



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

New Norfolk Primary School Redevelopment

Brought up by Mr Best and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

Mr *Harriss* (Chairman)
Mr *Hall*

House of Assembly

Mr *Best*
Mrs *Napier*
Mr *Sturges*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
BACKGROUND	2
PROJECT SCOPE	4
PROJECT BENEFITS	4
PROJECT STAGING	5
BUILDING DESCRIPTION	6
PROJECT COSTS	9
EVIDENCE.....	10
DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE.....	17
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	17

INTRODUCTION

The Committee has the honour to report to the House of Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1914 on the -

Redevelopment of general learning areas, provision of two new general learning areas, and external works at New Norfolk Primary School.

BACKGROUND

The New Norfolk Primary School provides educational facilities for children from kindergarten to grade 6. In 2007 there was an enrolment of 329 students and the school is expected to maintain a stable enrolment pattern into the future having shown a slight growth trend over the last decade.

Much of the school fabric has remained largely unaltered since construction. The layout of the spaces is not conducive to contemporary teaching practices, and this is made more difficult by the steadily increasing enrolment and the deteriorating condition of the buildings.

With space at a premium on the extremely restricted site, clever use of space has been a central requirement of the redevelopment, particularly as the school has developed an intensive student support infrastructure involving support professionals, para-professionals and community volunteers, participating in a range of programs.

The proposed works provide the opportunity to reconfigure and extend the learning areas in the multi storey northern building, provide a new and safe entry to the school, upgrade toilet facilities, provide spaces for storage and the delivery of student learning support, improve the play area, provide disability access to the multi-storey building and resolve significant deferred maintenance issues.

The school has been in operation on this site for over a century and benefits from a strong traditional allegiance from the local community. Its contribution to the streetscape varies from the character laden original school block and the attractive 'hop kiln' themed General Purpose Hall, to the fifties and sixties styled classroom blocks, much in need of a unifying refurbishment.

The New Norfolk Primary School has successfully embedded the previous Essential Learnings Framework within their curriculum, particularly in respect of contemporary learning styles, which will continue to support the new Tasmanian Curriculum.

The variety of learning styles that New Norfolk Primary School embraces includes: individual learning; community based education; and project based learning which will be more appropriately supported by the proposed changes to the building infrastructure.

Individual learning is self directed and personalised. It may occur separately or in a shared arrangement such as library or small work area. It can often be facilitated by furniture, shape and fitout, and has a strong link to ICT (Information and

Communications Technology) based learning using a virtual work space, using web based education resources and online centres;

Community based education is related to the broader sharing of resources and social interaction. The community may come into the school or learning may be accessed in community facilities. The community can also contribute to learning in the school, commonly demonstrated by parent participation in literacy and numeracy programs within the class room.

Project based learning requires a range and variety of general and specialist learning areas to support the development of a particular project. It can include research, experiments, physical constructions, forums and presentations.

The existing class rooms in the area to be upgraded are on average about 60 square metres in size and constrained in their configuration making it very difficult to deliver the contemporary curriculum as described above. In addition, space is at a premium due to the increasing enrolments. The proposed development of teaching spaces will ensure flexibility in the delivery of individual, community and project based learning along with the familiar teacher-to-class learning.

Current learning spaces will be transformed from the traditional design conceived around a belief that learning involves all students learning exactly the same thing at the same time, to a facility which provides opportunities for the personalisation of the learning program with students working at their own individual level of challenge. Students can then be involved in whole class instruction from the teacher, in smaller groups working at a common level, and individually and in small groups receiving support from peer tutors, parent tutors, teacher aides or support specialists.

Enhancements will include access to technology and other resources and will provide the flexibility to move between whole class, individual and cooperative learning activities without major disruption.

The Government provides educational services to the New Norfolk town and surrounding areas through the Fairview Primary School on the northern bank of the river and the New Norfolk Primary School on the southern bank adjacent to the main shopping and municipal services, and New Norfolk High School.

The Derwent Valley area has been enjoying minor population growth over recent years and this is expected to continue. New Norfolk Primary enrolments have increased over the last ten years from 264 full time equivalent (FTE) enrolments in 1997 to 301.1 FTE in 2007. The following table shows recent enrolment levels and current enrolment projections for the school.

