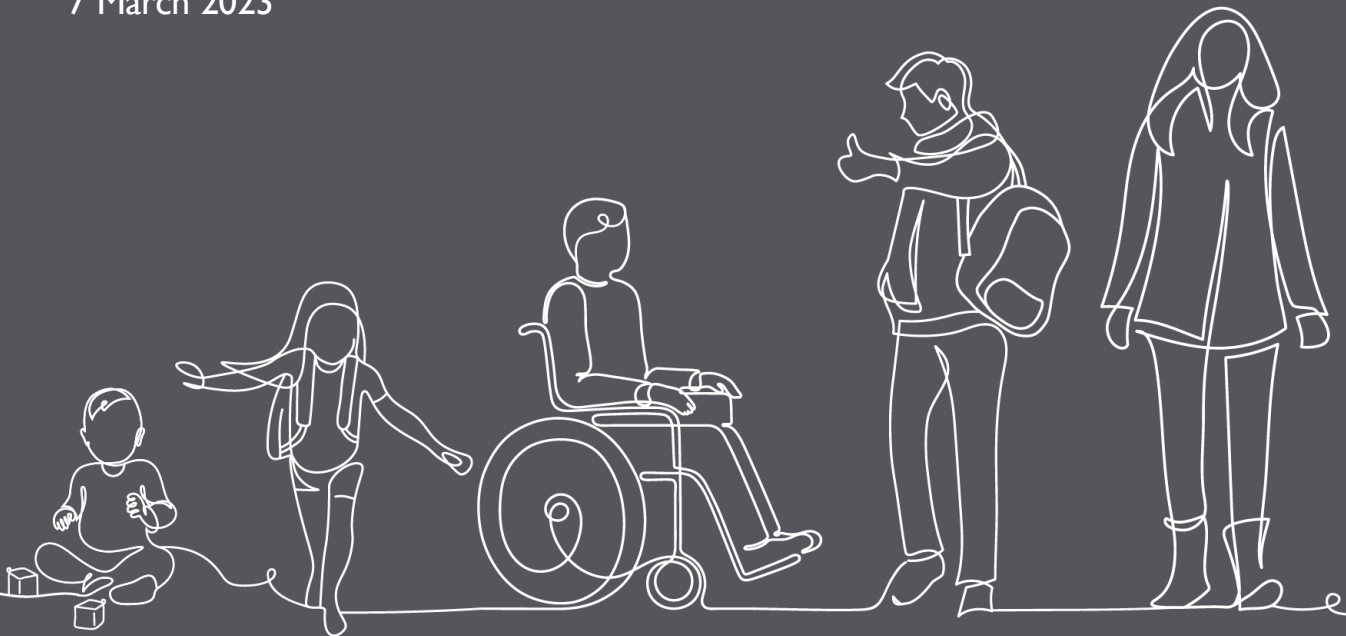


# EXETER HIGH SCHOOL – MAJOR REDEVELOPMENT

SUBMISSION TO THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

7 March 2023



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	3
CURRENT EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND PRIORITIES.....	4
Contemporary Pedagogy and Learning Opportunities .....	4
School Philosophy and Community Connections .....	5
Enrolment Demand and Building Capacity .....	5
School Site.....	6
Community Consultation .....	6
Proposed Works.....	7
Accessibility.....	10
Tasmanian Government Art Site Scheme.....	10
PROJECT MANAGEMENT .....	11
Funding and Budget Estimates .....	11
Construction Budget and Allowance for Escalation .....	11
Project Timeline .....	12
Potential Project Constraints .....	13
CONCLUSION.....	14
ATTACHMENTS .....	15

# INTRODUCTION

This submission by the Department for Education Children and Young People (DECYP) seeks approval from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (PSCPW) for the major redevelopment of Exeter High School (EHS).

Funding of \$11 million is provided through the Capital Investment Program, with \$100,000 expended in 2021-22 and the remaining distributed as \$550,000 in 2022-23, \$3.75 million in 2023-24 and \$6.6 million in 2024-25.

