and work practices in the industry.

Materials and equipment used in the construction and operation of the building will be selected on the basis of low environmental impact as well as life cycle cost. The project is to be developed within a sustainable framework. The Green Building Councils Education Assessment Tool will be used with the intent to achieve a 5 Star level, which is classed as showing Australian Excellence. Following the Green Star philosophy will provide a facility with substantially better environmental outcomes especially in the areas of:

- Energy Consumption Reduction in lighting and computer power consumption from current levels;
- Stormwater will be captured and used to feed site irrigation and toilets;
- Waste Minimisation Reduction through direct on site reuse and waste segregation for offsite recycling;
- Environmental Emissions Reductions in waste to landfill; and
- Transportation The site can be easily accessed by public transport. Dedicated secure bicycle parking will be provided along with change and shower facilities to encourage the use of bicycle transport by both staff and students.

In addition natural lighting levels will be increased to best practice levels and linked to automatic level controls to ensure safe light levels maintained. This in conjunction with the reduction in air conditioning in classrooms and offices and an increase in natural ventilation will combine to improve student productivity leading to greater knowledge retention and overall higher learning outcomes.

# TASMANIAN CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

This application is a joint initiative between the Tasmanian Polytechnic and the Tasmanian Skills Institute. The Tasmanian Polytechnic is responsible for preemployment training and Year 11 and 12 education while the Tasmanian Skills Institute in the public RTO dealing with the workforce development requirements of employees and employers engaged in contracts of training.

Both the Polytechnic and Skills Institute have industry and community leaders as Boards of Directors. Both training organisations have strong industry links with the Tasmanian Tourism Industry Council; Tourism Tasmania, Australia Hotels Association, Restaurant and Catering Association. Also long term partnerships have been formed with enterprises and groups such as Federal Hotels (including Pure Tasmania), the TT- Line and the Hotel Grand Chancellor.

The Service Skills Environmental Scan 2009 states that according to the report "Occupational Skill Shortage Analysis – Tasmania Phase One", there will be a continuous rise in employment in Hospitality and Tourism (up by 15.4% by 2014/15). Tourism, Hospitality and Events businesses are at the frontline of Australia's economy — providing consumer goods and personal and leisure services to both domestic and overseas consumers. Sectors include accommodation, restaurants, cafes, bars, catering, gaming, meetings, events (business and leisure), conferences, tour operations, tourist information services, tour guiding, holiday parks and resorts, cultural tourism, casino and caravan park operations.

In early 2008, the accommodation sector and food and beverage services employed almost 700,000 people (or 6.5% of the total workforce) with strong long-term growth in the last few years. Also 482,800 persons were employed in tourism in 2006/07, an increase of 1.1% on 2005/06. The *Training Demand Profile – Tourism and Hospitality; Skills Tasmania July 2008* document claims that one of the most pressing and potentially debilitating issues facing the Tourism and Hospitality Industry is the issue of labour shortages. The lack of willing people to work in the industry is putting pressure on effective business operations. The state wide shortages which are critical issues include Chef, Cook, Pastry Chef, Front Office Staff, Food and Beverage, Management and Tour Guides.

Since the industry requires trained staff such a flexible, modern, green training site would assist in supporting employment requirements. This site would have the ability to service an industry which is diverse and ever changing. Both training organisations have relevant industry experienced staff that have the ability and contacts to work along side enterprises to address workforce sector needs.

The location would also support the training activity as it is adjacent to an existing Tasmanian Polytechnic Campus and the Year 11 and 12 Launceston College. Both of these sites have Learning Centres which support e-Learning and other flexible delivery options.

Students are the centre of all outcomes: any new facility must take into account any new and emerging technology and employment opportunities that are not only available today but in the future. The building and physical environment should reflect the goals and high level of participation of all learners, the design should provide opportunity for students to not only learn new skills and knowledge in a controlled environment but provide opportunity for learners to put these skills into practice in a range of situations. All programs should be aligned to high industry standards that challenge learners to meet and exceed.

As a consequence any new building should take into account all new research on not only best practice approach to how students are engaged and provide a personalised approach to lifelong learning but also provide insight and opportunity for industry partners to be at the forefront of outcomes and emerging trends and standards. This facility should invoke a scene of pride, belonging and safety for all learners. It should provide a community feel as well as foster a sense of pride for the community. It should promote in-depth learning and a culture of high achievement.

A variety of teaching and learning styles are necessary as it is apparent that learners achieve higher outcomes when they are continually challenged and have opportunity to work with and along side teaching staff and other learners. The proposed new campus will support high achievement outcomes for students and staff by encouraging:

- Focusing on individual students needs;
- Staff and learners facilitating and personalised learning style;
- Utilising new technology in both teaching and learning as well as industry trends;
- Synergy with surrounding environment;
- Promote and foster a scene of community; and
- Provide industry standard ratio training thus ensuring industry buy in.