	2003 Census	2004 Census	2005 Census	2006 Census	2007 Census	2008 Projected	2009 Projected	2010 Projected	2011 Projected	2012 Projected
Persons	314	290	305	294	326	325	325	326	328	333
FTE	286.5	275.5	281.4	275.5	301.1	304.0	304.0	303.5	306.0	312.0

The original New Norfolk Primary School building was opened in 1930 with the northern multi-storey learning block constructed progressively during the 1950's and 1960's. The school was partially upgraded, including the addition of the 'hop kiln' style General Purpose Hall in 1994.

The New Norfolk Primary School operates an off-site kindergarten close to the high school site in Blair Street. Although this remains one of the few physically separate kindergarten services in the government education system, at this stage the current arrangement is considered satisfactory. The first priority with available funds is to consolidate and upgrade the existing learning facilities with a view to consider the co-location of the kindergarten at a future point.

The proposed alterations do not impact on the aesthetic or planning integrity of the original school building. Consultations during the early design phase established that the site is not heritage listed.

PROJECT SCOPE

Funding has been provided in 2007/08 and 2008/09 to:

1. Reconfigure and refurbish existing original classrooms and corridor spaces on the ground floor and first floor of the Northern building to provide nine contemporary general learning areas to cater for current and future enrolments, including:
 - Increasing the area for each learning space to as close to 90M2 as possible;
 - Providing wet activity areas;
 - Providing withdrawal spaces;
 - Providing access to ICT facilities in each learning space;
 - Upgrading staff facilities;
 - Providing connections between the learning spaces to encourage co-teaching and general flexibility; and
 - Providing access to outdoor learning areas.
2. Refurbish existing storage and resource areas in the northern building;
3. Resolve the circulation between the two main building blocks and around the campus generally;
4. Refurbish the lower ground learning areas and upgrade the existing toilets; and
5. Carry out external works including providing shade areas, landscaping and general site services.

PROJECT BENEFITS

There are a number of key benefits that the proposed project will deliver to the school and its community:

1. A new entrance will be provided from Pioneer Avenue resolving congestion and unsafe pedestrian traffic arrangements. The entrance will replace the old toilets to create a new access that flows through to a new concourse and gentle ramping system that takes the traveller up to the central courtyard;

2. The old toilets will be replaced to resolve long-standing problems associated with student supervision and the generally poor condition and inconvenient location of current facilities;
3. The existing learning spaces in the multi-storey building will be greatly improved, becoming larger and including withdrawal and support areas;
4. Two additional class rooms will allow class numbers to be managed down to an acceptable staff / student ratio, and accommodate the increasing enrolment;
5. The new ramp system and fly-over link will provide disabled access to the multi storey building, and across the courtyard to the general purpose hall and administrative / library block;
6. Most of the new and upgraded class rooms will have openings to adjoining teaching spaces and access to external learning spaces, greatly enhancing flexibility;
7. The central courtyard will be enlarged and an obstructive utility building will be removed;
8. New teaching support areas (relocated to allow for classroom redevelopment) will be provided appropriately located adjacent to the administration and library areas; and
9. A range of deferred maintenance issues will be resolved with the upgrade.

PROJECT STAGING

The design has been developed so as to ensure that the school can continue to function during the redevelopment with the minimum disruption possible. The redevelopment will accommodate a construction sequence which provides a series of staged handovers of the new or refurbished accommodation.

In summary the proposed construction sequence is as follows:

Stage 1 New Class Rooms

The existing double classroom unit at the lower ground floor level will be vacated with classes accommodated in the existing class rooms located in the administration block that are normally used for music and other support teaching activities;

The new classroom block (3 classrooms and ancillary areas) will be constructed on top of the vacated double classroom unit;

The existing undercroft storage area at lower ground floor level (under the double storey teaching block) will be redeveloped as student toilets; and

The hard landscaped areas associated with the above works including ramps and deck will be constructed.

At the end of stage one the new class rooms will be occupied by the classes that were temporarily moved to the music room, along with classes from the double storey building. The new toilets will also be commissioned.

Stage 2 Administration Building / Teaching Support Areas

The administration building will be extended and refurbished to provide accommodation for teaching support areas, the flying start teaching program and the staff room which is currently located on the upper floor of the two storey building.