This project will focus on the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing selected buildings within the EHS campus and will be prioritised and completed as per the attached drawings (refer to Attachment 1). The redevelopment seeks to increase the engagement of learners and empower them to have ownership over their learning experience and outcomes.

The scope of works includes the modernisation of site and building services wherever possible.

Morrison and Breytenbach Architects Pty Ltd has been commissioned as the consulting team for the project and are working in conjunction with the Project Working Group (PWG) comprising representatives from the School, School Association, Learning Services and Facility Services.

The submission is presented at the detailed design phase and recognises the strong need for a major redevelopment of EHS for students, staff, and the broader community.



*Image: Students at Exeter High School*

# CURRENT EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

## Contemporary Pedagogy and Learning Opportunities

Education shapes and transforms lives. It is the cornerstone of life success by providing learners with the essential skills they need to participate in society, and live fulfilling, productive and responsible lives. Education allows us to broaden our horizons and live our best lives as active and engaged citizens, which is critical to the social and economic prosperity of Tasmania and our nation.

DECYP is committed to ensuring that all children and young people are known, safe, well and learning.

We want learners of all ages to grow as connected, creative, and curious thinkers. We want them to have big aspirations for their lives, be engaged and learning more every day.

DECYP has articulated this commitment to support access, participation and engagement of learners built on core values of *Aspiration, Respect, Courage, and Growth*. Providing high quality learning facilities for learners and staff will ensure they feel safe and supported and are able to flourish and engage in learning.

The past six years at EHS have seen significant professional development of its teachers. This has led to the implementation of highly developed, authentic learning experiences, effective teaching strategies and rich curricula, underpinned with the belief that every person has the capacity to learn.

The school has collectively developed a 'Teacher Learning Community' based upon high expectations and created conditions for teachers to understand their own impact on student outcomes through continually improving their teaching practice. This has resulted in effective pedagogical practices and coherent, explicit curriculum delivery which has ultimately improved student learning growth and achievement.

Collaborative teaching practices and building a strong feedback culture, based on classroom observations, are the key school-wide improvement objectives at EHS. These have been the main drivers of all conversations regarding developing contemporary facilities that will support these pedagogical approaches to maximise student learning outcomes.

EHS has a strong professional learning culture where staff collaboratively plan learning programs and develop teaching strategies that ensure the school can cater for all learning styles and levels. Staff operate in grade teams and have become experts in grade-specific curricula, creating consistency of practice across the school. Reconfiguring the current infrastructure to better support quality teaching and learning is critical for EHS to continually improve educational outcomes for all students.

EHS has a core learning model in place where students do most of their learning in one General Learning Area (GLA) and have key engagement with one teacher to encourage the development of positive teacher-student relationships in the school. This model has created calm and orderly classrooms however does not support contemporary learning practices. The physical teaching spaces are dated, and many have not been updated since the construction of the school in 1985. The learning spaces are not connected, which inhibits the ability to encourage open and collaborative teaching and learning.

The school's *Food and Fibre* program is a unique program with a combination of practical and academic learning for all students who would like to continue with further study or training in agricultural industries. This program has been planned with UTas, TasTAFE and industry and aims to give students broad and relevant experiences in a range of agricultural industries. With these experiences, students will gain important vocational competencies and develop a variety of personal skills that are highly valued in modern food and fibre production.

Using DECYP's Built Environment Guiding Principles (refer to Attachment 2), the proposed redevelopment of EHS reflects contemporary thinking about how the built environment can support teaching and learning and provide adaptability for future growth and development.

## School Philosophy and Community Connections

The redevelopment of EHS presents the opportunity to redefine the school's educational vision in keeping with students, staff, and the broader community's long-term aspirations. The project master planning and design approach was to deliver a contemporary school that realises the new EHS vision to be "a country school with a contemporary cultural mindset." The vision for the school includes:

- be supportive of 'Smart Farming' by means of a tertiary educational pathway for university entry
- deliver contemporary learning to students who are recognised as being global citizens and part of the global population
- facilitate community change and make a statement about learning being lifelong learning.

