



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Major Redevelopment of Cosgrove High School

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

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

*Ms Rattray (Deputy Chair)
Mr Valentine (Chair)*

House of Assembly

*Ms Butler
Mr Tucker
Mr Wood*

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1 INTRODUCTION

To Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, 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:-

Major Redevelopment of Cosgrove High School

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

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This reference recommended the Committee approve works to undertake a major redevelopment of Cosgrove High School (CHS) to provide contemporary and innovative learning spaces, to modernise and unite facilities across the site, and provide improved equitable access throughout the school.
- 2.2 CHS is located at 286-294 Main Road, Glenorchy and comprises nine buildings built from 1950 to 1980. It has an enrolment of 339 students in 2022 with current capacity for 550 students. CHS is situated on land characterised by a steep incline from the front of the site to the rear, with a rise of 18 metres across the site. The ageing infrastructure, expansive and sprawling nature of the campus and site topography presents compliance, maintenance and universal accessibility issues.
- 2.3 During the 2018 election campaign, the Tasmanian Government committed \$20 million to undertake an upgrade at CHS aimed at revitalising the school and providing capacity for up to 800 students. Subsequently, the school was damaged by fire in November 2020, with B Block being destroyed. As a result, an additional \$2.8 million was made available for the project from the insurance payment for the fire damage.
- 2.4 To determine its priorities for the redevelopment, an extensive consultative and master planning task was conducted, involving students, staff, the community and the Department of Education. As a result of this work, key design themes were established to guide the scope of the masterplan and the redevelopment and which align with the vision for the school's teaching and learning philosophy, 'The Cosgrove Way'. These include:
 - The aspiration for CHS to become a wellbeing hub, that will support and encourage learners to engage in their education journey, connect all people at CHS and encourage a united approach to learning¹;

¹ *Revitalisation of Cosgrove High School*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education, 24 August 2022, page 4.

- Providing a contemporary, flexible and innovative learning environment, that can be shared with the community;
- Enabling 'hands on' learning opportunities;
- Recognising the importance of external learning areas to provide outdoor learning opportunities;
- Safety of student movement;
- A whole-of-site circulation strategy, with equitable access to be integrated into the circulation solution for the redeveloped areas; and
- Promoting the positive culture and identity of the school, to foster community interaction and engagement.

2.5 To commence implementation of the master plan, and to embed the school's philosophy articulated in the above themes into the design, the proposed redevelopment will include the following elements:

- heavy refurbishment of the existing buildings comprising H-Block to accommodate the wellbeing hub, renovated administration functions, staff areas and contemporary general learning areas;
- meeting spaces, staff offices, café and hospitality spaces, project workshop spaces, redeveloped music area, dance and drama;
- retaining the administrative presence and function of the school at ground level to provide a welcoming school entry;
- considerable landscape works to enable a greater focus on the flow of indoor to outdoor learning and to achieve equitable access across the reduced site;
- provision of safe access through the separation of vehicles and pedestrians;
- direct on-grade access to redeveloped outdoor learning environments to assist in overcoming significant existing level challenges for the school and maximise the benefit of considerable school grounds; and
- installation of lifts at essential locations to achieve equitable access across H and A-Blocks;
- relocation of the carpark from the school frontage on Main Road to outside the school's new public entrance and administration area, to provide for safer, easier and more equitable access; and
- landscaping and redevelopment of the former carpark on the Main Road frontage to provide a welcoming space to promote the identity of the school, provide opportunity for community interaction and ensure the safety of student movement.

Construction of a building fly-over, connecting the gymnasium to the rest of the school, may also be included in the scope of the works. However, the capacity to undertake these works is reliant on achieving a favourable tender outcome for the scope of works detailed above, such that it results in sufficient funds remaining available from the \$22.8 million budget to complete this additional work.

3 PROJECT COSTS

- 3.1 Pursuant to the Message from Her Excellency the Governor-in-Council, the estimated cost of the work is \$20 million.

The following table details the current cost estimates for the project:

Description	Cost Estimate (\$'000)
New and Refurbished Building Works	8,527
Civil Works, Carparking and Landscaping Works	6,153
Construction contingency (10% allowance)	1,468
Market Loading	2,920
Furniture and Equipment, including IT	1,000
Consultant Fee Allowance	2,063
Authorities Allowance	80
School Administration Allocation	60
General Contingency and Post Occupancy Allowance	49
Project Management Allowance	400
Artworks	80
Total	22,800

4 EVIDENCE

4.1 The Committee commenced its inquiry on Monday, 29 August last with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to Committee Room 1, Parliament House, whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Mr Kane Salter, Deputy Secretary Corporate and Business Services, Department of Education;
- Mr Anthony Coe, Principal Cosgrove High School;
- Mr Andrew Woodham, former Principal Cosgrove High School;
- Mr Todd Williams, Director Facilities Services, Department of Education, and
- Ms Peta Heffernan, Architect Consultant, Liminal Studio;

The following Committee Members were present:

- Hon. Mr Valentine MLC (Chair);
- Hon. Ms Rattray MLC;
- Ms Butler MP;
- Mr Tucker MP; and
- Mr Wood MP.

Overview

4.2 Mr Salter provided an overview of the proposed works:

Mr SALTER -We are seeking approval to proceed with the capital investment of \$20 million for the revitalisation of Cosgrove High School. Enrolments for Cosgrove High School for 2022 are 339. Enrolments are anticipated to continue to grow due to an enrolment rate of primary feeder schools, development of new residential subdivisions in the area, strong enrolments at neighbouring high schools and efforts by the leadership team to create a positive culture.

