

**PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET AT
CONFERENCE ROOM, HENTY HOUSE, LAUNCESTON, ON MONDAY 26
FEBRUARY 2007.**

MAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT

Ms LIZ BANKS, GENERAL MANAGER, LEARNING SERVICES (NORTH), DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; **Ms HEATHER FAHEY**, PRINCIPAL, MAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL; Mr **TIM GOURLAY**, MANAGER (FACILITY SERVICES), DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; AND **Mr MIKE WILKINSON**, CONSULTANT ARCHITECT, ARTAS ARCHITECTS, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIR (Mr Harriss) - I declare the meeting open. We have apologies from both Mr Sturges and Mr Best. The other three committee members constitute the quorum. I thank you for the site visit this morning, Heather, and the generous morning tea. It is always beneficial to have a site visit to familiarise ourselves with what is currently at the school and what the proposals are. Thus we are in a better position to make some judgments about that. Today's site visit was most informative. Tim, will you give the overview?

Mr GOURLAY - This project began with an allocation in the 2005-06 State Budget of some \$6.064 million in May 2005 under the project heading 'Launceston (Northern Suburbs) Primary Schools'. That allocation was primarily to ensure an upgrading in delivery of very contemporary primary education learning facilities to serve the northern suburbs of Launceston.

To properly deliberate and evaluate the best way of applying those funds, a steering committee was established by the department in August 2006. It was a representative group involving each of the school principals from the precinct, members of the school communities and departmental representatives. It was also an interdepartmental committee in that it had representatives from other government departments, it consulted with other government departments and also had a representative from the Launceston City Council. The committee met a number of times between August and the end of 2006. In its deliberations it explored a number of possibilities for the upgrading of primary education facilities in the northern suburbs. It prepared a report which, in the first part of 2006, was submitted to the corporate management group of the Department of Education as requested under the terms of reference of that committee.

As I indicated, the committee assessed the existing facilities and made an objective appraisal of those, mainly centred on Mayfield and Rocherlea primary schools. Part of the assessment involved an international education facilities consultant, Mr Prakash Nair, who applied a tool that is known as the education facilities effectiveness instrument, which is used as a base for measuring key criteria of effective education facilities. That assessment indicated that Mayfield rated fairly well in terms of providing a sound base of facilities that could be upgraded in a cost beneficial way and, relative to Rocherlea, it rated higher.

Having explored a range of options and a number of possibilities, the committee focused on one key aspect - that the Mayfield Primary School site and facilities should be

upgraded to contemporary educational program standards. Having considered other alternatives, the corporate management group of the department also requested that some further consultation and deliberations be undertaken in relation to the balance of the project.

Given the detailed inspection on site this morning, which focused fairly thoroughly on the proposed scope of works, I do not intend to elaborate on or work through the drawings, but our project architect will do that as we go through. One of the major aspects of the project is the proposed new footprint, so as well as upgrading the teaching and learning areas, there is a proposal to develop a new facility which provides basically administration, multipurpose facilities and a new library, which will be very much a community-based centre as well as a school facility. To elaborate a little on the importance of that centre in the scope of work, I will pass to the Principal of Mayfield Primary School to articulate that side of the project.

Ms FAHEY - Thank you all for the opportunity to speak to you about this project. My comments reflect the views of the Mayfield school community and have been endorsed by them and by the chair of the Parents Association, Ms Katrina Tatnell. The school community view is that the proposed redevelopment is a wonderful and exciting opportunity to design a new building and refurbish the internal spaces so that they cater for and reflect current pedagogy and more modern teaching practices.

Mayfield Primary School is a highly valued central focus in our community and is in need of upgrading because it has not had any major capital works since the school was built in the 1950s. Given the age of the buildings, the school team has worked hard to maintain and upgrade classrooms using school resources because we believe that if you are to have high expectations of student learning, this will happen more effectively in quality learning spaces.

The redevelopment will provide connections in our buildings, updated and flexible learning areas and opportunities to provide community spaces for adult learning. It will enable us to continue to enhance our existing community partnerships. The proposed classroom spaces will be more open with access between rooms to encourage children in adjoining classrooms to work together, as well as extending the classrooms to the outdoors.

At Mayfield children and teachers learn in teams. They learn by thinking, trialling, discussing and integrating information in learning spaces, which are required to be flexible and interactive to cater for the individual styles of the learners.

The new building will provide the school with a signature entrance and general purpose hall and community library. Our current hall is equivalent to the size of two classrooms. This is particularly challenging in the winter period when it is the only space available to conduct health and PE lessons. It is also the only space we have for whole-school assemblies and celebrations when we at times attempt to accommodate up to 400 people. As there is no community hall in Mayfield, this new hall will enable us to explore and expand the use of the school as a community facility, as well as its use for health and PE, music, drama, recreation and to accommodate all parents for school functions. One of the recommendations of the Engaging in Our Communities Taskforce is to trial a

partnership with Library Tasmania by incorporating an adult borrowing section in the new library.

Mayfield parents and community members are highly supportive and positive advocates of the school and are proud of the excellent learning outcomes which we have achieved, such as our excellent results in State eye testing and our receipt of the Minister's Learning Together award, which recognised Mayfield's excellence in its provision of flexible learning programs to support learning for all. The minister also recognised Mayfield as a shining example of a school that actively supports and develops programs to engage the community in the school. We want to build on this.

The redevelopment will provide the community with a flexible learning environment for students, resources to continue to build community partnerships, recreation opportunities and support for parent learning. The notion of embracing the school as a hub of community learning is exciting. We need updated spaces, flexible learning areas, opportunities to provide community-based education, modern approaches to technology and a contemporary school that reflects the high-quality education outcomes for all students who attend.