With the relocation of the support staff and the remaining classes moved to the music room, the double storey building will be prepared for its upgrade (Stage 3).

Stage 3 Double Storey Class Block

The ground and first floors of the two storey building will be upgraded providing accommodation for 6 classes.

A new fire wall will be constructed to separate the double storey block from the existing single storey, timber framed, weatherboard clad, double classroom unit on the southern side.

The existing staff toilets will be refurbished in their current location.

The existing student toilets will be demolished and a new entry concourse constructed with the remaining area converted to provide an undercroft storage area at ground floor level.

The hard landscaped areas associated with the above works (concourse, walkway, decks, etc) will be constructed including provision of a new groundsman's store.

Stage 4 Courtyard Works

The existing groundsman's store which was the original school toilet block will be demolished and the courtyard made good.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

New Classroom Block (Stage 1)

The new class rooms will be constructed on top of the existing single storey building which was originally designed to carry an additional storey. The existing construction is concrete framed with cavity brick infill. The extension will be:

- Floor - existing suspended reinforced concrete floor slab extended;
- External walls - brick veneer with steel columns and ring beam roof support generally;
- To comply with BCA fire resistance requirements, columns on northern side will be reinforced concrete and wall to eastern side will be cavity brick/block;
- High level walls and gable ends will be timber framed clad with planked cement sheet cladding to match existing General Purpose Hall;
- Internal walls – timber framed;
- Roof framing - proprietary timber trusses;
- Roofing - colorbond steel roof sheeting, insulated;
- Door and window frames - powdercoated aluminum;
- Internal wall linings – plasterboard / villaboard / MDF;
- Ceiling linings – plasterboard / acoustic tiles;

- Floor coverings – carpet / sheet vinyl (indoor/outdoor carpet to circulation areas);
- Joinery fixtures – laminated plastic finishes generally.

Administration / Teaching Support Areas (Stage 2)

The extension and partial refurbishment of the existing single storey administration block corridor will be comprised of:

- Floor – section of existing timber floor to be demolished and replaced with a reinforced concrete floor slab to suit the new extension (additional sub floor ventilation will be provided as appropriate);
- External walls - brick veneer with steel columns and roof support beams as required;
- Internal walls – timber framed;
- Roof framing - timber framed (extension of skillion section to GP Hall);
- Roofing - colorbond steel roof sheeting, insulated;
- New door and window frames - powdercoated aluminum;
- Internal doors – solid core painted timber with glazed panels to suit;
- Internal wall linings – plasterboard / villaboard;
- New ceiling linings – plasterboard;
- Floor coverings – carpet / sheet vinyl;
- Joinery fixtures – laminated plastic finishes generally.

Two Storey Classroom (Stage 3)

Refurbishment of the existing double storey classroom block:

- New external walls (western side) – cavity brick / block to ground floor, brick veneer to first floor;
- Internal walls – timber framed;
- New door and window frames - powdercoated aluminum;
- New external doors – glazed / powdercoated aluminum;
- Internal sliding doors – glazed / powdercoated aluminum;
- Internal swing doors – solid core painted timber with glazed panels to suit;
- Internal wall linings – plasterboard / villaboard / MDF;
- New suspended ceiling linings – plasterboard / acoustic tiles;
- Floor coverings – carpet / sheet vinyl (indoor/outdoor carpet to circulation areas);
- Joinery fixtures – laminated plastic finishes generally.

Upgrade Existing Single Storey Classrooms (Stage 3)

Refurbishment of the existing single storey timber framed double classroom block:

- New external walls (northern side) – timber frame clad in weatherboards to match existing;
- New fire wall to provide separation from double storey block per BCA requirements – timber frame lined with fyrchek plasterboard to provide a 120/120/120 FRL;
- Internal walls – timber framed;
- Roof framing – existing timber framing on steel trusses modified to suit;

- Roofing – terracotta tiles to match existing with insulation at ceiling level;
- New door and window frames - powdercoated aluminum;
- New external doors – glazed / powdercoated aluminum;
- Internal sliding door – glazed / powdercoated aluminum;
- Internal swing doors – solid core painted timber with glazed panels to suit;
- Internal wall linings – plasterboard / villaboard / MDF;
- New ceiling linings – plasterboard;
- Floor coverings – carpet / sheet vinyl (indoor/outdoor carpet to circulation areas);
- Joinery fixtures – laminated plastic finishes generally.

