

# PUBLIC

**THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1 AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE, HOBART, ON WEDNESDAY 24 JULY 2024.**

## **NEW RISDON PRISON KITCHEN PROJECT**

**The Committee met at 2.08 p.m.**

**CHAIR (Ms Rattray)** - I would like to welcome everyone.

Before we commence the hearing, I will introduce the members of the committee. I have Dean Harriss, Jen Butler, Tania Rattray and Helen Burnet. We also have Committee secretariat support at the table - Scott and Kiah - and we have Rosemary from Hansard.

We have an apology from Mr Simon Wood, and I acknowledge that.

Mr Secretary, would you please read the message from Her Excellency, referring to the project of the Committee's inquiry? Thank you.

**SECRETARY** - Pursuant to section 16(2) of the *Public Works Committee Act 1914*, the Governor refers the undermentioned proposed public works to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works to consider and report thereon, the new Risdon Prison Kitchen Project.

Pursuant to section 16(3) of the act, the estimated cost of such work when completed is \$15 million.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. The committee is in receipt of one submission, and it is from the Department of Justice. I ask a member to move a motion that the submission be received, taken into evidence and published.

**Ms BUTLER** - Yes. I move -

That the submission be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**CHAIR** - I understand the witnesses appearing before committee today are the representing the Department of Justice, Secretary, would you please introduce and swear our witnesses, please?

**Mr ROD WISE**, DEPUTY SECRETARY, CORRECTIVE SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE; **Mr COLIN SHEPHERD**, ACTING DEPUTY SECRETARY STRATEGY, GOVERNANCE AND MAJOR PROJECTS, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE; **Ms AMBER SMITH**, ACTING DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE; and **Mr ROBERT FORD**, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT, XSQUARED ARCHITECTS, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION, AND WERE EXAMINED.

## PUBLIC

**CHAIR** - Thank you all, and thank you for appearing before the committee. The committee is pleased to hear your evidence today.

Just before giving evidence, I would like to inform you of some of the very important aspects of committee proceedings, and some of you will be well aware of those, but for those who have not been at these before: This is a committee hearing and it is a proceeding in parliament. That means it receives the protection of parliamentary privilege. It is an important legal protection that allows individuals giving evidence to a parliamentary committee to speak with complete freedom, without the fear of being sued or questioned in any court or place out of parliament. It applies to ensure that the parliament receives the very best information when conducting its inquiries.

It is also important to be aware the protection is not accorded if statements that may be defamatory are repeated or referred to outside of the confines of the parliamentary proceedings.

This is a public hearing, and members of the public and journalists may be present, and this means your evidence may be reported. Do you all understand?

**ALL WITNESSES** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. I would like to offer the opportunity for an opening statement. Amber, is that going to be you?

**Ms SMITH** - Yes, I'll start. Thank you. Firstly, thank you for the opportunity to formally present and discuss the new Risdon kitchen project. It is certainly an exciting project for the department, that has been many years in the planning. I will start by providing a bit of a project overview and summary.

The Ron Barwick Prison, where the current kitchen is located, is the oldest facility on the Risdon site, having been constructed in the late 1950s and commissioned in 1960. I think as could be seen from our walk-around today, the current kitchen has reached the end of its useful life due to age and capacity constraints.

**CHAIR** - But very clean, I might add.

**Ms SMITH** - Very clean, yes. With the infrastructure now having deteriorated to a point that constant maintenance is required to meet required standards that allow the Tasmania Prison Service to keep it operational, it is no longer deemed fit for purpose; nor does it meet the essential functional and operational requirements of a commercial kitchen.

The department's goals are set out in the strategic plan, and they are to provide a sustainable, safe, secure, humane and effective corrections system and improve access to justice. The new Risdon kitchen project is a key initiative to be delivered under this strategic plan.

Further, the new kitchen aligns with priority 3 - improve and build infrastructure to meet contemporary approaches in corrections - of the strategic plan for Corrections.

A key objective of the project was to design and construct a new kitchen that caters for the increasing demand in prisoner numbers, and provides opportunities for prisoners to engage

## PUBLIC

in meaningful work and training, supporting rehabilitation and reintegration back into the community. When complete, the new kitchen will replace the existing kitchen in Ron Barwick, and deliver a modern, contemporary, fit-for-purpose facility.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. Anything else to add from anyone else from our witnesses? Yes Rod.

**Mr WISE** - If I might add, Chair, just from a correctional perspective.

**CHAIR** - Mr Wise, I should say.

**Mr WISE** - Thank you. When the original Risdon Prison was first built, I think there were probably 150 to 200 prisoners who transferred from the old Hobart Gaol. I think in the 1960-61 year, there was a 218 average population in the prison system. We've now got 800 prisoners today and the trajectory is on the increase.

**CHAIR** - Sadly.

**Mr WISE** - As you would have seen from this morning's visit, the facility is really straining to accommodate the number of people and deliver the number of meals that are required.

Storage is clearly an issue. We've got a number of shipping containers and storage areas outside of the kitchen area that have to be utilised because we can't fit them in the one facility. That creates a whole heap of issues for us in terms of safety, manual handling, the movement of goods and people throughout the facility, and it is no longer as effective a facility as we would like it to be.

On top of that, part of the goal of corrections is to provide prisoners with opportunities to acquire the sorts of skills and develop resources that will allow them to survive on the outside once they are released. We really need a modern facility to be able to properly train prisoners in hospitality. Hospitality is a terrific industry for prisoners to go into and they can get very useful skills in the prison environment. But what we would want them to do is become familiar with modern equipment, modern standards of kitchen practice, and they are struggling to do that in the environment that they have got at the moment.

It's also constrained, the whole environment, in a number of different ways. It's a rabbit warren, as you would have seen, and that is difficult for a whole range of reasons. Supervision is difficult. It is difficult to make sure that you know where everyone is at the one time; it is difficult to make sure that people are behaving as they should. From a work health and safety perspective, it is difficult to provide the sort of supervision that they need. And from a vocational training perspective, it is hard to get across everyone to instruct them in the way that you would want to.

We also rely, in any correctional environment, on a range of security measures. There are physical security barriers across every correctional site; but we also rely very much on dynamic security, which is the interaction between staff and prisoners. In most cases, the dynamic security is more important than the physical security, which is very often defeatable. But if you understand prisoners and where they are coming from, and you're getting intelligence from them and they're talking to them about issues that arise and talking to you about concerns

## PUBLIC

that they might have, then you are in a position to proactively work with them to stop security issues from arising. In an environment where there are so many nooks and crannies, and supervision is so difficult, that is really hard, but in a more open facility, where we can encourage our staff to engage on a better level with the prisoners whom they are supervising, we expect much better outcomes in that area.

So, from a vocational training perspective, from a security perspective, we believe that we need a modern facility that meets the needs of the corrections side, in addition to a facility that will allow us to deliver 800 to 1000 meals on a daily basis in a much more efficient way than we are able to at the present.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. Can I, on behalf of the committee, thank whoever organised our visit this morning and also congratulate those inmates that were there that were part of the workings of the current site. They were very respectful and happy to engage and I would like you to pass that on.

