



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

New Legana Primary School

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

Legislative Council

Mr Valentine (Chair)
Ms Rattray (Deputy Chair)

House of Assembly

Ms Butler
Mr Ellis
Mr Tucker

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	BACKGROUND.....	3
3	PROJECT COSTS	6
4	EVIDENCE	7
5	DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE	20
6	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	21

1 INTRODUCTION

To Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, 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:-

New Legana Primary School

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

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This reference recommended the Committee approve works to construct a new primary school in Legana to accommodate the fast growing population of the West Tamar Local Government Area. With the current Riverside Primary School over capacity, the New Legana Primary School will provide some relief to this capacity issue and allow for future growth in the area.
- 2.2 The new school will be located at 612 West Tamar Highway, Legana and will accommodate 350 students from Kindergarten to Year 6, as well as a 'birth to 4' Launching-into-Learning Program. Additionally, there will be a space provision for the expansion of the school into the future should this be required. This space provision will allow for another four general learning areas to be added, while maintaining the flow of the school.
- 2.3 The new Legana Primary School will provide 'outside of school hours' care facilities as well as an oral health clinic on-site. The oral health clinic is to be funded and operated by the Tasmanian Health Service.
- 2.4 Additionally, the project will be co-located with a community sporting and recreation precinct which will be developed and owned by the West Tamar Council. Part of this precinct will include an AFL regional sized oval that the school will have use of during school hours and for special events, via a leased agreement.
- 2.5 The Department has consulted widely with the local community and relevant stakeholders in relation to issues such as the buildings and spaces, the teaching and learning, community access to the school facilities and assets, and community partnerships.¹ This consultation has helped inform the Department of the relevant needs and priorities of the community for this development.
- 2.6 Central to the design of the school will be the Department of Education's pedagogical framework and built environment guide, with a focus on

¹ *New Legana Primary School*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education, December 2021, Attachment 5 - Community Engagement Outcomes Report, p 6.

contemporary thinking about how the built environment can support teaching and learning.² The design seeks to be adaptable to encourage a wide range of uses of various spaces and to provide learning environments that cater for a wide range of student needs.³ Additionally, the design contains a library and multi-purpose hall that engages with a learning court yard which opens out to the active space for wider community activities.⁴

2.7 The proposed works will include the following:

- Two kindergarten rooms and early years outdoor play space, including a suitable flexible space for Launching-into-Learning programs. The early years precinct will have its own nature-based play area and undercover outdoor space;
- Twelve contemporary general learning areas, with accessible shared and multi-purpose spaces and amenities;
- A central learners courtyard;
- A senior staff hub which is centrally located to allow for passive surveillance over external circulation and play spaces;
- A multi-purpose hall building that will include space for performing arts, music, 'makers space', outside school hours care, canteen and amenities. This hall will open out to the ball courts area to facilitate whole school assemblies and performances;
- An administration zone incorporating a reception area, school business manager's office, and flexible office space for senior leadership or consulting staff such as a speech pathologist or psychologist;
- Staff room facilities and a resource room in the main administration building, with space for a uniform shop and first aid room;
- Indoor environmental features such as maximising the use of natural light and ventilation, acoustic treatment of spaces, and environmentally sustainable heating cooling and other services;
- A kitchen/bush tucker garden;
- A football oval to regional AFL standard leased by agreement to the Department of Education for school hours and special events;
- Cleaning stores and suitable storage for plant equipment and Education Facility Attendants requirements;
- Appropriate levels of parking for staff and visitors, as well as student and bus pick up/drop off zone and traffic safety measures. Visitor parking will be in

² *New Legana Primary School*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education, December 2021, p 4.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

front of the administration area to avoid people having to cross the road to access the building. Drop off zones are located to ensure student safety; and

- An oral health clinic operated by the Tasmanian Health Service will be located within the administration building. This service will have access to the area regardless of school hours and will have its own distinct separate entrance.

3 PROJECT COSTS

- 3.1 Pursuant to the Message from Her Excellency the Governor-in-Council, the estimated cost of the work is \$24 million.

