



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Rocherlea Primary School Relocation

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

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

Mr *Hall* (Acting Chairman)

House of Assembly

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
BACKGROUND	2
HISTORICAL CONTEXT	4
CURRENT EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND PRIORITIES	6
SCHOOL & COMMUNITY CONSULTATION.....	8
PROPOSED NEW FACILITIES	10
BUILDING SERVICES	18
PROJECT FUNDING.....	21
EVIDENCE	22
DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE	28
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	28

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: -

Relocation of Rocherlea Primary School to Brooks 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 provision of contemporary primary school facilities in Launceston's Northern Suburbs formed part of the Capital Investment Program (CIP) announced in the 2005-06 State Budget in May 2005. Funding for the Launceston Northern Suburbs project has been provided over three years and over two stages as follows:.

Stage 1 Mayfield Primary School	\$3,620,000
Stage 2 Rocherlea Primary School	\$4,080,000 *
Total	\$7,700,000

* includes asset sale proceeds from existing Rocherlea site \$1.056 m.

The redevelopment of Mayfield Primary School (Stage 1 of the project - including construction of a new multi-purpose hall, administration and library facilities and upgrade of outdated general learning areas), is due to be completed in May 2008.

The relocation of Rocherlea Primary School to Brooks High School is Stage 2 of the project and includes construction of eight new general learning areas, administration, library, student amenities, general purpose hall and outdoor learning and play areas.

The existing facilities at Rocherlea Primary School, particularly the teaching and learning areas, were designed and constructed to suit teaching methodologies that are outdated and no longer suitable for the effective delivery of the curriculum due to the their size, configuration and lack of facilities.

While parts of the school have been replaced or refurbished over the years, most of the building works undertaken over the life of the facility have related to cyclical maintenance, minor refurbishment and fit-out alterations. The buildings are otherwise substantially in their original configuration but are generally in poor condition and require significant redevelopment to provide an effective and contemporary learning environment.

In consultation with the Rocherlea community and educational facility planning consultants engaged by the Department, the Steering Committee established to oversee the Launceston Northern Suburbs project identified construction of new

facilities at the Brooks High School site as the preferred option for redevelopment of the school. This was due to multiple factors including the proximity to Brooks High School, the large relative size of the Brooks High site, the potential for improved service delivery, the potential for improved student transition from primary to high school and the cost of refurbishing existing facilities.

Total funding available for the relocation of Rocherlea Primary School is \$4,080,000, including \$1,056,000 from the future sale of the existing Rocherlea Primary School site and an amount of \$2,083,000 provided by the Australian Government.

Construction of the new facilities will cost an estimated \$3,554,000 and construction will be completed in time for the commencement of Term 2, 2009.

Rocherlea Primary School staff and students will enjoy contemporary teaching and learning facilities and will have the opportunity to access a range of specialist facilities and programs at Brooks High School.

Learning areas will be integrated, open and flexible spaces, with links to external covered learning areas, to maximise the flexible delivery of educational programs. The Library and General Purpose Hall will provide for more specialist activities and enable community access including access to ICT.

The Tasmanian Curriculum Framework

The Tasmanian Curriculum Framework is a refinement of the previous Essential Learnings Framework. At the heart of the Framework is the understanding that in order to be able to learn new things as they arise and to learn throughout life, learners need to develop high-level skills in thinking, communicating, investigating, deliberating, reflecting and making judgements. This approach will continue to have significant impact on the functional layout and use of school buildings.

The curriculum areas covered are:

- English/literacy;
- Mathematics/numeracy;
- Science;
- Information and communications technology;
- Society and History;
- Arts;
- Health and Well Being; and
- Vocational and Applied Learning.

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

The variety of learning styles that Rocherlea Primary School embraces - individual learning, community based education and flexible support provision - will be more appropriately supported by the new contemporary facilities.

Individual Learning

Individual learning is self-directed and personalised. It may occur separately or in a shared environment. It can often be facilitated by classroom design, furniture, shape and fitout, and has a strong link to ICT based learning using a virtual workspace, using web based education resources and online centres.

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

School and broader organisational data is used as a guide for student learning.

Community-based Education

Community-based education is related to the broader sharing of resources and social interaction. The community may come into the school or learning may be accessed in community facilities.

Flexible Support Provision

School and curriculum planning need to provide flexible support to students and their families. This is evidenced in the range of areas within the school that are utilised for alternative activities and programs, available to students, their families and communities.

Community-based education and flexible support provision are benefited where there is a range of flexible spaces provided within a school including meeting and consultation rooms, libraries, workshops, public halls and gymnasiums.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Rocherlea Primary School is located in the Launceston Northern Suburbs and is situated at the intersection of Lilydale and George Town Roads. The school was established on its current site in 1956. Prior to this it was situated on the corner of Lilydale and Waterworks Road, approximately 800 metres east of the current site.

The school provides a significant focus for the local community. It serves a Housing Commission suburb which was developed in the 1980's as well as The Northern Suburbs Community Centre which is sited on an adjoining property to the school. The school and Community Centre share programs and facilities.

In past years the school had an enrolment up to 500 students. There are currently 183 students enrolled at Rocherlea Primary School, from Kindergarten to Grade 6. The gender balance is 50:50 with 101 males and 101 females. The predicted enrolment for 2012 indicates a marginal decline to 189 students.

Students in the Northern Suburbs schools are 'zoned' according to their place of residence. However, for a variety of reasons students attending Rocherlea Primary School often attend other schools and vice versa. Families from the Rocherlea,

Newnham, Mayfield, Hillwood, Swan Bay and Dilston communities currently attend the school.

The current break up of students attending by suburb is as follows:

- Rocherlea – 111;
- Newnham – 51;
- Windermere – 4;
- Mayfield - 7;
- Dilston – 5;
- Ravenswood - 4; and
- Mowbray/Mowbray Heights - 1

Twenty-six students have identified as Indigenous – 15 males and 11 female.

