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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

# Rosebery High School Upgrade

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

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## MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

Mr *Harriss* (Chairman)  
Mr *Hall*

House of Assembly

Mr *Best*  
Mr *Green*  
Mrs *Napier*

By Authority: Government Printer, Tasmania

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## INTRODUCTION

To His Excellency the Honourable Peter George Underwood, Officer of the Order of Australia, 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: -

**The upgrade of general and specialist learning areas at the Rosebery District High School.**

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

## BACKGROUND

The Rosebery District High School services the needs of the township of Rosebery on the West Coast of Tasmania and has a current enrolment of around 165 drawn predominantly from Rosebery, Tullah and Zeehan.

Enrolment levels have declined over recent years and although this trend is predicted to continue as more of the mining workforce becomes itinerant, any new development within the region could significantly affect the town's population.

Rosebery District High School provides early childhood, primary, secondary and senior secondary education services. In addition, the site has a Skill Centre used to facilitate adult learning within the area, supported by a Library / Resource centre that provides whole of community access to information resources including on-line information technology facilities.

The school curriculum offered by the school targets traditional Literacy, Numeracy, Positive Behaviour and Effective Reporting.

Within the limitations of an isolated regional school, management strives to offer enhanced and extended learning opportunities.

Facilities at the school have a total fully enclosed covered area (FECA) of approximately 4,376m<sup>2</sup> on a moderately sloping site. The school was originally established in the 1960s and has grown in stages to service the requirements of the mining community. The school manages sixteen teacher residences as part of its property portfolio.

Major work undertaken at the school over recent years has included the redevelopment of home economics facilities in 1994 and, in 2000, the replacement of two classrooms and demolition of some building areas that were no longer required.

Overall, a considerable amount of the existing accommodation for the school is in original condition and in need of refurbishment in order to provide a contemporary and equitable learning environment for students and teachers. Only a limited portion of the school has been replaced or extensively refurbished over the life of the facility, apart from cyclical maintenance, minor refurbishment and fit-out alterations.

With Rosebery having one of the most severe inclement climates in Tasmania there is a lack of all weather under cover space for students.

## SERVICE PLANNING

### Building Better Schools

In December 2007, Rosebery District High School made an application for Capital Investment Program (CIP) funding under the Building Better Schools policy framework.

The Building Better Schools policy framework is aimed at enabling the Department to implement an approach to investing in school infrastructure which is based on a number of core project planning principles, including the following;

- The project should be able to demonstrate improved student outcomes in terms of improved student learning, engagement and wellbeing pathways and transitions.
- There is a fair and equitable distribution of funding for school improvements across all government schools in Tasmania.
- Planning for the project must take account of demographic and student enrolment information in terms of enrolment trends and projections.
- The project must be consistent with and be reflected in the school's strategic plan for improving educational outcomes for students.
- The project should demonstrate that the condition of the current facilities is poor, poses an occupational health and safety risk, and/or continued maintenance is not economically viable.
- It must be fit-for-purpose, viable and achievable within a realistic budget and agreed timeframe.
- It must focus on long-term (not just short term) school improvement.
- Unless an urgent redevelopment need emerges, the project should be based on a formal Project Plan (School Upgrade Plan) developed in consultation with Learning Services, staff of the Finance, Facilities and Business Support (FFBS) Branch, the Principal, staff, students and parents of the school, and the broader school community. The project should also have the support of the relevant School Association.

## EXISTING FACILITIES

Rosebery District High School comprises a main single storey building and several other smaller single storey buildings sited mostly toward the northern end of the

school property. The school grounds encompass an area of 2.0 hectares. School facilities include:

- Building 1A – Part of the main building accommodating general learning and staff amenity areas;
- Building 1B – Part of the main building accommodating administration, general learning,, library, general purpose hall, canteen and staff and student amenity areas;
- Building 1C - Part of the main building accommodating MDT, home economics, art, science and student amenity areas;
- Building 2 – A separate single storey building accommodating music, drama, kindergarten, pre-school general learning and student amenity areas;
- Building 3 – A separate single storey building accommodating kindergarten and pre-school general learning areas;
- Building 4 – A separate single storey building accommodating student change-room areas.