The school is operating at 60 per cent occupancy at present and the total student enrolment capacity is 550 since the demolition of B block. The 2018 Government election commitment is to provide facilities for a capacity of 800 students. The proposed works will significantly deliver on that future capacity of 800 with an increase to 775. Extensive public consultation has been undertaken with the feedback being incorporated into the design. A key feature of the master plan is to modernise and unite facilities and create better linkages across the site including equitable access across the steep and expansive slope.

The major development will provide contemporary and innovative learning spaces and create a safer and welcoming environment for learners and the community. This will also assist in fostering greater partnership opportunities with the local community. Existing buildings will be redeveloped and learning spaces created to encourage a flexible curriculum which will be fostered by staff and students. This will assist in promoting collaboration of staff and students enabling differing learning styles in contemporary settings.

The works will assist in providing the school with an identity and an easily recognisable and welcoming entrance into the school by activating the public street edge to the main road,

Glenorchy. The works will also provide opportunities for ongoing community engagement which can amplify student learning in the school setting.

Highlighting the robustness of the master plan is that we do have two principals here today, the former principal and the current principal. Overall, these works are seeking to help with the vision of “Every Student, Every Day, Engaged in Learning”.

Becoming a Wellbeing Hub

- 4.3 The Committee noted the desire for CHS to become a wellbeing hub. From the Department’s submission:

The future vision for CHS is to create an inclusive space where students and staff feel supported, safe, and ready to learn and the community is welcome. The proposed redevelopment will provide contemporary learning settings and enable ‘hands on learning’ opportunities for students.

In line with DoE’s Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy, the site and its updated facilities will reflect the six identified wellbeing domains that support our students to feel safe, well and promote positive learners. The Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy establishes positive wellbeing as a critical component for learning. Importantly, the elements of this approach are aligned with the whole-of-government Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy – It Takes a Tasmanian Village. This ensures DoE’s approach is closely aligned with a range of government efforts to improve the wellbeing of Tasmania’s children and young people.

The aspiration is for CHS to become a wellbeing hub that will support and encourage learners to engage in their education journey, connect all people at CHS and encourage a united approach to learning. The redevelopment will promote a feeling of safety and security, provide spaces for students to retreat to and collaborate in different group sizes, and enable access to external learning areas. Engagement across year groups and disciplines will be encouraged and facilitated by the redevelopment.

...

The concept of a wellbeing hub is based on feedback from student, staff and community workshops, national and international research, and DoE’s curriculum.²

- 4.4 The Committee asked the witnesses to expand on the concept of the wellbeing hub:

CHAIR - Can you expand a little, when we were onsite, the term 'wellbeing hub services' was used. I imagine some of what you have just described as part of that, but if you can expand.

Mr COE - It is, if we take the term, one of our key priorities in this strategic plan is wellbeing for learning. We are very much focused on ensuring students are well and their wellbeing is looked after to enable them to learn. One of those is through being fed nutritious food so they can engage in learning. As Andrew said, a lot of them are potentially arriving without food, so they are not having that in their stomachs.

² *Revitalisation of Cosgrove High School*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education, 24 August 2022, pages 4-5.

You saw on the site visit that our professional services, our skilled social worker and psychologist, Aboriginal education worker and school health nurse have spread quite diversely throughout the current site. Students are often moving to different areas, so the sense of a wellbeing hub for professional services is a one-stop-shop, where you can go to get all the resources and the support you can require. It takes a bit of guess work out. You need support that I can go to that area and then in a sense, I will be triaged as to who I need to access.

The fantastic thing about the community there and the students is that they do not shy away from it. There is no stigma attached to seeking help for mental health and they will go and access it freely, if they need it and want it. Having a dedicated space for that to occur is going to be advantageous. At the moment it is sort of locked away and can be hard to access and find. You have to navigate away from your peers and when it is a little bit more visible and open, the access will increase.

- 4.5 The witnesses also expanded on the importance of the current communal area and the free lunch program that is currently offered. The witnesses noted the redevelopment will make significant improvements that should build on the success of this area, and contribute toward the wellbeing of students and staff:

Ms BUTLER - Today I was really impressed with the existing communal area and how the students had developed something important to them and their learning, and the free lunch program offered by the school. It is my understanding that this new development will be moved to a different space. I thought it was such great work. For the record, can you outline how the students developed that and how you rolled out the free lunch program, and what that will look like in the new facility?

Mr WOODHAM - Even before my arrival at Cosgrove, the communal hub for students came out of their voice. It was something undertaken by the multipride group. They identified that they didn't have an indoor space where all students could come together to gather - and what better way to come together and gather over lunch or food?

We identified too, out of our wellbeing survey, that many students weren't bringing their lunch or having breakfast, so our lunch program also extends to providing breakfast five days a week, recess on three of those days, and lunch on three days. It is envisaged that over time, ideally this will expand to provide lunches across five days.

Ms BUTLER - What kind of uptake is there from the students with those meals? As you know, it is not just bringing the students together, it's making sure they're eating properly and their brains are still working actively during the day.

Mr WOODHAM - We speak very openly and honestly here. One thing I noticed is that these days many students come into schools without a backpack. It's probably a bit uncool in high school to be seen to be carrying a backpack, which means that you're probably not carrying your lunch - that eating your lunch and sitting down in a space wasn't the done thing.

However, since having the lunch program in place, you see the majority of students lining up - I'd say close to 80-90 per cent of students - accessing that lunch program, having their lunch, finding a space to sit down outside if they can find a space to sit down. I guess that's part of the three developments providing those indoor and outdoor spaces where students can come together to connect.