Student & Staff Toilet Areas (Stage 1 and Stage 3)

Redeveloped and / or refurbished toilets areas will generally be:

- Walls – painted blockwork or painted villaboard on timber framing as applicable with tile splashbacks;
- Toilet partitions – heavy duty proprietary system; and
- Floor coverings – non slip sheet vinyl coved up walls at skirtings.

Building Services

Site Reticulation

The existing school power supply, together with the main switchboard, will be retained. New sub boards and sub mains will be provided in appropriate locations throughout the new development.

Fire Detection

The existing fire detection system will be extended to cover the new and redeveloped buildings. Existing detectors will be reused and recommissioned where possible. These will be supplemented by new detectors where required.

Site lighting

General security lighting will be provided by wall mounted bulkhead luminaries. This will be controlled via time clocks and PE cell from local switchboards.

Power

General purpose outlets will be provided throughout the buildings supplied from local switchboards.

Sufficient outlets will be installed to cater for computers, cleaning and general use.

Lighting

Lighting will be achieved by the use of fluorescent luminaries.

K19 diffusers will be installed in all general areas and the use of louvres will be used to reduce glare issues in areas where screen based tasks will be undertaken such as work rooms.

Heating

Ceiling mounted radiant heaters will be provided throughout the spaces, controlled by local thermostats and after-hours controls.

Existing heaters will be reused where possible.

Communications

A category 5e structured cabling system implementing star topology will be provided throughout. The system will be suitable for both voice and data.

A new communication cabinet will be established and the existing fibre optic cable will be redirected and connected to this cabinet. All works will be installed to AS3008.

PROJECT COSTS

Construction Estimate	\$1,980,000
Furniture and Equipment	\$253,000
Fees	\$190,000
Art Works	\$39,000
Contingency	\$129,000
Total Project Costs	\$2,591,000

Indicative Cost Estimate

The project budget has been developed in consultation with Kevin Collins Quantity Surveyor as shown below:

Stage Costings

Stage 1	New Class Rooms	\$705,000
Stage 2	Administration Building Support Areas	\$197,500
Stage 3	Double Storey Class Block	\$677,500
	Southern Classrooms	\$140,000
Stage 4	Courtyard Works	\$260,000
		\$1,980,000

Elemental Costings

Preliminaries	\$204,295
Substructure, columns and floors	\$118,405
Roof	\$107,552
External walls, windows and doors	\$201,788
Internal walls, screens and doors	\$143,115
Finishes walls floor and ceiling	\$295,297
Fitments	\$204,085

Sanitary Fittings	\$80,550
Water supply	\$25,000
Ventilation	\$6,600
Fire Protection	\$17,600
Electrical Light and Power	\$164,475
Communications	\$43,945
Alterations to existing buildings	\$69,438
Site Preparation	\$31,600
Roads, footpaths and paved areas	\$38,145
Landscaping including outbuildings and fences	\$121,610
External stormwater, sewage, water, and fire	\$41,500
Contingency	\$65,000
	\$1,980,000

EVIDENCE

The Committee commenced its inquiry on Wednesday, 13 February last at the New Norfolk Primary School. Accompanied by the consultants, the Committee was conducted on a site inspection, following which the Committee recovered in the Court Room, Derwent Valley Council Chambers, New Norfolk. The following witnesses were called, made the Statutory Declaration and examined by the Committee in public:-

- Les Burbury, Project Officer Capital Planning and Development, Department of Education
- Cath Parker, Manager Capital Planning and Development , Department of Education
- Anker Fuglsang, Principal, New Norfolk Primary School.

Background

The Principal, Mr Fuglsang, provided the Committee with the following overview of the project:-

First of all, the site is no longer relevant to modern teaching practices. Basically it is something designed around 1950s pedagogy and it doesn't suit what we know about teaching now with changes in technology and changes in the way you teach. That means the size of our classrooms - around 60 square metres or less - actually works against rather than helps educational outcomes for kids. That is probably the first and most obvious point.

