

**THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET AT
LATROBE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON THURSDAY, 26 NOVEMBER, 2015**

LATROBE HIGH SCHOOL MAJOR REFURBISHMENT

Mr ROBERT WILLIAMS, DEPARTMENT SERVICES, **Mr TONY LUTTRELL**, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, **Mr BRENT ARMISTEAD**, PRINCIPAL, LATROBE HIGH SCHOOL, AND **Mr HEATH CLAYTON**, PRINCIPAL/ARCHITECT, ARTAS ARCHITECTS, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIR (Mr Brooks) - Welcome everyone. We had a really good briefing on site and are probably fairly familiar with it. We have an apology from Ms Taylor.

This is proceeding of parliament, which means it receives protection of parliamentary privilege which is an important legal protection that allows individuals giving evidence to a parliamentary committee to speak with complete freedom without fear of being sued or questioned in any court or place out of parliament. It applies to ensure parliament receives the very best information when conducting its inquiries. It is important to be aware that this protection is not accorded to you if statements that may be defamatory are repeated or referred to by you outside the confines of the parliamentary proceedings. This is a public hearing. Members of the public and journalists may be present and this means your evidence may be reported.

Mr WILLIAMS - We are very pleased to be here to present on this project which forms part of the budget announcements from the Government this year in the budget process of over \$95 million of school investment over the next four years. I think this is the biggest one we have had - \$10 million. You have already had the visit to the school and seen the condition of the school. We might start with the reasons we need this development.

CHAIR - Mr Armistead would like to give us a brief overview. Start with the history, where we are at today, and what the benefits are.

Mr ARMISTEAD - When reinvigorating high schools in Tasmania was announced it was extremely exciting for us at Latrobe High School. We had been lobbying, as a school association, for a long time. I do not think there is a member of Braddon or Lyons who has not been through Latrobe High School in the last four years. We appreciate the interest that created. I know there has been some work done in parliament, and on *Hansard*, at other stages where it has been stated that Latrobe High School is in dire need of an upgrade. I am really proud of the programs we have at Latrobe High School. Even though I will be talking about the need, please take it from me that Latrobe High School is well regarded in the community for the programs and education it provides the students. However, it could be better, based on the facilities we currently have and there are some limitations to what we do and that is because of the facilities that exist currently at Latrobe High School.

Do parents choose a school based on vanity reasons and how it looks and what facilities are provided? Not in all cases and I am sure the majority of parents have chosen wisely in

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bringing their students to Latrobe High School but there are some I am sure that have chosen other schools in the local area or in the private system because of our facilities. I am pleased to say that within two years' time that will not be the case. It will be nice that every student in our area - because they deserve twenty-first century learning environments and at the moment they are not getting that.

Currently, what we do not have, and what we are in need of, is student ownership of space and the master plan that is being developed by ARTAS will demonstrate that student ownership will be an option for whoever is leading the school, and for the school community, and also for the teachers and it will give us the space to do that.

The average size of the classrooms at the moment, a high percentage of them range at about 55 metres square and with the wisdom of the department looking at classroom spaces throughout the state, they see that 75 square metres is the minimum requirement. We will be able to meet those in nearly every case with the master plan.

We have a real disconnect at the moment with our arts program, especially our performing arts. Currently, the music area and the drama room are approximately 100 metres away from each other and the drama room you saw today would be described as a shoe box for staff to work in. Once again, wonderful work being done in those areas but limited because of the space.

There is a great interest at the moment in food technology and we are seeing that across all schools and we have the facility to have one class operating at the school at one time and we definitely need two rooms and we are going to have two classrooms with the new facility.

We have one corridor which I can only describe as a highway through the school and at times 400 students congregate in that area and also that is where all the lockers are housed. We know, in some circumstances, antisocial behaviour can happen in that area. With the new design, we are disbursing lockers around the school and making them closer to where the general learning areas are. We know we will have a greater social experience for the students when they are in the school. I am concerned about anxiety of the students which they express now and I am sure, for some students, walking down a corridor that is so crowded would be anxious for them. I know it can be for staff.