The following table details the current total cost estimates for the project:

Description	Balanced Cost Estimate
DoE Capital Contribution to Oval	\$410,000
Public Infrastructure, servicing and land acquisition – highway intersection; road from highway; site access; services (DoE 50% share)	\$2,241,000
Escalation (total)	\$1,570,000
Design Contingency	\$100,000
General and Post Occupancy Contingency	\$74,000
Furniture and Equipment	\$1,725,000
Project Management and Public Art	\$550,000
Consultant's Fees and Permits	\$2,400,000
Construction Budget including contingencies	\$15,680,000
Total	\$24,750,000

4 EVIDENCE

4.1 The Committee commenced its inquiry on Tuesday, 7 December last with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to Committee Room 1, Henty House, Launceston, whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public (although not publicly broadcast on the internet, due to unavailability of the service):-

- Kane Salter, Deputy Secretary, Corporate and Business Services, Department of Education;
- Samantha Abblitt, Education Leader, Department of Education;
- Todd Henderson, Director, Cumulus Studio Architects, Department of Education Consultant; and
- Todd Williams, Director of Facility Services, Department of Education.

The following Committee Members were present:

- Hon Rob Valentine MLC (Chair);
- Hon Tania Rattray MLC (Deputy-Chair);
- Ms Jen Butler;
- Mr John Tucker; and
- Mr Felix Ellis.

Overview

4.2 Mr Salter provided an overview of the proposed works:

Mr SALTER - we are seeking approval for a major capital investment of \$24.75 million to construct a new primary school at Legana for 350 students. The West Tamar local government area has one of the fastest growing population in Tasmania, with new residential developments, proximity to Launceston and, housing affordability contributing to the popularity of the region. Enrolments at the nearby Riverside Primary School are currently in excess of 800 students, which is the largest number of primary students at any government school in Tasmania.

The new primary school will be built on a greenfield site at 612 West Tamar Highway, Legana. Outside school hours care facilities will be provided and an oral health clinic will also be constructed on the site. The oral health clinic is funded and operated by the Tasmanian Health Service. The new Legana Primary School will be co-located with a community sporting and recreation precinct to be developed and owned by the West Tamar Council. This will include an AFL regional-sized oval to be used by the school through a perpetual deed of agreement. Again, extensive public consultation is being undertaken with the feedback being incorporated into the design.

How the Project has collaborated with the West Tamar Council

4.3 The Committee was aware the Department must work closely with the local council on a project of this nature. The Committee questioned the witnesses on how the project has collaborated with the council to date:

CHAIR - It would be a significant development for this area. Can you outline your involvement with the council? I do not mean the elected members, but in general terms that you have gone through those processes with the local council for things like rezoning. Can you give us an update on where that is at?

... ..

Mr WILLIAMS - For three years, since the commitment was made back in 2018, I worked very closely with the general manager of West Tamar Council and his officers. The background to that was in 2014 West Tamar Council brought out a structure plan.

Ms RATTRAY - Structural or strategic?

Mr WILLIAMS - I think they call it a structure plan, a strategic plan, a master plan that showed how Legana would grow in the future. That plan showed the expansion through the property that we visited today both for a school and for residential development in the future, should that progress.

That plan existed and was the engagement we made with council all the way through. It has been a very positive discussion and relationship and council expressed an interest to partner to provide not just a school, but a community facility with the surrounding sporting precinct. There have been ongoing discussions. Through those discussions we engaged with the landowner. It is my understanding prior to that discussion before council released their structured, strategic plan -

Ms RATTRAY - Keep it structured that is fine.

Mr WILLIAMS - the discussion with the landowner had already occurred. There were no surprises in releasing a public document of that nature as that has been a very positive ongoing discussion for three years. We have formally presented to council on a number of occasions. As recently as last month, some of my staff provided presentation to council and the master planning process. We are in the process of formalising our agreements both with the landowners through mutual consent which has been very positive but, also with council on the sharing arrangements for infrastructure and the cost of operating an oval. It has been a very positive journey over the last three years in partnering with West Tamar Council and the landowners.