## RECENT HISTORY OF EXPENDITURE ON CAPITAL WORKS AT THE SCHOOL

A review of the capital expenditure history since 1990 - 91 indicates that \$1.565M has been spent on facilities at Rosebery District High School.

Major projects undertaken at the school since 1990 – 91 have included;

| Financial Year | Project Description  | Amount (\$) |
|----------------|--|-------------|
| 1993/1994      | CIP – Redevelopment of home economics area                                   | 190,000     |
| 1998/1999      | Minor works  | 55,000      |
| 1999/2000      | CIP - Replacement of 2 classroom areas and demolition of unviable facilities | 752,000     |
| 2000/2001      | Minor works  | 220,000     |
| 2001/2002      | Minor works  | 245,000     |
|                | Miscellaneous works/repairs  | 103,000     |

## PROJECT PROPOSAL

### Project Objectives

The redevelopment works planned for Rosebery District High School include the reconfiguration and refurbishment of general and specialist learning and support facilities to better accommodate future directions in teaching and learning.

The school has identified a need to:

- Redefine senior school grade class areas to improve student ownership, equity and management;

- Combine specialist learning areas that better facilitate curriculum synergies across subjects;
- Rationalise the Materials, Design and Technology (MDT) area to provide for emerging skills training delivery;
- Combine the library and Online Access Centre to provide more effective school town community access;
- Provide flexible space for school and community learning and training; and
- Create an all-weather external play area that may combine with a new canteen.

### **School and Community Consultation**

A steering committee formed in September 2008 reviewed previous master planning undertaken in 2006 that informed the school application for the redevelopment. The committee comprises the following members:

- Alex Downes, Principal, Rosebery District High School
- Mike Wilkinson, Project Architect, Artas Architects
- Peter Heathcote, Project Officer, Department of Education

Senior school managers and state library staff have been directly involved in the development of the design to the current approval stage. Alex Downes, the school principal, has also established close dialogue with interested stakeholders within the school community.

### **Anticipated Project Benefits**

The redevelopment is aimed at achieving:

- increased useable value of the buildings by combining previously underutilised space with classrooms of inadequate size and design;
- creation of flexible learning areas to contemporary standards;
- improved efficiency of specialist learning areas to provide flexible school and community learning and training;
- appropriate access and space for school and community library resources;
- provision of a significant shelter area for students with direct linkages to internal spaces for the arts, physical and social activities;
- maximum equity of access with ramping and covered travel ways; and
- removal of building stock that is no longer serviceable within a contemporary school facility.

## **BUILDING PROPOSAL**

### **Design Brief**

The following priorities for redevelopment were developed by the Steering Committee.

### **Reconfigure building IC to accommodate:**

- grades 9 and 10 and Staff Office incorporated with MDT and Home Economics;
- a Library Resource and Online facility and an IT skills / Training area, all accessible externally;
- a staff and community training facility combined with the library and accessible externally;
- a reconfigured combined Art and Science facility; and
- a refurbished MDT area.

### **Reconfigure Building IB to accommodate: Years 7 and 8 GLA's, Canteen and Staff room:**

- relocate the staff room to allow for the inclusion of 7/8 GLA's with a Shared Studio and Staff Office;
- allow for the inclusion of a relocated Canteen and Student Lounge adjacent the existing external under cover area; and
- maintain the existing administration facilities with minor works.

### **Other works:**

- rectify problem areas in roof of Buildings IC and IB;
- provide universal connectivity and equal access (covered) through and between buildings;
- provide a roof to the courtyard adjacent the hall for all weather play space;
- reconstruct defective parts of the timber floors in Building 1A; and
- re-service parts of the site as required.