# TASMANIAN POLYTECHNIC SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY TRAINING CENTRE

The proposed project is the Tasmanian Polytechnic Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre.

# Location

The proposed location is an existing car park site within the Wellington Square campus of the Tasmanian Polytechnic on Patterson St Launceston. The site is shared with existing heritage listed buildings and the design approach has been considered to compliment the area while providing a state of the art facility. An existing brick building on the site will be redeveloped as part of the new centre while two obsolescent weatherboard building will be demolished.

The site has a rich and varied colonial history which include the convict Treadmill and Gaol. Some remains of these buildings previously demolished will remain. An archaeological report has been undertaken and the recommendations of this report are being initiated.

# **BUILDING OVERVIEW**

The new development will be a state of the art training facility built to the latest technological standards and delivering training in Tourism and Hospitality. The demonstration of environmental considerations and sustainability in all aspects of tourism training cannot be delivered in current facilities. The new facility will provide an Eco Tourism basis and meet the growing needs and demand for staff of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry in Northern Tasmania.

The consolidation will allow the appropriate level of support to be given to those who may be disadvantaged or non-traditional student groups. Its close proximity to the Launceston CBD and other educational facilities will maximise community access to this facility.

The building has been designed to reflect the State Government's vision of a Culinary Centre of Excellence, part of the Tasmanian Government's paddock to plate strategy. Ecologically Sustainable Design principles will be applied throughout the design, construction and operation of the facility. The project will introduce and implement Green Technology, not only in the infrastructure and fabric of the new building, but also in the training of Tourism and Hospitality which will in turn influence attitudes and work practices in the industry.

Materials and equipment used in the construction of operation of the building will be selected on the basis of low environmental impact as well as life cycle cost. The building and environs are to be constructed under the Green Building Councils Australia's guidelines addressing environmental and waste management plans, indoor environmental quality, energy efficiency, smart lighting, transport considerations, potable water efficiency, material selection, emissions and land use ecology. The design will incorporate solar design principals as well as natural ventilation.

The facility is to be developed within a sustainable framework. The green building council Education assessment tool will be used as a tool to achieve as high a green star rating as is possible within the constraints of the budget and availability of materials. Using this green star philosophy the facility will provide a substantially better environmental outcome. Features include:

- Energy Consumption-Reduction in lighting and energy consumption from current levels;
- Water usage-Recycling of rain water through the toilets and irrigation system;
- Waste minimization-Reduction through direct on site reuse and waste segregation for off site recycling; and
- Natural lighting levels will be increased to reduce the need for electric lighting and linked to automatic controls to maintain safe working levels.

# Functions

The functions have been split over two levels. The lower level of the main building consists of the following areas: entry; general learning areas; retail; deliveries and

storage; cool, dry and alcohol stores; cleaner and chemical storage; staff offices; bar and restaurants; kitchen; plant room; toilet facilities; garage; rubbish storage; and lifts.

The upper level of the main building will consist of: staff offices; commercial training kitchens; bar and coffee service training areas; flexible learning area; lounge; stores; change rooms and lockers; toilet facilities; cleaners store; dry and cool stores; tea making and resources; and lifts.

# **Construction Methodology**

The proposed buildings may be considered as follows. The building will have reinforced concrete slabs and footings. The main structure consists of a combination steel columns and beams, and load bearing brick veneer. Infill wall framing will be timber or concrete block work. The roof cladding will be colorbond custom orb. Wall cladding will be a combination of brickwork, cement sheet, aluminium composite panels and bluestone face tiles. Roof will be fully insulated with R 3.5 to roofs ceilings external walls with acoustic insulation to internal walls. Window frames will be powder coated aluminium frame with 10.38 mm laminated glass. Internally, walls will be lined with plasterboard. Extensive use of glass will be used to maintain visual connection between spaces and aid in supervision. Floor finishes includes marmoleum floor sheeting, rubber, and carpet.

# **Power Supply**

The existing substation is satisfactory for reuse; and all distribution boards to be provided with residual current device (RCD) protection.

# Lighting

The majority of all lighting will consist of T5 fluorescent, compact fluorescent fixtures and high bay light in large workshop spaces. Luminaries will be operated by motion sensor and only operate when rooms are occupied. In areas where there is a significant natural light, light sensors are used to determine when lights can be used. Feature light fixtures will be incorporated for highlighting architectural or landscape elements. External lights will provide general lighting around the building controlled via photo-electric cell clock. Emergency lights will be installed in locations as required.