Mayfield Primary School has an excellent reputation in our local and broader community for achieving high standards, for its innovative programs, for its commitment to and focus on developing quality partnerships and the relationships with the community and for doing whatever it takes to support students' learning potential. However, at times this potential and experience with programs have been compromised by the lack of space and the limited flexibility of current spaces. This exciting redevelopment will provide the Mayfield community with a quality physical learning environment which will match the existing excellence in teaching and learning programs. The Mayfield Primary School community deserves no less.

Mr GOURLAY - In putting forward the Mayfield redevelopment, it is implicit in doing so that the Launceston (Northern Suburbs) project has been divided into a two-stage project. This is very much stage 1. I will ask the General Manager Learning Services (North) to explain a little bit about the second stage and the consultation process.

Ms BANKS - On 14 March I will call together the group that was nominated at the end of last year to be involved in phase 2 of this project and at that time we will open up the consultation to progress with what the community wants for the rest of the redevelopment of primary learning in the northern suburbs. The meeting was to have been held earlier this year; however, it was really important that we were inclusive about that and so we took the opportunity of the first available time that the mayor was available to participate because he is keenly interested and wants to be a part of that. That group was determined for me before I came into this job, so our first task will be to ask whether this is a representative group and whether we need to include others in phase 2. Phase 2 may still include members of the Mayfield Primary community as well, and in fact anybody who might want to have a say in what happens to the rest of that public money - the \$2.3 million.

I am hoping that that will be a clean, transparent and timely process so that the community feels reassured (a) that they have had a fair say, and (b) that the process will

not drag on, given what has already happened, and thus adding to people's angst about the process.

CHAIR - And now we turn to the consulting architect.

Mr WILKINSON - Thank you, Mr Chairman. Would you like me to run through and give a brief description of the master plan in each building?

CHAIR - In terms of the record, that would be appropriate. We have seen it, but we do need that on the record.

Mr WILKINSON - Okay. The master plan brief called for a new building which would include a library, a multipurpose hall, a canteen and some administration facilities. It also called for the existing buildings - building 1 being the southernmost building - to have the general learning areas tidied up and also provide some new linkages between them by way of having shared resources and wet areas. It also called for the refurbishment of the toilets, the demolition of the girls' toilet block and the western courtyard of building 1 as well. Building 1 is the primary classroom block. Building 2, the early childhood block, also needed better access and also linking GLAs between the various areas within the building and providing shared resources and wet areas between those GLAs. Also it has some refurbished WCs and generally gets a good upgrade.

Key features of both the existing building designs were that new decks were to be put on the north-eastern side of the building to provide opportunities for outdoor learning and linkages to the inside of the classrooms. All three buildings are linked by an overall plan which provides a covered walkway from the end of building 1 to the new building and the area immediately outside that new building has a covered area as well, so there is plenty of shelter provided between the three buildings. That cuts across to the east also to provide a link to building 2. As part of this redevelopment, we are also including a new car park, which provides an additional 12-16 spaces for the school to comply with the local planning guideline requirements of the Launceston City Council.

Also in the development, we are providing some background master planning to tie the new building, building 2 and the car park together and soften the area at the front on Hargrave Crescent. There will also be some tree planting provided down the side of the sports field. To that end, I think I mentioned also that at the end of the new building there will be a terrace with some steps down to the playing field so that provides a nice outdoor reading area.

On infrastructure: all the electrics and basically the subwalls in the buildings are okay. They are getting upgraded. Reticulation out to the lights and heaters and the lights and heaters themselves are being upgraded, as a new fire detection system is being put through the building. There will also be new security, a new PA system and new communication system. The latter includes the frame for computer communications and also wireless technology will be put through the buildings to facilitate the use of laptops.

Those of you who have a copy of building 3 footprint plan at the back of your report will see it shows the new building in somewhat more detail than I have just talked about. The multipurpose hall is divisible into two areas and it also opens up onto the courtyard around building 2. That will facilitate a gathering of 300-400 people or small

productions or a couple of classes. There is quite a bit of flexibility about that space. There is some storage off the back for some portable staging, chairs and any equipment the school needs to store. The two spaces are separated by an operable acoustic wall, which provides the separation required and that has a door so that you can walk through into that multipurpose smaller area.

Between that and the library there are some administration facilities and you can see that there are two offices there, the Principal's office and also an interview space. There is some storage behind the reception area and basically the front access to the school will be from this point. You can see where the foyer is; it comes into a reception area and the school access from the rear or south end of the building. The library has some regular stack space; it also has an area around that for learning or for a class situation, where they come in and use the library's resources as part of their activities. There is also a sort of soft lounge area, if you like, for children's research, and somewhere to watch a TV program, a CD-ROM or what have you. It will be a community facility where parents and interested residents can come in and use the library. There are tea and coffee making facilities for them there. On the back of the workroom and store you can see there are some toilets. We have provided a unisex facility for the staff, which has been slightly enlarged to include a change table. There is also a cleaners' facility in that section of the building. There is a large glass area that looks out onto the courtyard of building 2. The kiosk there will provide catering facilities for the multipurpose hall for lunches or recess times. It is fitted out to Health department requirements. It has a vinyl floor, stainless steel benches, new fittings and fixtures, and exhaust ventilation. On the right side of that there is the covered way. Outside the back foyer and along past the multipurpose hall is all covered.

Mrs NAPIER - To that double-dotted line?

Mr WILKINSON - Yes. It indicates the left-hand edge of the walkway.

Mrs NAPIER - So that is all covered?