Ms BUTLER - Good on you, that's great.

Ms HEFFERNAN - As Andrew said, there is greater ease. The flow between inside and outside is greater with the revitalised development, but there's now also direct access to productive gardens. I think the school has been talking to the 24 Carrot Gardens Project and other providers to enable that holistic opportunity with eating, nourishment, health, cooking,

growing. It's part of that hands-on learning curriculum development that the school is passionate about.

Ms BUTLER - I think chefs have been classified in the top 10 most needed professions in Australia at the moment. Can you provide information about how that commercial kitchen and the outdoor 24 Carrots scheme would be able to provide employment and career opportunities for students?

Mr COE - I can build on what Andrew said. At the moment, we have an external canteen where the food is prepared by some educational facility attendants and teacher assistants. Moving forward, with the commercial cookery, first of all we have students engaged in that process of preparing the food for students; so at the moment, it doesn't happen.

As you've seen this morning on the tour, the space is a wide open space. When you have 80-90 per cent - we're talking 250 students - in that space, the sitting arrangements aren't great, there's a lot of standing. What we want to do in the community is model what it means to sit down as a family, as a community, and eat, and how you do that. At the moment you'll see there's a lot of eating on the run and moving around - so actually having that time to sit together and eat and have those relationships would be a significant advantage.

Another advantage is that the staff often access the food as well. Having the teachers immersed with the students is really important, so having those relationships in the school to help us function as a school is really important.

Once all that comes in together, that will be a really good opportunity for us to gel the staff, student learning, providing food for students and cooking. With the price of food as it is at the moment, the sustainability of a free lunch program - starting to have some food developed through productive gardens at school and growing our own vegetables and so on, that will change the nature of what we can provide for the students. Healthier options moving forward.

We're at a limit of what we can provide at the moment. It's great, nutritious, but some healthier options as we move forward through this redevelopment will be great.

Mr WOODHAM - ... The reason for that shift if I may, from the level we saw where they were, which was a student-led space down to the next level which connects with the café to the outdoor, to have it all on the one level to then come in and out at the same time and connect with the café.

Providing Hands-on Learning Opportunities

4.6 The Committee understood that one of the school's priorities was providing hands-on learning opportunities for its students. The Committee sought further information on how this would be enabled through the redevelopment:

CHAIR - Moving over to current educational needs and priorities, talking about enabling hands-on learning opportunities for students, and contemporary learning settings. Can you give us an indication as to what that entails?

Mr WOODHAM - Within the contemporary learning spaces there is a transdisciplinary workshop, as I believe it is named, which will provide students with an opportunity to be creative and put their ideas into practice and to develop their ideas.

We also have the catering kitchen space with a domestic kitchen where students will be able to gain those skills, qualifications and opportunities suited to connection to industry pathways.

Mr COE - Bringing those on, as Andrew said, they would look into the vocational education sphere. Certificate II in Hospitality or Cookery, as it's now called, could be a viable option, with other micro skills like Responsible Serving of Alcohol, Barista. There would be a range of qualifications that the students don't have access to at the moment through facilities that aren't there at the school, so it would really open up those for a range of students in that vocational space, which also is part of our communal wellbeing area.

Improving Accessibility Across the School Site

- 4.7 The evidence provided to the Committee noted accessibility across the site was problematic, given its topography. The Committee witnesses this first-hand during the site visit. The Committee asked the witnesses to provide further information on the challenges the site presented, and how the redevelopment would address them:

CHAIR - This whole of site circulation strategy mentioned on page 5, can somebody describe that a little more? I have a pretty good understanding, but I would like to hear it put on the record.

Ms HEFFERNAN - What we are talking about is when we were onsite, we explained the height difference in the site is 18 metres from the main road up to the back of this building here, and accessibility across the campus is very difficult. The revitalisation is trying to expand the universal accessibility from what we are calling the 'heart' of the campus. The building works and the actual external circulation works enable accessible access to three quarters of the site and is what we are talking about with the 'holistic.' Where the revitalisation will have two strategic lifts located that will enable people to get through four levels of building and also the approach to the external works and the outdoor areas. All those outdoor areas that are linked together will have ramps that will enable one in 20 access. That is creating ramps that do not have rails and are integrated as part of the external works and landscape.

CHAIR - Okay, a mix of lifts and ramps and that virtually flattens the site out in a sense?

Ms HEFFERNAN - At the moment, to get to the different buildings on campus there is assistance required. Again, it is talking about equity and independence and ensuring the revitalisation can maximise that for the students.

Redeveloping the Entrance to the School

- 4.8 The Committee noted the desire for the redevelopment to 'help provide the school with an identity and easily recognisable and welcoming entrance to the school by activating the public street edge to the Main Road.'³ The Committee sought further information from the witnesses on how this would be achieved:

Ms BUTLER - A point you made this morning on our tour of the school site was the example of the front car park and the current arrangements where the students are having to walk through that as cars are entering. Maybe, you could put that on the record as a good example?

Ms HEFFERNAN - Yes. That was one of the reasons we are creating a more people friendly space and instead of having it as a car park, we are making it a landscape with active modes for markets and enterprising community interactions we talked about previously. That also the front of the school and the identity of the school, instead of having a building right on the main road. The identity of the school becomes more natural. There will be more indigenous

³ *Revitalisation of Cosgrove High School*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education, 24 August 2022, page 5.

trees and vegetation grown there, but it will not be overdone and creates a softer introduction to the school. It also provides that invite to community when the school is in a mode to invite the community into the school. That is why we are keeping the cars more to the entry area so there is a direct connection with the car park and the front door. The pedestrian access will be separated from the cars by putting the cars there. It is easier for us and safer to separate the cars from the people. The main road now is more interacting with a softer and more active front of school as a result.