When we talk about antisocial behaviour, we have toilets with two blocks for each sex. They were built when the school was built in 1964 and have not changed other than different flooring. Students have said to me they would rather spend time holding on than going to the toilet at school because it is very visible when you go into the toilet, people can see what cubicle you go into, and smells and sounds are evident, so it is easier not to go. I think that is a real shame for any student and with ARTAS design we are disbursing toilets around the school and in places where students are going to have full privacy. It is really important.

We have lack of safe, warm social spaces at the moment. We have one area that is also a thoroughfare and has, I would have to check, about six to eight exits. When all those doors are open it becomes a wind tunnel, so it is not warm and comfortable. That area is heated with a closed wood fire with a protective surround and is not ideal for students. That whole corridor area has conduit, it has asbestos tiles and with the redevelopment, we know that

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will be a nicer area for students to walk through. Also we have designed the school so there are different access points and exits, so that corridor space will not be used as much as it needs to be now and it will become open instead of inclosed.

Our HPE area, our gymnasium, sits on its own currently. It has had a stage built in the last 12 months and because of the stage it has now given us access to hold assemblies at school whereas we used to have to take students off site to do that. That has been a positive change that has happened in the last 12 months. However, our change rooms are not off the gym. For boys they are about 50 metres away and for girls, about 30 to 40 metres, once you have exited the gym. Once again, supervision around those areas makes it difficult when students are nowhere near where the teaching and learning is happening. We are happy that we are going to have change rooms built off the gymnasium.

Our HPE area is a really strong area. We have about 30 students who have represented the state this year in sport. We know also HPE is a growth area in jobs and health. Looking at giving opportunities to forge careers around fitness is something we are keen on doing. With the creation of our high performance lab in the current music building, that is going to be also a good move.

I thought it would be nice to outline to the committee how we went about the process of deciding our objectives and our vision. I have something to hand to you if you are happy to receive that now. Thank you. First, after a rigorous tender process by architects putting in for the contract, it was really interesting. We have made sure we've consulted with the community, but also with our student body. We wanted them as part of the process, so we had two students as a part of our school association who have been involved.

With the project team and those students, ARTAS was selected as the architects. One of the key components was the students felt that they were the architects who listened most to their concerns and were able to engage with the students. I think that is important in our decision. The other part is we thought ARTAS would challenge us, not only with the building spaces, but also what impact the buildings would make on the education of students.

If you look at what I have handed out, the vision and the values and the objectives are not necessarily the school's vision, values and objectives, especially the school vision. That would mean we would close up in two years' time because hopefully we would have achieved it. The vision for this project was to provide 21st century environments that promote learning and help foster positive relationships. As I have mentioned before, there were some parts of our building structure that we do not think foster positive relationships.

Our guiding values were learning, relationships, creativity and equity and we have always referred to them when we have looked at the design for each area. Does the design still sit with those values? We think we have been able to fulfil that. Key objectives, number 1, flexible learning spaces. We had a lot of discussion about that. It's important that if we are going to cater to 21st century learning that building spaces can operate in different ways. No matter what the leadership structure is in the school and what educational influence the leader puts on the school, the space is still conducive to that.

Orderly flow of students, which I have talked about. We can now enter through the bottom of B block and through the other side. That has created another pathway from west to east.

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Point 4, warm, comfortable and easily supervised social spaces, which I have talked about. Number 3, which I know that Heath and his team laughed about. We said we wanted efficient use of funds, we wanted wow factor for student learning and not for architectural statements. I am pleased to say we have not had to come back to Heath and make a statement like, 'How much is that costing because I cannot see where that is affecting student learning.' In every facet it has been affecting student learning as well. We are hoping we will get the 'wow' through the student learning.

The last one is because of our school business manager who was insistent that one of our key objectives was to maintain maintenance-friendly environments. Everything we do, we will look at what the maintenance may be ongoing maintenance may be.

That gives a bit of a summary of the brief given to the architects. After that, there was a breakdown of each learning and what we were asking for. Once again, we have been able to go through there and tick off on every item.