**Mr WISE** - Thank you. I shall pass that on.

**CHAIR** - To be able to get that direct feedback is really important and they were happy to tell us that they had to rotate the Coco Pops with the Nutri-Grain.

My question, certainly, for having a modern facility, will there be opportunity to receive certificates for those inmates who will be working in the kitchen? If they are going to be using more modern technology, does that come with a certificate type of arrangement?

**Mr WISE** - It does. Through the TAFE courses, they can get certificates.

**CHAIR** - So, through the VET courses?

**Mr WISE** - Yes. They can get certificates. And one of the other things that a modern kitchen allows, which probably older facilities don't, for the higher-level certificates you need to be competent in cooking not just the standard prison fare but other, more sophisticated meals as well. A good kitchen, a modern kitchen, allows you to do that. So, they could cater for conferences that might be held in the Tasmania Prison Service, for example, and be able to develop their skills in that way, and then be able to get those higher-level certificates.

**CHAIR** - Gaining a certificate is a relationship with TasTAFE.

**Mr WISE** - That is right.

**CHAIR** - Have you already started working on building on that relationship? I don't believe it is very firmly in place at this point in time.

**Mr WISE** - It is underdone, but we have a reasonably large TAFE presence in the prison system and this is an opportunity to develop it.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. I am going to open up to members. The executive summary on page 3 allows for quite a number of questions and then we will work our way through the rest of the report.

## PUBLIC

**Ms BUTLER** - Subsequent to the Chair's first questions, for the record it is important to note that I know of a person who served time many years ago when they were quite young. The prison kitchen was seen as a safe environment for that person; I believe they were 19, which is quite young. That person learnt quite a few skills and enjoyed being in that kitchen facility. Because of that, when they were released, they were able to undertake an apprenticeship and now they are a highly regarded and very successful chef working on the mainland.

It is very important that we provide as many opportunities for people who are in prison for that rehabilitative purpose, and the opportunity for them to restart their life and be able to find a meaningful career path. It is important that is on the public record -

**Mr WISE** - Thank you.

**Ms BUTLER** - The importance of ensuring that there are those work opportunities for people who are serving time in the prison.

**CHAIR** - Are there any further questions in regard to that page? We are moving across, and we have already been informed about the department's strategic plan. It might be worthwhile having on the public record that this proposed project is part of the larger project that happened at the Risdon Prison site. You might talk about that relationship that you have had with the previous builders of the buildings that have been completed.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - The kitchen is a very important part of the master plan that was first developed in 2017. Then in 2018, funding was provided for a range of infrastructure projects including what we would call the Southern Remand program of works. Part of that original program was to deliver the kitchen, the new Southern Remand Centre, and some upgrades in Risdon Prison complex that were needed in response to the additional prisoners that were going to go into the Southern Remand Centre.

As often happens with these large infrastructure projects, when we got to the final approval and contracting stage we found that the original budget did not necessarily match with what we had thought. We had to go through a value management exercise to find some savings and the one thing that was removed as part of that value management exercise was the kitchen. That was then re-funded in 2020 with an additional \$15 million allocation from the government.

The original work that was contracted was done by Hansen Yuncken and they did a fabulous job working on the Southern Remand Centre.

**CHAIR** - Through the COVID time as well.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Yes. As a result of that work, we applied for and received an exemption that allows us to use Hansen Yuncken, if we so choose, into the future. We have gone through an exercise with Hansen Yuncken where we have asked them to give us a price for the work, which we have now received, and we are pretty confident that the advice that we have received is a fair reflection of the market. We would probably see that the work that they have done is unlikely to change if we were to go out to tender. They looked at up to 118 subcontractors to understand what price they would be prepared to offer. We have had a good look at that and we're confident that the value that they've suggested would be the cost for the project is what the market would reflect at the moment.

Realistically, this is just another stage of the Southern Remand program but it's a very important stage for us. It's probably the last piece of work from the Southern Remand program for us to complete.

**CHAIR** - Then you'll possibly be moving north.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - That's correct.

**Ms BUTLER** - Could you run through the importance of that relationship with the previous build at the Southern Remand Centre, and explain, for the record, the specialised nature of that work in that site and how important the relationship is with the organisation that will potentially be conducting the new build? Can you explain, for the record, how specialised that work is, and why that relationship with that group and their understanding of what it requires is so important?

**CHAIR** - Particularly at a site that needs to be secure the entire time.

**Ms SMITH** - Exactly; and I was going to start with those security requirements of the prison environment. Understanding that is definitely something Hansen Yuncken were wonderful at, in terms of the Southern Remand program. We had Southern Remand as an identified site but we also did \$9.43 million worth of upgrades within the Risdon Prison complex - that's within a live prison environment. To enable those works, we had to undertake shutdowns of certain systems within the prison. The ability of Hansen Yuncken to remain flexible, to come up with other solutions and work with us as a team, and the consultants I must add - it was a very collaborative approach by everybody. When we say 'project team' we're talking holistically - everybody who worked on the project. As we touched, on through the height of COVID, we had so many issues with workforce availability and availability of materials. Hansen Yuncken remained agile, they were able to address program issues and worked with us and the consultants when we had those challenges to identify solutions.

**CHAIR** - And you came in under budget.

**Ms SMITH** - They certainly did. After the value management exercise, we managed to sign Hansen Yuncken up under a guaranteed contract sum. It was a managing contract and, yes, indeed, by the end of the project it was delivered within the time and on budget.

**CHAIR** - It's almost unheard of.

**Ms SMITH** - Yes. It was an amazing team effort, is all I can say.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - For the record, I would add the work that we need done is quite specialised in nature and we have a very good relationship with Hansen Yuncken; but there are other companies that we believe could do work for us and have done work for us in the past.

The reality for us is that there isn't a large number of companies at the moment in the state. There are probably only half a dozen that could take on these sorts of project with the scale and complexity that we're talking about. So, whilst Hansen Yuncken did a very good job, I want to make it clear that there are other companies that could do the work; but it is very

## PUBLIC

specialised and, obviously, the more experience you get from completing one of these projects, the better you will be the next time around.

**CHAIR** - One positive would be the fact that it's almost a greenfield site rather than a refurbishment. That, obviously, has more management challenges when you're trying to still use a facility but upgrade it.

**Ms SMITH** - Definitely.

**CHAIR** - This one's a complete build with a transition opportunity to move into it. We heard this morning - and thank you for the information that was provided - that, perhaps, the bakery would go first and then other aspects of the new kitchen would follow after that, and not disrupt the whole centre.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - That's absolutely right. As we discussed, strategically, the decision to put the kitchen in its location is about some of the longer-term planning that we have for the site. Had we put it inside Ron Barwick, for example, at a point in time when we then had to replace Ron Barwick, we would have lost the kitchen, whereas by having it in a separate location, it will still be able to operate when we're doing any changes to Ron Barwick.

**CHAIR** - Okay. I think we might wander over now to the general project scope. Obviously, this is where we might have some input from the architects around how you design a modern kitchen facility for a prison complex. So, just some understanding of how that unfolds and, given the really sensitive areas, certainly around security and safety, we would be interested to have some understanding. Thank you, Robert.