4.4 The Committee were also interested in how the process of zoning reclassification had progressed and if this would impact the progression of the proposed works:

Ms RATTRAY - In regard to the actual zoning of the land, it was noted by one of our committee members it is significant agricultural land, we are interested in understanding the classification of that? How that process was worked through and the expected settlement date for ownership if there is a DA pending fairly quickly?

Mr WILLIAMS - Yes, multiple questions in there. The class of the property is class 4 property.

Ms RATTRAY - That is lucky.

Mr WILLIAMS - We have submitted with the support of council and the community our zoning reclassification. That is going through the process at the moment and we anticipate February it will be in the hands of the Planning Commission. In saying that, it is all aligned with the structure plan brought out in 2014. All the feedback we have is the community are very supportive of that arrangement so, that is well and truly advanced. The owners of the property have given support for development approvals to progress and all of that.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

4.5 The Committee understands the Department sought significant community consultation for the project. Phase one of the community consultation involved direct mailouts, a survey, a community workshop, community meetings, a social media campaign and engagement with surrounding schools through their newsletters.⁵ A total of 305 surveys were received during the campaign and 41 people participated in the community workshop.⁶ Feedback received about the project was largely positive. The Committee asked the witnesses to describe the consultation process:

Ms RATTRAY - Community consultation?

CHAIR - Yes, we could go to that.

Ms RATTRAY - It would be useful to have a brief outline of that particular process on the public record, thank you.

Mr WILLIAMS - Certainly, a good process, have enjoyed the engagement. We have a community engagement member as part of our team who has also worked closely with council through the engagement. Before we started any work in designing, we engaged with the community and asked them about education provision into the future. What were the key features? What are they looking for? Strong messages on nature, the sporting connections came through. A strong support for the Legana structure plan through that process. There is the ongoing community reference group. I cannot remember the last time they met, but it was not long ago and it has been through all the iterations.

Ms ABLITT - This Thursday is the next one.

Mr WILLIAMS - Coming up. With the second round of engagement once we had the master plan. It has been released and included the draft intake zone. We have regularly presented to council throughout that three year journey. Really enjoyed that process engaging with the community, gathering all the issues and presenting them.

Mr SALTER - As Todd said earlier, we have certainly learnt time spent at the front end on the consultation both drives outcomes and saves time further down the track. Specifically, we have spent more time on that consultation process.

Mr WILLIAMS - It is invaluable work.

CHAIR - Avoids hiccups.

Ms BUTLER - For the record, I have spoken with a few people from the local community and they are pleased with the community consultation process. Apparently, it has really been gold standard, so congratulations. That is from people who usually complain about quite a lot and they have been very happy with the process. Well done.

Mr SALTER - Positive to hear.

Mr WILLIAMS - ... Every project has an engagement as part of it. We have the 'Get Involved' campaign online. Any community member can post a comment. Sometimes it is not about face-

⁵New Legana Primary School, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education, December 2021, Attachment 5, p 3.

⁶ Ibid.

to-face, it is having an avenue to have your say and get involved. That is for every project that we run. We connect really well with the school associations and listen to what they are saying. There are obviously diverging views in school associations.

- 4.6 The community and stakeholder consultation process of the project will be ongoing, with a second round of community consultation planned on the public release of the school's concept master plan.⁷ The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the makeup of the community reference group:

CHAIR - Did you say who made up the community reference group?

Ms ABLITT - We have council representatives, members of local sporting groups, people from the local childcare centres.

CHAIR - Any association members or no community association members?

Mr SALTER - There are the councillors including the mayor.

Ms ABLITT - Yes and school association, and Oral Health.

Ms RATTRAY - The school association from Riverside?

Ms ABLITT - And Exeter.

Ms RATTRAY - There is no school association as yet.

Mr WILLIAMS - But we have certainly been engaging with all the neighbouring schools over the last three years with the principals and the school associations to make sure we are sharing with them and gathering their feedback.

Ms ABLITT - All the neighbouring schools have, yes. In terms of workshops, but they are not on the reference group.