Mr WILKINSON - Yes. Hard against the multipurpose hall we have some translucent roof sheeting to let in light, as we have in the foyer entry to the south of the building. The multipurpose hall and the library provide bookends for the administration services in the centre. The two main white windows on the drawing indicate the windows to the two staff offices. On the right hand side is the main entry, with a portico protecting it from inclement weather.

Around the centre of the building is red-face brickwork. We still have to resolve the detail of the colour schemes. To the left and right of that facing brickwork are rendered-sections of blockwork. The components of the hall include aluminium-frame windows and symonite wall cladding for the base of the building from the window-sill line down to the ground.

CHAIR - What is symonite?

Mr WILKINSON - It is a solid robust material with a shiny automotive finish and a phenolic resin core within a sandwich of two aluminium panels. It is about 6 mm thick.

You put it on steel framing, insulate the wall behind it and have internal linings behind that. It will lift the building's appearance and be a nice piece of architecture.

The facade below looks back to the school. The highlight glazing provides ventilation into the hall and library as well. They are deep spaces so we will put some roof ventilation in the centre of both spaces. On the left is the long horizontal highlight window going into the back of the toilets and the cleaners' store. The three stripes on either side of the glass doors are aluminium transoms, and on the right of those is the roller shutter for the kiosk. The bi-fold doors on the right-hand side will open up in the centre and allow permeation of that space into the hall for larger gatherings.

The orange/red block on the left is the store at the back of the multipurpose hall. The doors to the right are for service deliveries and so on. A more robust symonite panel is down the bottom, and the upper wall section of the hall itself is corrugated custom wall, as is the roof material.

Elevation 4 shows the library doors opening up onto the sports field and the reading terrace, with the covered way on the left.

Mrs NAPIER - I thought the hall was going to be on the sports side and the library on the eastern side, but you have described it around the other way.

Mr WILKINSON - No, the library is on the west.

Mrs NAPIER - Why is the hall on that side?

Ms FAHEY - Given the doors that open onto the oval, we wanted an opportunity for children and community members to sit on that deck and use it as a reading space. It has a more pleasant vista, onto the oval, than on the other side. It provides a nice outlook for children reading with class groups or researching, or for community members when they are in the library, with the large double doors opening out onto the deck space. The oval will most definitely be a green field after it is redeveloped.

Mr WILKINSON - Also, the hall itself has a loading and unloading area as part of the carpark. If there is going to be an exhibition or something like that then you need to get a vehicle fairly close, and that is the side on which it can happen, rather than spreading your costs around to the other side of the carpark as well.

Mrs NAPIER - There are no change rooms for artists to change in or for people getting ready for sport, as if it were a gymnasium.

Mr WILKINSON - It is going to be used more for wet days and PE activities.

Mrs NAPIER - Though movement and dance would happen in there.

Mr WILKINSON - Yes. The floor covering in there is a very low pile, flocked, solution-dyed nylon that provides a good wear surface and a degree of comfort. It has a robust finish but gives the appearance and use of an indoor facility.

Mrs NAPIER - Is it on cement or is there some cushioning?

Mr WILKINSON - It is glued onto the cement. We did the same thing at East Launceston.

Mrs NAPIER - That area would be used for movement, so there would be leaping, jumping and landing. Has it been assessed for impact on joints?

Mr WILKINSON - No, but you would not set up a vaulting horse in there or run activities like that. It's not for sharp turning, though there will be some jumping. The alternative is a rubber sports floor.

Mrs NAPIER - I saw a really nice one at St Patrick's, though it was for dance and this is a multipurpose floor. I think it would be regularly used during winter for movement, PE and dance. Whenever you do such activities you want to avoid asphalt because it is not a good texture, so you would be in that room. Since you are dealing with 10-12 year olds, high-growth stages for which impact on hip and knee joints is important, the landing surface is highly relevant.

Mr WILKINSON - A cushioned surface or sprung floor would be best, but that would be an extra \$70 to \$80 per square metre.

Mrs NAPIER - That's why I'm asking about the carpet. I accept that it must be long wearing, but there are surfaces that at least have some cushioning in them that might be more appropriate.

Mr WILKINSON - The projected floor covering can be changed and it is about \$70 to \$80 a square metre to put down. A full rubber floor is about \$110 a square metre. If you want to put some cushioning on the back of the rubber floor you are looking at an additional \$20 a square meter, so you are up to about \$130.

Mrs NAPIER - So about double the cost.

Mr WILKINSON - Yes, but you can do it. The other thing to keep in mind is that you have chairs set up on that surface at various times, so you have to consider their impact on the surface. It would not be ideal to have assembly chairs set up on it for teacher and parents. A cushioned floor would not be ideal for that. You would tend to mark it.

Mr GOURLAY - The key is that this is a multifunction hall. As such it needs a floor finish that can serve a number of purposes. It has been found over the years that carpet is one of the most resilient and best surfaces for the use to which these multipurpose halls are put in primary schools. If we go for cushioned vinyl or timber it is more orientated to indoor sports and is not as good for sitting on the floor or the drama and dance presentation that the hall is used for.

Mrs NAPIER - Has any assessment been done of the impact on joints and growth of floor surfaces in multipurpose halls in primary schools?

Mr GOURLAY - Yes, in a high school hall we would put in a cushioned vinyl or sprung timber floor. Primary school general purpose halls are not so orientated to gymnastics; they are mainly for music, drama, dance, presentations, assemblies - and PE, though not heavy physical activity.