**Mr FORD** - Yes, no problem. So, Xsquared Architects, in conjunction with Guymer Bailey Architects, have a lot of correctional facility experience. We have engaged -

**CHAIR** - So, you didn't reinvent the wheel then?

**Mr FORD** - No we didn't.

**CHAIR** - I like to hear that.

**Mr FORD** - We have used FCA (Foodservice Consultants Australia) kitchen consultants, who also have correctional facility experience. We worked very closely with the Department of Justice and TPS (Tasmanian Prison Service) kitchen staff to undertake a series of workshops to write a brief and work through their requirements, and came up with concept plans that were worked through over a number of different iterations. We then went through a peer review process as well, which Amber could probably add more to. But that process certainly made us focus on the efficiencies of the circulation, the process. And, in the planning, we effectively have an entry point, a circular process that goes through storage, into the preparation, into the cooking, into the packaging, and then back out through storage. That's sort of the efficiencies in the design and the layout of the kitchen. We also -

**CHAIR** - There were some challenges with the site itself though?

**Mr FORD** - With regards to the - ?

**CHAIR** - To where the site was placed, where there were some challenges?

**Mr FORD** - The site is on a slightly sloping hill. We are between the Ron Barwick facility and the O'Hara Cottages facilities, and there is an existing car park that you would have seen there on site today. So, we have a footprint that is, effectively, a maximum width that we could actually build the kitchen. We have an entry point that comes through from Ron Barwick which is fairly well set because we want to make that sort of similar approach that the inmates will come up through the stairs to enter the facility. So, we have some defined points and constraints on the site. Then, when you look at the delivery process, because you've got the driveway and deliveries coming up, and you've got rubbish going out, there is a circulation requirement there for servicing the facility. We have kept the walkway and the inmates' entry points separate to that so that they were completely independent and didn't cross over or interfere with that delivery and circulation process. That is sort of the main site constraints that we've got there.

What we have then done is also, because we have inmates that are exiting through from Ron Barwick up to the site, they are effectively external to the building. So, we have fence lines between the building connecting to Ron Barwick, and they are a secure line, effectively. You move up into the building and the building itself - the perimeter envelope of the building and the nature of the products that we have used, it is all pre-cast concrete. So, we have there, effectively, a building that has a high-security rating for the external walls, even though it's a minimum-rated facility. The external windows that you will see on the plans that are in the induction training room and the day spaces, we've got glazing in there that is equivalent to the performance of the glazing in the cells at SRC (Southern Remand Centre). So, there are no bars on the windows but we have got that high-security rating of the facility.

Moving into the kitchen and that open workflow circular that goes around the space: by opening it up, we avoid that crossover and rabbit warren scenario that we have in the existing facility. It also allows for passive surveillance of the kitchen staff to be able to view across all the workspaces into the different areas.

Effectively, the only areas that are closed off in separate rooms are done so because of the environmental control requirements. So, the plating area is in a lower temperature room, so, we have cool-room panelling in closing it off, but we have glazing into that space. The bakery has different requirements but we have glazing into that area, so you can see right through the facility. On the plans, you will notice that there is an office sort of work station area that can overview the whole food prep, cooking into the bakery, right down to the plating, right through into the delivery area. That open plan and passive surveillance was certainly something that was important and discussed at length. SCG Consultants, who were engaged as security consultants independent of our consultant team, but they worked with us -

**Ms SMITH** - Engaged by the department.

**Mr FORD** - They also work in 3D and Revit, like we do. They access our model and share their models, and they were able to develop their security layout and camera views based on being able to understand, in 3D, what the models are.

**CHAIR** - The committee is very mindful that there's a lot of security aspects to this and we certainly aren't asking for any information that might compromise any of the security aspects at the RPS site, so please be mindful of that, because we are.



## PUBLIC

**Mr FORD** - Yes. I'm just trying to think if there is anything else in your lead-in question that I might have missed.

**CHAIR** - I think that's quite good.

**Ms BUTLER** - I think that's covered quite well. I was just going to ask a subsequent question around the electronic video surveillance of that kitchen area and what that might look like, and how that would operate.

**Mr FORD** - Okay. There might answers from both sides of the table on this one.

**CHAIR** - And a couple from in the middle?

**Ms SMITH** - Yes, probably from Rod as well.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - We'll see what everyone else says.

**Mr FORD** - I'll start with what we've got. As I was saying, SCG have access to all our models and done all their camera views. Within the staff areas, the TPS staff have got some screens and monitors that they can actually go and view video footage if an incident happened. If they think an inmate had stolen something or some other event had happened, they can actually view it on-site. However, the main feed also goes back to the main master control system, so that high-level side of security is -

**CHAIR** - The checks and balances arrangement.

**Mr FORD** - There's checks and balances. It means that the staff don't have to go through a procedure of going to the master control and getting all the approvals to view footage. They can actually just rewind a bit and see what's happened on-site. That's probably a point of difference that should be noted.

**Ms BUTLER** - So, that provides security to correctional officers as well as other prisoners whilst in the facility too?

**Mr FORD** - I think that would be fair to say. Others might be able to comment on the TPS staff and kitchen staff relationship with regards to that.

**Ms SMITH** - So, the catering staff are who supervises currently in the kitchen and then, from a correctional perspective, there is a correctional officer that for want of a better term -

**CHAIR** - Roams.

**Ms SMITH** - Yes, I wanted to say the word 'roams'. So yes, that current operating model is what is transitioning into this new facility as well.

**CHAIR** - Probably the taste tester as well.

**Ms SMITH** - I don't think Brad's overly keen for too much taste-testing of his products.

## PUBLIC

**Mr SHEPHERD** - I think one of the big issues here is we've just got to remember that it's a minimum-security prison facility. So, the ethos of operation for that is that there is a reasonable amount of trust given to prisoners.

**CHAIR** - And they have earned that trust.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - And they've earned it. And as Rod has alluded to, you want that relationship between the staff and the prisoners because that will allow you to, I guess, allay concerns or discover issues earlier than they escalate to become a problem. So, the security systems are set up so that the recording is happening there and then and you can go back and, obviously, view that recording. We have some added security features in this new kitchen, like when people come through the front entrance, they will go through a metal detection system, so both entering and exiting at the end of the day which, you would have seen today, that's not a feature that's available. But, ultimately, we are just simply picking up the current operational model in terms of the kitchen staff running the kitchen with the occasional visit from a correctional officer and moving that literally 80m from where it is at the moment and -

**CHAIR** - Into a modern facility.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Into a modern facility, that's right.

**Ms BUTLER** - Just for the record, I think it's important that there be a comparison between the current design, because it is such a tight environment - I think you referred to it as a rabbit warren in your opening address - and what the difference will be with the new design?

**Mr SHEPHERD** - As has already been described, the main issue is that it is a central design where it is open plan. The sight lines are very open. As you will have seen from the plans, the kitchen itself sits in the middle and the circulation flow works around the outside of that. A lot of the smaller rooms - the storage or the cool stores - are on the outside of the building. From a safety perspective you are able to see everything, as opposed to what you witnessed this morning when you came for your visit. The fact is there is a number of interconnecting corridors and rooms which make it that rabbit warren.

