



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Redevelopment of Brooks High School

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

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

Mr Farrell
Mrs Taylor

House of Assembly

Mr Brooks (Chairman)
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Rylah

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1 INTRODUCTION

To His Excellency the Honourable Justice Alan Blow OAM, Lieutenant-Governor in and over the State of Tasmania and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

The Committee has investigated the following proposal: -

Redevelopment of Brooks High School

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

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 This reference recommended the Committee approve the redevelopment of Brooks High School.

2.2 The scope of the Master Plan includes:-

- a. Minimise the distance between blocks;
- b. Provide a significant and strong connect between the two original campuses;
- c. Provide a student community zone incorporating the cafeteria, lounge and informal socialising areas;
- d. Integrate all services and systems across the wider campus (fire alarms, PA, IT, security);
- e. Investigate services supply infrastructure to and from the project area and upgrade to current compliance building services including fire, water, security, energy, electrical, mechanical, switchboards, fire panels and meters (refer Site Issues Report below);
- f. Meet current disability access standards across the wider campus; and
- g. Renew the existing learning areas including the provision of additional and flexible class facilities to improve learning outcomes and address the need for space and optimising utilisation of facilities at the school, including:
 - General Learning Areas (GLAs) with a floor area of 75 – 90 m²;
 - various shaped learning areas enabling a variety of configurations of loose furniture for a range of activities and group sizes;
 - interconnection between some general learning areas to enable multiple class groups to learn and participate in activities together;
 - withdrawal/breakout spaces for small group work;
 - provision of wet area/workshop spaces that can be utilised for practical activities associated with the general learning areas, particularly for Year 7 and 8, but which can moderate demand on the specialised learning areas such as science and ICT rooms, and in some cases home economics facilities within the school;

- incorporation of ICT within all spaces, due to increased size of general learning areas and improved provision of ICT infrastructure (wired and wireless data and communications), which can reduce demand for individual ICT rooms within the school;
- provision of current ICT technology for teaching and learning within these spaces, such as data projectors, Smart Boards, laptops, hand-held devices, etc;
- provision of electronic message boards throughout all areas;
- improved shared staff accommodation to enable staff work, planning, meetings and accommodation of resources; and
- appropriate storage for teaching and learning resources, materials and equipment.

- 2.3 The full submission of the Department of Education in support of this reference can be found on website of the Committee at:-

<http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Joint/works.htm>

3 PROJECT COSTS

- 3.1 Pursuant to the Message from His Excellency the Governor-in-Council, the estimated cost of the work is \$7.3 million.
- 3.2 The following Table details the project estimated budget:-

Description	\$'000
Demolition of existing buildings, infrastructure	162
Building Works	3,530
Site and Civil Works	200
Services and Systems (mechanical, electrical, fire, ITC etc.)	1,298
Landscaping (provisional sum)	400
Contingencies	410
Project Design/Management	450
Furniture and Equipment	500
Authority Permits Fees and Charges	45
Artworks (Art in Public Building Scheme)	80
Post occupancy commissioning works	225
Total	7,300

4 EVIDENCE

4.1 The Committee commenced its inquiry on Thursday, 14 August last with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to Henty House, Civic Square, Launceston, whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Andrew Finch, DOE - Deputy Secretary Corporate Services;
- Shireen Thomas, Principal Brooks High School; and
- Heath Clayton, Artas Architects.
- Nicholas Moore

Background

4.2 Mr Finch provided the following background to the proposed works:

Redeveloping Brooks High School to a level sufficient for twenty-first century education service delivery is considered a very high priority for the department. We were all extremely excited when \$7.3 million was made available for the project as part of the 2013-14 Budget, given it has been a high priority for some time.

The school was established in 1990 and is one of five high schools that are servicing the Launceston city and suburban area. Importantly, it is the only high school servicing the large area of the northern suburbs of Launceston. This year it has an enrolment of 512 full-time equivalents from grades 7 to 10, and supported by 85 full-time equivalent staff.

The high school is supported by primary schools located at Mayfield, Mowbray and Invermay. Rocherlea students, who were located on the Brooks High School site that we saw this morning, have now moved to the former Mayfield school, which is now known as East Tamar Primary School. That happened at the commencement of the current school year. Brooks High School, as Shireen informed us this morning, is now using that ex-primary school site as a junior/secondary campus for years 7 and 8, and that is working extremely well. Part of that relocation provided us with an opportunity to relocate the Tasmanian eSchool northern campus to the site.