Mrs NAPIER - It might not be an issue for this development but the department should have a look at it because the greatest damage that can be done is to 10-14 year olds, and this is dealing with them. It is a good space for the school, the concept is excellent, but for any PE, dance or movement using that space there will be a lot of leaping and jumping. It would be unfortunate to restrict movement because you could be liable to platelet injuries. I raise it as a policy issue. The school would probably like a bit more money to put down a better surface. It is worth looking at. The concept of the multipurpose hall is excellent but in terms of kinesiology and physiology of young people's bodies it cannot be justified.

CHAIR - We consistently question the matter of contingencies in budgets presented to this committee. There are two contingency components in this budget: 5 per cent for each of construction and design. Five per cent on the design contingency of \$130 000 seems pretty generous. This is a redevelopment of existing classrooms and the construction of a brand new facility, so what might be unforeseen in the design for that contingency?

Mr WILKINSON - Things like an alternative flooring solution, an additional wet area, some more shade area. The construction contingency should be for unforeseen items, but a design-development contingency is for making decisions as you go through the process of documenting the building that subsequently needs to be improved or if there has been an underestimation in the earlier process in the project.

CHAIR - I suppose on the flip side of that the design contingency of only 5 per cent could be a little low; there could be a balance between the two because when you are refurbishing existing buildings you never know what you are going to find.

Mr WILKINSON - It tends to be problematic with existing buildings when you are doing renovation work. You have to go backwards before you can go forwards, stripping wall linings off and so on. If you see rotting studwork or columns that have rusted out at the bottom, or something like that, it needs to be fixed. If the lightning circuitry isn't quite what you expected you might find that it has to be replaced. There is a whole range of contingencies. Changing carpet to vinyl flooring might be another.

CHAIR - The points that Sue has made could in fact be pursued by the school community in the event that some of these savings materialise along the way. The contingency isn't needed, so at an appropriate time there could be some lobbying for the school along the lines, 'Well that was the floor that was best budget; we might be able to crank up to something better as a result of the contingency not being required.'

Mr WILKINSON - Yes, but I would make the point that the overall budget is pretty tight, and we will probably need that design development contingency by the end of the day for things that are within the project at the moment.

CHAIR - Yes, but they are not real contingencies. And as you all know, once the committee deliberates and decides one way or the other, we have no further jurisdiction to check the outcome. There are other avenues within the Parliament to do that, as to cost overruns or whatever, but I think the point is worth making. Sue has raised the issues from a practical and physical safety point of view. The matters that you have just mentioned, Mike, are not either design or construction contingencies. If the budget is tight, it is

tight, but if you are going to need contingencies to simply deliver what was originally required, then someone has got their sums wrong somewhere along the way.

Mrs NAPIER - When you look at the budget, \$2.6 million has been identified for known construction and then there is \$1 million identified for 'contingencies and other issues', including \$360 000 for furniture and equipment. Getting the initial build and surfaces right is fundamental to a project. I have raised it mainly because I have paid more attention to the surface content.

CHAIR - Okay, I don't think we'll labour the point.

Mrs NAPIER - I want to make the point that I really like the concept that is built into the school. I think the idea of the school as a hub of community learning is excellent. If you are going to run yoga and movement classes and get people physically active, one thing that will stop them from using the facility is a cement-based floor. Older people cannot use it. I have seen that happen at Flinders Island and a number of other schools. You think the facility will be used, but it doesn't get used because people end up with knee and ankle problems because of the impact. You will be prevented from achieving part of your objective because of the surface. I think it is worth having a look at it if you are going to maximise community involvement.

Mr WILKINSON - Moving on to building 1, which is currently the main entry to the school off Mitchell Street, the administration is currently at the right-hand end. That will become space for teacher-assistants. We are providing disabled access up to the front of the building to the life skills area only. There are some stairs to the corridor linking the rest of the school, but on the left-hand side you will notice there is also a disabled ramp as well. One of the other things you will notice about the plan is the two decks on the top on the outside of the classrooms. We have generally tried to provide a deck between two class spaces and a shared resource or wet area between the classrooms. We have tried to keep them as reasonably open as possible, but with the ability to close them down at times, so that the two GLAs can be operated independently.

Outside the scope of what is contemplated in this project are the project studio space 103 and GLA 111 at the left-hand end. That is where the library is currently. There is no work going on there because the budget doesn't stretch that far at the moment, but we will see how we go. With the toilet block there, there is work on the wall framing and the concrete floors and the roof is being relined. The block is being fitted out with new partitions and toilets. The water-saving funds that the school offered to put into the project - some \$20 000 - will be used to provide waterless urinals for boys, so there is new technology there.

Mrs NAPIER - Are there Federal funds for that too?

Ms FAHEY - Yes - \$20 000.

Mr WILKINSON - The joinery that is in the staffroom and kitchenette is being moved to the entry. The toilets are staying pretty much as they are because they are in pretty good nick. We are building a meeting room and a staff study area connected to the staffroom with some glass bifold doors.

Mrs NAPIER - What would it cost to move that kitchen sink area?

Mr WILKINSON - It might cost you a few thousand dollars. If you don't do it, the room behind there, which is currently used as an arts store, is very small and wouldn't be suitable for use as a meeting room.

Mrs NAPIER - I asked it for another reason. It was an issue we discussed at some length when we were walking around - that area between GLA 4 and GLA 5. We had some discussion about whether it would be possible to move that storage space back against the wall, so that the wet area could be better viewed through glass panelling or whatever you decide to use in order to maximise the use of that wet area and enable supervision by the teacher. If it costs only a couple of thousand dollars to move that joinery, would it really cost \$20 000 tops to move those storage facilities? I think that is a bit on the high side.