The school has a very high Educational Needs Index of 83.73, indicating a relatively low socio-economic status. There is a high level of unemployment and associated, social issues and needs across the suburb. A significant number of students come from single parent families. There is a high need for support workers in the school, including guidance officer and social work services. In 2005 the absentee rate was 9.6%, and in 2006 the rate was 9.5%. In Term 1, 2007, the rate had substantially reduced to 7.1%.

The current class structure at the school is:

- One Kindergarten class;
- One Preparatory class;
- Two grade 1/2 classes;
- Two grade 3/4 classes;
- One grade 5 class; and
- 2 grade 5/6 classes.

The school has a total staffing of 29 persons. The following categories are evident:

- Teaching – 18;
- Non teaching – 10; and
- Support – 1.

The school has a close relationship with its community. The school parent body, known as the School Association is a committed and energetic group of parents and community members, working in the best interests of students. School staff and the parent body have a positive working relationship and work towards common goals. The School Association's primary tasks are to raise funds and ratify some school planning decisions. Individual parents also represent the Association on some school committees, for example, the "KidsMatter" team.

The Northern Suburbs Community Centre (NSCC) is located next door to the school. The NSCC plays a significant role in the Rocherlea community and the school, offering both in-kind and personnel support for school programs.

Students from Rocherlea Primary School are involved in a program with the Aldersgate Aged Care facility located a short distance from the school. The school has a commitment towards developing a community of learners. Students, parents and staff are included under this umbrella.

The existing facilities at Rocherlea Primary School, particularly the teaching and learning areas, were designed and constructed to suit teaching methodologies that are outdated and no longer suitable for the effective delivery of the curriculum due to the their size, configuration and lack of facilities.

While parts of the school have been replaced or refurbished over the years, most of the building works undertaken over the life of the facility have related to cyclical maintenance, minor refurbishment and fit-out alterations. The buildings are otherwise substantially in their original configuration but are generally in poor condition and require significant redevelopment to provide an effective and contemporary learning environment.

CURRENT EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

The Rocherlea Primary School has an Education Needs Index of 83.73. This places the school in the most disadvantaged community category in Launceston and in Tasmania. School data, state benchmarks (Kindergarten Development Check), Preparatory testing and national benchmark testing (grade 3 and 5) show Rocherlea students on average do not achieve at the same level as students of comparable age in other schools. Departmental and school research and data also clearly correlates economic disadvantage with lower learning outcomes (on average).

Rocherlea Primary School has begun a journey towards genuine transformation into a 'centre of excellence' for learning in the 21st Century. Achieving this goal requires the sharing of a vision and the passion for learning with the community, and where values and practices are inclusive and supportive of all.

Diversification of the curriculum has occurred in the last year with a special emphasis on enabling students to access a vast range of academic, cultural and extra curricula activities.

The following foci and priorities will continue this journey forward and will take the Rocherlea Primary School into the next phase of its learning pathway:

- Improving student learning outcomes;
- Increasing the skill and competency of school staff, and in particular teaching staff;
- Providing a safe, supportive and inspiring learning community where students value learning and see themselves as learners;
- Implementing the Tasmanian Curriculum;
- Addressing the ICT disadvantage for the whole community by providing the best possible technology facilities available;
- Implementing further strategies to involve parents in school activities with a particular focus on the early years (0-4 age group);

- Continuing the transition towards being a 'Kids Matter' school, which is a national mental health initiative for primary schools, designed to support appositve school community, reinforce effective social and emotional skills for students, provide parenting support and education and enable early intervention for students experiencing mental health difficulties;
- Maintaining strong links with Brooks High School with particular emphasis on the transition years from Grades 6 to 7, whereby Grade 6 students visit Brooks High School throughout the course of the year to undertake various activities. Indigenous primary students also other visit indigenous students at the High School to facilitate their development and transition; and
- Providing flexible and options programs for students with the aim of reducing staff/student ratios to enhance learning opportunities.

The new school facilities and the location close to the high school will provide a unique opportunity for students in the Rocherlea community to access contemporary education facilities and resources which they would not otherwise have access.

The new facilities will achieve equity as the learning environment is designed to provide every student and adult with the opportunity to access teaching and learning in a way that meets their needs and provides opportunities to reach their learning potential and improve outcomes.

They will provide opportunities that will be student-centred – challenging, authentic, relevant and connected to the community.

There will be provision for class and school-based options designed around need, interest and pathways which will engage students in their learning.

Individual pathways for learning will be able to be built and further developed for all students, due to the benefits and flexibility that the new facilities will provide through their design and fitout.

A significant priority will be to develop a clear focus for personalised learning using individual learning plans which address individual learning needs; setting realistic goals, for building self esteem, resilience and confidence in learning. Some provision may occur beyond school through community or other agencies.

School based structures to support relationship building between students/students, students/teachers, students/adults, teachers/parents will be a continuing focus.

Continuing the development of family-based support for the 0-4 age group through the 'Launching into Learning' initiative will be a priority. The provision of a Parent Room (parent/community space) as part of the new facilities will support this goal.

Students from grade six participate in a transition program which helps the move from primary to high school. The relocation of Rocherlea to the Brooks High site will allow for a more consistent and regular program of transition. It could also be expected that the structure developed between the two schools will act as a model for other primary schools. Rocherlea students could also expect to share in a significant

way some of the Brooks High School facilities that would not otherwise be available to primary age students in their own setting.

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The provision of contemporary primary school facilities in Launceston's Northern Suburbs formed part of the Capital Investment Program (CIP) announced in the 2005-06 State Budget in May 2005.

Following the announcement, a committee was set up to consider requirements and the Northern Suburbs Consultative Committee (NSCC) was subsequently established to oversee the project.