Mr WILLIAMS - Rather than a car park, we want to showcase activities at the front of the school and get that connection.

Ms RATTRAY - Is it more challenging having two entrances? I came with the Chair to the site this morning because I had no idea where I was going. We came in the side entrance by the Leprena Centre, but then when we got to the car park, you have another entrance. How challenging is that because straight away you have two lots of opportunity for cars and people? Are you going to get rid of one?

Mr WILLIAMS - Yes. The way that works is there are two exits. When cars enter the site - with appropriate signage - there will be a clear car park right at that entrance that will connect to the front of the school. There is one general exit we all went through today.

Ms HEFFERNAN - Once you get past Leprena, once you come in, that's two way. The entry bit before you get to the school gate is two ways, because there's Leprena, and there's a car yard, and they go out the way you come in. Once you get past the school gate, it's one way, so there shouldn't be anyone coming in where you were exiting.

It will continue to operate like that, but because we've got the carpark ... at the entrance to the school, and that ring road doesn't interfere with the pedestrian route, you still can get safely to the school without interacting with the ring road that you came in on.

4.9 The Committee also understood the administrative area would be redeveloped to provide a clearer, safer and more accessible entry point to the school for students and visitors. The Committee asked the witnesses to expand on this element of the proposed works:

Ms HEFFERNAN - We have relocated the front door to the admin closer to the proposed car park area. That enables ease of universal accessibility. At the moment, there isn't a compliant access to the school, so we can locate the DDA car park near the entry so that is an equitable access.

When we're entering into the ground floor we went into today - and at the moment it's a bit of a rabbit warren - it will become a two-storey void and it will have admin services and a meeting room, and bathroom facilities on that ground level. There will be a lock to get into the school at the level above, so, that will be a secure, controlled entry. If there is any altercation that happens in that area, whoever is meeting in the meeting room can go through a back access and reach safety so the penetration into the school is protected.

At the next level, either through the lift or the open stair, you'll need to have a swipe to get into that next level. We have the leadership and more admin and IT services happening directly above that front area. That also is going to open up the top level of what's currently the admin building. There'll be more passive surveillance across the front of the school, across the oval and across the car park. That has been quite strategic in why we've moved the admin and the front of house down to that corner part of the site.

... .. And there'll be a separate side, there'll be a separate student access to the rear of the site, so we're keeping the public and the students separated, which also helps from that safety aspect.

Engaging with Families and the Community

- 4.10 The Department's submission highlighted the importance of engaging with families and the community and encouraging them into the school, and how this contributed to the school's aspiration of becoming a wellbeing hub. The Committee sought to understand how family and community engagement could be promoted through the redevelopment:

Ms RATTRAY - A question on the statement, 'enable increased participation through the provision of different spaces encouraging more families into the school'. Is there a thought that more families will come because it is a more aesthetically and more accessible school? What is behind that statement? If parents are not engaged now, is this going to change that, or is that the focus, that this development will change that focus?

Mr COE - The commercial cookery provides an opportunity to have morning breakfasts and host those kinds of functions, events and after school that we do not have the facility to do at the moment. Parent-teacher nights, learning conversation evenings, the opportunity to bring those families in, definitely.

Mr WOODHAM - Prior to COVID-19 we would often have - and would continue to have - celebration assemblies where we would invite parents, family members to come in and celebrate with their students. That would also lead to a meal after the assembly as part of that celebration, just to build on that example Anthony's providing.

Ms HEFFERNAN -Also, the way we are looking at activating the front part of the school between the main road and the front building looking at that orientation. We are looking at that being a transitional community, families, school zones that enable pop-up markets, enterprise activities. Already there is a bicycle collective maintenance program happening at the front of the school. That zone becomes an invite to the community to interact more so with the school. However, it is also in a safe area of the school and does not mean the community is going into the heart of the school and a safety layering happening. There is also a cultural centre part of the hospitality ground floor area, because of the high proportion of multicultural students at Cosgrove. This enables that more visible celebration of all the different cultures, that invites families. Currently, there is no provision for that engagement.

...

CHAIR - You mentioned also, one of the dot points on the first set of dot points, ... 'enable increased participation through the provision of different spaces encouraging more families into the school'. Just to go over some of the things that you talked about at the site visit, how do you see families engaging with the school?

Mr COE - Yes, I have touched on one of those with the food and preparation, their lunching and those kinds of facilities will be great. There are a lot of opportunities and spaces and moving to childcare and onsite, depending on our VET provisions as well. So, that is another thing. Playgroup is an important part of certain VET courses as you go through and community services. Although community services can have a disability/aged care lens and it can also have a childcare lens as well. So, provision to run an outside school hours care in the future would be part of that as well.

CHAIR - Is that something you don't have at the moment?

Mr COE - It is not something we have that is thriving and we certainly don't have the facilities for it, so, that would be certainly one. There is an area and facility there -

Ms RATTRAY - Is there space in what's proposed?

Mr COE - We talked about that in that level 4 building with that wellbeing hub, coming off the wellbeing hub would be something there. My vision and thinking of that would be an open space kind of library link facility that would be carpeted well. There is heaps of space there so you could bring early families into that as well.

Ms RATTRAY - I picked up today that Glenorchy City Council have just dropped off on their child care.

Mr COE - We could do that also.