Mr SALTER - Also, student voice from those other primary schools has been important in shaping the design.

Mr WILLIAMS - One of the cool parts of the job is going to work with the kids around what schools and education look like for the future.

CHAIR - Getting an idea as to what they like.

Mr WILLIAMS - Yes, and what they don't like.

Ms ABLITT - We have run workshops with students from Exeter Primary, Riverside Primary, Exeter High and Riverside High. We ran those workshops with DoE staff and Cumulus Studio. Those workshops gave us input into what they wanted to see in their classrooms and outside. The sorts of things that help them learn, the sorts of things that inhibited their learning. That was right at the beginning. They were very engaged in that process.

- 4.7 The Committee were also interested in how the project has worked with educators to influence the design of the school so the project meets the needs of staff and students:

⁷ *Ibid*, p 9.

Mr ELLIS - I am interested in the interplay between the department, yourself, Ms Abblitt, and the architects. Watching these committee hearings over the last couple of days, it shows how central your role is in designing it. This gives me great heart that we're putting our educational experts at the centre of how we're designing our new schools.

Would you be able to give us a sense of how you work together as the leads, particularly your role as the principal advisor, Ms Abblitt?

Ms ABLITT - What I've been doing, you mean?

Mr ELLIS - Yes, and how it all works with this leadership team that seems to be putting together these schools.

Ms ABLITT - I have been turning up to each of the project working groups for Brighton and Legana. I'm offline essentially. I've been a principal for a long time, most recently as principal of Port Sorell Primary School. My role has been to be the conduit between gathering the evidence from experts within the department, gathering the research and providing the advice to the architects. It is the first time we have had this role regarding the two greenfield sites. Todd can probably talk a bit more as to how my role came about as this is first time we had this role.

Mr WILLIAMS - Absolutely, and proving invaluable in having that contribution front and centre and a commitment for the whole project. It is part of the evolution and we learn lessons. One of the lessons is we want the principal to focus on the learning and it is a commitment when you are taking the principal away from their day to day activities to contribute to a project. We balance that as best we can. Having Sam as a principal and a dedicated education leader, being able to connect to all the right areas of educational expertise in the department and bring that in fits really well. Facility services are buildings and project management and our focus is on delivering for our clients. The schools, the principal and the community are our client. Having the educational leader as part of that, having a stakeholder engagement professional as part of facility services front and centre is now to go engage, listen and gather. You put all of that into a project working group and we think that is a really good form to help then shape and present. It has been a number of years in the process of lessons learnt, but we are seeing the results of being able to provide quality which is the goal in meeting our client's needs.

Ms ABLITT - The other part of what I do is to help with some of the redevelopments and then that in turn feeds into this. I have been helping with the Hobart City High School Project, Cosgrove redevelopment, Exeter redevelopment. When I go to those project working groups, the things I learn from them I can also bring to these projects. What I learn from these I take to those projects and mutual beneficial learning happens. There is a consistency about what we do as a department that also brings a strength.

CHAIR - It is coherence.

Ms ABLITT - It is, absolutely. Then there is a consistency across what we bring to students, in terms of the learning environments that we bring to them.

Student Enrolments and School Capacity

4.8 The Committee were interested in understanding the school's capacity and how this would impact enrolments at the nearby Riverside Primary School:

CHAIR - With respect to the students you are saying the nearby Riverside Primary School has 800 students and this one is to have a maximum of 600?

Ms RATTRAY - Three hundred and fifty.

CHAIR – Three [hundred] and fifty, okay. How do you think this will affect the Riverside Primary School in numbers?

Mr SALTER - As part of looking at the intake area there has been discussion with [the] Riverside Principal who is fully supportive of the draft intake zone, which includes Legana and Grindelwald. The school is providing for some students who would have perhaps been going to Riverside in the future but there is no more capacity at Riverside hence, the importance of this school being constructed.