# **Fire Detection System**

The indicator panel will be located in the front entrance. The proposed fire services shall comprise the following systems:

- smoke detectors will be located in all rooms and ceiling spaces where required by the standard;
- heat detectors protecting rooms which might be subject to spurious alarms if smoke detectors are installed;
- a fire indicator panel controlling smoke and heat detectors and building occupant warning facilities will be located in the main lobby;
- interconnection of mechanical services equipment such as mechanical plant shutdown with the fire indicator panel for shutdown or control during fire emergencies; and
- a building occupant warning system throughout the building in the form of localised sounders.

The building occupant warning facilities will comprise local sounders which will be ceiling mounted. In the event of a fire alarm, all sounders will simultaneously operate.

# **Mechanical Services**

# Interface facilities

Whenever the fire detection system operates, all mechanical systems will be shut down.

### Air Conditioning

Air conditioning for cooling will be avoided wherever possible, with the exception of the server room, e.g. restaurant and café.

# Ventilation

Natural ventilation will be provided to all occupied spaces via open able windows or an opening and mechanical ventilation will only be provided to toilets and occupied rooms where natural ventilation cannot be otherwise provided.

#### <u>Exhaust</u>

The kitchen extraction systems shall be provided with variable speed control to minimise power consumption.

#### Security

Each building will include a security system with the facility to turn off lighting and heating when system is armed. Selected external doors will be provided with access control equipment to operate either an electric strike or magnetic lock. Internal doors that are locked will be released via a push button. Closed circuit TV monitoring of outdoor areas spaces will be provided. All security alarms will be operated via the computer system. Security issues to be monitored on site.

# **Communication/ICT**

Communications will include wireless system for student laptops and hard wire data system for staff. Each building will be connected to the server room via a multiple core fibre connection and each will utilize both wired and wireless technologies.

#### **Structural Design**

The structural design is foundation and ground slab and slab and beam construction.

# Wall and Roof Structure

The wall and roof structure consists of steel columns and beams, clay bricks and steel lintels.

# **PROJECT FUNDING**

Current Building Estimate	\$ 4,500,000.00
Equipment Budget	\$ 800,000.00
Total	\$ 5,300,000.00
Contingency 4%	\$ 212,008.00
Professional & Planning Fees 8.85%	\$ 536,158.00
Post Contract Contingency	\$ 11,850.00
Budget Total	\$ 6,060,000.00
Funding Allocation	\$ 6,060,000.00

# **COST ESTIMATES**

The details of the Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre are as follows:

Element	Cost Estimate (\$)
Building Works	
Buildings	\$4,112,000.00
Landscaping	\$150,000.00
Sub Total	\$4,262,000.00
Site Works and Services	
Site Infrastructure and connections	\$238,000.00
Sub Total	\$238,000.00
Other	
Contingencies & Escalation	\$223,850.00
Fees (total)	\$536,150.00
Furniture and Equipment	\$800,000.00
Sub Total	\$1,560,000.00
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	\$6,060,000.00

# **EVIDENCE**

The Committee commenced its inquiry on Monday, 16 November last with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to Henty House, 1 Civic Square, Launceston whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Scott Curran, Director, ARTAS Architects
- Tim Cox, Workforce Sector Leader, Tasmanian Polytechnic
- Bruce Morley, Eco and Adventure Guiding Learning Leader, Tasmanian Polytechnic
- Jack Hansen, Manager Capital Planning Shared Services
- Mike Van Der Veen, Principal Projects Manager

# Background

Mr Hansen provided the following background to the project:

This project, the Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre at Wellington Square, has again been approved by the board and the CEO of the Polytechnic and has also been consulted through both the Academy and the Skills Institute and they have supported the project. The Polytechnic has undertaken and agreed to an agreement with Skills Tasmania on the funding of the project and that has been approved by DEEWR in Canberra so the project is all approved and ready to go.

# Mr Curran added the following information:

This new development will be a state-of-the-art training facility built to the latest technological standards in delivering training in tourism and hospitality. Demonstration of environmental considerations and sustainability in all aspects of tourism training cannot be delivered in the current facility. As a result of that, a new building has been designed to reflect the State Government's vision of a culinary centre of excellence as part of the Tasmanian Government's paddock-to-plate strategy.

Ecologically sustainable design principles will be applied throughout the design, the construction and the operation of the facility. The project will introduce and implement green technology, not only in the infrastructure and fabric of the new building but also in the training of tourism and hospitality, which will in turn influence attitudes and work practices in the industry. Materials and equipment used in the construction and operation of the building will be selected on the basis of low environmental impact as well as life-cycle costings.