Secondly, the growth that we are experiencing and that is predicted conservatively in this community has made it very hard for us to accommodate the kids who are in our neighbourhood area. We need more teaching spaces. At the moment we have classes for this year of up to 30 and last year we had classes up to 30. This year our prep classes, with a recommended size of 21, will actually be 22 and 23 without further enrolments. So we are simply unable to create more teaching groups without more classroom space.

The third point is that it is very hard to maintain schools of the age of ours with the realistic budget that we have so that we protect the capital investment, the buildings. Our building has got to the stage where it needs major refurbishment in order for us to maintain basically our capital investment. When it is new it is easy to keep, but once it has declined to the stage that ours has, it is really hard to do anything about it. You saw the infant toilets. These have been a bone of contention with parents as being unsuitable for probably about 20 years and only a refurbishment will redress that.

The fourth point is that, as far as supervision and safety in the schoolyard are concerned, there are a whole lot of design features in the school - and I think 'design' is generous, because I think they happen by default rather than by design - that militate against maintaining a safe sort of playground. We read all the time in the newspaper about the increase in misbehaviour in schools, but certainly the profile of our student population has changed greatly in the 10 years that I have been at New Norfolk Primary School. The sorts of serious misbehaviours and the harm that kids do to one another have increased out of sight in most schools and ours is a typical example of that. The ability to have really professional supervision in both the classroom and the playground is very important. Having cloakrooms, corridors and a toilet that is out of the line of sight for infants in the recess and lunchtime really is challenging as far as providing a high level of supervision is concerned.

New entrance

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what, if any, benefits will be derived from the new entrance off Pioneer Avenue. Mr Fuglsang responded:-

Part of the ad hoc nature of the school is that as the school has grown the population has changed over a long period, so there have been add-ons and movements and, really, there is no central flow. When people come into the school, it is through a very constricted area.

It is probably not safe, but that is the least of our concerns. Our concern is that, as a public place, access is confused and restricted. That is one thing to be addressed. Also to do with the ad hoc nature of the school is lack of a key facility to provide the support services that we now have for children - like one-to-one counselling. We support people such as social workers, guidance officers and speech pathologists. We have tried to

provide that sort of facility in an ad hoc way. The plan unifies and rationalises this, making clear where things are, where people work, how people get there and how the community gets into the school and to places of importance to them. A lot of that is improved out of sight with this unified plan.

Access

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what improvements were proposed to be made for access to the school. The witnesses responded:-

Mr FUGLSANG - *One grade 6 student in a wheelchair came in a while ago. We were able to make restricted changes to the school to facilitate his attendance. However, if an infant came to the school we could not provide the same access and facilities as we do for other students - because of the topography. That has been accounted for in the plan. As a result we can provide access to all areas in the school for any mobility-restricted person. That was not first in our thinking but it is a really important benefit of the plan.*

Mr BURBURY - *Yes. Through some very astute planning, Anker and the architect have managed to provide access in a multi-storied building without taking much room for ramps and so on...*

Mr FUGLSANG - *We are solving the (access) problems basically within the school grounds. The access is about three-and-a-half times wider and they don't have to stop at doors; they don't have to go past classrooms that are half open, so it preserves the classroom space. The concourse is a huge, wide space for people. I guess the other point is that the kids are calmer when they come out because they have not battled their way out through a gate, down some steps, around a corner and all squeezed out there, elbow to elbow, jostling like a rugby team. There is a better and freer distribution of children into Pioneer Avenue, both ways. The parking is all around there, but basically it is just a saner, more complacent process as a result of creating some space.*

Input from parents

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what consultation had been undertaken with the parent body. Mr Fuglsang responded:-

We did it in a number of ways. We have a P&F association, which is a subcommittee of the School Association. So it was discussed at School Association level, so School Association members and P&F executives were involved in the steering committee. They were involved in the regular meetings with Mike Pope, the architect. Forms were sent home for parents to write comments and outside every classroom there were suggestion sheets placed and parents were given a month to make comments. Those were the main forms. There were quite a number of Parents & Friends meetings and opportunities to have input, but mainly it

was through executive members who were represented on the steering committee for the development of the plan.

It is really interesting: the things that parents worry about are the smaller cosmetic things and all those suggestions could basically be incorporated. The one thing that most parents put upfront - the most commonly mentioned thing - was the infant toilets. There was almost a sigh of collective relief when we said that we were going to fight the department and the architect over the infant toilets if necessary because it was such a fundamental concern to parents. That one victory - that those toilets were to be removed and redone - was enough to make the parents extremely happy with the whole process. So there was lots of opportunity.