Whilst there are still cameras set up in the existing kitchen, the sight lines will be more open in the new facility. We will also have more cameras, I would say. The cameras have gone through the design process and have been put in those locations to maximise the sight lines so there are no nooks and crannies, as Rod has described, where you can pick up what everyone is doing.

**CHAIR** - Does having more cameras undermine the trust aspect? Once you have instilled a level of trust and then you are going to put more cameras in, does that not undermine that in some respects?

**Ms SMITH** - Probably more the terminology versus the cameras that are currently in the facility. They do their very best to cover off all those nooks and crannies but from what you have seen in the design today, that has not necessarily been achieved. For this new facility we are making sure that all those nooks and crannies are covered by the use of cameras. As Rod touched on, it is that dynamic -

**CHAIR** - There are no nooks and crannies. We have an open -

**Ms SMITH** - That is right, but there is equipment. I suppose you could say that somebody may be able to duck behind some equipment if they so choose, and put some chicken breast in their top and off they wander out - which is apparently what happens quite often. By having that security ability -

**CHAIR** - You might have to up the portions.

**Ms SMITH** - -Yes. But by having that security that enables, if there is an incident, to look back on that. Ideally, we are providing a facility in which the dynamic security is the main point. A point that makes the facility a lot better than what you have seen this morning is also the use of natural light - there are skylights into the facility. Having that light and bright feeling just creates -

**Ms BURNET** - I am interested in some of those other design features that you might have considered in relation to that work flow, and also some of the possible improvements to work health and safety in that design.

**Mr FORD** - Sorry, I am not understanding the question?

**Ms BURNET** - Currently, we have a very old kitchen and there is a fairly greasy floor. Ms Smith, you suggested that there were ongoing significant repairs; so, the floor and also work stations for people using the kitchen.

**Mr FORD** - The floor, for example, that was mentioned and was quite obvious in constant state of repair in the existing kitchen. The new flooring through this kitchen is an epoxy floor system. There are a couple of different types to use depending on the locations where they are to be used. One of them goes up to 9 millimetres thick, which is for dealing with the extreme cold in freezers to the thermal shock of having boiling water poured onto them.

We have the full kitchen area in epoxy finishes graded to multiple grates or floor wastes. The current code that we have now you've got floor wastes with falls in floors that would be steeper and at closer centres than was required by the previous existing kitchen. Likewise, within the cool rooms there are significant floor requirements to get drainage out of the kitchens through into the external drains, because you can't have a drain within the freezer. The floor finishes that have been selected are deemed fit for purpose. They are non-slip. They are a specific product that is used in commercial kitchen projects. Currently, we have blue colour selected. We had some discussion about the colour and there are other options on colours but blue, I think, is the one that we have landed on and that's in our selections. So, the floor finishes are fit for purpose, epoxy and non-slip.

**Ms BURNET** - And other efficiencies as well?

**Mr SHEPHERD** - That's right. We're putting in a lot of modern kitchen equipment. You would've witnessed this morning that there's quite a lot of manual handling so we'll be reducing some of that down. Also, the circulation flow will allow for that interaction of having to move materials in and out.

**CHAIR** - Like conveyor belts, and the like.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Yes. It will be a unidirectional flow. As Rob described this morning, there's been a lot of work done into the storage for the shelves and those sorts of things, so we've taken all of that into account. Again, from a workplace health and safety perspective, that will reduce a lot of that manual handling and the risk that comes with that. Then, obviously, we're down to the nitty gritty of stainless-steel benchtops and those sorts of things from a cleaning perspective and hygiene and all that sort of stuff as well.

**Ms BURNET** - On a similar vein, do you have many work health and safety incidents within the current kitchen?

**Mr WISE** - Not a large number. The processes are pretty sound to, in the first instance, prevent them and secondly, to respond to any incidents that do occur.

**CHAIR** - It's a well-managed kitchen, Rod?

**Mr WISE** - It's a well-managed kitchen; but you would have seen that some of the surfaces are degrading so it's harder to keep to the standard that we would like.

**Ms BURNET** - Not a large number; have there been any serious incidents or injury within the kitchen over the years?

**Mr WISE** - The answer would have to be 'yes'. I can't think of the last though, Ms Burnet, I'm afraid.

**Ms BURNET** - Again, the repetitive strain injury, a lot of the work is, obviously, very repetitive and I am interested to know if that is designed for. Chair, you mentioned the conveyor belts and the moving surfaces.

**Mr WISE** - The plating area has a conveyor belt system for moving the product along as they do the different processes until they get to the end of sealing the packaging, so that saves a bit of manual handling.

Another thing from a safety point of view is that we've added an emergency shower into this facility.

**CHAIR** - For anyone who gets burnt or for chemical spills.

**Mr WISE** - Or if there are chemical spills because there are chemical cleaning agents that are around. That's another thing that was added in as a request from the Tasmania Prison Service (TPS) as well. They're not often in commercial kitchens, but it was felt appropriate in this instance.

**Ms BURNET** - In relation to food and any sort of food poisoning or trying to reduce the risk of that. We saw this morning that there were issues with storage and containers to meet those demands. I'm interested to hear how you've catered for those things to try and reduce the risk of spoilt food.

**Ms SMITH** - We've worked very closely with the kitchen consultant who we have on board, who's also worked in line with food safety standards. Currently, the TPS goes through

## PUBLIC

a process of having their facility checked on a regular basis as well to meet those standards, so currently they are. But we've ensured that, as Rod touched on, we have temperature-controlled areas and we are introducing the purchasing of modern equipment, refrigeration and the way that its managed - that circular flow through the facility - to ensure that we are adhering to those modern standards that we need to.

**Ms BUTLER** - For food that goes from this kitchen to other correctional facilities, is that again reduced, or does it change, from the way that the new kitchen is designed?

**Ms SMITH** - Rod might talk a little bit more about the operations, but the TPS is using the same operating model as they are using now. They have what is called a cook-chill system. So, the delivery of the food to those other facilities will be done as they are now.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - As was described this morning, there is a very good tracking system in place, so that all the food is recorded and entered onto the database so that TPS can track when it was cooked.

**Ms SMITH** - Batch number, bar code.

**Mr WISE** - The only other thing to add there is that out of the new kitchen we are going to ensure that some of the lower-security areas, both in the women's system and in the men's system, prisoners will be able to cook their own meals. That will be managed out of the kitchen as well.

**CHAIR** - Support self-catering for the O'Hara and the Vanessa Goodwin units.

**Mr WISE** - Correct.

**CHAIR** - Can you give some understanding as to why moving away from gas and using more electricity would be useful? I noticed that there are solar panels.

**Ms SMITH** - Yes, there are solar panels, so, that is part of that shift, in terms of that environmental and sustainability, hence the use of solar panels.

However, the move away from gas has to do with the ongoing maintenance. Recently, there was a piece of equipment down for approximately nine months that the TPS catering services were unable to use; the requirements around getting those particular trades to come out and service this equipment, because gas requires dual sign-off. In close consultation and undertaking benchmark exercises with other jurisdictions and other facilities designing and commissioning modern correctional kitchen facilities, they are using electric. Even though we have the gas bullet on site, that will still be utilised for Ron Barwick, but the ongoing maintenance and just the costs and the outright purchase of the equipment, we have undertaken that cost-benefit analysis that electric was the way to go.