Mr WILLIAMS - Certainly, there is no shortage of space on the Cosgrove site. In addition, the department's community use policy encourages the community to come into the school and to use the school, making sure, of course, that the staff and students are safe so we are not interfering with learning. We encourage the use of school facilities. It is a positive and good thing, not only for the school but for the broader community around ownership of the school.

Mr COE - If I could touch on an opportunity that we are exploring at the moment if we can get that point in the future, there will be an outside hours school care run through the Bridgewater PCYC. That would fund two youth engagement officers who would be based at Cosgrove who could then go into the primary schools pick up the disengaged year 3 students, bring them into Cosgrove as part of their transition from year 6 to year 7. They would be onsite in the afternoon and go through that after-hours school care. We are working with a couple of those students at the moment. We don't have a formal arrangement but that would bring the community and families in after school hours as well.

Catering for Future Enrolment Demand

4.11 The Committee noted the current enrolment figure, and understood the redevelopment would increase enrolment capacity significantly. The Committee sought detail on expected future enrolment numbers, and whether the additional capacity would be utilised:

CHAIR - Enrolment demand and building capacity. So, at the moment you're sitting at 339. After this you will have a capacity for 775. Is that right?

Mr COE - Correct.

CHAIR - That is a significant number; a significant leap.

Mr COE - It is a significant leap. Trending at the moment, looking at 375 current projected for next year.

Ms RATTRAY - But this is only your anticipated - there are no facts or assessment behind that.

Mr WOODHAM - Cosgrove, in that past four years has experienced 100 per cent growth. Four years ago, enrolment numbers were around 177 students and they have now grown to what we see today which is 339, so, a significant growth in a relatively short amount of time. I think that is a good indication of the community confidence within the school and we can expect to see that growth continued in the future years.

CHAIR - Maybe I am not aware of them, but I do not think there are any major housing developments in close proximity of the school that have happened since that 175?

Mr WOODHAM - Not that I am aware of. I am aware there will be the housing development across the road at the showgrounds.

...

CHAIR - Which may add to it also. That is a significant growth though, without that.

Ms RATTRAY - Obviously, you were there for that time - is it the leadership? Often the sort of numbers the school has and the general perception of the school are partly due to what the leadership looks like. Is that what you are basing that projection on, or is it the fact there has been 100 per cent increase in that past, since the 177 enrolments to around 775?

Mr WILLIAMS - ... Absolutely, what I have seen is undoubtedly the leadership of the school and the improvement that is in that area. I think Andrew and the team, and now Anthony, are doing a marvellous job. Also, too, as the department, we have improved our enrolment procedures, including in-zone and out-zone enrolments and the linkage between feeder schools. Whilst still allowing parent choice of course, we are also making sure there is clarity in the zoning and a direction for the primary schools to a feeder school. That work has been done over the last two or three years and it has strengthened that process.

Ms RATTRAY - People are sending their children outside of their immediate school area because of choice in the past and that has changed?

Mr WILLIAMS - Yes, right across the state.

Ms RATTRAY - Not so easy for some of the more outlying areas.

Mr WILLIAMS - No, definitely not. There has been a considerable amount of work done to reinforce that. Every three years the secretary has to examine and review the zoning arrangements. Through that last process improvements were made to support the system, as a whole, so yes, that is an element of it as well.

Ms RATTRAY - This is still quite aspirational, 775.

Mr WILLIAMS - Yes, it is.

.....But rightfully so, we want to promote Cosgrove as a school of choice. We want to promote the great learning that is occurring in Glenorchy. We do not want students to go outside of zones, through town et cetera, which creates many other problems, traffic congestion. As a system, we are mindful of promoting Cosgrove, working with the Hobart City High School and showcasing those as great public schools to come to.

Building on the School's Relationship with the Indigenous Community and Culture

4.12 The Committee noted the school's strong relationship with the Indigenous community. The Committee sought to understand how this relationship would influence and grow through the redevelopment design:

CHAIR - It is interesting that you have - is it 27 per cent of students identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander?

I notice you are working closely with the department's Aboriginal Education unit. Can you expand a little on how this development might be improving aspects of education for them in any way or is it general?

Mr WOODHAM - ... We also have a strong relationship with Karadi Aboriginal Corporation. We have an Aboriginal education worker who I think you saw today, Theresa, working closely within our school. We have Leroy who also does a great deal of work with our students who you saw today in the common room.

Ms HEFFERNAN - Liminal Studio has engaged Leroy as our cultural adviser as well. As part of our design process we work with cultural advisers. We consulted with the school and the school put forth Leroy as the appropriate person to engage with so the design team is also working with Leroy on an ongoing basis. We have walked on country with Leroy. He has started to reveal some of the stories of the site and that's going to also inform yarning circles. The way the external spaces are articulated will be informed by some of the storytelling and the knowledge that he and the Aboriginal community will bring to the site as well so that will be an ongoing process throughout the design of the building.

CHAIR - So, it really does become part of the site and the ethos of the school.

Ms HEFFERNAN - Yes.

Mr COE - If you walked around Cosgrove at the moment, you won't see anything other than the Aboriginal flag out the front so it actually brings some of those cultural aspects alive. We talked about the landscaping at the front of the school, having some on-country experiences out there plus some native plantings and things that pertain to being on country and it's a real opportunity for outdoor learning, and throughout the school as well. We have the youth worker engaging but that infiltration into the school and having a dedicated cultural space with artefacts we can acknowledge and understand certainly is a growth area we're focused on.

CHAIR - So, choosing the native plantings for the site, obviously you would engage with the Aboriginal community in that regard as well?

Mr COE - Absolutely.

Ms RATTRAY - The artworks, the art installation, will that be something that will have that Indigenous focus as well?