The high school building facilities, as we saw, are mostly in original condition, about 25 years old, very well maintained, but significant areas are no longer conducive to contemporary teaching practices or the current needs of the school. Brooks is like many of our secondary facilities. They are in need of redevelopment to suit modern learning practice. At Brooks, the current learning areas are very small, outmoded, outdated, unsuitable to support contemporary education practice around flexible and different styles of teaching, and they lack general amenity. We need to provide learning environments which meet contemporary standards and suit current teaching practice.

This project arose from a process that we initiated in 2007-08 - the Better Schools policy process - so we could identify high-priority projects to put into the government's budget process. Building Better Schools, and most people interface with it, is our strategic direction. It helps us prioritise the highest areas of need for important capital investment around our department's learners - what we call the Learners First Strategy - which is our centrepiece strategy. This strategy has a vision to develop successful, skilled and innovative Tasmanians. It is based around key values of learning, excellence, equity, respect and relationships, but importantly having modern facilities to provide these services is essential.

This project also supports the department's strategic asset management plan, which we have in place. That plan has the main aim to optimise the use of our built resources to

support the provision of educational programs and ensure appropriate standards of accommodation to support best practice in service delivery. That is in schools and in information delivery services for LINC.

DoE has redeveloped significant numbers of schools in recent years and we are experienced in revitalising existing infrastructure to provide contemporary education facilities. We aim to get the best value for money that we are given. The resources are scarce and we endeavour to put them to the best use possible. That is what we are proposing to do with the \$7.3 million we are proposing to invest at Brooks High School. This project is recommended for the committee's approval.

4.3 The Principal, Ms Thomas, added:-

... our school's strategic plan is driven by a collaboratively developed vision for our school. It is a vision that is owned by students, by staff and by family and community members - that is, inspired learners connected to positive futures. Everything that we do at our place is about connecting with great lives for our young people.

... The majority of our students experience social disadvantage in the extreme. Our current economic needs index at Brooks High School is 79 and it has increased each year for the past five years. We are currently one of the highest needs communities in the state. The lives that our students return home to once they leave our boom gate, for many of them, are quite beyond belief. Our school provides the only constant and only aspirational focus in their lives.

One in 8.5 of our students currently are humanitarian entries to this country, so they are refugees. Young people who were born in camps in Nepal and Bhutan primarily at the moment, but also in Horn of Africa countries. Sometimes they arrive on our doorstep a week after arriving in Australia, and come to our school. It is such a richness that they bring to us. It also builds a really rich cultural demographic for our school.

Some of our students have been child warriors in Horn of Africa countries. ... our place needs to wrap around our students and make sure that every minute they are there is a learning opportunity for them. It is not just a place of cognition and academic learning. It is a place of social learning and building constructs about what the contemporary world means for them living in Launceston. Despite all of those layers of trauma that some of our young people experience, they are magnificent young people.

... the current physical facilities ... are substandard. They are not large enough to house our classes of 25 students as well as desks and tables. There are no wet areas and no running water to support integrated learning in this twenty-first century, particularly in the areas of humanities where English, history and geography complement each other beautifully from the Australian curriculum. I spoke to you about the issue of being able to hear the boys going to the loo and hearing the urinal flush when I was working in one of the areas the other day.

You also saw this morning how the walls have been knocked out in attempts to open those spaces up. We can't do anything more; we've done all we can in trying to modernise those buildings. They are in good nick because I won't allow them to fall into any disrepair. There is almost a smokescreen there because you arrive in our stunning environment that once used to look a bit like an Indian rubbish dump and it smokescreens that substandard physical facility that we have.

The new build will bring us a twenty-first century learning environment for young adults. General learning areas that have flexibility allow our young people to collaborate, to be independent or to be involved in team-based learning and project spaces. They will have

storage spaces for their lockers built in and we will have space, we will have individual bathrooms. Students won't need to leave their learning spaces to go to the bathroom and that in itself is a great risk management focus because there are vulnerabilities our young people have.

Design

4.4 Mr Clayton provided the following submission in respect of the design response:-

... Brooks High School is in a picturesque parkland setting. Unfortunately, a lot of the buildings are very formal in their set-up and tend to be isolated. As part of our process, when we were awarded this consultancy we met with the school and the committee and started to explore some masterplan options. The school had a few things in their mindset of what wanted to do. Right from the start the old primary school was going to be a grade 9 campus and they even started moving them over there as soon as we got in.