EHS is committed to continually improve learning outcomes for students by supporting and enabling calm and orderly learning environments, embedding a feedback culture and improved student learning outcomes. The proposed redevelopment, through the provision of contemporary collaborative learning areas will enable the environment to play a role as the 'third teacher' by contributing to learning outcomes (the use of displays, whiteboard tables, moveable furniture, improved technology etc). The new learning spaces will provide opportunities for team teaching, wherever this approach is deemed advantageous to students.

The redevelopment will help re-orient the learning experience away from what teachers are teaching and instead empower students to have ownership over the direction of their learning with the provision of multiple learning settings that can be manipulated to cater for small, medium and large group learning. Having innovative learning environments will realise the vision for the school to become a centre for innovation, creativity and excellence in teaching and learning. Digital technologies and contemporary pedagogies will be supported, as well as collaborative teaching and learning practices.

In working with students, staff continually model and reinforce the importance of the school's four values - *Learning, Respect, Maturity and Acceptance*. These values have been developed in collaboration with the EHS community. The school believes that these values are critical in constructing positive learning opportunities and supporting students as they develop self-awareness and establish themselves as valued members and leaders within their communities.

EHS has a collaborative and committed School Association. They are passionate advocates of the school and are cognisant of how the redevelopment will benefit not only EHS but also the wider West Tamar community.

The school has recognised the need to make deeper connections with the community, as well as for the community to understand the outstanding quality of teaching and learning that takes place at EHS. Key partnerships include:

- strong partnerships with associated schools through the West Tamar Cluster
- exploring ways to strengthen school/community relationships
- providing authentic and engaging experiences beyond the classroom and into the community.

Community engagement and community use of facilities are strong DECYP policy platforms and core objectives for the redevelopment of EHS.

## Enrolment Demand and Building Capacity

The current number of student enrolments at EHS is 311. There is a projected enrolment growth over the next four years of 24 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students or 7.2 per cent.

The school has recently introduced Year 11 and 12 study options and a significant upgrade to its school farm facility. These changes, together with the school's aspiration to be a regional centre of excellence for agricultural studies, may result in greater enrolment growth in the future.



## Capacity Assessment

DECYP has a standard methodology for building design capacity.

The school is currently operating at 59 per cent occupancy. The school has a current designed enrolment capacity for 525 FTE. The proposed redevelopment includes an additional two GLA spaces which increases the enrolment capacity to 575 FTE.

## School Site

EHS was founded in 1985 and is located at 28 Glen Ard Mohr Road, Exeter, approximately 20 kilometres from Launceston. The school's main campus is located at this address and has an adjacent school farm on West Tamar Highway. The total fully enclosed covered area is 6,446 m<sup>2</sup> on a 22.5 ha site.



*Image: Aerial photo of Exeter High School*

## Community Consultation

Extensive community consultation was undertaken for the redevelopment of EHS in September 2021. The consultation included an online survey, and workshops were held with staff and students from the school, and the broader community. The purpose of the consultation process was to seek feedback to assist with the prioritisation of works and development of the Master Plan for EHS.

A Community Engagement Outcomes Report was prepared following this consultation process (refer to Attachment 3).

Through this consultation, students, staff, and community members said they wanted their school to look and feel welcoming, with modernisation of the overall aesthetics of the facilities. Learning areas should be flexible, modern, and spacious, with access to outdoor areas.

Specific aspects that were considered priorities for the school and its community were replacement of the external paved areas of the school, a new bus shelter and all Year levels having their own block and open area.

Modernisation of the library space, a new canteen/café space, student bathroom upgrades, staff offices, more storage, large digital screens, and better lighting were also identified as critical improvements.

This feedback has been used to develop the scope of works for the project and many of the elements identified above will be delivered as part of the redevelopment of EHS.