This facility is also to be developed within a sustainable framework. The green building council education assessment tool will be used as a tool to achieve as high a green-star rating as possible within the constraints of the budget and availability of materials. Using the green-star philosophy, this facility will provide a substantially better environmental outcome and at the moment this building is currently tracking on five stars. Features will include reduction in lighting and energy consumption from current levels, recycling of rain water through the toilets and irrigation system, waste reduction through direct on-site reuse and waste segregation for off-site recycling, solar hot water, and natural lighting increased to reduce the need for electric lighting, linked to automatic controls to maintain safe working levels.

The proposed building may be considered as follows. The building will have a reinforced concrete slab and footings. The main structure consists of a combination of steel column and beam and load-bearing brick veneer. In-fill wall framing will be timber or concrete block work. The roof will be Colorbond custom orb. All cladding will be a combination of brickwork, cement sheet, aluminium composite panels and bluestone faced tiles. The roof will be fully insulated with R3.5 to roof ceilings and external walls, with acoustic installation to internal walls. Window frames will be powder-coated aluminium with 10.38-millimetre laminated glass. Internally, walls will be lined with plasterboard. Extensive use of glass will maintain a visual connection between the spaces and aid in supervision. Floor finishes include Marmorleum floor sheeting, rubber and carpet.

The majority of lighting will consist of either T5 fluorescent, compact fluorescents or high bay. In areas where there is significant natural light, light sensors are used to determine where lights can be used. Featured fixed lighting will be incorporated in the architecture and the landscape elements. External lights will provide general lighting of the building and they will be controlled by a photoelectric cell or clock. Emergency lights will also be installed.

Whenever the fire detection operates, all mechanical systems will be shut down. Air-conditioning will be used for cooling and will be avoided wherever possible, with the exception of the server room, the restaurant and the cafe; the training kitchen should be included in there as well. Natural ventilation will be provided to all occupied spaces via openable windows. Mechanical ventilation will only be provided to toilets and occupied rooms where we cannot provide natural ventilation. The kitchen extraction system will be provided via a variable speed control to minimise power consumption.

Each building will include a security system with a facility to turn off the lighting and heating when the system is armed. Communications will include a wireless system for laptops, and hardwire data for staff. Each building will be connected to the server room. Another important consideration in this building is the AV component. This building will have state-of-the-art AV which will enable us to display and record demonstrations as they occur. Each of the kitchens and training areas will have television screens that will enable the students to see the lecture, preparation of food or coffee or bar service. This will also give us an ability to stream that information to other campuses or to other areas. It will also give us the ability to record those demonstrations. If they are done by a visiting chef or somebody like that, it gives us the opportunity to record that and keep that for posterity.

This site has been identified as having major historical significance due to previous buildings on this site. The old gaol and the convict treadmill were located in an area to the west of the site, which is where the proposed car park will be. The likelihood of remains being underneath the car park is high and we have taken that into consideration while we have been designing the building. One of the other site constraints was the existing tree on the site. It can be seen in some of the early photographs and we considered that it was important to retain that tree. That has had an impact on the footprint of the building and also the layout of the site.

We intend to retain the existing heritage building that is on the western side of the site, adjacent to Barrow Street. We are proposing to pull off all the add-ons that have been put onto that building and return that building close to its original state. That will be used for storage and also potentially for garaging. We are looking to create a student courtyard in between that building and our proposed new building, utilising the tree as a fairly substantial element of that courtyard. The building will be set out from using the existing traffic way that is there at the moment and the footprint of the building comes across and impacts slightly on the existing car park area.

We have looked to provide the restaurant, lounge bar, bar and training kitchen on the ground floor. Because of the connection with the public we felt it was important that this be placed on the ground floor to give ease of access. Another really important consideration in the design of this building was to open up the façade of this building as much as we could to get as much visibility for people walking past or driving past. It is in a very high traffic area; lot of tourists walk past this area on the way to the Gorge, the Cenotaph or the park. We felt that it was important to provide a visual connection with this building for people that were walking past. As a result of that the restaurant and the kitchen have been placed on that ground floor.

The loading bay and storage area is also located in that area at the rear of the building, once again so that we do not have circulation cross-over. There is a lift there that provides access for the public and for staff and students to the first floor, and a lift for goods. The lifts arrive in the loading bay. Then they are decanted into the storage area, either into the training kitchen or into the lift to the kitchens upstairs. Adjacent to the entry we have a small retail area where the produce that is produced by students can be sold...

We are utilising the entry as well for hotel training, so we have a desk there for front of house. Then up the stairs to the right we have a lounge and bar that will be used in training but can also be open to the public. We have a 50-seat restaurant with the ability to be divided into two smaller spaces. Flexibility is also an important criteria of the design. We have designed them so that we can open up these areas to be much larger but we can also shut them down to provide a lot more areas. The classrooms that are adjacent to the restaurant have bi-fold doors so these can be used as classrooms during the day or can be opened back up if there is an evening function or even if there is a luncheon that requires more seating.