Part of our role is that we come in as an external party. I have done a lot of work in Education department areas so we started to test them on the best way of creating the school environment. We started looking at the things that were wrong, the things that weren't working and then we looked at the things that worked really well ... the process started about creating a junior campus and a senior campus.

We touched on the schools that feed into Brooks and I believe every single one of those has been redeveloped through either the BER or other capital investment programs that are run through the department. When you go from a primary school that is fairly well developed and in very good condition and then into grade 7, you are going back about five or six steps, and in discussions with the committee there was that transition issue we were having. We starting talking about having an old primary school we could convert and then start to transition the students out of primary school in through the old primary school into a junior campus, and then we start to make them. As we progress through the process we get more grown up until we get to the end and start setting up these kids as young adults to allow them to move into grades 11 and 12 and then hopefully university.

We looked at numerous options. We looked at options of developing the buildings on the lower tier. We looked at options about putting one building down there, one building up and all that. When we started to look at where we wanted to go, it was very clear that we wanted to try to create this heart of the school, an area where everyone had real ownership. More importantly, one of the things that Shireen was very clear on was that the school is not just about learning, about numbers and reading. It is also about social learning and we needed to make sure that we were setting these students up ready for the bigger world.

On site, what we look to do is the existing library, which sits fairly central in the school plan at the moment. The idea is that we create that as a central social hub. That building will house a cafe, the canteen, and it will be a social learning area. There will be what is an old fashioned term - the library. The days of rows and rows of books are disappearing but there will be that opportunity to expand out and it becomes like the internet cafe type of thing. There is an opportunity to engage; there are spaces for meetings, informal and formal.

Flanked either side of that social hub, that social building, is the redevelopment of the learning plazas. The learning plazas are the key to this proposal in that these are our new learning plazas for the grades 9 and 10 students. These will give contemporary learning spaces that will allow the school to offer all the things that Shireen touched on, all the programs that they want to run, and the flexibility to move as it grows. Within those spaces we are looking at creating five general learning areas, which is a contemporary

term for a classroom. It is not just a classroom; these are flexible rooms, they come and go.

... We wanted general learning areas to be quite simple in what they were because there was a purpose. But for the social areas and the break-out spaces, that is where we wanted to play around with furniture and colours and different types of seating options to create this project room and this project delivery and these smaller type of things. The design that we have offers that flexibility to the school.

We also have a project room, which is basically a dedicated wet area. We can do science-based, cooking-based and other messy learning - probably an easy way to explain it. That is a fully vinylled area. We have stainless steel. You can get in there and we can lock it down and they can look after their own stuff in there, but it is outside of that classroom. There are lots of flexible areas.

The staff rooms are essential in these areas. They are all glassed; the staff are not hidden away. The staff are always integrated in what we are doing. Also we are incorporating toilet blocks, individual toilets, as part of each of these learning hubs that are accessible both from inside and outside. When they go out for breaks, they can access them without having to come back in through the building.

Another factor is that it is a beautiful parkland setting, but half of it is behind buildings and half the areas in behind those existing buildings are all no-go zones. They are not accessible by the students because they cannot be supervised. As I said, when the bell goes, if you want to kick the footy or have a hit of cricket you nearly have to walk all the way up to the main road where the oval is. It means from a schooling point of view that teachers are scattered everywhere, so everyone goes in all directions.

The purpose of this plan is to try turn where those buildings are demolished into a new public park space where you can go and kick a football. It is not competition, but you can kick a football, kick a soccer ball, throw a ball, but it is close to a social hub. As we come out of the buildings for learning, they move into a social outdoor area and then more into an active area. Then you move down further into the old primary school ovals, which is really for active things. We have that graduation of areas, but they are all linked. The whole school community is still tied together.

... As part of this project we are looking at how we tie this together. You would have seen from my submission the symbolism of the ribbon tying the buildings together, a bit of a play on the school gum leaf scene, so we have morphed that through. We have that symbolism about what we are doing, about bringing the school together, so once again we are reinforcing the ideas the school is already doing. We picked that up even further in the path. We are proposing a new avenue into the school to help people find their way.