4.9 The Committee were also interested in learning more about the potential for expansion of student numbers in the future:

Ms RATTRAY - I have a question about the future expansion of the campus. It's on the masterplan, number 18 is future expansion. I want to confirm that that is for a maximum of 100 students on top of the 350 that this building has catered for.

Mr SALTER - Four general learning areas can potentially be provided for, which is approximately 100 students.

Ms RATTRAY - In that space?

Mr SALTER - Yes.

Oral Health Hub

4.10 The Committee were aware that the works included the creation of an oral health clinic to be operated by the Tasmanian Health Service. The Committee sought further information on the clinics inclusion in this project:

Ms RATTRAY - With the oral health clinic arrangement, I note from the paperwork \$750 000 will be contributed by Tasmanian Health Service. Would you like to talk through how that came about? Were they in need of a building and thought this is a good opportunity?

Mr WILLIAMS - The Health department approached us when they heard we were progressing a new Legana school and expressed an interest in permanently establishing a facility in that area. Currently, at Exeter Primary School there is the mobile unit that has been there for many years and is quite constrained. We worked with the Health department to progress and reach agreement on how that would work to not only support the school, of course, but to support the community.

CHAIR - That is going to be a separate unit and while it is in the school envelope it will be operating outside school hours.

Mr WILLIAMS - It will operate during school hours; however, the building is separate with its own separate entrance.

CHAIR - It has its own security and separate entrance?

Mr WILLIAMS - Correct.

Football Oval & Sporting Facilities

4.11 The Committee also understood that the project would include a football oval that was made to regional AFL standard, to be owned by the West Tamar Council. This oval would then be leased to the Department of Education for school hours and

special events.⁸ The Committee wanted to further understand the costs associated with this leasing arrangement:

Ms RATTRAY - In regard to the oval, I note in the budget there is a \$410 000 contribution by the DOE, yet there is a lease arrangement fee as well. You don't consider that's double dipping on behalf of West Tamar Council?

Mr WILLIAMS - No, I don't. We would have to build an oval anyway and we would have to maintain an oval. The contribution we have made we believe is appropriate for us providing an oval, given all the civil works and infrastructure works that need to be established. The cost of running groundsmen, having machinery, water and fertiliser, when you add all of that up it is quite a large cost as well.

We have reached the right balance in partnering. Councils, as part of their business, maintain grounds. We generally don't because we want to focus our efforts on maximising learning.

Ms RATTRAY - Councils also provide recreational facilities for communities and the school community is part of their community, so this is a significant contribution by DoE.

Mr SALTER - If I can emphasise what Todd is saying, the right contribution for the value that the school will get out of it. The annual fee, as Todd has said, is \$10 000. You wouldn't be able to maintain a facility of your own for that amount. The school will also get access to other facilities as the council develops them down the track. We certainly think it's more than fair and reasonable; it's a good partnership arrangement that we've come to with the council.

... ..

Mr WILLIAMS - The cost per annum for the use of the oval would be \$15 000, not \$10 000, as I previously said.

Ms RATTRAY - Is that covered by the school, out of there, or is that a separate arrangement with DoE?

Mr WILLIAMS - That is a separate arrangement with DoE.

Out of Hours School Care

4.12 The Committee noted there was provision for out of hours school care to be provided on the site. The Committee questioned how an out of hours school care program could be accommodated:

CHAIR - Something we talked about at the site visit was the possibility of before and after school care. Can you talk us through whether that was considered something that might happen on this site?

Ms ABLITT - Yes, absolutely. It is very much a needed service and increasingly in schools and particularly, primary schools as families return to work. We have made provision for that in the multi-purpose hall where they can have storage facilities. They will have access to toilets and cooking facilities. They will have access to the multi-purpose hall and outside areas. They have specific requirements they need to meet and we are confident they will meet those because we will be meeting those requirements for the childcare provisions for the school.

4.13 The Committee were also interested in whether there were appropriate facilities in place to accommodate a breakfast club:

⁸ *New Legana Primary School*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education, December 2021, p 7.

CHAIR - The other question that correlates with that is breakfast club. Just for the record, let us know whether that can occur on site and whether the facilities are there?