The Northern Suburbs Consultative Committee (NSCC) comprised:

Andrew Finch	Director, Finance Facilities and Business Support
Liz Banks	General Manager, Learning Services North
Ivan Dean	Mayor, Launceston City Council
Frank Knott	Alderman, Launceston City Council
Malcolm Hales	Principal, Rocherlea Primary School
Leanne Newson	Parent Representative, Rocherlea Primary School
Peter Tranent	Parent Representative, Rocherlea Primary School
Warren Pill	Principal, Brooks High School
Mark Challis	School Association Chair, Brooks High School
Heather Fahey	Principal, Mayfield Primary School
Katrina Tatnell	School Association Chair, Mayfield Primary School

The redevelopment of Mayfield Primary School is Stage 1 of the Launceston Northern Suburbs project. The project is currently under construction and due for completion in May 2008.

Consultation regarding Stage 2 of the Launceston Northern Suburbs project commenced in early 2007. The Northern Suburbs Consultative Committee (NSCC) re-convened to determine the best allocation of the balance of funding to address educational needs of students in the northern suburbs and the students attending the Rocherlea Primary School.

The Steering Committee re-affirmed that the vision statement developed for the Launceston Northern Suburbs project was still representative of the combined aspirations of the schools and broader communities, being to establish:

“A connected, adaptable and inclusive learning community that fosters innovation, maximises individual potential and develops socially responsible citizens with the wisdom to make good choices.”

The NSCC met on four occasions in March, April, May and June 2007. As part of the consultative process the following tasks were undertaken:

- A Fact Sheet was sent out to almost 6000 residents in the Northern Suburbs seeking community feedback on future development options for Rocherlea Primary School;
- A full day tour to recently completed redevelopment projects, involving Rocherlea Primary Staff, parent representatives and members of the NSCC was organised by the Department of Education;
- Costed options for redevelopment of the existing Rocherlea Primary School and provision of new primary school facilities on the Brooks High School site were developed and made available for consideration;
- Options, including redevelopment of the existing facilities, construction of a new school combining Mayfield and Rocherlea Primary Schools on a new site, redevelopment of Mayfield Primary School and construction of new facilities for Rocherlea at Brooks High School were considered by the Northern Suburbs Community meeting at Rocherlea Primary School on 25 May 2007. Middle school and K-10 models were also investigated and assessed.

The Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources (DIER) and Launceston City Council were consulted regarding strategies for improved pedestrian access to the Brooks High School site from the eastern side of George Town Road.

Costed options for redevelopment of the existing Rocherlea Primary School and provision of new primary school facilities to the Brooks High School site identified that the cost to redevelop the existing school facilities was comparable to the cost to develop new contemporary facilities at the Brooks High School site, due to the largely original condition and configuration of the existing facilities.

On 29 May 2007, the NSCC members made a recommendation to the Minister for Education and Skills that Rocherlea Primary School be relocated from its current site to the Department of Education site at Brooks High School.

The NSCC also recommended that Rocherlea Primary School remain a separate Kindergarten to Grade 6 primary school with its own unique identity and name. The conditions of the relocation include the full implementation of the following criteria:

- Provision of library facilities for primary school students;
- Address safety of access ring road;
- Address fencing and security issues;

- Address parking and vehicular access;
- Provide the best available ICT facilities;
- Provide safe access to the school for students; and
- Maintain the Principal position and independent administration and financial functions currently undertaken by Rocherlea Primary School.

On 20 June 2007, the Minister for Education announced that Rocherlea Primary School would be relocated to the Brooks High School site and would maintain its own identity and independence.

PROPOSED NEW FACILITIES

Site summary

The proposed site for location of new primary school facilities on the Brooks High School site is an area of land totaling approximately 1.35 ha, as indicated in the attached drawings.

The site selection was based on the following considerations:

- The opportunity to create a highly visible and individual identity close to the main access point into the site;
- Proximity to existing Year 7 learning areas at Brooks High School to assist in transition from primary to high school;
- Proximity to existing facilities on the Brooks High School site that may be shared with, or accessed by, the primary school (ie: specialist facilities);
- Ensuring access to the Brooks High school facilities is available without conflict with vehicular movement;
- Maximising use of existing playing fields on the southern side of the access road; and
- Maintaining views out over the valley from the new facilities across proposed recreational areas.

Building work

The brief developed for the proposed new facilities for Rocherlea Primary School provides for the following:

- Construction of eight new general learning areas, including associated wet activity and support spaces, outdoor learning areas and student amenities.
- Construction of an administration area, library, and community meeting area.
- Provision of a general-purpose hall, incorporating a community meeting area, canteen, amenities and storage.
- External works including play areas, landscaping, fencing, hard play courts and carparking.

The following schedule of functional spaces and floor areas for new accommodation are proposed:

Element	Area	Total Area
8 new general learning areas @ approx. 90m2 each		
Comprising:		
- classrooms	4 @ 68m2 4 @ 63m2	524m2
- break out spaces (shared between 2 class groups)	2 @ 16.5m2 2 @ 16m2	65m2
- wet areas	4 @ 13.5m2 4 @ 14m2	110m2
Sub total		699m2
Student amenities		
- female student toilets (distributed)	6 pans	14m2
- male student toilets (distributed)	5 pans, 2 urinals	15m2
- infant toilets	2 pans	8m2
Sub total		37m2
Administration		
- Entry/waiting area		34m2
- Reception/general office		30m2
- Storage (inc. resources)		18m2
- Principal office		15m2
- Assistant Principal office		14m2
- Staff room (and kitchenette)		45m2
-Sick bay		4m2
- staff toilets (1 male, 2 female inc. access)		8m2
- cleaners store		2m2
- circulation		24m2
- interview/visiting professionals rooms	2 @ 15m2	30m2
- SEO Office		9.5m2
- Server Room		4m2
- Resource Room		25m2
Sub total		261m2
Library and Meeting Room		120m2
GP Hall		132m2
School/community shared facilities		
- multi-purpose meeting room (Parent Room, Breakfast Club) & canteen		43m2
- access wc		9
- cleaners store		3.5
Sub total		55.5m2
TOTAL NEW BUILDING AREA		1304.5m2

Administration

Rocherlea Primary School is to maintain its own main entry, reception and administrative functions.

Entry to the primary school site will be from the main carpark, via a graded entry path.