School population predictions

4.5 The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the current and projected school population numbers. Mrs Thomas responded:-

We have 512 students ...Currently we will lose a large grade 10 cohort this year, with a grade 6 cohort coming into grade 7 that is approximately 20 students less. I am very confident we are going to stay sitting up around the 500s for quite some years to come. The traditional drift that was happening, particularly from Mowbray Heights Primary School - which probably has more of a middle-class demographic; a lot of their students were heading to St Patrick's College - has turned and those students are now coming to us. ... That drift has turned and the 20 or 30 who would head off to non-government schools are back in our court.

... That is having a great impact on those kids also leveraging up the middle performing students in their literacy and numeracy.

4.6 Mr Finch added:-

We've looked at the ABS statistics and, as we heard at the site visit, there is strong growth coming through in that birth-4 group, the preschool age group. We expect that will flow into our schools in the next five to 10 years and into the high schools particularly. We are confident the school will return to the mid to high 500 or 600 plus. Importantly, the school currently caters for approximately 700 students and we won't be adding to the footprint as part of this project.

4.7 The Committee questioned the witnesses as to whether the policy setting of long-term introduction of years 11 and 12 to high schools had been taken into account so far as accommodation capacity of the proposed works. Mr Finch responded:-

We have some capacity. We will have a school that will cater for close to 700 students. It is likely we'll have probably in the high 500s. It's like all these projects; it's about landing it right. You have to have an eye on the future but we don't want to build something too big or too small.

4.8 Ms Thomas added:-

If you look at some example from Scottsdale High School, these students are not going to necessarily engage full time in grade 11 and 12 subjects all day every day. Already at Brooks High School we deliver a very flexible provision for some of our marginalised and disengaged young people so that there is an ebb and flow. We have some students who come in, once other students have gone home, to work in MDT under very close supervision - a teacher assistant and a teacher. It may be that some of the grades 11 and 12 subjects would be offered at different times during the day or in the evening. It is important for this facility to be the heart of the community, so I see this as a learning place for everybody in our community. We want people to be there during the evenings. We have a lot of community groups that use it now. I believe there is a lot of flexibility of provision that you can investigate and explore when the time comes for that sort of thing to take place.

4.9 Mr Clayton concluded:-

There is lots of flexibility on this campus because of its size. There is area around the existing gym that could be redeveloped. There are areas down around the back of the e-classroom area that could be redeveloped, depending on where that program ends up. If we were having this conversation tomorrow or in five years, how that integrates is probably a little bit different. There is enough flexibility.

Priority

4.10 The Committee questioned the witnesses as to whether the proposed works were regarded by the Department of Education as being the highest priority. Mr Finch responded:-

Yes, I can assure you it is. The project came from the school community. It was initiated from the school community back in 2009-10. It came in as part of a large number of projects from schools, in excess of 100 submissions, but we immediately formed regional committees consisting of principals of schools and facilities project officers and so on who

could sit and break down and look at each submission and visit sites. We came up with some regional priorities and then we had another group that had to put a statewide overview against those priorities. We essentially formed what we saw as about the 20 highest priorities. Obviously we couldn't go to government for 100 projects so we had to narrow it down and we had a very rigorous process to get to that list of 20. Having been personally involved in that, Brooks was at the highest end of the priorities.

... From all the schools that submitted we then had the challenge of prioritising those. We had the criteria that is outlined in Building Better Schools to enable us to shortlist those. We shortlisted and prioritised them on a regional basis, but then we had the challenge to cross-prioritise those on a statewide basis. We had regional works committees and a central asset strategy steering committee, and representatives of each of the regional ones participate in the central committee. We consider we have a very good prioritisation process to identify the highest priorities. We are then able to put those to government as part of the annual budget process.

... I was heavily involved in the BER program in 2009 and that enabled us to get a good overview of schools but importantly it also provided for significant redevelopment of primary schools. We are fairly open in saying that a significant number of our secondary schools and colleges are in need of significant redevelopment. We could almost do with another stimulus program for secondary schools and colleges. The nature of our priorities now in submissions to government for funding see secondary schools and colleges at the highest level of priority, given we have many outdated facilities that do not suit modern teaching pedagogy, as Shireen has outlined. I am very confident this is at the forefront of our priorities. It is much-needed expenditure.