Ms ABLITT - Absolutely. We've got canteen facilities on site and it could definitely be an option that breakfast club would be able to occur there. That again would be something that the school staff and school community at that time, whether it is through the staff or through school association, would be able to organise. But the facilities are definitely there.

Project Design Philosophy - Rosan Bosch

4.14 The Committee understood the new Legana Primary School would focus on an integrated design approach with the aim of blurring the lines between architecture and landscape.⁹ The design focuses on Rosan Bosch's six key principles of early learning in developing both the internal and external areas of the school.¹⁰ The Committee questioned the witnesses on why this approach was important:

Mr ELLIS - Can you give us the pitch on Rosan Bosch and why we are following her ideas, why we think they're important? Help us explain it to our constituents.

Ms ABLITT - Page 8.

Mr HENDERSON - Rosan Bosch, I guess we are using those six key principles from her in terms of how the students might learn. One of the questions you asked before was how we have been working with Sam. She has been pretty heavily involved in all of the conversations we've had around different ways of teaching. We will come with certain ideas then Sam will discuss them all. This was the one we settled on as being the most appropriate.

We have a series of spaces within the rooms and also outside the rooms. They've all got names, which are like collective names so that everyone knows what we are talking about. So, caves are spaces for focusing and concentrating, they are spaces where you can recede away from other students or from other people.

Campfire is a space where students might work together; they may be learning something together, making something together and they are learning off each other. It is all about collaboration.

The watering hole is more of an informal knowledge space which might be in a circulation zone where someone might walk past a teacher and another student and say, 'Have you thought about this?' or 'What you're doing is interesting'.

The mountain top is about teachers teaching to students but also students teaching other students. They might be presenting and they have a captive audience, they're standing. It's almost like a small stage. They're talking about what they've learnt.

Hands-on is about interaction, building, making. That one is in the classroom as well as the maker spaces. There might be robotics, Lego, cooking. In the spaces learning through making and doing as opposed to learning by being told.

The movement is about students who might struggle to focus. You say, 'Go and do a loop around the quadrangle space, come back, sit down'. Kids can get a bit fidgety sitting on the

⁹ *Ibid*, p 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid*.

carpet all day. It's a series of spaces set up to work with each other. Sam could elaborate on it a bit more, having been a teacher, on how it helps modern teaching.

Ms ABLITT - It's a philosophy that's spoken to both of us as architects and as teachers. That has brought us together. Rosan is an architect with experience in learning spaces. She has designed a lot of schools. I spoke about her yesterday. We've used those principles at Legana. It is something we need to look at in all our learning spaces. It's not just something we look at when designing new spaces, it's something we can look at in our already built environment. The spaces aren't just about what we have inside but also outside. Things like the hands-on can also be outside in sandpits and in the learning courtyard. We're making sure we have those spaces in all the learning communities or learning neighbourhoods for all our classes.

Library Facilities

4.15 The library is an important part of a primary school learning experience. The new Legana primary school library will be a central feature of the school, providing visual connections to all areas and zones and easy access for school groups.¹¹ The Committee inquired as to how this library space would interact with the other spaces:

Ms BUTLER - Could you talk us through the library?

Ms ABLITT - Yes. It's my favourite place.

Mr WILLIAMS - That is the building F floor plan

Ms ABLITT - The library space is at the centre of the school and is easily accessible from all learning spaces. It directly opens onto that learning courtyard. The doors open onto that learning courtyard. The leadership team is centred in that library space. That is deliberate so that our leadership team is front and centre with teaching and learning. They are not far from the administration block. There are meeting spaces in the administration block so when the leadership team such as the principal needs to meet with parents, they can go over to the administration block to do that.

The library is close to the makers spaces. That will be like our resource hub, much like I mentioned yesterday, so not just books but other types of resources for both students and teachers. It is a place for reading, it is a place for collaborating, it is a place for working with others.

Ms BUTLER - Will there be sound proofing between those two sections?

Ms ABLITT - Absolutely.

Public Infrastructure and Student Safety

4.16 The proposed works include costings on public infrastructure, including work to support pedestrian movement along the West Tamar Highway.