Mr COE - Yes, I certainly hope so. We had our recent NAIDOC Week assembly so it was a fantastic week, and we have talked about Leroy engaging with the students to produce artworks. We have just started putting those on display so actually having those living artefacts throughout the school or that the students can contribute is really important to embrace and acknowledge the culture and bring it in.

Just recently, there has been momentum to have a cultural committee involved with community members and Leroy and our Aboriginal education workers so they get more of a presence in the school. We will definitely have those on display as part of what we can show.

Mr WILLIAMS - We are just in the process of working with Arts Tasmania to commence that commissioning process so I'm sure the school's views will be going through that process as part of that engagement that will then inform the outcome that is selected. We don't have that detail yet; we're starting on that process.

Ms HEFFERNAN - We often work with the Department of Education and Arts Tasmania as the designers to make sure that the brief for the artworks is something that's

Mr COE -Connected to the development, useful - all those things. Practical.

Mr WILLIAMS - In addition to all that work that we are doing, we are also engaging with the Department's Aboriginal Education team as well and they are directly involved in the project.

Community Consultation

4.13 The Committee was keen to understand what consultation had been undertaken and how this had influenced the redevelopment and the school's priorities:

Ms RATTRAY - I want to talk about the community consultation. I touched on that it has been a broad community consultation, because you have named other schools and the Chigwell Child and Family Centre. Obviously, they are your future students coming in so you need to know what is happening there. How far has that community consultation gone with what we are looking at today? We have possibly a bit of a change in what is proposed. This is where it gets interesting for me sitting here, making a judgment on something that is possibly different than what is proposed in our papers. Can you explain that?

Mr WILLIAMS - I will certainly try to if I may, and I am sure others will help me as we go. The Department is committed to the community consultation. We have a community consultation specialist who leads all of our initial engagement in our capital projects and it has proven to be invaluable in listening to community before we start our design. Engage talk about the concept we want to do, redevelop Cosgrove, provide contemporary learning et cetera. Through that we had very positive support from community around that development because they could see the benefit it would provide to their area.

Ms RATTRAY - They would, when you showed them these nine very suave pictures. They would be thinking, 'wow!'

Mr WILLIAMS - Contemporary learning is important, of course. We were not showing them concepts, we were actually asking them what they wanted, and they said they wanted a contemporary school and for the community to be able to access and use the school. That was the first engagement. Through other engagements the school has done - and we have done, with our neighbouring schools, as we do - we had further engagement and feedback on that.....

.....There is also the-.....community reference group that's meeting quarterly. Organisations like the PCYC, University of Tasmania, the Glenorchy Mayor, the Glenview CEO, Migrant Resource Centre, the Aboriginal community are also represented, the Tasmanian Health system, the Beacon Foundation and MONA. It's a great community group for us to be able to engage and talk with about Cosgrove and where we're going.

Ms RATTRAY - It is not so much the families connected to Cosgrove now and into the future - it's more of a high level?

Mr WILLIAMS - Through our engagement we do have online surveys, we write to the surrounding community members about the development as part of that process. We encourage everyone to contribute - it's very hard. We did have some community forums where people were welcome to participate. That is at that high level, yes.

Our focus on the detail is obviously delivering student needs and ensuring that the proposed redevelopment will meet the needs of the school into the future.

While we haven't gone into the detail of that with the community, we have released a high level plan - the master plan. We encourage feedback from that, and there was general support for that. It doesn't get into the nuts and bolts of 'do you want this, or do you want that' because, respectfully, that's the engagement with the school that is front and centre in delivering learning. What we heard from community was they welcome the redevelopment, and they welcome the partnerships and using the school for community purposes as well, which we obviously encourage.

Ms RATTRAY - What is the relevance of this page 5 in the document, then? If we're only looking at the buildings and not looking at the teaching aspects of the learning opportunities. What is the relevance here?

Ms HEFFERNAN - There is the process that Todd talked about, which is the high level community group, then the consultants were engaged. Liminal was engaged as the principal consultant, then we continued in-depth workshops with the students, parents, staff, and also touching base with the community reference group.

The document that you see is what the students have been part of developing the brief for, what the teachers have been involved in, and some of the parents who have participated. The community reference group has also seen this. When we're talking about contemporary learning spaces, you don't always know what that means -

Ms RATTRAY - These are the examples?

Ms HEFFERNAN - If we want to look at progressive learning, this is what's happening in the world; these are some of the examples, some precedents. For clarity, the documents we have here, which you have not seen, they're not changing the proposal, they're adding detail to the proposal. Nothing has changed in here, it's just more detail. It is making sure that's clear, because we're not creating a whole new scheme that hasn't been seen. It's just populating and developing the detail.

Ms RATTRAY - Except for the sports component.

Ms HEFFERNAN - When you're talking about the sports component, are you talking about -

Ms RATTRAY - No, the one you said you might be able to do.

Ms HEFFERNAN - That level - the community are aware of this potentially not happening.

... .. The bit that I'm talking about is a single level of provision, single level of accommodation, and it has things like sensory rooms, the nutrition sports lab, and an enterprise opportunity. Once we have consulted with the community, if that does not get built or delivered in this part of the process, partners in the community have said they could provide or help work with Cosgrove to provide that function.

For us to try to juggle the market conditions of the construction industry at the moment - no one can look through a crystal ball. What we have done is to prioritise. We still get a wellbeing hub as part of the base works. That includes the support services that Andrew and Anthony were talking about. That includes a youth centre, so that external access can still happen. That includes all the hospitality. That includes dance/drama. They're all an integral part of the wellbeing hub that has come out of the workshops with the students and teachers. So, that will still be delivered.