Consultative process

- 4.11 The Committee questioned the witnesses as to whether the consultation process had included an opportunity for discussion of alternative use of the funds allocated to the project. Mr Finch responded:-

We have to get the consultation right for the situation so that we have a group we can work with and have the right levels of input. Importantly, there will still be room for further consultation around, for example, fit-out, because we are at the fairly high level of making sure we get the designs right. When we get into fit-out, as you can see in the budget, we have \$500 000 for furniture and equipment, so we'll want to consult with school staff around the types of furniture and equipment we put in. Similarly, there is a requirement to spend money on public art, with a budget of about \$80 000, but there'll be provision to work out what type of artwork and what artist we use.

- 4.12 Mr Clayton added:-

The plans we are presenting here today ... have been shared in the wider Brooks community and tested through the school. The school has expanded it through the newsletters, it has been on display and there have been opportunities to make comments on it and we have made changes from the feedback we received from staff. They didn't necessarily want to be part of the physical design committee but were happy to have their five cents' worth once they realised they might be working in that room and how their world would change. We have been accommodating those sorts of changes all the way through the process. From our perspective, it's never locked in stone until we start putting bricks and mortar on site. It is a flexible entity to a degree.

... Even from our perspective, as we start to resolve and get a bit more detail in the design things have to change when you start adding steel column and bits and pieces. The school has been part of this journey right from the start.

Design

- 4.13 The Committee questioned the witnesses as to whether the proposed works 'future-proofed' the school in respect of advances in ICT. Mr Clayton responded:-

It is something we have to consider. The Department of Education has an IT policy we are required to facilitate through. That is their cabling requirements and all that sort of stuff. We will work with the DoE IT department in developing those requirements. As part of this project we do need to link the two campuses, which are fundamentally sitting isolated, so there will be a fibre link between the two. There are a number of technical things that need to occur between that.

We will be putting wi-fi through. The idea of creating this social hub is to create this wi-fi environment; even in the social spaces of each of the learning plazas there will be wi-fi. Everyone will have wi-fi. There will be plug-in ports if you are doing heavier data usage stuff. I was told in no uncertain terms by Tiffany to make sure there are plenty of power points to plug in to recharge your phones, your tablets and things like that. The school has a laptop policy they are developing now.

- 4.14 The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what provision was made for lighting and heating in the new facilities. Mr Clayton responded:-

The changes to the building code mean that we have energy efficiency requirements, and energy efficiencies for Tasmania have tightened up unbelievably - very difficult. We have, as part of our team, a sustainability consultant that will model and advise on this as whole rather than individual elements, which the Building Code looks at. We're looking at the use of double-glazing, highly-insulated walls and ceilings and concrete slabs for thermal mass. We're looking at setting up our windows and openings to get good cross-ventilation so we're not having to rely on mechanical systems to heat and cool the facilities. We don't find it is conducive to good learning spaces if you are relying on an air-conditioner to blow hot air all the time. Any of our heating and cooling systems we have are controlled by the security system, so when the cleaner leaves at the end of the day and arms the security everything shuts down. We won't have the ability to leave things on, so those running costs are managed. We are looking at reusing water back to flush toilets and things like that. The school already has solar panels so we will incorporate those back into what we are doing. The light fittings we use are always LEDs and T5 fluorescents.

We do the best we can within the budget we have. You can always take these things another steps but we believe we've found a good balance between what is a good economic return. Sustainability needs to be practical as well. We can do these things and spend lots of money for not a lot of benefit but we like to know we're getting something back for the things we do. If we're going to invest in these things, there needs to be a real-world saving for the school. The running costs of the facilities are important and that's why we shut things down so things can't be left on - if you push a button, it goes for two hours and shuts off. There's a tendency to let things run just because they do or if it gets a bit hot open a window rather than turn the heater on, so it automatically shuts off. Rather than motion detectors where the lights come on as soon as you walk in front of it, you still have to physically turn it on but if there is no movement in that room for a period of time the lights turn off. So absent tech rather than motion tech - it's the little things like that that we're looking at incorporating into what we do to help get that real-world sustainability.

- 4.15 The Committee asked the witnesses to explain the rationale for the decision to construct the stylised façade and use of cantilevering featured in the proposed

design and what, if any, benefits would be effected by the design to warrant the cost of such construction. Mr Clayton responded:-

... (the façade) is the symbiotic ribbon I was talking about earlier that ties the buildings together. Yes, there is a little bit of intricacy in putting that together but it is a facade that sits external to the main buildings. The buildings themselves with that element stripped off are very simple. What we are looking at is simple steel portal frames, which is how we do our large-scale sheds and things like that, picking up on that light industrial feel that we wanted to incorporate with the school. Then we are putting layers of timber ceilings under that to mask some of those areas. We then have this ribbon that wraps around which we think is an important symbol for the school of tying these things as a landmark.