CHAIR - I will declare some history with Mr Armistead. We went to school together and were prefects, so it is surprising to be calling each other 'Mr Brooks' and 'Mr Armistead', but I have declared it. Did ARTAS want to give any comments or overview before we get into it?

Mr CLAYTON - Does the committee need any further explanation on the design of what has been put forward? I am happy to elaborate or answer questions, as you wish.

CHAIR - Yes.

Mr FARRELL - You have covered off on the consultation you had with the students, which seems to be the reason ARTAS got the contract. You seemed to listen to their needs. I noticed that currently in the school there is a student common area that has a wood heater in it. I imagine it would probably be the only wood heater in any school in the state, would that be right? Would that design have its own possible issues? I would like to know a little bit more about the student feedback that you received and have responded to as far as the open spaces are concerned. How do you feel that will improve the learning outcomes and the general acceptance of the school?

Mr CLAYTON - One of the main design factors we took into consideration was that when we first came to the site, whenever you went out one of the doors, you looked into a vast landscape. It was open fields, grassland or distant houses and things like that. There were no external spaces that were comfortable for students to break out into or to socialise into. The same can be said for the teaching spaces. The only social space available to them is the oversized corridor that has the wood heater in it that you are referring to.

When we met with the students - and you met them today as we walked around - they have been fantastic because they were very clear to us about the problems that the lockers cause with everybody coming into that one area together. It is not only having all the people trying to come to the locker, but everybody is also trying to get from one place to the other through the same area. We nicknamed it 'the super highway' because everybody has to walk up and down that one corridor. We got caught in the rain there today and it forces even more people to do that.

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One of the key objectives was the student movement through the school. When we looked at incorporating a cafe or a cafeteria into this design, the students were very clear that they did not want it to be another oversized corridor. It was not meant to be somewhere you just passed through on the way to going to maths or science or PE. They wanted the cafe to be destination in itself, so that it was somewhere special to go to and something they could be proud of.

When we started to look at all those things, we looked at locating the cafe area to the north-east. By doing that, it wraps around and lines up with the end of B block, along Last Street. That encloses a courtyard which we, very early on, decided was an important aspect for the site. It created a sheltered space that students could access outside in a protected environment. Then they had access to the building, as such, as a cafe, a social space and a teaching space. That cafe is supported by the new teaching kitchens which feed into it.

To get back to your point around those spaces. We are creating a space the students could go to for down time to allow them to unwind in between learning. Then, when they go back into the learning environment, they are more switched on. That was a very important fact we received from the students - they had never felt they had the ability to switch off completely in the unwind phase.

Mr FARRELL - I put on record our appreciation for the fine lunch we had in the cooking area. We allocated a bit of time to have lunch after our fairly extensive walk around. Currently the school only has one cooking room.

Mr CLAYTON - It has one teaching kitchen at the moment. Under our proposal, we are proposing to have two teaching kitchens and what we are calling a catering kitchen. It is something a little different from what has been done in other schools around the state. For lack of a better word, we have called it 'the master chef model' because of the popularity of that cooking show and things like that. We are finding the interest through the schools is greater, but they want something more than the traditional home economics set-up where you make a few cookies and take them home for mum and dad.

We are looking to help start a pathway through the high school into other certificates and then through to which ever way they want to go. This teaching kitchen model is more aligned to what they are seeing on TV. It is also working very closely with the home economics teaching staff in delivering a model with two dedicating teaching areas, plus a stand-alone demonstration area that can be used for various things. You could bring two groups together into one demonstration and then they go back into their classroom to do the learning.

A flow-on of that is this catering kitchen. We have located it adjacent to the school canteen with the view that we can run student enterprises through there that feed into the canteen. We are still talking to the school about there being a canteen manager that would also support that process, and then the sale of the goods that would come through the canteen. We are exposing these students to commercial reality earlier, and helping to train them into part-time work and things like that as well.

Mr FARRELL - You mentioned the dual purpose of many spaces, inside and outside. I was impressed with the plans for the drama area where you are using the stage not only for the gymnasium side, as it exists now, but to use it also for the drama side which is a really

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clever use of space. We saw the students having their drama in quite a small room today and they seemed happy with what was going on until we interrupted them. This new space seems to be really well laid out and it looks good on the plan. What extra benefits do you feel this space will give to the school?