Mr WILKINSON - It probably is. But it would be getting towards that - two-thirds of that figure at least, I would think. You are redoing the wall framing, and then there are the doors.

Mrs NAPIER - Where are your main support frames in relation to those stores? Can't you maintain the support frames and use them as part of your glassing in and then just construct new stores on that back wall? It seems to me quite vital for teachers to have good supervision and if you are to maximise the use of shared wet areas and two classes being able to work in a team situation, you would need that visual supervision, otherwise you won't use it as much as you should.

Mr WILKINSON - We could, there is nothing stopping us. If you were going to do that, you would probably just leave the bag racks where they are, slide the two stores down and put them back to back so that you have to go through the bag spaces to get to the store. On the other hand, you could access the stores off the wet area and you make a longer, thinner single store. You could do that.

Mrs NAPIER - Obviously I am keen about it!

Laughter.

CHAIR - The school will be able to take that up if that reconfiguration is seen as a desirable outcome.

Ms FAHEY - It was certainly around the budget when we originally looked at that, but when we had to start cutting some areas, we decided to maintain those existing stores.

Mrs NAPIER - Because the team approach is consistently applied through the rest of your campus and because of decisions to use glass for supervision and to provide privacy, I thought that was excellent. I have seen it work in other schools, where it has changed the nature of teaching. It just seemed a pity to leave that there and restrict it for those two areas.

Mr HALL - What is your gut feeling about the cost of making that alteration, Mike?

Mr WILKINSON - The space is going to be renovated anyway, so we are spending something like \$1 400 a square metre on it anyway, so with plumbing, joinery and so on, it would probably be around \$200-\$300 more per square metre.

Mr HALL - Roughly how many square metres are we talking about?

Mr WILKINSON - I am not sure; it is not to scale. I think it would be about 40.

Mr HALL - So it could be \$10 000 to \$12 000. The current construction estimate is \$2.875 million, so you are within \$24 000. But you have the contingency of 5 per cent on top of that.

Mrs NAPIER - I just wouldn't like to see it come up as a minor works later on. You might as well do it now.

CHAIR - Those deck areas are fairly extensive. There may be some consideration of a minor reduction. They are concrete, aren't they? Is that suspended concrete?

Mr WILKINSON - The deck on the right-hand side is probably the highest of them all; it is a slab on fill.

Mrs NAPIER - Can we just get it on the record: at the moment these decks are not planned to be covered beyond the extension of the roofline -

Mr WILKINSON - No, we have steel roof framing coming out, so the school could always put a roof covering on there later if they wanted to.

Mr HALL - A bit of sail cloth or something like that. Is that possible?

Mr WILKINSON - Yes.

Mrs NAPIER - Or perspex or something. I wanted to get that on the record so that it was clear that that was the intention.

Mr WILKINSON - The only area that is left to discuss in building 1 is the computer lab. We have been looking carefully at the carpet and the benches and they are really in need of replacing for the next 20-odd years of use. In the life skills area we are renovating the kitchen and putting a new wall in to separate off GLA 3 from the life skills and flexible programs area. That can be opened up as another big space within the school. Then you have the two classrooms below that with the wet areas joining the flexible programs and GLAs 1, 2 and 3. Ostensibly there is a fair bit of glass in there, but again it is not completely transparent. There are some storage cupboards and things there, so I suppose if a child wanted to hide, they could do so. It is going a good way towards providing some shared resources between those two classrooms.

Along the north-western face of that building we have some sun shading to prevent overheating and the computer lab is also getting some airconditioning to keep it cool.

Mrs NAPIER - That shading doesn't go around to the west, does it?

Mr WILKINSON - That is actually the south-west over there, so you will get a bit of late afternoon summer sun, but it will tend to be a bit low in the sky. By the time it gets round there, I reckon they will be home.

Mrs NAPIER - In relation to the computer lab, I noticed in the library facility you allowed for coffee-making facilities for adults. There appears to be a suggestion that there be two computer stations there. Is it expected that this will act as an online centre? What is envisaged to maximise the access to IT? Is it mostly to have it in the library, or is it to be organised as a class in the computer lab?

Ms FAHEY - In terms of the lab, as I mentioned during the site visit, the view is that the children have dedicated class lessons to learn ICT skills. In relation to the community access to the lab, we envisage the potential of accessing through TAFE or Adult Ed courses after school for parents to learn those skills in that sort of environment. In the library the idea is to have Internet access and access to the town library, where parents can order books on line which would then be brought to the school by a courier service. But also there will be a research area within the library for students who want to do their research there.

Mrs NAPIER - And adults can access that as well?

Ms FAHEY - Yes.

Mrs NAPIER - When that was first looked at - I think Swansea and Nubeena were examples - there was a concern that the area where the children were using the library be separate from where the adults used it. Is it envisaged that the community and the children can use the library at the same time?

Ms FAHEY - Most definitely. That space is reasonably open. During the day if parents were not accessing that particular area, the children could go and sit on the couches, for example. Likewise, if children are not in the research area, there is no reason why the parents couldn't access that part of the library.

Mrs NAPIER - I think it is important to get that on the record because some communities feel that there needs to be that physical separation. I guess this is the first instance I have come across where it has been deliberately planned that there be no separation during the day hours for community-based use and school-based use. That is what the community wants, is it?

Ms FAHEY - Most definitely. Also I think it is really important for our children to see their parents valuing literacy and learning in a library, which again gives the children that view that learning and reading are important and their parents are modelling that. Also, there are opportunities for parents to read with the children when they come into the library. I think there is enormous scope for using the library as a community resource.

Mrs NAPIER - Has the issue been raised whether it might discourage some parents to come in because they might be a bit nervous about being seen as not being able to handle the equipment?