We have some garaging for eco tourism, storage area, chair store, plant room and offices located in that area as well. Upstairs we have bar training. Once again it is a similar design so that we can bi-fold the doors back and combine that with coffee service. A small cafe adjacent to the bar service and training area gives the public an opportunity to come up and experience the products, and also the students get the opportunity to serve those people.

There are two commercial training kitchens that are spread across the front of the building, once again to open up the building and get more visibility. You will see that we have pulled back all of the training areas off that window to keep that as open and as visible as possible. The opportunity to open that area to combine those two kitchens together and then the flexible learning area at the ends, give students the chance to break out into that learning area apart from the commercial kitchen. There is a central corridor with access to staff offices that look down into the courtyard and onto the tree, a fire stair and all of these storage requirements associated with those functions on that floor.

At the moment we are currently in planning. The drawing that you have, which is A213/P2 was the original drawing that we submitted to council. Heritage have advised us that they will not support our application. They have asked us to redesign the façade of the building to fit in with the historical nature of the site. They would like to see the façade in different materials, to set the building back slightly, to get greater fenestration on the building and to articulate the façade more than what we had at the moment. The original façade was designed around the intent, which was to provide a state-of-the-art building that really showcased what we were trying to do. We felt that this modern façade was an appropriate way of introducing this new building to form an iconic form in this heritage precinct.

As it stands at the moment we are currently negotiating with Heritage. The revised drawing that you have, which is A213/P6, is a current form that we are proposing to go back to Heritage with. As you can see, the building is not quite as open as we had originally intended but we are still hoping that, through large areas of glass but with greater articulation and the use of more materials, we are able to satisfy their requirement. We have broken the roof forms down into much smaller roof forms. We have introduced the same form as the buildings next door. We have introduced some of the patterning as well. The trees are also an important part of the streetscape and we are looking to maintain those as part of the new elevation. We are setting the building back. The building will step in and out now as it goes along the front of the building more in line with the building that is next door. That is the existing DECCD building and we are hoping that, by introducing these elements, we can come to an agreement with Heritage in terms of the façade.

...We are looking to use a number of different materials onto the street. With the two sections of wall that are behind the trees, we are looking to introduce bluestone tiles onto the face of that building to reflect the bluestone wall that runs along through the front and to try to break the materials up so that we do not just have a straight copy of the red brick that is on site. We will also to introduce some timber in the louvres. We felt that the trees were a really important part of

this design. A tree has two lives: it has a life when it has no leaves on, essentially the frame of the tree which is woody and has lots of timber, and then it gets lots of foliage and becomes green and changes. We wanted to reflect that in the timber shutters and try to get a link back to that tree so that the link, that initial design concept, does not get lost.

At the back of the building we have introduced red brick because the back of the building looks directly onto that existing heritage building.

... There are a number of different elements on that back so once again we have tried to break it up. We have introduced a sandstone render onto a component of that building. Also, we have brought around some of the silver or grey Alucobond that we have around the front of the building to get a direct reference back with what we are trying to do on the front of the building.

#### **Solar Water Heating**

The Committee questioned the witnesses with regard to the use of solar hot water heating in the proposed works. Mr Curran responded:

Yes, we are using solar hot water heating to enable us to put that through the system. That is one of the opportunities we can utilise. The main difference between this building and the previous building is that the environmental controls that we are using on this building step up a notch from what we were using on the previous one. That enables us to get some additional green-star points from where we were before. There are the same considerations with materials, with the glass, sun control and power. We have all the same elements, but now have the ability to improve the mechanical ventilation system, which we need to do because of the associated function with the kitchen and the heat and the air that needs to be down through there.

#### **Historical Tree and Courtyard Facilities**

The Committee questioned the witnesses with regard to the maintenance of the tree with heritage value and the design and use of the courtyard space. Mr Curran responded:

We have based this design on a similar project - Cornwall Square, where we have the Transit Centre and also the Sebel Hotel. All the trees were retained in that development and it just adds human scale to the street. It also is a terrific environment to have a break under there and have coffee or a meal. That is what we wanted to try to do with this as well, the ability to break out to the street, utilise some new trees on the street but also use that great tree we have and the potential for functions out in that back courtyard space as well.

... The access at the moment is down that laneway and then around the back into the courtyard or through the restaurant, or around off the car park from the other side.

Because of the functions that are associated in here with delivery, storage and things there is no public access through that. There is only the ability for people who work in this area and need to get access out of that door. ...It is for visitors that come into the airlock and they will get a chance to go and buy things before they move into the lounge or into the restaurant. It also restricts them, if you like, to just that area to buy the retail things.