Mr CLAYTON - Currently, they have an internal room that is painted black, and that is drama. This new space gives them an opportunity to do much more than just hold school drama, which is a key component. Our plan is built on the work the school has previously done. The stage was done before we started this process. We look to build on that by adding the performing arts area to the back of the stage. Rather than taking up what has traditionally been a stage that then uses the gym - and upsetting all the PE teachers in the school because the gym is now out of use because someone wants to do a performance - we look to position the performing arts centre so it could be used for smaller performances. Instead of running one or two big performances, they might do five smaller ones and they can run it purely out of the performing arts space. We have included retractable seating. I think there are 90 seats on the retractable seating and we have laid out up to about 220 seats in there once you put seating on the floor. It gives it lots of flexibility so the drama staff can do performances. They can do their practising on the stage during class time and also they can do dance up on the stage. They can retract the seating. They can do different types of performances.

We have also created a space between the existing building just outside of that and we've covered that space and made an outdoor performance arts space so they can practice street performances and things like that, which they are starting to bring into the curriculum now because there are many different types of performances, not just the traditional models we have been working with. That space is multifaceted in another way. It could be used for presentations. It can be used for performing arts. It can be used for grade assemblies. It can also be turned the other way and we can have performances outside, on chairs looking from inside, in unpredictable weather, so lots of flexibility around that

Ms OGILVIE - I want to say how supportive I am of this project. I think it is wonderful that you have worked with the synergies between your curriculum, the learning environment, and the physical space to be able to support that. You talked about it in relation to the teaching kitchens. I see you have been thinking about micro businesses. In effect you are teaching those skills about how to run a business and money and maybe you are making jam and selling that, or whatever those things are. It seems to me that it flows through your performing arts and music and also the gym, looking at the number of kids who have gone onto higher levels in sports and sports administration and all those new areas of potential future employment.

I think it is very clever. I have a particular interest in the technology side. You mentioned a bit about engineering. It is to do with maths and science and space, architecture. Looking at all of that, with that philosophy in mind on the technology side of things, how have you woven in technology that will support that new model you are trying to develop with space and curriculum?

Mr ARMISTEAD - We can all answer that one.

Ms OGILVIE - It is for all of you. You have had to work collaboratively.

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Mr ARMISTEAD - E-strategy is something the department is investing in heavily too.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes. It is good.

Mr ARMISTEAD - What we know is that every decision we make, next week something new comes out. We want to make sure access is of the utmost importance to students. Any time, anywhere, is really important. Currently, we have a program which is 'bring your own technology' which is quite common across most schools at the moment. We are also making sure we support that by having devices available for students at school as well. In regards to hands-on, at your fingertips, we think we will continue around that sort of mould. We have not yet talked about the library being moved into a central hub at the school and having greater access for students.

Ms OGILVIE - And deeper digital capacity through the library.

Mr ARMISTEAD - So instead of having computer labs, computers, or stand-up work stations, all mobile devices will be broken out across the whole school.

Ms OGILVIE - And charging stations everywhere.

Mr ARMISTEAD - And, charging, yes, even down to USB points instead of plugging into power points. That is all in the design to the level that Heath has had a conversation with, for example, our humanities team, who, in grade 9 and 10 will have the top of B block, and talk to them about how many power points you need in the room, how many USB ports. We are starting to get down to that real detail, which is taking some time. But we know that detail will result in strong learning programs happening.

Ms OGILVIE - I see a great vein of innovation and future entrepreneurs and commercialisation that can come out of the mix that you have. It will be interesting to watch how you will steer that over the next decade.

Mr ARMISTEAD - Yes.

Mr CLAYTON - We have made provision in each of the learning areas to have a space for up to four laptop trolleys.

Ms OGILVIE - We saw that.

Mr CLAYTON - We are also looking at creating, as Brent said, the stand-up, quick, hot desk-type of research areas. Also, part of this project is to upgrade the wireless networking through the whole school. At the moment it is patchy so there will be access to wireless networks from that social space outside. That learn anywhere, any time, can happen indoors and outdoors.