In an unfair world where costs go through the roof, what we had to go through was, what are we prepared to let go of? However, it might be supplemented through partnering with community, and that's why we've put in the section that we call the 'overpass' section, because it creates a bridge that you can walk under. That is what we may have to not proceed with if the market loading is where it is at the moment.

CHAIR - Depending on how the tender comes back.

Ms RATTRAY - Hence my question around the community part, and I asked this onsite. Is there something like -and it may well be my view only - the 'Rolls-Royce' outdoor front car park area, welcome area, to facilitate something like you've just described there?

I am interested to know whether that conversation had actually occurred with the community. By the community, I mean the school community directly... .. the actual school community who might say that would be our preference - but if they say, no, we're happy to wait 15 years and get in line for stage 2, that's what I would like to understand.

Mr WILLIAMS - Yes, absolutely. Yes, we have had those conversations with the school. I'll let Anthony and Andrew talk more about the school and student and staff feedback on that. We will certainly release the tender package and keep our fingers and toes crossed that market conditions are good - and we hope we can deliver that.

The school community has prioritised the wellbeing hub over the extension to the gym - but also prioritised the outdoor connections over the extension to the gym as well. We've had very open discussions about that, because I don't want to promise -

Ms RATTRAY - Build people's hopes up, then cut them off at the knees.

Mr WILLIAMS - Absolutely.

Mr WOODHAM - I think there are obviously priorities that we want to meet as a school, one of those being the safety of our students. That car park area provides that aspect of that priority in ensuring our students are safe - they're not going to be hit by a car when they're coming out of school. Obviously, another priority is accessibility, and we're addressing that. I strongly believe that, through consultation, we've heard that community voice, and we've really captured that in what we're trying to deliver on with these planned works.

Project Costs

- 4.14 The Committee closely scrutinised the project's costs, questioning the witnesses on the cost of the civil works, car parking and landscaping works, in comparison to the cost of the new and refurbished building works.

Ms RATTRAY - I was advised onsite that there would be a more extensive breakdown of the civil works, carparking and landscaping works, at the cost estimate of \$6.153 million. I'm still in shock about the cost, given that the whole refurbishment and new build is \$8.527 million.

Mr SALTER – Perhaps... .. we can run through those components. Firstly, we talked about landscape works, \$2.8 million - again, I think that's better described as outdoor functional, learning and recreational areas. Most of that is in the middle of the school. It's helping with the level access and with those outdoor learning opportunities. As I understand, it's certainly driven by the students' voice, in terms of that being important - so, not to do that I think is an opportunity lost in itself.

The car park at the front is estimated at \$310 000 - not as significant in the overall scheme of the cost.

Perhaps the next couple of largest ones are site services, stormwater, sewer water, fire, electrical, et cetera - \$1.3 million for necessary infrastructure works.

Mr WILLIAMS - I absolutely acknowledge we could have classified the description of that \$6.153 million more. but as Kane said, a big part of that is the external outdoor learning access works at \$2.8 million. The car park itself is relatively contained at \$310 000. Obviously we have to do site works, and ensure that stormwater, sewer, water, electrical, fire and comms will be upgraded as part of this job - and, as Kane said, that's \$1.3 million.

Ms HEFFERNAN - Part of that is due to the existing infrastructure being redundant, on its last years of life and not being compliant.

- 4.15 The Committee also sought greater clarity on the contingency and market loading allowances contained in the project cost estimates:

Ms RATTRAY - What's the contingency in that \$6.153 million figure, then, that hasn't been separated out?

Mr WILLIAMS - Not a contingency as such, but allowances that we make for market escalations and builders' margins and overheads, as per the quantity surveyor's advice. It's in the order of \$1.3 million -

CHAIR - Sorry, this is separate to the other two - the construction contingency of 10 per cent, and the market loading of 20 per cent?

Mr WILLIAMS - This is still in the civil works, car parking and landscaping amounts.

CHAIR - So there's a contingency in there as well?

Mr WILLIAMS - They're for escalation and builders' margin, yes, as per the quantity surveyor's advice that we work to.

... .. I can assure you this is based on quantity surveyor advice that we've been using for two years, through our development phase, to get to that level of detail. It's a very thick report that we've aggregated to present to the committee.

...

Ms RATTRAY - The total cost... .. It is \$8.527 million, and yet the market loading for that is just shy of \$3 million. I have been here while the Derwent Entertainment Centre redevelopment happened and I am still in shock at the overrun on that. However, once it leaves this committee, we've got to rely on the Public Accounts Committee to have a look at it. Sometimes you feel like you are saying 'yes' to something when you have no idea what the cost is going to be. That is the problem.

Mr SALTER - The same as yourself, when we go out to tender, we want the best available information so we know whether the scope can be reasonably delivered. So, with the consultant and getting quantity surveyor advice - which is adding that 10 per cent general contingency for unforeseen, along with the 20 per cent market loading - it was considered reasonable to go out in this climate. Ultimately, when it goes to market, that will tell us the price but we also do engage with the industry so that we are trying to go out to tender at the best possible times to suit their forward work programs. So, we are looking to do everything that is within our control to see that price come within the estimate and the advice that's provided.

Mr WILLIAMS - I might just add that yes, it's real. The market is buoyant and we are seeing that in the tender results that we get at the moment. Yes, we have good advice through the quantity surveyor - \$22.8 million is what we have to spend, so, we will maximise that spend for Cosgrove High School.