(The plans) have been on display. We have had several stages of the plan and it has been refined more and more. Most of this was on display very early, and once again we had the plans on display and a big comment sheet inviting parent representatives and teachers who will be working in the rooms to make suggestions. That has probably been a three-stage process. There has been reaction to that, further talk, further resolutions, more feedback and this final plan is probably about the third stage of consultation.

... in my opinion school communities respond very much to a lot of more superficial things, like how a school looks, so when it is refurbished they take a lot of pride in it. It really means something to the community. In the last 18 years, New Norfolk has gone from an economic low, where occupancy in the main street was low. The council and the Derwent Valley economic renewal group - Valley Vision - have worked hard to lift the place and turn it around. One of the interesting things is that the Pioneer Avenue streetscape has improved, and there are plans to improve other parts of it. High Street has improved out of sight. The school will take its place as part of this renewal not only of the school but also of the town centre. There will be increased parent pride. The parents and friends have already approached me about creating a space that parents can call their own when they come into the school. At the moment it is the canteen. We did have another parent room but we sometimes need it for music. In the next couple of years we may have the flexibility to give parents a bit of ownership. We can say, 'Come in; there is coffee and tea so help yourself'. We have a lot of volunteers in the school carrying out a lot of roles. We can't get many to meetings, but many people accept one-to-one invitations to come in and participate in the school. We think there will be huge opportunities to grow that.

Shelter

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to whether the new concourse has a translucent roof. The following exchange occurred:-

Mr BURBURY - *No, it doesn't. It offers shelter points along the way, but not complete coverage.*

CHAIR - *Would that be a consideration, to provide shelter? It is going to be a well-used area, paved and flat.*

Mr BURBURY - *Physically there is no difficulty in doing that, though I worry about the money. I would like them to develop the design a bit more to see if they can manage it. It is far better than what we have at the moment because you come into the building with plenty of sheltered room to assemble yourself. Then you are moving under the concourse, which is quite a big structure in its own right.*

CHAIR - *Under the flyover?*

Mr BURBURY - *Yes. You have a better arrangement than the existing one, but we could improve it. It would have to be costed.*

CHAIR - *Yes. There is a small contingency of only \$65 000. You are likely to find difficulties as the job progresses and I suspect you will chew up that contingency. However, if you didn't then for little cost it might be done. I would be concerned about the architectural effect, though what we saw on site is fairly ad hoc; there is no great architectural theme flowing through the whole development. I raise it as a possibility.*

Mr BURBURY - *We could certainly take that on board.*

CHAIR - *Though if the school community is happy with its being open then that is fine.*

Mr FUGLSANG - *Our understanding through the process has been that we need to be fairly frugal. Initially the costing was for the refurbishment of classes, not for buildings. If we went well with the tender then there are a couple of developments we would consider. One would be to have awnings over the weather-side wall. The huge classrooms can be very hot and temperature control is very difficult. I give notice that this would be a major contribution to creating a good work environment in classrooms.*

The second consideration is the covering you mentioned, giving complete covered access from one part of the building to the far extremes of the building. We will try to look at that in our maintenance budget in the coming years, to finish things off. There are constraints with meeting the budget, a couple of things we don't think we can afford, but if we can we will move on them.

CHAIR - *Certainly protection on the northern side from intense heat is important. Conducive learning areas would be the priority.*

Class sizes

The Committee questioned the witness as to what the total teacher number for the school was. The following exchange occurred:-

Mr FUGLSANG - *Our total FTE entitlement is around 15.4. We actually have about 30 adults working on site when you take account of our teacher aides, our ancillary staff and our part-timers, realising that that 15-plus FTE quota includes a whole lot of people that team-teach and part-time specialists who might come for one or two days.*

CHAIR - *So when you get these new classrooms, have you indicated to us what the class sizes might be?*