Mr LUTTRELL - I might add the department is working in the ICT area on providing schools with a tool by which they can work out which access points they use the most so they can start managing that load across the school better - so where should the access points be enhanced and where is the greatest use. We will be providing that to schools in the next year or so. That should help all schools.

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Mr ARMISTEAD - You talked about science and technology. Having the grade 9/10 hub where the existing library is, the connection between maths and science will be strong. At the moment there is lots of talk about learning around STEM, looking at science technology, engineering and maths and the library will be something that will allow us to launch into that area.

Ms OGILVIE - Fantastic. Let us hope you are a leading light within a few minutes.

Mrs RYLAH - I have some questions about the courtyard design. I note on the landscape master plan that points 5 and 6 indicate security gates going on near Last Street. When I look at the courtyard, I cannot determine whether there are other security gates at 28, 29, or in the space between the new cafeteria and the end of the arts building.

Mr CLAYTON - We are looking to make that courtyard secure with the use of gates. There will be gates on Last Street. There will be a large gate between the home economics and music area and there will be some gating in the cafeteria area, the small gap there. Where the 27 is on the landscape drawing, there will be some gates or something along through there. It has not been shown on that landscaping plan. It will not be a highly secured compound type of thing but it will keep the honest people out.

Mr FARRELL - I noticed the corridors were old with exposed conduits and one of the key objectives is maintenance friendly. I wondered what things you have put into the plan that are going to cut down on some of the expenses, apart from buying a ton of wood every couple of weeks.

Mr CLAYTON - With our material selection we are trying to be as responsible as we can. We will be using 1 200 masonry type things for wear and tear and not having a lot of glazing below 1 200 because they would be subject to the boots and things like that. Then we will look to use a lot of pre-finished claddings on the upper level, which a bit lighter weight, easier to handle. It is that balance - and this is one of the things we have been talking about a lot with the staff - between being light and transparent and having enough room for things like displays. It is a balancing act and the same with the external materials. We still want it to be light and transparent but we have the maintenance where we do not want to be replacing windows on a regular basis. Basically, a rough rule of thumb is, anything below 1 200 is a hard, durable finish and then we try to get it as light and open as possible from there.

Mrs RYLAH - In regard to the modular concrete seating elements, I cannot think of anything worse than sitting on concrete. Can you tell me about that?

Mr CLAYTON - It is a shame we did not get the 3D up and running. Basically, we are looking at bringing the concrete element in for its durability but where it is a seating element, it has a timber slat associated with it. When we create these spaces, they are not like we saw today which was a row of seats that everyone sat in. These are bigger platforms so you can sit as an individual, or you can sit in a group around on some slatted timber that then uses the concrete as a table-top, but all in one level. So it becomes more of an urban-type landscape such as you see in Melbourne. It gives you an idea of what we are doing.

Watching video.

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Mr ARMISTEAD - I prepared the 3D for the presentation I did the other week. It was not necessarily explaining the intricacies of the building design or anything like that. It was more to create a feel of what this could look like for the community. At the end of the day, the community see it from the outside. We did that to give them an idea of how that space is going to be. We had people saying that you could see them using it, and how those seating areas and the landscaping were going to tie together.

Mrs RYLAH - The slatted ceiling in the covered area - can that be tilted?

Mr CLAYTON - It will be permanent and that is mainly a sun-shading device. We wanted to get that as light as possible; we did not want it to overheat and be uncomfortable in summer, so we are looking at using a slatted timber product which helps to diffuse the light.

Mrs RYLAH - You would still get wet there?

Mr CLAYTON - It will be a solid clear roof, but then the slats will diffuse the light coming through. We have broken it out where the trees are so we can get some vegetation in around those areas.

Mrs RYLAH - I want to confirm that we are using aluminium-framed windows. Do we have breaks and double-glazing?

Mr CLAYTON - We have double-glazing and we are still working on the specification of the actual window itself. There is a thermal building report we are doing at the moment.