We have taken the conservative approach. We are going to release the tender package, but in a way that connection to the gym and the gym works, if we get a good tender result, that can be done. However, if not, then we still have a package of work that will deliver significant benefit for Cosgrove High School.

I suppose, to a certain degree, we have taken a conservative approach, hopefully, to under-promise and over-deliver, given the market conditions that we have.

Continuing School Operations During Construction

- 4.16 The Committee noted it can be difficult to continue school operations during a major redevelopment and sought to understand how this would be handled:

CHAIR - When it comes to reorganisation internally of the school as a result of certain areas being quarantined off for the development, how are you approaching that? I am interested to know whether that in itself is going to cause cost issues.

Mr WILLIAMS - It is certainly challenging. It is something that, given the amount of redevelopment work that we do, we are mindful of making sure that we get it right. First and foremost, we are ensuring learning continues with the least amount of impact while acknowledging that there is going to be major construction. We have not gone into the detail of that yet. Perhaps Anthony and Peta might talk more about how we will manage it. I'm assuring the committee that it is front and centre in our planning considerations to ensure the school can operate.

Mr COE - The displacement of the grade teams, we are moving next year towards a grade-based team so functionally, we can move them around the school in preparation for the redevelopment. We are not at capacity so there is some internal work to move classes around to plan so we can have a bank of three classrooms that are currently used, ready to go when we need to displace the students. That is the main concern, the functionality over process through the build and what starts where.

You have seen today we can move our professional support services out of that whole side of the building. When that begins, it is not necessarily going to impact the functionality of the school. The other side, where the administration building will be, but that depends on how that process works and the steps through for whoever gets the contract. We are certainly able to move students around to keep that continuity of learning at the moment, given the size of the school and unoccupied spaces.

Impact of the 2020 Fire

- 4.17 The Committee was aware of the fire in November 2020 which resulted in the B-Block building being destroyed by fire. The Committee questioned the witnesses on how this had impacted on the redevelopment plans:

CHAIR - I am well aware of the fire that was onsite that took out one of the buildings, a most unfortunate circumstance, in one way. It must have been a very difficult thing to deal with and to be able to reposition the learning spaces to cope with not having that building.

I am interested to know how that may have impacted the overall planning for what we have before us. Did it change the planning in any way by losing that building? If someone could run through that a little, for the record.

Mr SALTER - Perhaps if I could start at the broad level. As you outlined, it was unfortunate that the block had to be demolished and its impact on the school and students at the time. There are insurance arrangements which means there will be \$2.8 million available that will contribute to the overall project, meaning it is the \$20 million through the capital investment program plus the insurance coverage.

In terms of how it has impacted on the planning process, we will go to Andrew first.

Mr WOODHAM - That building consisted of four classrooms for our students and was seen as a bit of a year 9-10 hub for our students. There was also a staff room and a dance studio that was part of that building. There was also a space dedicated to an Aboriginal educational worker that would take groups of art students within that space. Having lost that, obviously

it had a significant impact and part of our build certainly picks up on the performing arts and you will see that there is a dance and performing arts space on level 4 of the plan.

CHAIR - So, that is now being catered for?

Ms HEFFERNAN - Further to Andrew's comment, it also has meant there is actually more contained open space, which was disrupted before by the building. In the actual part of what we're calling the heart of the school campus, there's now ability to activate that and provide more recreational use and outdoor learning provisions, productive gardens, so we're making the most of something that was unfortunate.

Mr WILLIAMS - If I may add too, the timing was such that it didn't mean we had to change our plan. The fire occurred and we hadn't engaged our consulting team. We recovered from the fire and focused on ensuring staff and students were back into learning. Following that we engaged a consulting team, so it didn't change our plan. It meant we had something new to work with, and we confirmed the insurance arrangements to contribute to the capital project as well.

Does the Project Meet the Assessment Criteria under Clause 15(2) of the Public Works Committee Act 1914?

4.18 In assessing any proposed public work, the Committee seeks an assurance that each project meets the criteria detailed in Clause 15(2) of the *Public Works Committee Act 1914*. Broadly, and in simple terms, these relate to the purpose of the works, the need for and advisability of undertaking the works, and whether the works are a good use of public funds and provide value for money to the community. The Committee questioned the witnesses who provided the following confirmation:

CHAIR - I need to ask you some standard questions which are really important for the committee in making its decisions and there are five of them. The first is, does the proposed works meet an identified need, or needs, or solve a recognised problem?

Mr SALTER - We believe it does.

CHAIR - Are the proposed works the best solution to meet the identified needs, or solve a recognised problem within the allocated budget?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

CHAIR - Are the proposed works fit for purpose?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

CHAIR - Do the proposed works provide value for money?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

CHAIR - Are the proposed works a good use of public funds?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

5 DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

5.1 The following document was taken into evidence and considered by the Committee:

- *Revitalisation of Cosgrove High School*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Education, 24 August 2022

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is satisfied the need for the proposed works has been established. Once completed, the proposed works are expected to revitalise Cosgrove High School as a contemporary high school, and will support teaching and learning in line with the school's philosophy, 'The Cosgrove Way'.
- 6.2 The proposed works are expected to provide a range of contemporary internal and external learning spaces that promote student and staff wellbeing, greatly improving accessibility across the site. The proposed works are also expected to encourage greater engagement with the local community, through an enhanced streetscape and a safer and clearer entry.
- 6.3 Accordingly, the Committee recommends the Major Redevelopment of Cosgrove High School, at an estimated cost of \$22.8 million, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

**Parliament House
Hobart
4 October 2022**

**Hon Rob Valentine MLC
Chair**