Ms FAHEY - That's something we will work on down the track in terms of professional learning for parents and making them feel welcome. We already have a reading together program with Early Years. Parents come into the library with their young children, from birth to four years, where they are looking at books, reading and becoming more comfortable within a library setting.

Mr WILKINSON - For building 1, the new decks will be built from concrete blockwork, a dark grey-brown colour copying the brickwork at the back. I wanted to use blockwork because it can be reinforced and withstand more push and shove than brickwork. There is sunshading over that, extending to the eaves of the building on either side. There is a concrete floor on the front deck. Also round the front deck is a chair-back in the metal section so the kids can sit on top of the wall and have their lunch or read a book. You can have class gatherings out there and not fall off the back of the wall. It is not required by the BCA but it will come in handy. There are steel handrails for the ramps coming down off the ends of the building. The doors are being put into the existing window framing, so we are not replacing wholesale sections of window. We are working with what we have. We are required to refurbish and make sure that all the classrooms have good ventilation.

The early childhood building, building 2, is similar to building 1. The decks are on the eastern side between groups of rooms. The kinder deck is being replaced with a new concrete deck, albeit a little bit smaller, though you will still fit classes out there. It has steel framing over the top and sunshading on the north-eastern side. We have had to decide whether to replace carpet. In probably half of this building we are leaving the carpet where it is. It's in fairly good condition so there is no point in throwing it out. In some areas we are replacing ceilings, but not in others. The ceiling on the other side of kinder-prep is being replaced. A lot of the old linings are hardboard which have been affected by moisture over the years, so we are replacing some of that with plasterboard.

The toilets are being completely refurbished; we are replacing wall linings, partitions, pans and so on, and installing waterless urinals. Off the terrace end of the library we will install a new water storage unit in the ground to collect stormwater from the carpark, multipurpose hall and library roofs and run it into a tank at the sports field end of the building. We plan to put a swale down the side of the playing field, which will, when it is full, water the trees down there which are proposed as part of the landscaping. We will provide cultivation of the subgrade, and topsoiling and mulching, but the planting will be done by the school's groundsman.

Ms FAHEY - And the students.

Mr HALL - Could you explain the difference between a water storage unit and a tank?

Mr WILKINSON - My engineers advise me that it quite expensive to get a connection back into the existing stormwater. There would be a lot of pipe to replace. We suggested it would be a good idea in the current climate to put in a water storage unit for the school for irrigating the grounds.

Mr HALL - So it will go straight into a tank?

Mr WILKINSON - Yes, and the overflow will come down the side of the sports field in the swale - a very shallow depression, formed into a grass surface, that channels stormwater.

Mrs NAPIER - In winter is that likely to result in the green area getting rather wet?

Mr WILKINSON - There is an existing swale along the bottom - south - boundary, so it will find its way into that channel and go off.

Mrs NAPIER - How does that affect local backyards?

Mr WILKINSON - It's lower than the backyards; it's running off down to a stormwater trap at the south-west corner of the site.

Mrs NAPIER - That water could be used for irrigation of grasslands and so on. It would be a great next project.

Ms FAHEY - In that corner we propose to have a community garden that we and the children are in the process of planning.

Mrs NAPIER - We seem to be getting tropical rain bursts, so you wouldn't want to have too much of an overflow because it might affect the backyards.

Mr WILKINSON - Only when the tanks are full, and the water would be hitting the ground in any case.

Mrs NAPIER - I just hope that has been thought out.

Mr WILKINSON - We are reducing the sealed and roofed areas and putting in a few more planting beds in the front of the new building, so there should not be much more water.

Mrs NAPIER - Can the tank be adapted to an irrigation plan that might be developed?

Mr WILKINSON - I think so.

Mrs NAPIER - We would like assurance that assessments have been done such that high rainfall is unlikely to impact on neighbouring backyards.

Ms FAHEY - In fact there is another swale that goes right down to the boundary fence.

Mrs NAPIER - About 20 years ago there was an issue about that, if I remember correctly.

Mr WILKINSON - In building 2 we will be putting new entries into the courtyard side of the building to allow easy access to those classrooms, rather than having to walk through other rooms. There is an access ramp up to the south-west corner of the building. As in building 1, we are renovating the general learning areas and the shared wet area and resource area between those pairs of classrooms.

The elevations for building 3 show the decks, pergolas and ramps going up to the end of the building.

Mrs NAPIER - We have talked about symonite; what is it?

Mr WILKINSON - An aluminium sandwich panel. The phenolic resin core provides a bit of insulation, separation and strength. It has a shiny metal surface that comes in various colours, including dark blue, bronze and silver.

Mrs NAPIER - How well does it age?

Mr WILKINSON - It ages pretty well. The surface is treated; I don't think it would cloud unless you took to it with an abrasive or wire brush. You would probably scratch it a bit.

Mrs NAPIER - What surface is there inside the multipurpose hall?

Mr WILKINSON - A Tas-oak veneer plywood, 12 mm thick, to 2.73 metres around the inside of the hall and library. It will have good wear. If feet go up against the wall it should not be a problem. It is not a painted plaster surface.

Mrs NAPIER - The windows appear to be quite high.

Mr WILKINSON - They will let in plenty of north and south light. You will get a bit of late afternoon sun through those windows but not generally during school hours.

Mrs NAPIER - You appear to have 15 GLAs. If you have an average class size of 20 - though kinder-prep are trying to get to 20, are they not?

Ms FAHEY - That's what we are trying to do, but we are struggling to get to that figure.