Mrs RYLAH - You cannot confirm you have thermal breaks in windows yet?

Mr CLAYTON - No.

Mr FARRELL - With the design and the opening up, how is that going to improve it from a teacher and education point of view?

Mr ARMISTEAD - I just went back through my notes and I skipped the point which was really important. We have not really discussed the teaching and learning spaces, especially with the classrooms. What we are trying to do at Latrobe High School is that we co-plan, we co-teach and we also take data to improve our performance. Currently, we have some lead teachers and also graduate teachers working together, especially in the maths area where we know we do not always have qualified teachers.

We are placing classrooms together but we do not actually have the spaces at the moment in all areas to open them up so you can have two groups working beside each other. We are being really innovative in bringing those classrooms together but it has to be moving all the time to do that.

Now we know that with the design concept we have in front of us, it will allow nearly every classroom to open up with a shared or paired classroom and to break out into another learning space if needed. It is going to change the way we teach at Latrobe High School in a huge way. We cannot have that model I was talking about across all our areas at the moment. It is impossible; we cannot timetable it. There are select groups that are working

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that way. I would like to think that that model will be the model we will use across all areas, eventually.

Mr FARRELL - You can see this new design having quite a dramatic effect on the way that teachers and students interact?

Mr ARMISTEAD - Definitely. You might notice that the bottom of B block opens up into the courtyard and that bit of space outside the classrooms. Part of the concept design for the structures in that courtyard is for students to be able to break out there and work, as well as socialize. During class time there might be some students working out in that open space as well.

CHAIR - On the design specifications, are there any non-standard specifications? I assume we do not have to import varnish from Sweden; it is the regular paint we use in schools these days that we can get from a local supplier. We do not have to freight it in overnight if we need another half-litre.

Mr CLAYTON - Where possible, we are using local products and where not, we are trying to use Australian-made products. There are obviously some elements that we cannot get from within Australia or locally, but we are trying to minimise that. The block work and things like we have sourced locally. The colour bond and such things are from local suppliers, but obviously it comes from Melbourne. Aluminium is flown in from the mainland. Wherever possible, we understand that the purpose of this is a stimulus package and we should be stimulating the suppliers as well.

CHAIR - The local benefits test will apply to this tender, I presume?

Mr WILLIAMS - It was applied as per the Treasurer's instructions and thought about before we even went out to do this.

CHAIR - Given the current economic cycle in the north-west, do you envisage some stronger competition for this work?

Mr WILLIAMS - I think later on; probably not with this one. It is the first big one up here. Later on with some of the other projects, there may be increased competition, especially if we run into the beginning stages of, say, Devonport Living City, which will be really big. We have had a close relationship with the Master Builders Association to give them a rough time frame. Tony has met with them many times.

CHAIR - The time frames you believe are realistic, so it can go to tender in January?

Mr WILLIAMS - That is right.

CHAIR - And it starts, I think, in March, with a 15-month construction time, more or less?

Mr WILLIAMS - They are reasonably realistic, although there are some approvals and the like that we have got to get done. There are always things that can come up with these things. We think these are realistic. We could have objections through council planning processes. We could have weather events and those sorts of things. Barring anything

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unusual, these are what we are reporting back to the Government in terms of when we will spend the money.

CHAIR - I will get to the students and the consultation period in a minute. I commend the school community and Mr Armistead for their work around that. One of the students said, 'I don't know if this time frame is going to be able to happen'. I thought it was really good that the students were thinking about the impact on themselves and also whether this going to happen, or are they just picking numbers? I said to the student that I would ask the committee.

Ms OGILVIE - There is a future project manager over there.

CHAIR - It was really good to see the involvement of the students.

Mr CLAYTON - From our perspective, we are on track to be at tender at the end of January. I think 15 months for a project of this size is fair and reasonable.

CHAIR - I also think the design is very good. There are no expensive additions and big voids and curved walls that cost money which means that we get less for the same amount. I am on the record as being concerned around that, and about using local labour where possible.

Mr Armistead, you have been working on this project for many years; you have raised this with all the local members. Does this deliver what you wanted on behalf of the school?