But it really depends on why they are there. They might be there to go upstairs for coffee in the café or they might be there to buy things, or they might be there for the restaurant. There are a couple of different scenarios as to why they might be in there.

#### **Restaurant Location and Design**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the location and design of the restaurant for the proposed works. Mr Cox responded:

...One of the key differences between this design and the current facility is the restaurant in the current facility is on the third floor...

It is a well-documented fact that if a restaurant is anywhere but on the ground floor, it is doomed to fail. So the way the programs are designed at the moment, they are very structured. Let's face it, if you are going out for a quick bite for lunch, the third floor in the current tourism and hospitality training building is probably not going to be at the top of your selection list, parking obviously being one of the issues there as well.

With the layout and the positioning of this proposed building it is envisaged that the restaurant will be open five days a week. You will notice with the training kitchens on the first floor with the pod design that we can fit 16 in each kitchen, and if you look at the size of the kitchen downstairs, you will not fit 16 in that kitchen. That kitchen has not been designed for that feature at all - having the whole group. You would then split any potential or any training groups that are coming through doing cookery training into a roster where they would work different shifts in the restaurant downstairs. Whilst they are not on shift, they would be off doing other training upstairs or some project-based learning et cetera.

...So we would envisage that you would have no more than five students working in the ground floor kitchen which not only then allows the restaurant to be open on a more regular basis, but also provides a more industry-real staff to customer ratio, still in that controlled training environment.

So the restaurant will be open five days a week, not two days, as is the case at the moment.

...As Scott mentioned, the 50-seat component of the restaurant itself, can be split into two for smaller groups if required, or classrooms G30 and G31 for larger functions - for example, it can also be used for functions such as Melbourne Cup lunches, increasing the capacity of the dining area to 100.

[The current restaurant capacity is] approximately 100 and, as mentioned before, the disadvantage of that is that it is one big room. It has a great

atmosphere and everything if you have 80 to 100 people in there but it doesn't have an atmosphere at all if you have only 20 or 30, unfortunately.

The other advantage is with the design that Scott has put together here is that we can close the rooms off so that you can use these rooms for other training purposes. At the moment you might have only 20, 30 or 50 people booked in, but you cannot utilise that room for any other training because you have guests in there as well. It is very limited in its operation, whereas the proposed operation will be very flexible.

Mr Curran added the following with regard to access:

There is access through the front of the building. Due to this method of reproducing this elevation; that is the plan - the very front line of the plan does not reflect the true elevation of what we have shown there. At the moment, in front of that white car, we have the ability to walk into either side of the classroom.

#### **Restaurant Name**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to proposed names for the restaurant. Mr Cox responded:

The Treadmill has been definitely put out there as a proposed name for the restaurant.

Mr Hansen added the following:

This is the concept we have used in Drysdale Hobart. We have used the Collins Room and those sorts of things, which are names of the local vicinity and its connection to the Drysdale building and yes, we will definitely be considering that in this building here and putting the same concept through.

# **Convict Treadmill**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the position of the convict treadmill and the possibility of incorporating it into the design of the proposed works. Mr Curran responded:

We are not sure what is there at the moment. This is an unknown thing we have. All we have at the moment is an overlay from some aerial photographs. Let us say that there is a strong possibility that where our building finishes and where the old building finished may clash. There are guidelines set out under the Heritage Act that determine the process that we need to follow through. The next process for us is to do what is called the discovery dig to see what the extent of those remains will be. It may be that they do not coincide with what we are trying to do; it may be that they do.

At the moment where we overlap we currently have a garage and storage areas. I think probably there are better ways for us to interpret the archaeological remains than to put in a resin floor or a glass floor. Part of the strategy behind our initial concept was that it is a fairly historic site; it has a lot of significance and if we leave what is there for another day when it can be uncovered properly then we do not have the money in our project to do it justice. However, in the future that may become available. If we do not build over the top of it then that enables that opportunity to move forward rather than us build on top of it and not be able to do that.

...As they have explained it to me, they will actually do the excavation and record it. That will enable us to build over the top of that area if there is a clash between the archaeology and what we are trying to do.

... There is an opportunity for us to do an interpretation panel, which is what we have done on previous sites where the history of the site has been considered important. There is an opportunity for us to do something like that. Once again, it is really an unknown. We have had other projects where the likelihood was very high yet we did not find anything.

Mr Morley added the following information:

...Convict studies are an important part of our training courses, so to be located on a site that is significant in terms of our convict heritage is something that we would interpret, not just to our students. Our students are required to conduct interpretive tours and are looking for places around Launceston city but they could actually do it right on site. So interpretation might not just be limited to a panel but might also include face-to-face interpretation, delivered as part of their training on site, which would be fantastic in terms of the convict heritage.