### **Project Response - Areas for Redevelopment.**

There are three main buildings on the school site.

The main building, Building 1, is comprised of three parts, Buildings 1A, 1B and 1C, which are co-joined brick and timber structures with steel roofs which have been built and added onto over the last fifty years. Parts of these are proposed for demolition due to poor condition and surplus space.

Building 2 is a more recently constructed brick building dedicated to music. No work is proposed to this building.

Building 3 is the Kindergarten / Prep facility of appropriate design and condition. No work is proposed to this building.

### **School Planning and Design**

In this redevelopment, the project designers propose works to three parts of Building 1 and some external works.

- **Building 1A**

Building 1A, on the eastern side of the site, accommodates the primary general learning areas. It is proposed to demolish the connecting sections to Building 1B and retain two GLA's for current use and two overflow GLA's for use by staff and special training programs. Remedial construction work is proposed to the floors of the two GLA's which are affected by moisture.

In the longer term, it is also proposed to construct a small extension to this building to provide for student toilets and a cleaner's store. A new covered awning is proposed on the western side of the building.

- **Building 1B**

It is proposed to build new entries to the main school administration and also the Library. By providing a signature steel portal frame at the Library entry with a projecting canopy and ramp, it will provide a clearly signed and more accessible entry for students and the community. The existing external steps into Building 1C will be removed and the area on the rear of the existing toilets will be converted into a garden symbolic of the school's links with the mining heritage of the area.

The Administration and Reception area is to have minimal intervention. Painting and re carpeting in some areas only is envisaged at this stage.

It is planned to re-locate the staff room to allow for the inclusion of a pair of 7/8 GLA's with a Shared Studio space and staff office. These classrooms will be provided with wet areas, storage cupboards and computer resources.

The inclusion of a relocated Canteen and Student Lounge adjacent to the existing under cover area is also planned. It will be located next to the new staff area, which will allow this space to be opened up for community gatherings and functions. The final configuration of this area is to be determined in close consultation with the school community which will contribute to these works.

In the longer term, the internal courtyard next to the Multi-Purpose Hall is proposed to be roofed, and with demolition of part of Building 1A, will be open on the east side and secured with a steel fence and have two sets of gates for access. This space will provide a valuable covered breakout area for the hall for larger school gatherings and a sheltered play area during wet weather.

Ramped access will be provided from the Music Building into the new atrium connecting the Library in Building 1B to Building 1C.

- **Building 1C**



Building 1C is on the corner of Propsting and Morrisby on the highest part of the site. Year 9 and 10 GLA's are proposed to be located in the existing classroom space with a small increase in area. These GLA's will be connected with bi-fold, glazed doors. They will be refitted with computer facilities and storage cupboards.

The adjacent Home Economics area was refurbished in 1994 and no work is proposed in this area. The MDT area has some minor work proposed - predominantly repainting of the area.

The courtyard between the Home Economics staff office and ICT/Training is to be roofed over (partly glazed) to provide light, ventilation and sheltered, ramped access to this part of the school.

The On-line Centre and Library is proposed to have a new designated accessible entry with disabled toilet located off the airlock. This facility is proposed to be combined with the IT skills area/Training Room and is to be available for use at times by the community and needs to be secure from the remainder of the school.

The Online Centre is for community use of the internet, including after hours with parents of students and tourists being more regular users of this facility. The ICT / Training Room can also be used by the community for interest groups including adult education. These spaces are supervised centrally from the circulation desk.

A Science and Art combined project room is proposed to be reconfigured into the existing art space with a project studio and preparation room adjacent.

The existing boys and girls toilets adjacent the Library are proposed to be painted.