Yes, it does look intricate. It is triangulated. It is interesting. It actually adds interest to the architecture of what we are trying to do and it sits forward of the main building structure. In saying that, it is a simple steel structure. It is a series of triangulation trusses that are supported by steel columns and then we are just putting single-sided aluminium cladding over that. We are not trying to waterproof that so the cost of that ribbon, as we call it, I don't believe is extravagant in the scheme of what it does as far as tying the buildings together.

As far as the cantilever goes, it becomes a bit a victim of the functionality of what we are trying to create. As you would have seen there today, we have the bank that falls down onto that lower level and as we create those learning plazas they naturally fall out. Where those cantilevers occur they are becoming under-crofts for storage. We are looking at putting plant and equipment under them now so they are not just going to be so-called expensive cantilevers, they will be usable spaces underneath. There are definitely cantilevers but we are stopping our structure at the natural line we are looking at.

... To be honest, I was told in no uncertain terms that what we had to do could not look anything like what was out there. If you want to make an architectural statement it comes at some form of cost. I believe we have come up with a good, responsible resolution to what we are trying to achieve. We haven't splashed out in every single area we could have possibly done, we have identified some key elements we wanted to address, which is the ribbon. We believe those cantilevers are an important aspect because there is that natural bank. The design would start to lose its impact if we just had blank walls coming off the bottom of the toes of banks where, if we set them back in, they become usable areas. The cost is not considerable above and beyond what would be just a standard flat wall.

- 4.16 The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what consideration, if any, would be given to sourcing materials and construction elements from local providers. Mr Clayton responded:-

We consider it with everything we do; we have to. What we're finding in industry at the moment is that companies aren't stocking what they used to stock locally. Even a company such as Laminex that would have probably 70-80 per cent of their market, unless you want white, it's not stocked in Tasmania. It's stocked in Melbourne and they bring it over every three days. We would love to support buying locally. We try to support local manufacturers where we can such as Island Block and Pavers and those sorts of companies that supply locally, make locally and stock locally, but the reality is there aren't that many. The Vitrabond wall panelling is stocked out of Hobart. Some of the floor vinyls are stocked locally but only in small quantities. When we're talking about these bigger projects, it is all shipped in from the mainland on order. They don't even manufacture carpet tiles until you order them. We do our best to buy locally where we

can, but it's getting harder and harder even to buy timber made locally. It's all coming from the mainland or New Zealand.

Inter-campus movements

- 4.17 The Committee questioned the witnesses as to how teachers and student movements between the junior and secondary campuses would be managed. Ms Thomas responded:-

In terms of the junior campus, we operate very much on a middle-school model where the teachers of our grades 7 and 8 students teach the students English, history, geography, maths and sometimes science, so there is limited movement required by the students. We are looking at having more of a focus on the teachers coming to the students. They will still need to move to the gymnasium for phys ed. When they get to a more sophisticated level of science and laboratory work they will have to move over to the science area and down to the MDT zone as well. Heath and the team have heard us. We didn't want to spend \$1 million on undercover walkways so we're having dash points. You would have heard the music play when you were there today, and the students know that that's the signal. There are two minutes of music and you need to be moving and at class by the time the bell goes. That doesn't always work because of adolescents - the nature of the beast, et cetera - and we're not perfect. With their timetables they know where they have to be and what we find currently is that if some of our students have a specialist session at the gym, they usually go to the gym and do table tennis, indoor soccer or whatever we are offering in the gym, so they are there ready for the start. They will still have to move.

Workshop equipment

- 4.18 Mr Nicholas Moore made the following submission to the Committee in respect of the workshop equipment installed at the school:-

I am one of the people who works in the MDT technology workshop. I am in the building that has the old, ratty brown fans rattling away which are just behind my office. I've worked in Brooks High School for 15 years and within my building the only redevelopment in 15 years has been a coat of paint, which is a bit disappointing, but that is the way the world works.

Having worked at Brooks High School part-time for 15 hours a week for 15-plus years and working at other high schools as a technical teacher aide in the workshop, one of my issues has been the very bad standards of workshop equipment throughout schools in the past.