**CHAIR** - I like the cooking shows that you see on TV - even though I don't cook a lot, I like to watch - and they seem to always to be using gas. If we are looking at providing certificates for those inmates to repurpose as they go back out into the community, they may not have those skills now.

**Mr FORD** - There was a bit of discussion about the selection of electric appliances.

**CHAIR** - You know you have to have all new pots when you have induction.

**Mr FORD** - Australia-wide and worldwide, people are going to be moving away from gas, just from an environmental point of view. Electrification is the way that people are going to be heading.

I didn't attend it, but I know TPS staff and the food controller went to the expo.

**Ms SMITH** - The foodpro expo in Melbourne last year.

**Mr FORD** - That was a good opportunity for them to witness the way the market is going. The technology and induction cooking is advancing really quickly and improving all the time.

**Mr SMITH** - It was certainly something that we looked at - not just what are other jurisdictions providing within their correctional facilities, but also what are those commercial kitchens so that if the prisoners are undertaking that vocational training within our facility, that they are transferrable skills. We did that level of benchmarking as well. As Rob said, it is definitely the way everything is moving.

**Ms BUTLER** - What backup systems - generators and so forth - are in place in case of power shortages - without providing too much security detail?

**Ms SMITH** - We have uninterrupted power supplies or UPS system and we have a generator as well. I might throw to Rob to talk more on the technical specifications.

**Mr FORD** - There is a generator that we have in front of the facility. Currently, it is 70 000 litres or the like. It is run for a number of days, basically. That is connected to essential services and it would mean the kitchen could run if there was total loss of power to the site. Historically, I do not think there has been a period where Risdon has been down for not even 24 hours. The sizing was based on a risk assessment of what would happen in a COVID scenario, if it were to happen, and power was lost, and that is why the facility is there.

**Ms SMITH** - We went through an exercise of determining what needed to be connected to the backup generator, which has some down time before it kicks in. Even though that is only a few seconds, unfortunately with some equipment you have a few seconds and you know that it has to boot up. You don't want a loaf of bread half through its cooking cycle and then we lose power, it shuts down and then it has to boot up again. We made sure that those critical pieces of equipment, including the security equipment, are linked to the UPS, that is an uninterrupted power supply.

**Ms BURNET** - Further to some of the questions about gas and sustainability, solar panels, I noticed this morning that there was a lot of single use packaging. I was curious about -

**CHAIR** - Five slices of bread in one plastic packet.

**Ms BURNET** - breakfast packages and so forth. Obviously, there are security things to consider as well. I would like to know how that waste stream might be reduced, in the first

instance, and also with any food waste - not stuff that gets reused or repackaged - anything that is spoilt, or surplus to needs, is disposed of or reused.

**Ms SMITH** - I'll start with single use packaging. Single use packaging is something that we are transitioning from and by 2026 there will be the need. I understand that in other jurisdictions correctional facilities can ask for an exemption, however that is not something we are going to do. There is definitely the commitment to transition from that single use packaging.

Yes, that is currently something that is being worked through to meet that 2026 implementation.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - As we discussed this morning, what can be recycled is being recycled on site - cardboard and the like. With food scraps, I know the TPS is very committed to reducing food waste as much as possible. As Brad described this morning they have some processes where they look to avoid any food waste but where there are food scraps it is used for composting on the site.

**CHAIR** - I note on page 7 of the proposed works there is harvesting of rainwater from the roof to reuse in the flushing of toilets and initial washing of bins within the kitchen. That is another environmentally appropriate aspect of the proposed works.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Part of the charter that we gave to the architects was to look at designs with sustainable principles behind it. As you can see, the solar panels have been installed.

**CHAIR** - Are they internal guttering or external guttering?

**Mr FORD** - The building has main gutters on the sides of the building - perimeter gutters. We have one valley gutter; but it is collected from those perimeter gutters and they are fed into two 10 000 litre tanks, and from there it feeds through a filtration and pump system to then be reticulated to the toilets for flushing, and also down to the bin wash for a preliminary bin wash to get that heavy waste off and then they can do the pressure washing and the like as well before it's returned back into the facility.

**CHAIR** - And disability access? It says it's available to the education and program space, as well as the amenities.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - We considered access for people living with disabilities as part of the project and I guess we have a performance solution where you would have seen there is ability for people to enter into or leave from Barwick through the front gates and then they could come up using the existing walkways and then be brought into the facility or, dependent upon what level of disability the individual has, they could be transported up. The actual design for the loading bay allows for a vehicle to come inside, for the loading bay to close and then they can enter in through to the walkway, which would then bring them up through the main entrance so they could pass through the usual security functions.

We still have the opportunity, I guess, if we ever felt it was required, that we could look at putting in some sort of stair-climbing system or those sorts of things. But at the moment, we're quite comfortable because, from what we've been told, at the moment there aren't a lot of people living with disabilities who are working in the facility. But we think the performance solution I've just described will be adequate for the small number of people who do to be able

to get there. And we absolutely would want those people to have the same opportunity to work there as anyone else.

**Ms BURNET** - You'd hate to think that they weren't in the kitchen or weren't trying to get those kind of skills because they had a disability.

**Mr SHEPHERD** -No, absolutely not.

**Mr WISE** - And given they're minimum-security prisoners, it doesn't present the same sorts of risks as moving people outside the facility in some other areas of the system.

**Ms BURNET** - There are other questions I might ask about health and culture, if I may, Chair, or would you like me to wait until after?

**CHAIR** - No, this is the area because, after this, we're going to head over to the environmental site assessment, so all those questions around that particular aspect would need to be asked now.

**Ms BURNET** - Yes, okay. I'm interested to know, certainly in those prisoners who have health needs - and this is more around food processing rather than actually working in the kitchen - but if they have issues around diabetes, poor dental health, various conditions such as coeliac disease, or they might have cultural observations in relation to food, how is that managed by the service?

**Mr WISE** - I think at the moment across the system we have about 200 people on special diets of some description, whether they're coeliac or lactose-free, or a religious observance-related diet, so it's about a quarter of our prisoner population who are on some sort of special diet. Clearly, we cater for those people now and will continue to do so in the new kitchen.

**Ms BURNET** - Okay. Yes, I'm reading a food and nutrition report from 2020. That was four years ago and there's probably a few things that have changed, but I'm curious, it is interesting that there is such a demand.

**CHAIR** - It probably reflects the community generally now. You often see people who are lactose-intolerant or coeliac or gluten-free, or whatever, now in the community, don't you?

**Ms SMITH** - The catering staff work very closely with Correctional Primary Health Services, which is under the Department of Health banner. However, they work from the Risdon Prison site. So, those with medical needs such as your coeliac disease and your lactose are assessed, there is an assessment undertaken by the medical staff, and that's provided to catering; and they meet whatever those needs are required to be.

**Ms BURNET** - And food being such an important, well, usually, it is an important time to enjoy, I suppose, if you're eating. I'm interested in, firstly, with an overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in prisons across Australia, what kind of specific catering there might be for palawa or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners. And also, what sort of opportunity there is in this new kitchen to do training around cultural awareness and eating, training in food preparation in those cultures.