### **Building Materials**

- new building works are to match with existing materials generally;
- new floors – timber where elevated and concrete on ground;
- steel columns in existing walls and for covered walk-ways and courtyard roof support;
- timber roof framing where possible -over reasonable spans;
- external cladding;
- painted fibre cement sheet to gables, atriums and the new ends of Building A;
- Zinalume roof sheet to atrium upper walls;
- new glazing - powdercoated aluminium frames with laminated glass;
- Colorbond steel roof sheeting;
- glazed roofing;
- internal wall linings – plasterboard and veneered plywood;
- new ceilings – plasterboard and acoustic tile;

- internal wall framing – plantation pine;
- joinery – laminated products;
- canteen – stainless steel benches and frame; and
- floors – carpet and rubber.

## FUNDING AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The following table outlines indicative costs of major components applicable to the works.

| Description  | Amount (\$)      |
|--|------------------|
| Specialised Learning Areas                               | 1,520,000        |
| Contingencies  | 100,000          |
| Project Design / Management / Authority Fees and Permits | 150,000          |
| Furniture and Equipment                                  | 200,000          |
| Artworks (Art in Public Buildings Scheme)                | 31,000           |
| Post occupancy commissioning works                       | 24,000           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>2,025,000</b> |

### Potential Project Constraints

Risks and constraints identified in relation to the project timeline and final scope include the following:

- anticipated availability of skilled resources within the region meets expectations. With the current downturn in the minerals sector there is potential for regional resources to vacate the area which may incur additional project cost to secure out of area trades;
- reduced competitive tender market due to perceived locality isolation or more attractive project works available elsewhere at the time of tender;
- construction over the winter months that may cause delay;
- the need to divide the construction period into stages to enable part of the building to continue to be occupied to minimise disruption to timetabling of available learning areas at the school; and
- the necessity for construction work to be carried out whilst the school remains in operation to maximise the period of time available to contractors to complete work.

Any influences to the project timeline or budget evident at tender, will be managed within the current project allocation.

## EVIDENCE

The Committee commenced its inquiry on Tuesday, 17 February last with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to the Memorial Hall, Agnes Street, Rosebery whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Cath Parker, Manager Capital Planning and Development, Department of Education
- Alex Downes, Principal, Rosebery District High School
- Mike Wilkinson, Director, Artas Architects & Planners P/L

## Background

Mr Downes provided the Committee with the following background of the project:-

*...The submission before the Government details a proposal to develop the grades 7-10 general learning areas to improve student ownership, equity and management, to integrate specialist learning areas to better facilitate synergies across subjects, to combine the library and online centre into a space that provides more effective school and public access, to provide flexible space for school and community and learning and training and to improve the accessibility within the campus.*

*As background to the proposal and as outlined in the submission, Rosebery District High School provides early childhood, primary, secondary and senior secondary education services. In addition, the site has a skill centre used to facilitate adult learning within the area. It is supported by a library/resource centre that provides whole-of-community access and online IT facilities.*

*The school services the needs of the township of Rosebery on the west coast of Tasmania and has a current enrolment of around 165, drawn predominantly from Rosebery, Tullah and Zeehan. The curriculum offered targets traditional literacy, numeracy, positive behaviour and effective reporting.*

*The school was originally re-established in the 1960s and has grown in stages to service the requirements of the mining community. The school also manages 16 teacher residences as part of its property portfolio. Overall, a considerable amount of existing accommodation is in an original condition and in need of refurbishment in order to provide a contemporary and equitable learning environment. In general, only a limited portion of the school has been replaced or extensively refurbished over the life of the facility, other than cyclical maintenance, minor refurbishment and fit-out alterations.*

*... This particular redevelopment allows us to restructure the school so that we have specialist secondary areas and primary areas and it begins a process of contextualising a school for west-coast conditions. You are quite right.*

## Community Access

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what access, if any, the wider community would have to the proposed facilities. Mr Downes responded:-

*The library is used by lots of people. There are many occasions over the week where students and the public are in the library using it together. Similarly, though to a lesser extent, the online access centre is open for many hours over the week. Significant numbers of people attend that facility. Our hope in bringing the online access centre into the school is to increase the services even more and to provide more relevant services to our community.*

### **Enrolment**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the projected enrolment number for the school. Mr Downes responded:-