A few comments from the basic description (of the proposed works). It is about \$7.3 million for the main structures of the building redevelopment, and \$500 000 broadly allocated to furniture and equipment. As I stated in my description, we have equipment that came from the old Brooks High School that is over 50 years old. It is held together with fencing wire, baked bean cans and bodgie covers. In reality I have tried for many years to get it sorted at a global level but apparently it is all done in school and each school is its own little world. That is my basic bush description of it.

I haven't seen anything about what is going to happen in our section, so I don't know. My point is that I would like to put the case forward so that it is registered. There is no use having a \$7 million school with the future of vocational training, with equipment that is knackered and should go to the tip. You could say it is serviceable. A lot of it wouldn't meet any of the current Australian Standards. For example, a sanding machine has a sander on one side, a sander on the other side, so in theory you can have a student on both sides. Those are banned on the mainland because you can have two operators and all the dangers of that. The equipment is old. Basically it is passed its use-by date.

... You are looking at the future. At the moment I am trying to help train a second/third year MDT teacher, and he is the future of the school, not me. I am an older person, only part-time and not a teacher. He should be seeing machinery now that is five years old. He's working on a machine today, as I left his workshop, that is 50 years old. If he is in that school in 20 years time he will be working on a 70-year-old machine. It is one thing for a private operator to battle on with money to replace machines, but it would be a reasonable expectation that in a major redevelopment it is all done. Maybe it is going to happen.

... As an observer at the back, I hear it would be good to have great facades, et cetera, but if I had \$70 000 to spend on that or new equipment to save the next generation of teachers, I know where I would be spending my money as a taxpayer. If it is a \$7 million development and this costs \$70 000, it is 1 per cent of the budget. It's not much in the scheme of the world, is it? I just wanted to put that out there. What concerns me is there are not more people here because it's a huge community of people and I'm the only mug here, but I can carry that. My concerns affect people such as the young teacher I was teaching this morning.

- 4.19 Given the evidence of Mr Moore, the Committee questioned the witnesses of the Education Department as to whether there was any scope within the budget to upgrade equipment. Ms Thomas responded:-

As the principal I would say no, not at this stage. It is a succession plan, but in terms of our school resource package our school business manager and I work very closely together in looking at how we very strategically upgrade each area. We squirrel away funds for big pieces of equipment such as that. That is a challenge most secondary schools are facing. I want to stress that the equipment is not unsafe because we have it checked regularly by Workplace Safety. Leonie Johnston, our business manager, is absolutely on the ball and watertight on that, so there is absolutely no risk whatsoever. In fact a couple of pieces of equipment that have been stored in our MDT area we have donated to the railway restoration - old lathes and equipment such as that. We would never ever place any piece of equipment into any of our learning spaces that we knew was unsafe. We have very strict OH&S requirements around all of that.

(So far as the scope of these works has been established) It is an upgrade of general learning areas.

Costs

- 4.20 The Committee asked the witnesses to provide some explanation of the art component of the project budget. Mr Clayton responded:-

We have already commenced a discussion with Arts Tasmania on this project and they have met with Shireen and part of our role as part of this commission is to form a committee to look at the art component and ensure it gets incorporated as part of the building. I must admit I can't remember the last time in the recent past where paintings have just been hung on the walls. There have been some issues with that art program in the past but it has got better and there are more artists participating in it now than in the past who are more accommodating to meeting the understandings of working in a school and these other environments. It was a challenging thing for artists to get their heads around and now we're getting more and more artists understanding what is needed. It needs to be usable and something people can engage with, not just something that sits there and everybody looks at. I know a key factor that Shireen has been talking to Arts Tasmania about is that this thing has to serve a purpose.

5 DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

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

- Redevelopment of Brooks High School with the Integration of the Rocherlea Primary School Campus to Create a Single High School Facility, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education Asset Planning, July 2014; and
- Nicholas Moore, Submission dated 29 July 2014.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is satisfied that the need for the proposed works has been established. The current facilities are mostly in the original 1990 configuration and although well maintained, significant areas of the school are no longer conducive to contemporary teaching practices or meet the current needs of the school.
- 6.2 The redevelopment will provide a flexible facility to accommodate contemporary and future needs in teaching and learning. The design features will: consolidate campus activities and create a central hub; improve connectivity between facilities; open the campus to the landscape and significantly improve the General Learning Areas of the school.
- 6.3 Accordingly, the Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

**Parliament House
Hobart
9 September 2014**

**Adam Brooks MP
Chairman**