...Through the archaeological dig, depending on what they find, that will be recorded both through documentation and through photographs. Then all the research that has to go along with that archaeological dig will be fantastic in terms of providing us with that interpretive material. So even if they cannot expose the actual infrastructure that may still be there underneath the current surface, we would have documented photos which we could incorporate into the interpretation of what is left there. Then the research would come up with whatever evidence there was in the records of what it used to look like when it was actually operating.

# **Heritage Tours**

The Committee questioned the witnesses with regard to the possibility of using the proposed new facilities for heritage tours. Mr Morley responded:

We currently do a little bit of that; we utilise existing buildings for tours. However, the guiding program is one that is probably not on campus as much as most of the others. The storage area and the parking are critical for our key equipment, our bus and our trailer, because a lot of our training takes place in field sites. All of our training about Tasmanian native flora and fauna and geology and so on does not take place on campus. However, to deliver our underpinning knowledge and skills, to give students an understanding of the tourism industry, what tourists are after and the concepts and main themes we look at in terms of what we can interpret for Tasmanian natural and cultural heritage, this needs to be done in a learning environment like this one.

We need the ability to travel to the national parks and the various heritage sites around the State to deliver the training on site, but if we have the ability to utilise this site in terms of actually conducting historic heritage tours, that would be fantastic. Currently with the Drysdale building in Hobart we utilise the rear area because the multi-storey car park was built on an old Aboriginal campsite. All that was revealed prior to the building of the campsite. The archaeological dig was done and the research was done on the traditional owners, so we currently interpret that site. You cannot see any evidence of it whatsoever apart from the council putting evidence on the ground in terms of where the old rivulet used to flow underneath the car park. So we actually use that built-up site, which is completely changed and bears no resemblance to what it did when it was used by the traditional owners, but we can still interpret it to the public and to our trainee students very effectively. That is part of the key. If you think about a site like the Female Factory in Hobart, you have four walls and that is all you have to work with, yet good tour guides can interpret this and really paint the picture for someone of what life was like for those female convicts when the place was in full swing. That is the challenge often that guides have.

It stretches to any topic at all. Wildlife is another one. On wildlife tours, particularly if they are conducted in the day, you cannot see the actual subject matter that you are interpreting so the challenge for the guide is to do that, to paint the picture for people, to open their eyes and turn the lights on without necessarily seeing a light on the ground.

Mr Cox added the following:

The entry, G.O5, just past the retail; that desk and facility there, are actually incorporated for guiding and retail sales as well. The students would be able to operate from that desk. There is a storage facility under the stairs, so that would be set up from which the students would conduct and run their tours and everything.

...We already have a bus. One of the problems with the current facility is the lack of storage for the eco-adventure guiding area, so again this current site would rectify the issues that we have there. A recent perception study carried out by the Tourism Industry Council in northern Tasmania stated that tourism obviously was one of the current economic drivers, with eco and adventure tourism being the key growth area to the industry and one of the main drivers throughout Tasmania. The current facility that we have is outdated. It is unsustainable in its current form and does not adequately house or suit the eco-adventure guiding area. Again, the key drivers are to facilitate the growth area of eco-tourism, provide a better retail training and food and beverage training area with the restaurant and the location of the building, and being able to open and operate that five days a week as well.

# **Heritage Council**

The Committee questioned the witnesses with regard to the authority of the Heritage Council in planning and development applications. Mr Curran responded:

We have the opportunity now to appeal against their decision. The recommendations come back to the council. The council have issued me with that notice and we are currently suspended at the moment while we try to negotiate this facade. That is another option available to us - that we appeal their decision.

... If we appeal then there is potential for us to lose three to four months in that process, which is time we do not have.

#### **Vehicle Access and Heritage Concerns**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to any heritage concerns regarding vehicle access to the site. Mr Curran responded:

We are looking to have a shared zone down the side - shared for pedestrians and also for vehicles. The vehicles would come in, go past that doorway, turn in, do a three-point turn and then come back out of the site in a frontal direction.

... The information we have received from Heritage is that it is really to do with the façade of the building that we were proposing. The footprint, use on the site, retention of the tree, refurbishment of the back building, were all good positive things. It really is to do with the façade and the form of the building as it fronts onto Paterson Street.

...There is a slight modification. We tried to keep the footprint the same, as much as we can, but we have moved elements of the building in and out to get that articulation they were looking for. So there will be areas that will be set back. The new setback line of this building is that the retail space that you can see, which is adjacent to the Gothic building, goes back onto the line of the Gothic building and then it steps forward onto the line of the building that is on the corner, whereas the Gothic building starts forward and steps back. What we are looking to do is to start on that line and then to step forward. The indications we have had from them in preliminary meetings is that they are happy with that approach. We are still negotiating and we are still very much at a preliminary stage.