*We are reasonably confident that our numbers will be around 150 for the next two or three years, give or take 10 or 15. If the mining industry takes off again then the numbers might go back to the 180s that we got them to a couple of years ago.*

### **Consultation**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what consultation had occurred with the wider school community. Mr Downes responded:-

*... we have had a lot of talks and a lot of consultation with our parent group and both our fund-raising group and our school association are very excited about the possibilities.*

*... all our meetings had representatives from the school association, ancillary staff, the parent body, the fund-raising group and teachers. We invited the Neighbourhood Centre, invited people from Ausminerals to come down and be part of that as well. So everybody has had an opportunity to be part of that process.*

### **Project budget**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to whether the budgeted contingency amount was sufficient. Mr Wilkinson responded:-

*I think so. It is about 7.5 per cent or something like that. That is pretty normal I think we could manage it within that.*

*... That contingency is only really for unforeseen works although it does get to fund some school requests at times for little things that get included. Generally speaking it has to be reserved for unforeseen building works for problems that crop up during the course of construction.*

Following such response, the Committee questioned the witnesses as to how any unexpended funds would be treated. Ms Parker responded:-

*What normally happens is that the school can work with the architect to extend the scope of the works. What generally happens in the initial planning is that there might have been a request for additional works but we have had to shave those back because the budget would not cover them. Then, as we go through, we might find that because we do not need that contingency we are able to extend the project to include those works that have already been identified but were not able to be funded. So it is returned to this particular project.*

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to whether any unexpended funds might be applied to covering the courtyard. Mr Wilkinson responded:-

*The roof is being costed at \$41 000 and the concrete slab is being costed at about \$6 000, or maybe \$10 000. I think the whole lot is about \$51 000. Then if we want to fence it off to make it secure at night time and on the weekends, the steel picket fence is another \$4 000, so about \$54 000-\$55 000.*

*... Some of the information we have been receiving on cost estimates, particularly services estimates, is that there has been a bit of a downturn in prices and they are getting more competitive, although Rosebery is a fair way to come for someone from Burnie, say, to service the job. So we are not anticipating that those savings will be as much as they might be in a major regional centre like on the north-west coast or in Launceston.*

Ms Parker added:-

*If that is the wish of the school community, it certainly would be (possible to cover the courtyard), and I should say, Mr Chairman, we are also interested and enthusiastic about the money that is flowing through from the Commonwealth under the Rudd stimulus package. We see opportunities there for extending the scope of works and doing a more substantial project around that multipurpose hall if, again, that is the wish of the school community.*

*So I think the flow-on effect of that money might have a very large impact in this school.*

### **Post-occupancy commissioning works**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what would be entailed by the post-occupancy commissioning works. Ms Parker responded:-

*As part of our overall allocation of the project budget, we maintain 2 per cent of the construction budget for what we call post-occupancy contingency. This is to cover things that the school might identify that are not necessarily connected to the scope of works. They might think, 'Oh, we didn't want a door there, we wanted a door over there, that's not the way we thought it was going to be on the plans'. We find that there are things that are not picked up under the formal defects procedures because they relate to the plans but there are additional things that the school*

*decides that they wish they had done, or wish they had thought about as part of the original works. So again that money is paid out to the school to pick up those things at the end of a project that they might not have foreseen.*

## DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

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

- – Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works  
– February 2009.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The need for the proposed works was clearly established. The redevelopment will increase the useable value of the buildings by combining previously underutilised space with classrooms of inadequate size and design. New flexible learning areas and improved efficiency of specialist learning areas will provide a flexible school and community learning and training facility with appropriate access and space for school and community library resources.

The Committee notes that favourable consideration will be given to directing any unexpended project funds to further works to achieve covering of the courtyard.

Accordingly, the Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted, at an estimated total cost of \$2,025,000.

Parliament House  
Hobart  
13 March 2009

Hon. A. P. Harriss M.L.C.  
Chairman