**Mr WISE** - I can say that in terms of representations from Aboriginal organisations, there have been none in relation to special dietary needs for palawa people. But we do, on occasions like NAIDOC Week, for example, we will go for indigenous foods and cook them for celebratory purposes. But we're very open to representations from community organisations, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations on that matter. But it hasn't been an issue that has been brought to our notice at this stage.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. Any questions just in regard to the proposed works, the design approach?

**Ms BUTLER** - Female prisoner access to the kitchen: it is mentioned in the submission that that will be looked at in the future. What's the strategy around the introduction of females into that area?

**Ms SMITH** - I'll probably talk from a design perspective, initially, is that we have thought about that strategically to enable the design to be flexible enough to allow, whether it be females or other cohorts, if deemed appropriate by the TPS, to work within the facility. But in terms of that strategic direction, it's probably something Rod is best placed to comment on.

**Mr WISE** - Yes, look, ideally, we'd like to be able to accommodate women prisoners in there as well as men. It presents management challenges, I suppose.

In our initial iterations of the kitchen, it was going to be two-storey and we were going to be able to split up male and female prisoners, potentially, or different groups of prisoners, so prisoners requiring protection from others. In the design that we've finished up with that's more difficult. But in terms of how you deliver services across a day, you can split it up. So, we could, at some stage, have a morning shift of male prisoners, for example, and bring on an afternoon shift of women.

The number of women is much smaller, as you heard this morning. We're aiming for - 64 today, we opened with but we were looking at, say, 50 male prisoners on deck at any one time and a total number of 70, so that allows for a number of prisoners each day to be off seeing doctors or doing programs -

**CHAIR** - And court appearances.

**Mr WISE** - And court appearances. All those sorts of things that might drag them away. Some of them will be ill and so on. But if we have a pool of about 70, we'd hope to have about 50 of those people. We've only got 64 women in total, many of whom won't want to work in the kitchen and don't have to. A reasonable proportion of the female population is on remand, and remand prisoners can't be compelled to work. So, we might struggle to get the same numbers of women on a shift as we do for the men. But it's an opportunity because, again, it's a terrific opportunity to deliver vocational training for those women. There is a small kitchen in the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison -

**CHAIR** - Where they do their lunch?

**Mr WISE** - Where they do their lunch, but they could also do more, and so they can do food handling, they can do the early-level certificates. But it's not the same sort of experience as they would get in working in a big commercial kitchen.

## PUBLIC

**Ms BUTLER** - And also in the Vanessa Goodwin area there's opportunity for mums who are with their young babies to be able to be educated in how to feed their babies and how to prepare food, and so forth, within that facility. Is that correct?

**Mr WISE** - That's correct, yes. So, we are looking at self-catering in those Vanessa Goodwin units, of which the mothers and baby unit is one. And we can get additional support in for mothers who've got their children there to assist them in providing appropriate food for their children.

**Ms BUTLER** - Just one other question. When the prison is in a lockdown, for instance, how do you maintain those numbers of prisoners being able to work in the kitchen during those lockdown periods?

**Mr WISE** - One of the things that led us to placing the kitchen where it is, is that it is serviced by the Ron Barwick Prison, which is minimum-security. Generally speaking, that prison doesn't have lockdowns. The higher maximum-security area might be in lockdown but the Ron Barwick Prison will be able to send its prisoners there in any event. So, the chances are small.

We do have potentials of gastro and COVID and all of those sorts of things which might limit the number of people who are available to work in the kitchen, but, as you've already heard, there is a greater degree of automation so we believe that we can still produce the adequate number of meals with a reduced staffing complement. And, if worst comes to worst, we can go to emergency plans where we can bring food into the site.

**CHAIR** - Pizza.

**Mr WISE** - Pizza, yes.

**CHAIR** - That's what they are usually looking for - a pizza.

**Ms SMITH** - The catering service does think about that ahead of time as well, so they do have stockpile if the facility happened to not be able to work for a day or two, or longer.

**CHAIR** - I think we were told there were four days' worth of food on hand.

**Mr WISE** - With the cook-chill, there is plenty for a short term.

**Ms BUTLER** - Is the kitchen open seven days a week?

**Ms SMITH** - No. Current operating days are five days a week, but they do a double-up on two of those days. So, we definitely did talk through the planning stage, that there is that opportunity. And I guess that is what Rob was saying about women or other cohorts working on other days. So, there is that opportunity, obviously noting there are seven days a week, but we wouldn't want the same cohort working those seven days a week. They've got to have that down time as well.

**Ms BUTLER** - That's transferred to the new kitchen, five days?

## PUBLIC

**Ms SMITH** - Five days, currently, yes.

**CHAIR** - Any questions around the environmental site assessment? I note that you had to get some consultants in to look at some aspects of the site. It appears that there were no real issues.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - No. That's a very standard approach by us, particularly if there is going to be any ground excavation work done. We had that work done and the soil samples were analysed, and we worked through, with the council and the EPA, a construction environmental management plan, which we will develop which will allow us, we believe, to dispose of the vast majority of any of the soil on site. Again, as we go through that process, if we find any samples that were in excess of the standards, we can then take those off-site and dispose of those at Copping. But we are pretty confident that we will be able to dispose of it on site and there won't really be any issues at all. The council was comfortable with that and have signed off on the DA.

**CHAIR** - We normally have a table of scheduled time frames to meet. I have got ahead of myself. We will come to that then. I think we have gone over the need for the project. Are there any further questions on the need for the project?

The existing facility, we have well and truly talked about the current site and the limitations that that presents, and the TPS operations for the existing site, and the security aspects, addressing the need. I've inherited this approach from the former chair, Rob Valentine, so, that's why it is so particular. I'm not sure if the colour on page 15 is the blue that Robert was talking about for the floor because it looks like it's quite a bright blue in the mock-up further on. I hope it's this one and not this bright one. It would knock them out of the kitchen.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - It keeps them awake, Chair.

**CHAIR** - Is that what it is?

**Ms SMITH** - We do go through that consultation process with staff, so we would do up a colour board with what's suggested. However, the final choice will be a collective decision.

**CHAIR** - One question that I might ask, and it was from a discussion in the car on the way back: are those working within the kitchen environment provided with some sort of good footwear? It looks like it would be heavy going for their shift without having good footwear or relevant footwear, appropriate footwear.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Are you talking about the staff or the prisoners, or both?

**CHAIR** - Both.

**Mr WISE** - I think probably what you saw, Chair, was what they're provided with. It seemed to be suitable. There is a lot of water around and those sorts of things, but we don't get slips and trips, so we believe it is appropriate.

**Ms SMITH** - Gumboots are issued to prisoners, noting, as you did see today, it was quite wet and they do washdowns in between cooking and plating to ensure that food safety standards are met.

**CHAIR** - I am aware that their shift started at 8 a.m. and finished at 11.30 or 11.45 a.m. And then, from time to time, they come back and do a two-hour shift in the afternoon. So, it's five hours, possibly, on your feet.

**Ms BURNET** - Are there safety mats as well for muscle fatigue?

**Mr SHEPHERD** - My understanding is that there are footwear choices that are provided. So, for people working in the wet area, you can get gumboots, and for people working in the other areas -

**CHAIR** - If you're packing cereal you're going to have a pair of, probably, sandshoes or something.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Yes, you get appropriate boots for that. And there are fatigue mats available for anyone who requests those.