Mrs NAPIER - Though if it's Education department policy, then with 15 GLAs you have a capacity for 325 students?

Ms FAHEY - Yes, based on the current redevelopment.

Mr WILKINSON - We are fully renovating 12, plus the computer lab and the life skills area.

Mrs NAPIER - In the demographic projections which affect the size of schools, you have 267 currently and are projecting to have 221. How many students do you currently have?

Ms FAHEY - 271.

Mrs NAPIER - It is projected to be 221 by 2011, so why are you developing a school for 320-odd students?

Mr GOURLAY - The reconfiguration of the existing blocks lends itself to that. The existing teaching and learning space lends itself to that capacity.

Mrs NAPIER - Will all classes get down to 20?

Mr GOURLAY - There is the potential for that. The reconfiguration will give the school a great deal of flexibility in terms of class configuration and makeup.

Mrs NAPIER - Liz indicated that on 14 March phase 2 of the project will begin. I am pleased to hear that because there has been concern about the hiatus, and you acknowledge that yourself. You indicated that the membership could be open to change in the future. In going for 320 students, does that indicate a decision about what might happen at Rocherlea and/or the middle school at Brooks High School.

Ms BANKS - Not as yet.

Mrs NAPIER - So it is for Mayfield per se, with the opportunity to maximise existing spaces.

Ms BANKS - Everything else after that is for consultation.

Mrs NAPIER - There is a date now, so that is good. The community will love it. There is a date so there will be genuine consultation and there is no predetermination such that, because we have done Mayfield, options are now not open. It is important to get that on the record.

How many children go to Mayfield from the Rocherlea catchment?

Ms FAHEY - We currently have 35 children who catch the Rocherlea bus. There was a time when we shared enrolment between schools before the home area was introduced. We also have a significant number from the Newnham area.

Mrs NAPIER - Over and above the 35?

Ms FAHEY - Yes.

Mrs NAPIER - How many would that be?

Ms FAHEY - About 50.

Mrs NAPIER - I acknowledge that we were informed of that at the school.

Mr HALL - In reverse, are there any who go from Mayfield catchment to Rocherlea?

Ms FAHEY - I don't know but I don't think there are many.

Mr HALL - It does happen?

Ms FAHEY - It has happened in the past, though probably not recently. Before I was at the school there was a notion of shared enrolment. For example, if one class at Mayfield was full, they would go to Rocherlea if there were the capacity - and vice versa.

Mrs NAPIER - Rocherlea was a really big school at one stage.

Ms FAHEY - Both schools had about 600 students at their peak.

MR RAY CADMAN, RESIDENT OF MAYFIELD, WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - You may speak to your written submission or proceed as you wish.

Mr CADMAN - I am somewhat confused. The ad in the paper asked for general input into what is happening in Mayfield Primary School, and I put in my submission in good faith, though not knowing what was going on with Rocherlea Primary School. If Rocherlea were to be closed then the pupils, wherever they were, would be going to Mayfield. If so, should we be considering a new school instead of redeveloping an old school? We have already heard of problems we might encounter with it. As a long-term resident of the suburb - 54 years - and passionate about the suburb, as are all the northern suburbs, I put in my submission. We are talking about Mayfield redevelopment today, but what is going to happen to Rocherlea? Is it going to close down? Are they going to go to Mayfield? What about a new school as opposed to redevelopment?

CHAIR - I was aware of your concern about the possibility of closing Rocherlea and the impact on the students and where they might go. Nonetheless, the things you have submitted to the committee are relevant because that is the matter Mrs Napier addressed a few moments ago in her questions to the other witnesses. What is the next stage, and what is going to happen at Rocherlea? You will have heard their response to that: a date has been set for further consideration. You have raised matters about a brand new facility in the event that Rocherlea closes and students need a new facility. The other matters you have pointed out in your submission include a greenfield site overcoming the notion of one school versus the other in terms of hierarchy and turf claims by students when one school moves to the other.

- . I certainly appreciated those points that you were drawing out in your written submission. I guess my question to you would be: is there any further matter, given your consideration of this area, that you would want addressed in the light of what we have already heard - the fact that considerations for Rocherlea are still in part of the development process for the whole of the northern suburbs, as indeed they are for other primary schools in the area. I guess they will all become part of the debate as we go forward. Are you satisfied at this stage in terms of the extra dialogue that will now take place?

Mr CADMAN - Yes, but there is another point I would like to bring up. I welcome any spending in the northern suburbs because I firmly believe the area has been neglected socially and educationally for a long time - and I speak from experience as I have two boys that attend Mayfield Primary School. Billy is sailing along quite nicely, but the other boy, Jack, is a noisy type of boy and he goes to St Michaels three days a week. I have difficulty comprehending that the social problems in our suburbs have existed for so long that a child like mine has to leave the area to get special help to cope with his education. I haven't heard anything in this room about any development that caters for children like my son and quite a few other children in the area. That is a very big concern for me. My child has to leave Mayfield Primary to go to another suburb three days a week, so he can catch up. He doesn't have a mental problem; he is quite normal.

I have difficult grasping the fact that children have to go to another area to get special educational help.

I feel very strongly that if there is to be redevelopment at Mayfield Primary, surely the top priority should be addressing the question of children who have difficulty learning. I don't want to get off track too far, but I know the area pretty well and I have seen countless children drop out of school, get into the wrong sort of apprenticeship, become dissatisfied and suddenly it's Ashley and then they are graduating into the jail system. All my life I have seen this with countless kids in the northern suburbs. If money is going to be spent, let it be spent on remedial requirements. Let us be positive and look at these areas of social injustice. Maybe new school, new start, new hope, new salvation.