The plan for the proposed redevelopment was shared with the school community prior to the end of Term 4 2022 . It was also published on the DECYP website and communicated widely in December 2022 and January 2023 seeking community feedback until 31 January 2023. Three submissions were received and anecdotal feedback has been positive. One submission was a request for further information and two provided feedback on the redevelopment plan. In light of the extensive media coverage and other communication channels, the low number of submissions indicates wide support for the redevelopment plan.

## Proposed Works

As part of the design process, the PWG's focus has been to address the highest priorities of the school and fulfil the agreed design principles. This includes offering students contemporary teaching and learning spaces which support learning needs, and student social opportunities and wellbeing.

The project budget was set prior to the COVID-19 pandemic when the cost of building was significantly lower. This led to a process of establishing priorities to define a final scope of works and keep the project within the project budget, with a focus on refurbishing facilities that best supported the school's educational program into the future.

In line with this, the PWG identified the following redevelopment priority works:

- Redevelopment of the existing Years 7-8 hub to include contemporary formal and informal student learning, breakout and staff office spaces, storage, and service upgrades. The redevelopment of this hub contains the renovation within the existing footprint to accommodate eight dedicated GLA spaces.
- Redevelopment of the existing Years 9-10 hub to include contemporary formal and informal student learning, breakout and staff office spaces, storage, and service upgrades. The redevelopment of this hub will include a small building extension to accommodate eight dedicated GLAs.
- Minor external changes to the library hub including a paved patio, roofed pergola and installation of a new sliding door.
- Partial redevelopment of the existing MDT, art, and culinary arts hub within the existing footprint to accommodate a new entrance / arts exhibition area, an upgrade of a visual arts and kitchen areas with refurbished benches and fittings, and development of an adjacent courtyard / outdoor learning space and service upgrades.
- Redevelopment of the existing antiquated north side toilet block to provide individual cubicle facilities in conjunction with external improvements including access ramp and covered outdoor space.
- Partial landscaping and site work to activate and support the redeveloped building hubs / learning spaces. Works include new ground surface treatment to replace existing uneven pavers in Courtyards 1 and 2 and a bus shelter off Glen Ard Mohr Road adjacent to the existing bus layby.
- Other minor improvements are subject to a favourable tender outcome including the development of a meeting room within the existing Administration block.

The design process has considered options based on DECYP's Built Environment Guiding Principles, student and staff needs and community opportunities. The hub layout and design has been informed by consultation with staff and students and the school's vision to engender student pride and integrate the school's facilities and activities into the local community. Key considerations include:

- ensuring facilities are redeveloped to maximise the current and future pedagogical benefit for students and accommodate future trends in teaching and learning
- provision of good visual and physical connection through the school site
- improving and maximising the learning and social opportunities of the existing internal courtyards and through improved access and integration with adjoining spaces and outdoor learning
- student, staff, and visitor safety, in accordance with the “safe and secure” design principle, and Appendix B from the final report by the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse – Practical Guidance for Implementing the Child Safe Standards*.

## Design Principles

Five specific design principles have been established to guide and inform the master plan direction and subsequent detailed design decisions for the redevelopment of EHS. These principles are in line with DECYP’s Built Environment Guide design principles.

### **Principle 1: Contemporary learning for global citizens**

New and adapted learning environments that support the school’s approach to contemporary teaching and learning for pathways to tertiary education and industry links for vocational opportunities.

### **Principle 2: Place-based design for a distinctive identity**

An engaging and enjoyable environment expressing the school values, culture, and context that students, staff, parents/carers, and the community wish to inhabit.

### **Principle 3: Sustainability and a healthy learning environment**

Commitment to environmental stewardship and design for user health, that educates, cares for, and inspires students and the community.

### **Principle 4: Foster community**

Design for inclusion, connection and interaction that fosters the layers of overlapping school communities.

### **Principle 5: An easy access, legible environment**

A welcoming arrival and learning environment with easy access, intuitive wayfinding, and weather protection.

## Design Concepts

Five design concepts informed the overall physical interventions to the school’s infrastructure to implement the high-level ideals of the Master Plan and Design Principles while solving the identified shortcomings of existing conditions.