#### **Floor Area**

The Committee questioned the witnesses with regard to the floor area of the development and the floor area of Drysdale. Mr Curran responded:

I do not know what Drysdale is at the moment but we have taken approximately 200 square metres out of the original brief that we were given by the clients to suit the footprints we have on this site at the moment.

Mr Hansen added the following:

The Drysdale building is about 900 square metres per floor and there are three floors, so it is nearly 3 000 square metres. This is considerably smaller - half the size.

Mr Curran concluded:

It is smaller but a lot of the building we are currently in is dead space, just because of the design. With the restaurant, if you have 20 people in there, you cannot use the rest of it. With this building, basically every internal wall is open/close so you can set it up whichever way you like. It is extremely flexible in design.

The security system for the building will allow us to have complete control of each section. Of an evening we can open it up and use it for a culinary school of excellence, or open it to the general public for demonstrations. The AV facilities give us the ability to record things with guest chefs and everything else. That, to me, will be extremely beneficial, especially to the regional and remote areas. Where students cannot come in from Queenstown or Smithton they can still have full access to these presenters and we can use them over and over again.

The pod design is a new design that we have come up with in consultation with the Skills Institute and the cookery teachers. The power, plumbing and everything will come out of one central point to each pod, but also there will be two students on each pod so it gives it more of that realistic environment that they would be working in. With the layout of the current facility, you have one or two teachers and 16 to 18 students. It is the same with the actual kitchen that services the restaurants. You get very cosy and comfortable in your environment and then you go out and do your on-the-job placement or your work placement and all of a sudden there are not 16 of you. There are two or three and you say, 'Hang on, this is not how I was taught. This is not what I was expecting'. With this design, the OH&S considerations have been taken into account and they will still have plenty of space but will also be getting used to working in confined spaces at the same time. Then when they come down to the ground floor restaurant it will be even smaller, so by the time they get out into the workplace they will be used to working in small kitchens, as they mostly are.

# **Capacity for Growth**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the capacity for growth in the proposed new facilities. Mr Cox responded:

The flexibility of being able to operate as one kitchen or two kitchens will suit our current demand plus our demand into the future... [projected for] the next 15 to 20 years. The Service Skills Environmental Scan for 2009 showed in its occupational skill shortage analysis of Tasmania that hospitality and tourism will continue to rise by 15.4 per cent up to 2014 or 2015, so this current building will definitely exceed that and beyond. The location of the building will also be able to utilise the facilities directly across the road, the Launceston College facilities, when in 2011 they become part of the Tasmanian Polytechnic as well. That is the reason we have not had to look at building libraries or designated computer labs into this facility, because we will have them behind us and we will have them across the road. With the building being completely wireless, every classroom will be a computer lab anyway.

### Future use for the Drysdale Building

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the plans for the future use of the Drysdale building. Mr Hansen responded:

At the moment we are again in consultation with DHHS... That is our preference at board level at the moment for consideration and we are discussing that. We have approached the nearby developer just in case we were asked by the Institute board to make sure that we do look at other areas. I support Government's preference that we look at another government agency for the use of that building... If that comes off then the building will be handed back to its original owner, because it used to be the old catering block for the Launceston General Hospital.

# DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

The following documents were taken into evidence and considered by the Committee:

- Teaching and Learning Capital Fund for Vocational Education and Training Tasmanian Polytechnic Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre Wellington Square: Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, November 2009; and
- Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre Wellington Square: Site plans (five pages).

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The need for the proposed works was firmly established. The proposed Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre Wellington Square campus will provide a space where environmental considerations and sustainability are demonstrated in all aspects of tourism training, something that cannot be delivered in the current facilities, which are outdated and insufficient to meet the growing demand. The project will introduce and implement green technology, not only in the infrastructure and fabric of the new building, but in the training of tourism and hospitality which will in turn influence attitudes and work practices in the industry.

Eco tourism is the key area of growth in the industry and one of the main drivers for tourism growth throughout Australia. This facility will also enable the realisation of one aspect of the Tasmanian Government's vision for Tasmania as a Culinary Centre of Excellence. This will promote and grow the food industry providing more jobs of higher status in the hospitality and tourism industry as well as a better community understanding of the link between food and wellbeing.

The proposed new campus will support high achievement outcomes for students and staff by encouraging a variety of teaching and learning styles, continually challenging students and offering the opportunity to work with and along side teaching staff and other learners. Its close proximity to the Launceston central business district and other educational facilities will maximise community access to this facility. The proposed works will provide state of the art facilities for the delivery of training in tourism and hospitality.

Accordingly, the Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

Parliament House Hobart 4 December 2009 Hon. A. P. Harriss M.L.C. Chairman