The administration area will have strong visual presence on entry to the campus to identify Rocherlea Primary School as its own entity on the shared site.

Functional areas provided in the administration area are detailed in the Schedule of Areas.

The most notable areas are provision of adequate meeting space, a separate reception counter for visitors and students, accommodation for visiting specialists such as speech pathologists and guidance officers, and a work room for teacher's aides and support staff, with access to teaching and learning resources stored nearby.

Library

The Library forms part of the Administration building to ensure central access for staff, students and visitors to the site. The library incorporates a main area and is interconnected to a large meeting space which will be available for staff, students and community groups, depending on the occasion. This room will cater for staff meetings, School Association meetings and school options programs. The library and meeting room will also be able to be used as an alternative to the GP Hall for assemblies and forums.

The library is also closely located to the teacher's aides and resource storage areas, to enable easy access to these materials, and close monitoring by library staff.

General Purpose Hall

The existing General Purpose Hall building was originally proposed to be relocated from Rocherlea Primary School.

However, investigation by the consultants, including the quantity surveying consultant, identified that it would not be economical to relocate the building due to the nature of the installation of the external cladding panels over the steel portal frame structure as well as the need to construct a new structural floor at the new site. Accordingly, it was agreed that it would be more practicable to construct a new GP hall.

The new GP hall will provide a space to accommodate students groups for physical education and music classes, as well as whole school groups for assemblies and performances. The hall is of adequate size and height to accommodate ball games and other activities for primary school students. The location of the hall also enables it to be opened out to the central covered area to accommodate a greater number of people depending on the occasion.

The provision of a Parent Room (parent/community space) as part of the hall will accommodate the 'Launching into Learning' initiative which provides family-based support for the 0-4 age group. This room will also be used for parent forums, lead by the school or Northern Suburbs Community Centre.

The hall will also accommodate other school options programs including Taiko drumming, Karate and Student PE Leadership.

The canteen facility within the hall is also designed to provide a space for class cooking activities when not in use, as well as a facility for food preparation for after hours activities in the hall. The canteen incorporates counters opening into the hall as well as outside.

The hall also incorporates amenities which can be used by students during school hours, and visitors or the public out of hours when the hall is in use. The hall also has close access to the canteen and parent room, to enable groups to use these spaces in conjunction with each other. Programs such as the Breakfast Club will operate from the canteen and parent room.

General Learning Areas

The following key features are incorporated in the design of general learning areas:

- Learning areas grouped in pairs to support team teaching opportunities, encourage multiple groupings of students and make best use of associated support spaces;
- The potential to open up at least 2 class spaces into one large assembly or multi-purpose area of between 120-140m² has been incorporated;
- Break-out spaces shared between two learning areas, with the ability to open up or 'close off' from classroom space as required, while maximising transparency between classroom and break-out space for passive visual access;
- Individual staff workstations in each learning area, either as part of the shared break-out space or within the learning area;
- Each class group has access to their own wet activity area;
- Bag storage units for students provided within the classroom; and
- Each learning area has access to a shared outdoor learning deck with roofed shade cover.

Student Amenities

Student amenities are distributed and integrated with the learning area building envelope, rather than consolidated in a separate building.

The learning areas for younger students have their own associated toilet facilities that can be passively supervised by staff from the learning area.

External works

External works include, but are not limited to:

- A separate, secure kinder play area, including play equipment;
- A primary school play ground area and equipment;
- Landscaping;

- External paving/courtyards;
- Hard play court spaces;
- Relocation of the existing Yr 7/8 grassed play area for Brooks High School, including relocation of goal posts, removal of asphalt hard play court and some minimal re-grading; and
- Perimeter fencing to the kindergarten and some parts of the site perimeter.

Carparking and Pedestrian Access

Liaison with the Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources (DIER) and Launceston City Council regarding strategies for improved vehicle and pedestrian access to the Brooks High School site has resulted in the following:

- Additional carparking spaces adjacent to the new school facilities to cater for Rocherlea Primary School staff and parents;
- Extension of footpaths along Georgetown Road;
- Retention of existing pedestrian crossings, with a potential relocation of the existing crossing on Lilydale Main Road further west of the existing school site; and
- Agreement to modify bus routes to transport students to the new site following commencement of operation of the new school

Architectural Statement

The design of the new Rocherlea Primary School seeks to inspire and nurture whilst providing a welcoming and inviting community atmosphere.

The fundamental notion behind the concept for the new primary school is to transport the memory and identity of the existing school to the Brooks High School site. The existing Pine trees at Rocherlea Primary School have played a prominent role in the identity and memory of the school with both students and members of the community throughout its history. Various references and analogies to the structure of pine trees have been made in the design to maintain this important connection.

Design Concept

The placement of the buildings can be likened to a stand of sheltering pine trees following the existing contour on the site. The roofs form a protective canopy, light filters into the spaces and the breeze brings through the scents of the nearby trees and plants. It is intended that here the students are free to make their own spaces, and create their own experiences.

Site Masterplan

The siting of buildings closely aligns with the existing ring road and follows the contours to minimize the cut and fill earthworks and encourage easy and level access across the site for both pedestrians and vehicles whilst minimizing the alterations to the existing Brooks infrastructure.

Entry to the school is via a pathway from the existing carpark down into the public forecourt. Bounding the forecourt are more public spaces, the administration building and the general purpose hall and associated functions (canteen, parent room and amenities). These spaces contain the community-orientated areas that form the heart of the school. The library and community meeting area are also designed to provide community access including access to information and communication technology and various educational programs.

The public forecourt and multipurpose hall divide the learning areas into two distinct precincts, one being a more infant orientated area (Kindergarten, Prep, Grade 1 and 2) with related playground areas and the other for general student learning (Grades 3,4,5 and 6). The infant areas are nestled within the contour of the site whilst the more senior general learning areas open up to less contained and open spaces. Provision has also been included for two additional learning areas should the student population increase in the future.