### **Concept 1: Create contemporary learning environments**

Years 7-8 and 9-10 hub learning spaces are adapted to create contemporary learning environments. This is achieved by reconfiguring the existing cellular classrooms into interconnected spaces that facilitate adaptable and varied learning environments according to the pedagogical vision for EHS which supports enquiry-based learning and flexible teaching arrangements.

### **Concept 2: Open buildings and connected courtyards**

The design opens the individual buildings, so they relate to each other, the central courtyards, and external spaces. This will create a connected school where students and staff see and experience the activities and learning of others leading to a vibrant and engaged school.



### **Concept 3: A new social and academic heart**

The design creates a vibrant social and academic centre by enhancing the indoor learning facilities and developing new outdoor areas and improved access to the existing courtyards.

### **Concept 4: A welcoming space for the school and community to meet**

The redevelopment will result in landscaping improvements to the school's entry and will increase engagement opportunities and use of facilities by the community.

### **Concept 5: Facilities to compliment student pathways to further education and local growth industries**

The redevelopment of facilities such as a teaching kitchen or art room with adjacent exhibition space starts to support pathways to contemporary VET and tertiary further education or careers in emerging local industries.

## **Landscaping**

The landscape architects' design addresses existing landscaping shortcomings, considers opportunities for external learning and social interaction across the campus and provides an environmentally sustainable strategy for integrating the school into the natural landscape setting that could form an ongoing education resource in natural landscape management. A staged approach will provide guidance on how to implement the plan over time.

The sketch Master Plan (Attachment 3) identifies project opportunities that will be further developed as the project continues. Implementation will be subject to funding availability and prioritisation.

## **Sustainability and a healthy learning environment**

In keeping with Design Principle 3, the design reflects the school's commitment to environmental stewardship and design for user health, that educates, cares for, and inspires the students and community.

Design characteristics adopted include:

- preservation of resources that
  - recycle existing fabric where practical and where it supports desired design outcomes
  - use materials from renewable resources wherever possible
  - choose materials after considering total life cycle of the material
  - consider the impact of refrigerants.
- aim for carbon neutrality to
  - provide energy efficient buildings by means of:
    - high levels of insulation
    - an energy efficient heating /cooling system
    - placement of glazed windows and doors to maximise solar gain
    - an energy efficient lighting system.
  - use materials with low embodied energy
  - use materials that are carbon negative
  - encourage sustainable forms of transport – bus transport
  - incorporate a landscaping strategy to achieve carbon neutrality.
- provide a healthy environment by means of
  - excellent indoor air quality with
    - adequate natural ventilation for a healthy internal environment
    - use of non-toxic natural materials which do not emit gas.

- natural light for wellbeing
- inside-outside spatial connection
- year-round thermal comfort
- natural planting and greenery
- spaces with correct acoustics.
- views to the exterior.
- restore natural habitat and biodiversity that will
  - restore natural landscape in sections of school grounds
  - increase biodiversity of landscape in school grounds
  - restore natural water flows – use stormwater run-off as natural resource.

## Accessibility

All refurbished facilities and outdoor areas will comply with contemporary accessibility standards. Upgraded bathroom facilities will provide the required number of accessible toilets. The replacement of existing uneven courtyard paving will substantially increase the accessibility of the site. Where paths are proposed for replacement, accessibility has been a key design consideration to ensure all people, regardless of ability, have ease of access to key locations.

## Tasmanian Government Art Site Scheme

EHS presents an excellent opportunity for a suitable artwork to be incorporated into the social and public areas of the school. The artwork component will be progressed by a focused subgroup of the PWG.

To date, Arts Tasmania has commenced planning the Expression of Interest process to procure a local artwork that can inspire learning and interaction.