The Committee sought to further understand how this infrastructure would be constructed with student safety in mind:

CHAIR -[The Department's submission] talks about public infrastructure with regard to the site planning and school design. The last dot point: 'Public infrastructure to support

¹¹ *Ibid*, p 4.

pedestrian movements along the West Tamar Highway towards the Legana residential area. Not yet costed.'

The question was about kids making their way to school. Obviously, sometimes you get unintended consequences of increasing hazards and those sorts of things. Can you talk to us about how that may have been thought through, about how kids get to school from Legana, which is further north, rather than travelling on the edge of a busy highway? Are there other aspects as to how you are facilitating them to get to school?

Mr SALTER - I will start at the high level then Todd can add. Feedback on pedestrian and cycle access has been strong through our consultation and engagement process. State Growth is also looking at the West Tamar corridor. They have recently gone out for their engagement process and I am sure that both cycle and pedestrian access would come through strongly there as well. It is something that is front of mind. We have been active in our engagement with State Growth since the commencement of this project. It is important that investment in the West Tamar corridor and the school align. We would be confident of those aspects lining up so that safety for students is paramount.

Longer term, as we outlined at the site visit, the Legana Structure Plan provides for residential development that will potentially and ultimately see connection directly with Legana and not coming via the highway. That's a long-term direction. Todd, did you want to add?

Mr WILLIAMS - I think that's covered off most of the points. First and foremost, parents and students need to get to school safely. That's front and centre in everything that we're designing and doing. The key part about that is our connection with West Tamar Council, who are heavily involved in the discussions with State Growth that have been happening now for three years, and connecting those two important infrastructure elements.

Project Costs and Contingencies

4.17 The project has engaged a quantity surveyor who has noted a number of risks to the current budget given the current construction market.¹² The Committee questioned the witnesses about the provision for project contingencies in relation to potential rises in construction costs:

CHAIR - And the market conditions influence on construction costs - I'm presuming that means 'predicted by the quantity surveyor', rather than 'predicated'?

Mr SALTER - Yes, that's correct.

CHAIR - 'Project contingencies may present a risk should construction costs continue to increase.' You get to a point, and we have to ask these things on the record, where all of a sudden, the construction costs have just ballooned out. Is there ever going to be a point where you say, 'Well, we can't go ahead with this project', or will you, as someone pointed out yesterday, cut something out and not do that? Compromise?

Mr SALTER - As outlined in the project budget, we've provided what we consider are reasonable contingencies and cost escalation increases. As we get into more detailed design stages, further QS [Quantity Surveyor] advice will be obtained. Ultimately, when we go to market, that will tell us what the construction companies come back with.

It is important in these new builds that are there for 20, 30, 40 years that we don't compromise on scope at the front end. If we get to the point where the market puts pressure on the budget,

¹² *Ibid*, p 13.

then we will look at that with Government. Government is committed to a new school at Legana so we'll continue to actively monitor the budget and pressures as it goes along.

4.18 The Committee were also interested in how the project might mitigate delays in construction given the current demand on the building industry:

Mr TUCKER - Is there enough room in the construction industry to get this built? That's basically where I'm heading with this because if there isn't enough room, they're not going to put in a tender.

Mr SALTER - Through engagement with them, making them fully aware of this coming up, we can't guarantee but they're certainly indicating that they would be interested at the time the tender goes out.

... ..

Mr SALTER - The discussions through Infrastructure Tasmania with industry are looking at how we deliver the 10-year plan, so we're certainly mindful of that issue and working with industry to get the right balance, and working with other departments so that we aren't all competing and releasing at the one time. They are issues that have been put on the table and we've been very open about those discussions.

Mr TUCKER - You're working closely with the construction companies, because we need to keep the work in the pipeline for them, but they need to work with us and let us know if they can't do projects at an economical rate. If they've got too much work on, we need to know that.

CHAIR - There's also the problem that if they don't want a job, they'll put the price up and if there's only one of them putting it in, you're getting an expensive project.