Mr ARMISTEAD - Yes, I am very confident it does. Like anyone involved in running the school, I will still ask for more millions if I could get it. However, within the budget constraints of the \$10 million we have been given, I am extremely pleased we have been able to meet the priorities we created and ticked off on every item. The only item we have not ticked off on is the administration building. It does not impact on student learning, therefore we have not spent the money there. That would be the only place that may need future funds.

Mrs RYLAH - In regard to the budget that has been set around this project, I note you have a design contingency of over \$1 million indicated here. That seems like a fairly significant amount; it is more than 10 per cent of the total project. Can someone give me some sense of what that is about and why it is of this size?

Mr CLAYTON - With any project, you need have contingencies. The number has been set by the department. There are the construction contingencies and post-occupancy. There are some things that get missed during a process because of various things. Not everybody has the ability to fully understand plans as well as we do and sometimes you have to make some changes at the end. We might have to put in some extra power points or move a couple of things. That is what the post-contract contingency is for.

Mr LUTTRELL - If you look at some of the splits, I think there is only around \$150 000 for infrastructure. As you go through a project, quite often you discover different infrastructure issues that present, and they are not cheap, either. We have a low estimate for infrastructure of \$150 000, which is on page 19. That is a low estimate and that contingency will cover off any additional work that might be required from electrical or

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roofing or other aspects such as asbestos. Once you start lifting things, you do not necessarily know what is left behind from 1964.

Mr CLAYTON - We are currently undertaking the reviews of all the switchboards and things like that. With a couple of those things, until you start pulling them apart and trying to work on them, you do not fully appreciate how bad they are, and a switchboard is \$20 000 or \$30 000 each time. We know there are some we have to do and that there be some other things that may pop up along the way in a school that has not been touched for a long time.

Mrs RYLAH - On page 17 in that first element of that table, it says that the tender will be packaged to allow reductions should the tender sum exceed the pre-tender estimate. Can you give me some indication of how you are balancing the contingency level of \$1 million with this comment and give me an understanding of the design for the whole project?

Mr WILLIAMS - When we set out for the tender process, we will have a quantity surveyor give us a sense of how much they think we should put it out for tender for. Then, during the period we are negotiating the design, and then when we start to negotiate the tender contracts, we will work with them because it is weird how the market changes. A change in the market can send the cost of a particular item significantly through the roof or, as we start to do it and we suddenly realise we need a different type of product. We have to do a negotiation through the whole process. The whole aim of having a contingency is, towards the end, that we end up with zero. If that contingency was still there at the end, we would be scoping the project to do more things and, conversely, we would scope it back. About 10 per cent is probably what we normally put in for these sorts of things because there are variables. As you pull a wall down, you find the wiring has been eaten by rats and you have to rewire; those sorts of things come along. This is a pretty standard methodology and probably the one we use with all our projects that we bring before you. It is to have that sort of contingency so we are guaranteed, because we cannot spend more than \$10 million. It is a process of iteration as we go along until we end up with zero. It is a negotiation. It is setting the tender up so the contractor knows it is not a set price. We have to negotiate the scope into the value of the funding.

CHAIR - Mr Armistead, you have given the students the ability to have a fair amount of say in the design and even in the selection of the architect, no doubt with teaching and community oversight. Do you think anything in this design is from students thinking it would be cool to have, rather than it being needed? Are you happy with what they have come up with?

Mr ARMISTEAD - It is an interesting point. It is quite surprising in some ways how trustworthy students are. As long as they are well-informed through the process and we give them enough opportunities, they have been really good in bringing up ideas. However, we have had the document we have run through with them as well. They know what the vision is. They know what the guiding values are and what our objectives are. So if their suggestions do not meet them, they understand they cannot be put forward.

I am really glad that we sat down and put a strong brief behind what we wanted to be built for the redevelopment. Without that, I agree it could have become a little bit that way, but I do not think there is anything they have brought up that is not going to improve the environment for students.