CHAIR - Thank you, Mr Cadman. Are there any questions from the committee, either on Mr Cadman's written submission or on the matters he had raised with us today?

Ms BANKS - Mr Cadman, I would like to invite you to come and have a talk about that. We will explore that together.

Mr CADMAN - Okay.

Mrs NAPIER - You raised in your submission the access to remedial teaching. You also commented that quite often schools will provide access to sporting facilities, such as tennis courts and gymnasiums et cetera, to give them constructive involvement. Would you like to expand on that?

Mr CADMAN - Most definitely. I come from a family of eight in Mayfield, and it was pretty easy for the system to come along and grab me and put me in a boys' home when I was a young fellow. I didn't do too much wrong. Football was what actually saved me. I played in Rocherlea's footy club. What I am saying is that the more development you can give children in recreational facilities - footy ovals and tennis courts - the more it will be in the best interests of kids in poorer areas. They seem to like space and recreation.

CHAIR - Good diversionary programs.

Mr CADMAN - Yes, most definitely. I haven't come here to make enemies; I have just come to try to get my points across. I am nearly 54. I have seen the northern suburbs expand. In my time the problems in the streets and the problems affecting children in Housing Commission areas haven't got better; they have escalated. Kids are out of control and there is no respect. I really think it is time for people who are in the appropriate positions to have a good look at education and rehabilitation in the northern suburbs. There are a lot of problems there and things are really getting out of control. A new start for the school could be the answer.

Mrs NAPIER - Ms Fahey, at the school you were telling us what the plans were in terms of access to basketball and netball courts. Although your space at the school is relatively restricted, could you indicate to the committee what the forward plans are for ensuring that those kinds of facilities are still there?

Ms FAHEY - Certainly the oval area is used for football and cricket in the relevant seasons. The court areas are used on a daily basis for a very effective part of our health and PE programs. We have whole-school daily fitness and we place a lot of emphasis on the health and wellbeing of our students. In response to Ray, I would have to say that Mayfield Primary School is a safe, secure and supportive learning environment for all our students. Yes, there are some issues in our community that often affect our more senior students, but our data and our information show that our school is a very positive place of learning. We have positive relationships with all members of our community and we certainly go all out to do whatever it takes to support the learning of all the students at the school.

The support for one of Ray's children is that exploring learning opportunities for children can take place in many different places. It can be in the school, it can be in the community and at this stage, it was found in working with Ray, who was part of the decision, in finding the best place for a short period of time for some intensive intervention to support his son. Certainly in the long term he always belongs to Mayfield Primary School community and there is certainly no intention of his viewing that placement as full time. Ray has been involved all through the process. I guess that is another issue that is outside the boundaries of what we are discussing here.

Mr CADMAN - I have no argument with that. I love the school and I love the teachers - they have put in a wonderful effort. But getting back to the personal issue of my son having to leave the area, I don't know how the placement is affecting my son's self-esteem, being around intellectually handicapped children. I think that is a bit of a problem and it is a very big concern to me. I don't think it is an ideal situation for my son to be in.

Mrs NAPIER - There is an opportunity, Liz, for your new team to look at special education access, isn't there?

Ms BANKS - That's right. I am part of that group and that is why I am happy to -

Mrs NAPIER - It would be really good to feed into this. There is a process under way right now, as I understand it, looking at the kinds of issues that you are raising and I think it would be a really good time to have some direct impact. Liz is saying, 'Come and talk to me' - I would be there tomorrow if it were me.

CHAIR - Okay; that contact can be made. The department ought to initiate that, rather than Ray having to do so, so contact can take place and we assume it will.

In terms of this project, the last paragraph on page 11 of the submission makes it very clear that, after the considerations of the working group over the last couple of years, the preferred option that has emerged from those deliberations is to continue with K to year 6 at both Mayfield and Rocherlea. Here we have stage 1 of the process for the northern suburbs. Am I right in saying the minister, David Bartlett, commented late last year that it is possible that Rocherlea could be considered for closure? Is that correct; did the minister make that comment?

Mrs NAPIER - Yes, he did, in November - but only as an option.

CHAIR - If, through further deliberations commencing in early March, it is determined that Rocherlea should close, is there anybody before us today who could give an indication as to where the students might be located in that event? I am looking at the numbers Rocherlea currently has - around 195, projected to decline in the next four years down to about 170.

Ms BANKS - I would not want to pre-empt anything because we just said it is an open consultation and that is what we intend to have. That is really important, so I would not want to go into it with anybody thinking I had another agenda. The department owns some space on the other side of the road around Brooks High School, so that is possible. We have just noted that the Mayfield site has the capacity for more children, and there is the possibility that something different could happen at Rocherlea. All of those options are available, and all those bits of land are available. I am not answering your question because I don't want to.

Laughter.

Ms BANKS - It is not up to me to decide; that process will decide it.

CHAIR - I only ask in the context of the submission and consideration before us. Is \$3.6 million an appropriate expenditure on Mayfield or is it necessary that we consider whether there is going to be a bigger project for Mayfield? Are we applying a bandaid to Mayfield when it ought to be going further than just \$3.6 million?

Ms BANKS - I have not been part of the process up until now but it sounds to me that it has been pretty comprehensive. I would not think it is a bandaid approach at all. However, it is only part of a bit over \$6 million that the Government has committed to the project for the northern suburbs schools. Our job is to make sure we get best value for the remaining money that is going to be spent. I do not see it as a bandaid.

Mrs NAPIER - We had the executive summary of that report; could we have the whole report?

CHAIR - No reason why not; we'll take care of that. Thank you all.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.