The entry path way forms a pedestrian spine and activity zone past all buildings and links up with the Brooks High School site pathways. The site topography accommodates more nurturing, explorative, sunlit courtyard spaces to the north and prospective and open spaces to the south.

Buildings

The administration building is largely transparent at the entry to this building as a welcoming gesture to the community. This building nestles into the hillside and forms a counterpoint to all the other buildings.

The library and meeting room are housed within the administration building and have the potential to be opened up into one large space. The library has a direct relationship with a semi public outdoor area which links to the activity spine. It is hoped that the Art for Public Buildings Scheme will be partly implemented in the library to create more intimate and group orientated spaces, within the larger space, i.e. as a “reading cubby”, “pirate lookout”, etc. The materiality of this building is a robust exterior with the sheet metal roof wrapping down to the ground on the south side and tough external walls revealed “under the canopy”. The series of spaces internally are crisp and lively, with highlight glazing allowing natural light to flow down into the circulation zones of the building.

The general purpose hall and associated spaces form the community hub of the school with the ability to function independently if required. This building is located opposite the administration building and defines the public entry forecourt. The main hall is intended to extend into this forecourt and activity zone to create a larger space when required. The parent room is located closer to the infant area of the school and has the potential for a number of uses both in and out of school hours with the focus of this space being for the Launching into Learning program conducted by the school, but also to serve as a social and interactive space for parents. The materiality of the hall and associated spaces is again robust in nature with tough outer finishes and sheet metal roofing. Carpet and acoustic paneling will be used internally to mitigate excessive noise and create a more comfortable and inviting space to occupy.

The buildings containing the learning areas are almost identical in form. The intention is that each “scale” (set of classrooms) will have a robust exterior, with tough solid textured end walls and the roof wrapping over, whilst internally the spaces will be softer, with timber lined ceilings, acoustic paneling and ideally a homogenous floor finish throughout. The breakout space is a smaller more intimate, cosy space that has removable rostrum block flooring that has a number of applications both within the breakout space and the classroom itself. Wet areas are located on the northern faces of the classrooms with direct access to outdoor learning areas. It is intended that all furniture within these spaces will be mobile to encourage different spatial organisations that suit the pedagogy. A variety of material, colour, texture, variation and scale will be used to encourage a positive learning atmosphere. Each “scale” has an associated storage space for resources and playground equipment.

Materials

Ecologically sustainable principles of building siting, landscape design and site management will be used to demonstrate an ethos of stewardship as a good example to the students. The buildings will utilise natural daylighting and passive solar heating through thermal mass in addition to cross ventilation. Rainwater will be harvested and stored in water tanks to irrigate the gardens and grounds around the buildings.

It is intended that a solar hot water system for heating water will be implemented. Active participation in good lighting and heating practices will become an educational theme, which will then hopefully become common practice over time.

The materials used throughout will be energy efficient materials wherever possible, low voc emission and low formaldehyde use, modular in nature to accentuate scale, tactility and repetition. The predominant materials will be sheet metal, textured concrete, glass and sheet cladding. These materials will be utilised within each building in various arrangements to create a common language and consolidate the series of buildings as a campus within the wider Brooks campus.

External works

Vehicular approach to the new primary school will be along Tallentire Road past the boom gate entrance to the school and via a slip road to the car park for disembarkation of students as well as staff parking. The existing carpark is to be doubled, though it is suggested that the new carparks be reinforced with turfcell, rather than fully paved, as this will limit additional runoff in the area.

Pedestrian access from the carpark and bus stop will be along the main axis of the site, generally following the contour of the existing roadway. The administration building will be to the north of this axis, with all classrooms to the south.

The level change of half a metre between the two sides of the walkway will be accommodated by way of a series of steps (also serving as an informal meeting place/amphitheatre) and a 1:20 grade walkway providing access for disabled persons.

It is proposed that water sensitive urban design principles be employed throughout the development by collecting runoff from roofs in tanks for use in the irrigation system and possibly the playgardens on the northern side of the new classrooms.

In addition, drainage from roadways and paths will be diverted through planted bioretention swales, which will filter sediments and aid in cleaning the water before it leaves the site. A “bog” garden will be established at the lowest part of the site to provide a teaching resource where students can observe wetland biota such as frogs, insects, and birdlife.

The playgardens will be designed to suit the age group of the adjacent classroom, varying in size and shape. The fenced Kindergarten/Prep zones will have areas for activities such as water and sand play, cubby making, bike riding, jumping, balancing, and the use of swings, trampolines and other play equipment useful for upper body strength development. The more senior primary students will have areas suitable for more formal outdoor classrooms, surrounded by vegetation to attract the Rosy Lorikeets from the old Rocherlea site and other native birds.

Play equipment will also be located in this area, to include a trampoline for development of balance and movement choice appropriate to the age range.

The existing hard court will be increased in size and the grade modified to provide more useable hard court spaces.

The existing grassed area will become a designated oval for the primary school. An additional flattened grassed play area will be established for the Grade 7 and 8 students, to replace their existing play area.

Some of the new fencing recently installed at the existing school will be reused within the new school complex.

Landscaping

The landscape theme aims to build on the existing character established when Brooks High School was being established during the 1980's and 1990's. A band of Eucalyptus and Acacia trees was planted to accentuate the entryway and provide some wind protection from the cool winter southerlies. Some of these existing trees will be removed for the buildings, and some will be retained and increased in numbers amongst the play areas. An additional band of trees will be planted on the southern sides of the playing fields to provide wind modification and protection to the playing fields.

The existing band of trees will be the northern edge to the new school, providing shade, shelter and a defining spatial barrier to Brooks High School.

One of the significant and treasured landscape features in the existing Rocherlea Primary School grounds is the quality of the surrounding cypress hedge. It has provided shelter, and been an endless source of play tools to the school community for the last fifty years. Some recognition of this hedge, and even replication has been requested by the school.

In addition, a flock of native parrots has become resident at the school and it is hoped that suitable planting can be provided to ensure that these birds follow the school community to their new site.