**CHAIR** - There you are. If you don't ask, you don't know. Thank you.

**Ms BURNET** - I wondered because I didn't see too many.

**CHAIR** - They had just washed out. That's probably why.

Just moving over, thank you, Ms Butler, you have a question on page 17, around 4.3.

**Ms BUTLER** - Yes, if you could run through the natural ventilation consideration within the space that's documented - that opportunities for natural ventilation have been considered in the delivery areas. If you could run that by us?

**Mr FORD** - In the delivery loading dock areas, obviously, you get vehicles entering and exiting that area. We also have a bin washdown area. So, the design that we have in that instance is not a full mechanical ventilation system. We've actually got external levers in the front of the building to allow for natural ventilation of those spaces.

**Ms BUTLER** - Also, with cooling and heating systems for the actual kitchen itself, what would that look like? So, in summer when it's particularly hot in a kitchen or in winter when it can be very cold?

**Mr FORD** - We have a central mechanical plant that runs the air-conditioning system. It's a fully ducted system. Because of the kitchen and the nature of it, you've got a lot of exhaust, so there is a lot of take-up area, so there's always going to be a lot of exchange and changeover of air. Kitchens are always a hot space so, whether it's going to be in the middle of winter or summer, the internal environment in here should be fairly stable.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - We've got all the necessary ventilation systems in place that you need for a commercial kitchen, or any of the exhaust removal.

**Mr FORD** - The hoods themselves, they are sized appropriate to the kitchen equipment that has been selected. The kitchen consultant has given all the information and worked with

mechanical consultants to determine the duct sizing and the hood sizing, and the volumes of air to be extracted.

**Ms BUTLER** - They are all compliant with the similar standard that has been used at other prison sites in so far as extraction and safety?

**Mr FORD** - It would be designed in accordance with all the appropriate standards to do with mechanical air conditioning systems for a kitchen.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - They look very much like the diagram, Chair, that you have from your visit.

**CHAIR** - From my visit to South Australia; thank you for raising that. I did share with people prior to the hearing that another committee that I sit on had been to South Australia and looked at the Yatala redevelopment and their kitchen. It was very impressive, and I was given the advice that the new proposed kitchen at the Risdon Prison site will look very similar, and will be the same state-of-the-art modern kitchen facilities for inmates to learn and not be idle.

Do members have any other questions in regard to any aspects of the proposal that is being looked at? There is quite a bit on governance, which talks about the process for arriving at this proposal; those that were involved; and risk management. It seems like all the aspects of risk management have been covered off - that is on page 26. Any questions on that? We will get to the actual costs as we go over.

**Ms BURNET** - In relation to the design and any input from inmates, is there a way that they can directly input into this design?

**Mr WISE** - The opportunity for their input into design has passed. The staff liaise with the prisoners on a daily basis, so the things that aren't working are brought to the staff's attention. If the prisoners have a view about how things could be done better, then they are fed into the staff views on a constant basis.

What we have done, is that the prisoners will be involved in terms of finalising the operating model. We are trying to replicate what is a modern kitchen in every respect. In any workplace where employees get the opportunity to feed into how things operate and the best processes that can be put in place, that will happen. Already the arrangements have been made to have the prisoners as a critical part of developing those processes.

**Ms BURNET** - It goes to the heart of any sort of design, that the people who use it who may have quite a significant chance to offer what might be something that works better or something that doesn't.

**Mr WISE** - This is essentially a commercial kitchen, and there are plenty of examples of commercial kitchens where the people who work in them are not prisoners and feed into the design. Those design principles are well understood. I don't think there is anything special about being a prisoner and working in that environment that would mean that we should take that into account.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Adding to that, my understanding is that the prisoners are aware that this project is under consideration.

## PUBLIC

**CHAIR** - They mentioned 'get on with it' when I told them what we were doing.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - I am sure they did. They are very good at offering advice; but certainly, the kitchen staff have been engaging with the prisoners and talking to them. They have offered an opinion on certain things and that has been fed back into one of the working groups that have been set up for the project. They have had some opportunity to provide input into what we have been designing.

**CHAIR** - The project program, and the budget - we are going to get to that over the page. The summary of the project timeline, we are always interested in whether those proposed project timelines and dates that have been provided are on target.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - I think we very much believe that that is the case. Obviously, we will wait to hear with bated breath from your good selves.

**CHAIR** - We're spot on for this committee hearing.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - As we were talking about earlier today, there are probably some nuances around the awarding of the contract, but we believe that these are realistic targets and this is certainly what the project team is working to, and I don't see any reason that we wouldn't be able to think that we would meet those.

**Ms SMITH** - In discussion with Hansen Yuncken, they're aware of our timeframes and they haven't raised any issues to do with the program.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - That's probably one point that we might not have necessarily mentioned before, but one of the real advantages, I think you did mention it this morning, sorry Amber, that because we are on the greenfield site, but it is external to any working environment, in terms of prison operations.

**CHAIR** - Except for the containers, and one of Brad's very good sheds.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - It will be an easy building site to work on. If you compare that having to take your tools and your staff through a gateway into a working prison, and the delays that you could expect, by having that external and being able to fence it off to make it a construction site, and the very easy access for the tradies and for the construction team to be able get there and work.

**Ms SMITH** - It's a twelve-month construction.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - That's correct.

**Mr HARRISS** - I guess mine is around cost escalations. We know that is very relevant in 2024. I imagine that has been considered, but also are there areas of the project that could be scaled back, if budget becomes an issue?

**Mr SHEPHERD** - My answer would be that as we do with any project that we are involved with, if the budget became an issue, we would look at value management exercise.

## PUBLIC

There would be areas that potentially we could scale back. As you would see the project is made up of a number of elements, so we would be able to look at some of those.

**CHAIR** - For example, what might one of those areas be that could be scaled back?

**Mr SHEPHERD** - We somewhat deal in hypotheticals, because I was just going to say that we are very confident that we have the budget that we need for the project. But, if we were to scale back, then we would go through a normal value management exercise.

**CHAIR** - You won't take out the skylights, would you?

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Some of the things that we could look at would be reduce the footprint of the building. Things like, we've got a training room in there, we could potentially take that out, we would still be able to offer training opportunities.

**CHAIR** - It's going to change your roof line though.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - Yes, but that's an exercise we go through whenever we do these sorts of value management propositions. As I've said, it is somewhat a hypothetical question, because we don't believe that we need to do that. We have already gone through a value management exercise, as Rod has alluded to. We started off hoping to be able to have vegetable processing inclusive in this. We had a two-storey building where we would have separate areas where we could have different cohorts in the building at the same time, but we have to be very careful of managing out budget. And we have done that and where we've landed, as I said, we are very confident that we have the budget to deliver the project.

**CHAIR** - Do you leave vegetable processing in the same facility that it currently exists.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - The intent at the moment is that it will remain in there, as we discussed this morning, as that space of the existing kitchen is freed up. There will be some decisions for the TPS to make about what they want to do.