Mr TUCKER - That goes back to my point. You can always pull out but it's about having that discussion with them.

Mr WILLIAMS - We're certainly listening. We're engaged in that conversation. An example would be, we were ready to tender a couple of jobs a month or two ago but the feedback was 'we can't even respond now, so can you hold that till February and release it then?', and that's what we're going to do.

Building and Landscape Materials

4.19 The proposed works aim to incorporate as many natural or low-carbon footprint materials as possible in the project.¹³ A number of options will be explored for the build. The Committee sought to understand more about some of the products being considered for use:

Mr TUCKER - Can someone please explain to me what low-carbon concrete building slabs, footpaths and ramps are?

Mr HENDERSON - One of the things we are trying to do is reduce our carbon. There are new green concretes that use fly ash and all sorts of other ingredients that you -

Mr TUCKER - What is fly ash?

Mr HENDERSON - It is a waste product.

Mr ELLIS - In the coal industry. After you burn coal, you make fly ash.

¹³ Ibid, p 9.

Mr HENDERSON - Yes, so we are trying to use those. Boral is making green concrete. Concrete is one of the most -

Mr TUCKER - I have to ask the question, you have to pay more for it?

Mr HENDERSON - Well, it depends. What do you mean, money or environment?

Mr TUCKER - Well, money.

Mr HENDERSON - Not necessarily. Previously yes, but now it's becoming a much more used product. They are trying to roll it out in as many projects as they can because they see the benefit of it.

CHAIR - It has a different setting off process. Portland cement produces carbon dioxide.

Mr HENDERSON - It is also easier to get rid of. Concrete is one of the worst things to be building with. What do you do with the concrete when you need to get rid of it?

CHAIR - So what happens with this?

Mr HENDERSON - They're trying to make it so you can re-use it for roads, crush it up. In America they use it for roads, they crush it and reuse it. There are lots of ways you can use it.

CHAIR - Even with reo [(reinforcing)] in it?

Mr HENDERSON - Yes, some of it would have reo in it. Pathways would not have as much in there. We are trying to do something with the concrete that is as environmentally conscious as we possibly can. That is really the aspiration for the project.

Does the Project Meet Identified Needs and Provide Value for Money?

4.20 In assessing any proposed public work, the Committee seeks assurance that each project is a good use of public funds and meets identified needs in an efficient and effective manner. The Chair sought and received assurance that the proposed works were addressing an identified need, in a cost effective manner and were a good use of public funds:

CHAIR - ... Does the proposed works meet an identified need or needs or solve a recognised problem?

Mr SALTER - Yes it does.

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

Mr SALTER - We believe they are.

CHAIR - Are the proposed works fit for purpose?

Mr SALTER - We believe they are.

CHAIR - Do the proposed works provide value for money?

Mr SALTER - We believe they do.

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

Mr SALTER - Yes.

5 DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

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

- *New Legana Primary School*, submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public works, Department of Education, December 2021;
- Attachment 1 – Proposed Site Master Plan;
- Attachment 2 – Site Master Plan Development Plans;
- Attachment 3 – Department of Education Pedagogical framework;
- Attachment 4 – Department of Education Built Environment Guide; and
- Attachment 5 - Community Engagement Outcomes Report.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is satisfied the need for the proposed works has been established. Once completed, the New Legana School will provide necessary educational capacity for the rapidly growing primary school student population. With the nearby Riverside Primary School at capacity, the new Legana primary school will allow much needed relief to the enrolment pressures of Riverside.
- 6.2 The proposed works will provide an additional 350 student enrolments for the area with space available to potentially expand this number further in the future.
- 6.3 Additionally, the proposed works will provide a location for an oral health clinic in the school administration area which will be able to be adapted should the clinic no longer be required. The works will also include integrated connections to the West Tamar Council sporting precinct.
- 6.5 Accordingly, the Committee recommends the New Legana Primary School, at an estimated cost of \$24.75 million, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

**Parliament House
Hobart
24 January 2022**

**Hon Rob Valentine MLC
Chair**