It is proposed to use planting to designate spaces between classrooms which will aid in bringing wildlife, especially native birds, possibly echidnas and marsupials, close up to the classrooms. It is proposed to provide water and food plants, as well as plants that can be used as part of a bush tucker curricula, currently part of the Brooks High School curricula, and plants that were used for aboriginal cultural activities such as basket weaving and making shelters.

BUILDING SERVICES

Electrical Services

Site Reticulation

The new school power connection will be provided via the existing site reticulation system with check metering provided within the main switchboard located within the new Administration Building.

Each building will have a distribution board to supply both general light & power and mechanical services.

Site Lighting

The public spaces will be provided with general security lighting located on the buildings with additional lighting along the pathway through the centre of the site for after hours use. All lighting will be designed to Australian Standards for pedestrian areas.

Lighting

Internal lighting will be provided within the following configurations:

- General purpose fluorescent lighting
- A/V presentation lighting (reduced light level for use with projectors etc)
- Acescent (feature walls) and task lighting above benches

All lighting will be controlled via room located switches with motion detectors in series to reduce the use of artificial lighting in unoccupied spaces.

Lighting for amenities areas is being investigated for the most cost effective solution.

Fire Detection and Alarms

A new fire indicator panel (FIP) and Emergency Warning System (EWS) will be provided if deemed to be required with each building utilising a separate mimic panel

adjacent to the entrance. Full smoke detection coverage will be included with thermal detectors used in wet areas as required.

An EWS solution will be provided to enable safe evacuation of staff and students in an emergency. In addition, administration staff will use this system for paging and general public address.

Security

A security system incorporating both access control and internal motion detection will be provided with interfaces to both mechanical and electrical systems for energy minimisation.

Communications

A Category 6 structured cabling solution will be providing within each building with either copper or fibre connections to the head end equipment depending on exact locations of equipment.

The head end equipment including servers will be located within the administration building.

Public Address

The public address system will be integrated into the EWS as detailed above.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Connections will be provided as required for smart boards and audio visual projectors distributed throughout the buildings.

A VOIP phone system will be provided to enable a reduction in network cabling required within and between each building.

Mechanical Services

Heating

Various methods of heating are currently being investigated for heating. The existing heat pump units within the old school are to be checked for suitability of relocation to the new site; however it is anticipated new units will be required.

The system will be designed for heating loads only. Although cooling will be available at approximately 75% of the required load the units will not be sized for the additional cooling capacity.

Simple integration will be provided with the security and access control system to reduce energy consumption on site.

Ventilation

Natural ventilation will be provided to meet the Building Code of Australia (BCA) requirements via operable windows in most spaces. It is not anticipated that mechanical ventilation will be required to supplement the natural ventilation provided within each room.

Exhaust

Exhaust systems will be provided in all amenities areas not having sufficient natural ventilation, with time clock and security integration being provided to reduce energy consumption on site.

Hydraulic Services

Water

A new water connection will be required for the new school from the council system with reticulation to each building to provide both potable water and fire hose reel connections.

Sewer

A new sewer connection will be required for the new school from the council system with reticulation to each building to provide connections to all amenities areas.

It is not intended to treat black water for reuse on this site.

Storm water

The existing storm water system for the road in the center of the new proposed site will require redirection to enable buildings to be situated in the locations proposed on the development application drawings.

Rainwater will be collected from the roofs and stored in tanks for reuse in landscape irrigation.

Storm water from hard landscaped surfaces will be reticulated into the council system via a wetlands “bog” garden. Further details are available by referring to the landscape plan.

Fire Services

Fire hose reels and portable fire extinguishers will be provided in each building to meet BCA and Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) requirements.

Solar Water Heating

A roof mounted solar hot water system will be provided over the multipurpose and administration building to provide hot water to amenities areas.

PROJECT FUNDING

The project is jointly funded as outlined below.

Australian Government	\$2,083,000
State Capital Investment Program (CIP)	\$941,000
Asset Sales (existing school site)	\$1,056,000
Total	\$4,080,000

The project funding is divided as follows:

Construction estimate, including contingency	\$3,554,000
Furniture and equipment	\$175,000
Consultant's Fees	\$280,000
Art in Public Buildings	\$71,000
Total	\$4,080,000

Cost Estimates

The project budget was developed by the Department of Education in consultation with a firm of quantity surveyors.

JAWS Architects quantity surveying sub-consultant Kevin Collins Quantity Surveyor has provided cost information and estimates for the construction of the new school, based on the design developed to date. The details of the cost estimate are as follows:

Element	Cost Estimate (\$)
Building works:	
Administration & Library Building	610,000
General-purpose Hall	475,000
Kindergarten and Prep Learning Areas	395,000
General learning Areas	980,000
Sub total	2,460,000
External works	
Preliminaries	96,495
Site preparation	65,000
Roads, footpaths and paved areas	140,725
Boundary walls, fences and gates	20,350
Outbuildings and covered ways	99,000
Landscaping and improvements	228,430
External stormwater drainage	97,500
External sewer drainage	35,000
External water supply	30,000
External fire services	32,500
External light and power	75,000
Sub total	\$920,000
Other	
Contingencies	174,000
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION BUDGET	\$3,554,000

EVIDENCE

The Committee commenced its inquiry on Friday, 18 April last. Accompanied by Officers of the Education Department and the consultants, the Committee was conducted on site inspections of the existing school and of the proposed works.

Following the site inspections the Committee reconvened in the Conference Room, 4th Floor Henty House. The following witnesses were called, made the Statutory Declaration and examined by the Committee in public:-

- David Button, JAWS Architects;
- Adam Mulcahy, Senior Project Officer, Education Department;
- Malcolm Hales, Principal, Rocherlea Primary School; and
- Liz Banks - General Manager, Learning Services North, Department of Education.