Mr FUGLSANG - *Yes, I did work that out and it was in my presentation to you guys when I said we needed a new classroom. It takes it down from an average of about 27 to an average of 23, something like that. That is fairly significant. The way we organise the school, we try to keep smaller classes of little kids, so your preps are your smallest classes and your year 5s and 6s are your biggest classes. We aim to keep under the department's guideline of 21 in prep. The department has a guideline of about 24 for 1s and 2s, and we actually prefer it to be down around 22. We would rather the 5s and 6s to be around 26, and we achieve that with an extra class. We can't get down there with the 11 groups we have at the moment because there is no room.*

There are other ramifications which are quite complex because when you bring in a specialist to give non-contact time, the specialist can come in for two days and teach 11 groups but cannot come in for two days and teach 12 groups. If they come in for another day and it is raining, they have to share spaces, the specialist has to teach in the classroom rather than teach in their own space. So we take that into account too.

CHAIR - *As you indicated to us earlier, both in your presentation here and on site, you have classrooms of 30 students crammed into about 50 square metres.*

Mr FUGLSANG - *That is exactly right.*

CHAIR - *So the per square metre per student ratio will be greatly enhanced by what is being proposed here. That leads me to the next question. The three new classrooms that are being constructed will be sufficient for the next 10 years, going by the projections for likely growth at the school?*

Mr FUGLSANG - *That will really optimise the provision that we can provide on the site. If growth does go the way that is predicted or even more, we will have to establish a population ceiling and we will no longer be able to take students out of the area. At the moment we take students out of area and traditionally a lot of them like to come to where their*

fathers and grandfathers came. We have, for instance, a group from Magra who come to the school, but we would have to have a policy whereby we established, with our general manager, a ceiling, saying we can only take other students if there is space. With projected growth it will come to that.

Mr BURBURY - *Can I add to that? There is always this dilemma when you are planning for a school. If you count up the subdivisions in the area you get a number that is much greater than actually walk through the gate. The enrolment projections we have on page 6 are perhaps conservative, but quite a reasonable projection. They show that, as far as we can see into the future, the provision we are making will be adequate. That is not to say it cannot change. In fact we never know until they hit our kindergartens whether those houses are full of young couples with young kids or other groups of people, so there is always a risk, but we are pretty confident that we are building for the future as best we sensibly can.*

Maintenance issues

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what deferred maintenance issues would be resolved with the proposed upgrade. The witnesses responded:-

Mr BURBURY - *It is like any old building. The heating system is old and tired; the wiring is old tired; the plumbing is atrocious. We have fascinating times with the sewerage blocking up as it goes down through that new ground area. All of that is resolved in the process of this upgrade because it is really concentrating on that building, and it takes away the burdens. The department has this process of going around to each school every two or three years and assessing the room and essential services in the school as well as the maintenance system which records breakdowns and so forth. I know, from having managed that area, that this has been one of the worst schools in terms of needing things done to it. As I said earlier, we have spent all our little pockets of money to solve problems. Our last big burst was the heating in the admin building which had reached a point where it was almost ready to be condemned. The heaters were absolutely terrible, so we had to find emergency money. It has been a school that has dragged us like that. The upgrade will resolve all that and clean the decks. It will now be as well heated, as warm and as cool as any other school.*

Ms PARKER - *I might add, Mr Chair, that any project budget that we put forward has a component for purchasing equipment and in this case it is \$253 000. That should go a long way to fixing things such as broken blinds, chipped surfaces, chipped desks, broken floor tiles and replacing carpets. I think it will look very different next year from the way it looks now.*

DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

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

- New Norfolk Primary School – The Proposed Redevelopment of the Existing Primary School – Department of Education Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, dated 31 January 2008.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The evidence presented to the Committee clearly demonstrated the need for the proposed work to go ahead. Much of the school fabric has remained largely unaltered since construction. The layout of the spaces is not conducive to contemporary teaching practices, and this is made more difficult by the steadily increasing enrolment and the deteriorating condition of the buildings.

The proposed works provide the opportunity to reconfigure and extend the learning areas in the multi storey northern building, provide a new and safe entry to the school, upgrade toilet facilities, provide spaces for storage and the delivery of student learning support, improve the play area, provide disability access to the multi-storey building and resolve significant deferred maintenance issues.

Accordingly the Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted, at an estimated total cost of \$2,591,000.

**Parliament House
HOBART
31 March 2008**

**Hon. A. P. Harriss M.L.C.
CHAIRMAN**