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT

## Funding and Budget Estimates

The total project budget is \$11 million. The proposed scope of works fits within the available budget. The budget estimate is summarised in the table below:

Description	Cost Estimate (\$'000)
New and Refurbished Building Works including Staging Provisional, Escalation Allowances and Market Loading	7,508
External works including landscaping, paving and undercover walkway upgrade to selected areas and a new bus shelter	817
Construction and Design Contingency	855
Furniture and Equipment, including IT	520
Consultant Fee Allowance	792
Statutory Authorities Allowance	80
General Contingency and Post Occupancy Allowance	68
DECYP Project Management and Administration Allowance	280
Artworks	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,000</b>

## Construction Budget and Allowance for Escalation

The cost estimate indicated above demonstrates the EHS redevelopment scope is within the allocated budget.

The cost estimate accounts for escalation and pricing / market risks currently being experienced by the Department across all capital projects in all regions.

The construction contingency is allocated to manage any unforeseen circumstances that may arise during the redevelopment project.

The budget contains an approximate 10 per cent allowance for both construction contingency (5 per cent) and a design contingency (5 per cent).

Tender documentation will allow for itemised pricing to assist in addressing the current market risk conditions. To ensure the budget is not exceeded, minor elements of the scope could be removed such as less renovation works and restriction of exterior improvements. This will be further tested through the design process prior to tender.

## Project Timeline

The key upcoming dates for the project are as follows:

Project Task / Phase	Completion Date
Development Application submission	January 2023
PSCPW hearing	March 2023
Documentation, preparation for tender	April 2023
Tender date <i>*subject to PSCPW approval</i>	June 2023
Tenders close	July 2023
Tender assessment and approval	August 2023
Contractor appointed	September 2023
Construction commences	September 2023
Construction completed <i>*subject to construction market capacity</i>	June 2025*
Defect's liability period <i>*subject to construction completion date</i>	June 2025 – June 2026*
Project completion review and evaluation	June 2025 – June 2026
Project finalised	June 2026



**Image: Proposed Years 9-10 hub refurbishment**



## Potential Project Constraints

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

Identified Risks	Risk Mitigation Strategy
The pre-tender estimate exceeds the total available budget.	Ongoing cost reviews throughout design process.
The estimate assumes the current market conditions. If the market conditions remain the same, cool off, or increase, actual costs will significantly differ to estimated.	Ongoing cost reviews throughout design process.
Costs increase with little scope for further reductions.	All consultants are regularly reminded of the budget constraints. Ongoing cost estimates throughout the design process.
Planning approval is not forthcoming to meet the timeframe for tender.	The PWG is working closely with the West Tamar Council.
Design development does not progress in a timely manner to meet the timeframe for tender.	Regular PWG meetings have been scheduled to ensure design can progress in the timeframe required working with consultants and EHS to expedite this process.
Design does not meet requirements for contemporary pedagogy.	Regular PWG meetings with key DECYP staff to ensure contemporary pedagogy can be achieved in the new facility. Senior DECYP educators are involved with the design development process.
Delays occur during construction.	Regular site meetings will be held throughout the construction phase that updates the construction programme.  Regular construction program discussion and update with school to ensure timetabling and teaching and learning options are planned.

# CONCLUSION

The major redevelopment for EHS will provide a much-needed contemporary high school and will continue to support EHS's school philosophy. The redevelopment will provide a range of contemporary internal and external learning settings that promote student and staff wellbeing and vastly improve access across the extensive site.

Obtaining approval from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works will provide assurance to the students and staff at EHS and the Exeter and surrounding communities that this project will proceed through detail design, tender and construction.

It is therefore recommended to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works that the works proposed for the major redevelopment of EHS proceed as detailed in this submission.



*Image: Proposed Years 7-8 Hub refurbishment*

# ATTACHMENTS

1. Morrison and Breytenbach Architects Report
  - Intervention Overview
  - Section 1. Intervention 1 – Year 7-8 Hub
  - Section 2. Intervention 2 – Year 9-10 Hub
  - Section 3. Intervention 3 – MDT / Art / Culinary
  - Section 4. Intervention 4 – Ablutions Block
  - Section 5. Intervention 5 – Site Works
  - Section 6. Landscape Architect Design
2. DECYP Built Environment Guide Design Principles
3. Community Engagement Phase I Outcomes