Background

The General Manager, Learning Services North, Ms Banks provided the Committee with the following overview of the project:-

From the northern suburbs' perspective this development is the second phase of the project that has been going for some time, the first phase of which, the Mayfield Primary School site, is close to completion. A number of options were put up for phase 2 of the project and the option before you was the preferred option after a very extensive community consultation that involved the Rocherlea and other primary sites around the northern suburbs and included a range of processes to try to gauge feeling. We are hopeful that this project will enable a real community kind of schooling approach which has already begun at Rocherlea under its current principalship and which engages our young parents in the 0 to 4 age group particularly and also indigenous families because the northern suburbs has an over-representation of Aboriginal members of the community. Those are probably two of the major focuses for the work. The third focus is to really grow the potential of two schools sharing a site in terms of the facilities that are there, such as the school farm and the other natural facilities its land and opportunities bring into the future for the grade 7 to 10 cohort to work in partnership with the younger students in a range of new and innovative learning opportunities.

Community consultation

The Committee questioned the witnesses regarding the consultative process and the nature of the initial negative response from the community to the proposal. Ms Banks responded:-

That is the case for a range of reasons and various community groups had their own particular perspective on it. For example, the Rocherlea Community Garden were very concerned to ensure that

they would not be disadvantaged by this. There were members of the local community who were concerned that the school might lose its identity. We worked through all those issues in a really fair way so that everybody had their say in coming to consensus and that was part of the reason that the consultation took so long.

The Principal, Mr Hales added:-

I want to go a little deeper into the background about the process that we went through and indicate how much the community support the current proposal because, as Liz said, there were some issues. However, the majority of those issues were around the school closing and that was the number one concern that parents had. I think what this process did was to give them a bit of insight into the fact that there were other options. School closure certainly did not come from the parent group; it came from the fact that as soon as a group such as this was put together to talk through the range of options in the north, the media speculation was that that meant that Rocherlea was going to close. That caused some angst and concern within the parent group. But as we moved through the discussion and through our meetings in this consultation period it came to be that that was not necessarily the whole circumstance, that there were several options. Option one was that the school would close; option two was that there would be a redevelopment on the current site; and option three was to relocate to a new site and have a new school built. We worked hard as a school community to work our parents and other community members through this because, as was mentioned to you this morning, the decision was made by the committee that the school would not close and therefore that came down to two options - either to redevelop or go to a new site.

We did figures and we looked at a plan of what redevelopment might look like and we looked at what a new building might look like on a new site. Then that committee, with the support from the local community and the local parents, found that the preferred option was to go to a new site because the redevelopment of the site, as I have mentioned this morning, would have meant that we would have spent \$2 million, I think, and we would have lost resources and facilities by doing that redevelopment. However, the relocation to a new site actually meant that we got an increase in funding and we maintained all the resources and all the facilities that we currently have.

A lot of hard work went into making sure that the community understood the ramifications of it all and in the end I would be struggling to find one parent or one community member now who would look unfavourably on their students having what will end up being some of the finest facilities in the State in terms of education, learning environment and playground facilities and all that that goes with those aspects. The community now believe they will have a state-of-the-art primary school. I believe that students in a disadvantaged

area deserve the same opportunity as students in any other school and where we are currently we do not match what others might have.

Class configuration/Library

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the current class configuration and how the transition to the new design was planned. Mr Hales responded:-

We currently have a kindergarten. We have two prep/1 classes, one 2/3, one 3/4, one 4/5, and two 5/6s.

... Obviously each year, depending on the numbers, the make-up of those classes changes. Next year we will probably have a straight prep and two 1/2s. But the new building will accommodate any of those types of configurations for class groups.

(Expansion) has already been taken into account and on the draft plans there is a space there. The siting of the building is such that directly next to the grade 5/6 classes at that end there is a space that has been left that will accommodate a new building.

The Committee questioned the witnesses as whether the proposed positioning of the library in the new school gave any cause for concern. Mr Hales responded:-

In some ways the library and the meeting room part of it probably will be a bigger use for the people who work in this area than it is for use by the children. I don't believe that the library is any further away than it is from the furthest classroom that we have in our school now. In fact, I believe it is closer. Even though it sits there and it may seem to be detached and added on at the end, its intended purpose is for students to access it either as a whole class or in small groups. But they will always be with an adult, so under those terms of supervision I do not see it as an issue.

This multipurpose area here is another facility that could be either shared use or similar use to what the library is. If we want to meet in small or large groups we could meet here or we could meet in the library, even though this is where all the books will be. In our thinking we have made it really clear that our classrooms are also significant places of learning and we want as many resources in the classrooms as well. We have talked about twenty-first century learning, which means that it doesn't matter where you are in the school, you will be able to access technology or have some access to learning facilities or books. Because we have been looking at it in the plans, we are really interested to hear that someone thought it seemed to be detached, because we certainly hadn't seen that in our design.

Mr Mulcahy added:-

I guess too, as Malcolm alluded to, throughout the development of the design we have gone through a series of options and when that issue was

raised at this morning's site visit it was almost comforting to know that the design we see here today is a result of having gone through those options and that that issue has been thought of in the way they have been developed. Some of the other parameters around the position, shape and location of the library in the administration building and how it relates to other buildings on the site include things such as the contours, the site levels and the existing vegetation and those sorts of things. So as part of a package, I guess, we have tried to consider all those things in terms of the way the building has ended up being positioned, shaped and located - which functional areas in certain parts of the school were needed to be co-located or flexible enough to be connected and those sorts of things.

Community activity

The Committee questioned the witnesses regarding the engagement of the community in the school curriculum. Mr Hales responded:-

One of the aims that we have had at Rocherlea Primary School, certainly in the time I have been there, is to make sure that we align and realign our students and our families with a focus on learning, and that school has a purpose to provide a learning environment for students. Just as much as it is the school's responsibility to provide a learning environment, it is also a family and student responsibility to engage with what we offer.

I think we have done particularly well in differentiating the curriculum a bit and that means offering a variety of options for kids to participate in that meet their needs and their understanding. The other thing that I believe that we are doing really well is that we are engaging the community in what we are doing so they are aware of our aims and goals and part of that is to provide a social environment that supports kids' safety, supports their learning and supports their being supportive of each other at school.