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CHAIR - I commend the school, the leadership of the school, and the students. We had Edward Lancaster and Eden Spinks for the tour. These exceptional young student leaders and future leaders of our state were wonderfully informed. They explained things to the committee as required and are certainly a credit to your school community and to the school.

I found the student engagement was probably the highest I have ever seen on one of these public works committee hearings. Certainly Kings Meadows and Prospect were very well represented from students for recent public works committees. Edward and Eden were fantastic to have along and I think it is an important aspect of looking at it from a student's perspective.

Even my little mate Ethan Duniam was very happy to see me and excited about the school. I asked many of the children in class what they thought and it was all positive. They knew about it; they knew what was going on and I think that was a very good change from what probably happened 20 years or 30 years ago. It is a changing of the model, you could say.

The committee can either recommend, approve or not approve. We have set criteria we need to consider on behalf of the taxpayer. I will ask you as the principal of the school but also a taxpayer as well, do you think the work delivers the stated purposes?

Mr ARMISTEAD - Definitely.

CHAIR - Do you think it is advisable and necessary to carry out the work?

Mr ARMISTEAD - It is definitely advisable and necessary that we carry out the work.

CHAIR - Do you think it provides value for money and delivers good value for the public?

Mr ARMISTEAD - \$10 million sounds a lot when you break that down to \$7.2 million in build costs. There is always the concern we were not going to get the full value that we need and we would be going back asking more money from the state again. I am really confident, as I said before, when it goes out to tender and sits within budget, we are getting everything we need.

CHAIR - I noted there has been some fluctuation in your enrolments and they have dropped slightly over the last few years. I know previously that was because of some different class sizes, and year 10s leaving, and things like that. There is an envisaged increase in 2017 onwards. You mentioned in your opening comments about the feeling of some parents about what they see and feel when they come into the school. Do you think that - and I know you mentioned in your opening statement that it will potentially help some parents that see it that way - will add a significant feeling of not only a better learning outcome for students, but also when potential students and parents tour the school? What impact do you think that will have?

Mr ARMISTEAD - I do not have any data on that. All I can say is that we have had two students this year who have come to us from a local private school and they are coming to us after being through the school in grade 6, with their parents looking at the school. The sole choice made to go to a different school was based on the facilities. As time has gone on, we are fortunate they have heard about our programs. One student started this year in

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grade 8 and another student is starting at the start of next year in grade 9. That is in the last couple of terms. Does it have an impact? Yes, I think it does. If I was to sit here and say that our education program is not affected by the current facilities, I would not be telling the truth. I know now once we have gone through this planning process, it is only going to make teaching and learning that much better from what we are going to receive.

CHAIR - You feel this work will absolutely resolve those issues, the vast majority of them?

Mr ARMISTEAD - Definitely. The vast majority, I think it will.

CHAIR - You are very heavily represented in interstate sporting representatives from what I recall of our discussion.

Mr ARMISTEAD - Yes.

CHAIR - And you have put in some high-level sporting facilities, including circuit room, a cardio area, a strength and conditioning area. Is that the same at every school or is that a specialised feature of Latrobe High?

Mr ARMISTEAD - I would like to think that it will be at some stage. A school down the coast, Penguin, have that facility. Ulverstone and Devonport have similar, but not to the extent of Penguin. If we look at the current use of that building, it is music upstairs and down the bottom we have started to turn that into a high performance area. We knew that with the build, without utilising that in some way, we are going to have to knock that building down. We are going to, I believe, be fairly cost neutral. We will be able to keep that facility, make great use of it and it will be cost neutral to the build. It is a real positive. I know our students are extremely excited about the possibilities in using that. With roughly three classes timetabled at the gym each time, it will be another good breakout area for the HPE team.

CHAIR - Do you think the work should proceed, Mr Armistead?

Mr ARMISTEAD - I certainly do, Mr Brooks.

CHAIR - Just making sure you listen to what I say. Thank you for attending. The committee has no further questions. As I advised you at the commencement of your evidence, what you have said here today is protected by parliamentary privilege. Once you leave the table, you need to be aware that privilege does not attach to comments you may make to anyone, including the media, even if you are just repeating what you said to us. Thank you very much for attending.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.