As I said, ultimately, we would have loved to have vegetable processing as a part of this. Again, from the site that you have seen, there may be opportunity into the future to collocate a vegetable processing facility next to where we are building the kitchen, because there is more space there that we could do it. At the moment, we are concentrating on delivering this project with the budget that we have.

**CHAIR** - Ms Butler, are you going to ask about the Tasmanian Government Art Site Scheme?

**Ms BUTLER** - Yes, I am. I have two questions. I was contacted by a group yesterday that had seen the Tasmanian Government Art Site Scheme for this project advertised. I suppose that's the best term to use. They are potentially interested in having artists or an art group with proven history of working within the prison system and working with prisoners as a form of rehabilitation, being able to work within the allocated funding. I said I would raise that today - an opportunity for prisoners who are artistic and creative to be able, under instruction by a reputable person of course, to be considered to create an artwork under that scheme. Would that potentially be considered?

## PUBLIC

**Ms SMITH** - Yes, absolutely, and it has been done in the past. We go through a process where we have a panel. We have a few key members, including Rod; we've got Haylie from within our projects team and we've also got a correctional presence -

**CHAIR** - We met them this morning.

**Ms SMITH** - Who you met this morning, yes. Also, a correctional member on that panel, and we go through an assessment process. It's very similar to a request for quotation or tender. The artists will put forward their submissions and we'll go through a process of assessing those. Certainly, something like that would be seen as a positive.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - We would encourage them to put in the application.

**Ms BUTLER** - Excellent. I will pass that on. I did have a question about the re-purposing of existing plant and equipment from the current site to the new site, if some of the equipment is still in good working order. Is that being considered as well? I should have asked that previously.

**Ms SMITH** - We are taking a blast chiller, which is a newer piece of equipment that has been purchased in the recent years. That will transition over to the new facility. Unfortunately, a lot of the other equipment is ageing. Some of the loose equipment will be taken over - that's stuff that can be placed on benches, and that will come over. But from that long-term vision and what the TPS will do with the current space, that's still to be worked through. Certainly, most of the equipment is nearing the end of its useful life, or will be by the time this facility is commissioned.

**CHAIR** - Including any of the bakery equipment?

**Ms SMITH** - We went through an exercise to look at the equipment, its age and does it meet contemporary standards -

**CHAIR** - Still makes very good bread.

**Ms SMITH** - It does. They do a good job.

**Mr SHEPHERD** - I think it was described this morning, that some of the existing infrastructure will be retained and will be used, particularly for some of the storage and the cold storage. We will still have to have an area within Ron Barwick where we're holding onto product, so it's not like everything won't still have a use when we move out.

**CHAIR** - Given that we know that in this climate, projects can and do run over budget and there may not be a lot of money left over for landscaping, could some sort of landscaping be part of the Tasmanian Government Art Site Scheme? Could that also be included as part of that? You know, a particularly nice feature or something.

**Ms SMITH** - At the moment, the proposal is a nice feature on your entryway. We're really open to the artistic flare that these artists are best-placed to putting into their response to the brief. Whether it be hanging or adhered to the wall, obviously, we have to undergo strict security in terms of the fittings and fixtures. But in terms of landscaping more broadly, we will propagate our own plants on site and then -



## PUBLIC

**CHAIR** - I did mention we might be taking cuttings.

**Ms SMITH** - prisoner labour will be used to plant that out. We did a very similar approach with a section of the Southern Remand Centre.

**CHAIR** - Does the ICT infrastructure include the metal detector that was proposed in the initial costs?

**Ms SMITH** - Yes, that's part of the security component.

**CHAIR** - That's fine. That's another aspect of the build.

**Ms SMITH** - That's our internal communications and technology. We will have wi-fi accessible through the building as well. If TasTAFE have a presence, they will need to have their own network system built in as well as the Department of Justice; as well as the Department of Education, which runs on a separate one to TAFE. There are lots of complexities but it's allowing the purchase of racks and servers for our internal DoJ communications.

**CHAIR** - Given that the furniture and equipment, excluding the kitchen equipment, that is included in the construction contract, how will that process work? Will there be somebody, perhaps like Brad, who will work with whoever gets the tender to be able to choose what items are needed?

**Ms SMITH** - All the selection of the equipment has been undertaken to date. However, the procurement of that equipment, and when it arrives on site, is quite a process and there will be a lot. That's exactly what part of Brad's role will be - the transition and commissioning, working closely with the builder when that equipment arrives to site.

**CHAIR** - We probably should identify what Brad's role is. We've talked and referred to him quite a bit through this hearing.

**Ms SMITH** - Catering Services Supervisor, Bradley Duggan.

**CHAIR** - Thank you; he is very knowledgeable.

Members, are there any other questions regarding the project budget?

Are there any questions about the proposed design that we have? We've heard quite a bit from Robert over the course of the hearings about particular style and aspects. Is there anything that members would like to raise?

**Ms BUTLER** - Will you lose many carparking spots with the new -

**Ms SMITH** - No. We looked at an alternative to a retaining wall, and that was the embankment. That would mean that we would lose those carparks, so we went with the block work retaining wall.

**Ms BUTLER** - Also, the height of the -

## PUBLIC

**CHAIR** - The height of buildings in Hobart has become very popular.

**Mr FORD** - The floor height up to the ridge of the building is approximately 7.3 metres. Given it's a sloping site, depending on where you take it, it's going to be plus or minus from that; but nominally 7.3 metres is the highest point.

**Ms BUTLER** - Thank you.

**CHAIR** - Members, are there any other questions?

I would like to congratulate whoever put this submission together. It was very detailed.

**Ms SMITH** - Haylie was instrumental in pulling it together but it is definitely a team effort with everybody sitting behind us having a role to play.

**CHAIR** - Thank you, a team effort. A very good submission. I look forward to seeing - should it meet the committee's approval - a new kitchen facility in the future.

**Ms SMITH** - We have every confidence.

**CHAIR** - I have a couple of things that I need to do before we conclude. Before you leave the table, I would like to reiterate the statement that I made earlier regarding the committee's proceedings.

These are the standard Public Works Committee questions, based on the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1914*.

I don't need everyone to answer so you might nominate somebody who is going to answer. Do the proposed works meet an identified need or needs or solve a recognised problem?

**Mr WISE** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - Are the proposed works the best solution to meet identified needs or solve a recognised problem within the allocated budget?

**Mr WISE** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - Are the proposed works fit for purpose?

**Mr WISE** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - Do the proposed works provide value for money? They're not Rolls-Royce. They're just the Kingswood model? Is that correct?

**Mr WISE** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - Are the proposed works a good use of public funds?

**Mr WISE** - Yes.

## **PUBLIC**

**CHAIR** - Thank you. Before you leave the table, I would like to reiterate the statement I made earlier about the committee proceedings. As I advised you at the commencement of your evidence, that what you have said to us here today is protected by parliamentary privilege but once you leave the table you need to be aware that the privilege does not attach to the comments that you may make to anyone, including the media, even if you are just repeating what you said to us. Do you understand this?

**ALL WITNESSES** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - Thank you very much for attending today and giving the evidence. Again, we thank you for the opportunity onsite earlier today. It certainly does help the committee in their deliberations. We shall conclude.

**The witnesses withdrew.**

**The Committee adjourned at 3.41 p.m.**