In 2007, we introduced an options program to our upper primary students. That is part of differentiating the curriculum and giving some opportunities for kids to engage in different sorts of activities, all with a learning focus. So far from last year to this year we have had music, art, computers, a group of kids writing a newsletter, taiko drumming, karate, et cetera. We now have Mark, who comes in and takes the taiko drumming with the students. It is a Japanese drumming program and at the moment, for some reason unknown to me, we have only girls involved in it. Our initial reason for putting it on was to support the boys because it is loud, active and physical and we thought, 'Won't this be great for all these boys in our school', but the boys did not want to do it. The girls are doing it. If you were to come out sometime and hear and watch them perform it is fantastic - it is discipline, is about training the brain to do repetitive actions, to get rhythm and beat and follow all that sort of stuff.

With the karate bit, we were following a model from the United States called the Personal Skills Project and that was about redirecting students'

energies into constructive and purposeful activity. There are a number of things that we have done in our school for that and one is to have a really strong health and PE program and we are doing that really well. The other thing we wanted to do was give some purpose to the kids' aggression and exercise so we have introduced karate, which requires some sort of discipline. A karate teacher comes in once a week and works with a group of children. I think the success of these option programs can be shown because last year we had a number of students who did not want to be involved because it was something different. This year we started the option programs and the students were straight in. We do not have any students who do not want to participate. They get it by choice and it runs for a term each and then they can choose something else. That is what the taiko drumming and the karate are all about, along with a whole range of other things. It means that we refocus the number of students in this school and the student/teacher ratio drops to an average of 8-12 students to one teacher. We also have a group this year that work in science, which is part of their new curriculum; so we are focusing very much on the learning areas. That is what that program is all about.

Asset sales

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to how the estimated contribution from asset sales was calculated, Mr Mulcahy responded:-

Without having been involved in the project for its entire time, I can only comment that that has been a component of the project since the very beginning. I know the department has only begun to look at the value of the site and that sort of thing, but that is a component of the asset sale, which has been effectively earmarked for this project. There is a fairly extensive process by which we would identify a property for sale, value it, and then go through the correct channels to dispose -

... the sale of this property is one of a number of properties identified under the Government's asset sales programs. At this stage we have been allocated that money from that program as opposed to from the specific sale of this site, if you like, although the sale of this site would be part of the overall program providing funding for similar government projects. At this stage we are comfortable with that.

The sale of the site obviously could not occur until a new site is constructed midway through next year and we would not be endeavouring to pursue that sale for a while after that to ensure that the new school was up and running successfully prior to moving on with that. We are confident the funds will be available with that proposed timeframe in mind.

Location of parent room

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to why the parent room was proposed to be associated with the multipurpose room rather than the early childhood area. Mr Hales responded:-

We talked about where we would locate that and we had a lot of discussion about that parent room because we really wanted that to be down towards the early childhood area. But also it is to do with the access, because this will all be fenced to here and if we had a parent room down there then, because that is fenced and the main access is down through here, people would have to go perhaps all the way around there so as not to cut through here and across classes. This enables people to come directly into this area. It is purposely located near the canteen and this larger hall so that we may be able to run some activities in here for parents to share that facility as well if they wish. There was certainly a lot of debate on that and that was probably one of our longest discussion points. If parents want to access that room, they drop their children off and just come to there and they can stay there. There are adult toilets here.

Ms Banks added:-

The parents that we want to target through Launching into Learning and through the Aboriginal Early Years Program are often those who have not had a very successful time at school themselves. So we were very careful and worked with the Aboriginal unit to find out what was important. We wanted to ensure an easy and inviting access for them, not having to go through big crowds of kids and stuff like that. The same with the offices, being able to have a direct access and regard for their privacy appeared to be really important for those groups which was interesting because I had not thought about that before this project.

Mr Mulcahy concluded:-

... There have been a number of discussions about the utilisation of the spaces within the school and as part of that exercise we have looked at the Aboriginal Education Unit, how many staff they have, how many days a week they need to operate, whether or not there are synergies with the two proposed visiting professional rooms in the administration building or whether the activities are better suited to the parent room adjacent to the multipurpose hall. We are actually also investigating - budget permitting - the creation of an additional space to accommodate those staff members.

... our investigations have identified five-days-a-week and fairly constant occupation of their space to deliver their service, if you like, so it is exactly that. If we try to merge it with another activity in another space on site that is likely to be very difficult for those people in terms of timetabling and sharing space. At the moment we are really looking at where another space could be located to offer that service from the site but with an independent space. That is a bit like the landscaping, the

ongoing development of the design towards the tender stage, and we are looking at that at the moment.

DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

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

- Rocherlea Primary School – Proposed New Primary School Facilities on the Brooks High School Site – Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, March 2008.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The need for the proposed works was clearly established. The facilities at Rocherlea Primary School, particularly the teaching and learning areas, were designed and constructed to suit teaching methodologies that are outdated and no longer suitable for the effective delivery of the curriculum due to their size, configuration and lack of facilities.

While parts of the school have been replaced or refurbished over the years, most of the building works undertaken over the life of the facility have related to cyclical maintenance, minor refurbishment and fit-out alterations. The buildings are otherwise substantially in their original configuration but are generally in poor condition and require significant redevelopment to provide an effective and contemporary learning environment.

The proposed works will enable Rocherlea Primary School staff and students to enhance the School's relationship with Northern Suburbs House and to enjoy contemporary teaching and learning facilities and will have the opportunity to access a range of specialist facilities and programs at Brooks High School. Learning areas will be integrated, open and flexible spaces, with links to external covered learning areas, to maximise the flexible delivery of educational programs. The Library and General Purpose Hall will provide for more specialist activities and enable community access including access to ICT.

Accordingly the Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted, at an estimated total cost of \$3,500,000.

**Parliament House
HOBART
7 May 2008**

**Hon. G. R. Hall M.L.C.
ACTING CHAIRMAN**