

An aerial photograph of Sorell School and its surrounding environment. The school is a large, modern building with a red roof, situated in a green field. In the background, there is a large body of water (Sorell Lake) and distant hills under a cloudy sky. The foreground shows a grassy area with some trees and a parking lot with several cars.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PHASE 2 OUTCOMES REPORT SORELL SCHOOL NOVEMBER 2019

get involved

CONTENTS

PURPOSE.....	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
PROJECT BACKGROUND.....	4
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES.....	5
CAMPAIGN OUTPUTS.....	5
PARTICIPATION.....	6
WHAT WE HEARD.....	6
WHAT WE LEARNED.....	9
NEXT STEPS.....	10

PURPOSE

This report has been compiled for the purposes of summarising and interpreting feedback and submissions received during Phase 2 of community engagement for the redevelopment of Sorell School. As part of the Department of Education's (DoE) commitment to transparent community engagement, this report and its attachments will be provided to all stakeholders and available for public viewing via the DoE website.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Education (DoE) has committed to undertaking extensive community engagement as part of the Tasmanian Government's Building Your Future education capital works projects. A \$25.75 million redevelopment of Sorell School is included in the Building Your Future capital works projects and a second phase of community engagement for the redevelopment of Sorell School ran for six weeks from 19 September 2019 to 1 November 2019.

The campaign, known as *Get Involved*, included direct mail out, media release (and event), advertorial feature in the Sorell Times, pop-up stall, one-on-one engagement and small group presentations.

The total number of responses received during the campaign relative to the population of the Sorell Local Government Area (LGA) was low, despite an extensive six week community engagement campaign.

A total of 17 submissions were received. Of these, 10 were considered either positive or neutral, and seven expressed concerns about some aspects of the concept plan. Four submissions specifically highlighted concerns with the proposed separation of Early Years from the primary learning areas.

There appears to be strong support for the redevelopment, with community members saying they felt the release of the concept plan demonstrated progress in delivering the project.

No community feedback was received in relation to the potential consolidation of the Midway Point Kindergarten onto the school site, despite the concept plan highlighting this as a possibility. This could be interpreted as being due to overall support for a consolidation. However, further engagement with the school association and teachers is required to test sentiment in relation to this.

INTRODUCTION

The Tasmanian Government established a suite of initiatives to improve education outcomes across the State as part of its 2018 election commitments. The Building Your Future education initiatives contain a total of 19 capital works projects, including the construction of two new schools, four major school redevelopments and six new Child and Family Learning Centres.

DoE has committed to undertaking extensive community engagement as part of the Building Your Future education capital works projects. This is to allow local communities and stakeholders to have the opportunity to provide input into specific projects – ensuring a co-constructed approach to delivering capital works that improves outcomes for learners. To facilitate this, DoE established a community engagement team to deliver a series of community engagement campaigns during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 financial years.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Sorell School is the oldest continually-operating school in Australia, having provided education and care on the same site since it opened in 1821. \$25.75 million has been committed to deliver a combination of new buildings and refurbishment of existing facilities that provide state-of-the-art learning spaces for students from birth to Year 12. Works will commence in 2021 and are expected to be completed by 2023.

Sorell School is a co-educational school with facilities and infrastructure currently spread across four campuses:

- a kindergarten located in Midway Point.
- a kindergarten to Year 5 primary campus located at Sorell.
- a Years 6 to 8 middle school and Years 9 and 10 senior school campus co-located at Sorell.
- a trade training centre and adjoining classrooms for Years 11-12 located at Sorell.
- a school farm and the Pioneer Heritage Village located at Sorell.

A concept plan depicting how the school might look was developed by architects based on input from the project working group established for the redevelopment of Sorell School. This concept plan was shaped by feedback received from parents, teachers and the broader community through the first round of community engagement undertaken in February/March 2019. The concept plan (below) formed the basis of the second phase of community engagement.

Sorell School Redevelopment Concept



Community voice...

"Accessible community hub."

- Natural flow through the school from main road
- Accessible oval, outdoor courts and new food space
- Potential for new gym and performing arts centre should funding allow

"Connected campuses, optimise K-12 learning."

- Kindergarten, primary and secondary on one site
- New Child and Family Learning Centre
- Potential to consolidate second kindergarten from Midway Point

"Positive culture, safe and welcoming."

- Administration centre visibility across whole site
- Learning areas providing welcoming and secure spaces.
- Outdoor spaces for learning and play

"Respect for the past."

- Unique and modern-designed campus
- Mix of new and refurbished buildings
- Retain school farm and Pioneer Village

Department of Education



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Phase 2 of community engagement activities for the redevelopment of Sorell School were tailored to meet four key objectives. These were:

1. Provide opportunity for key stakeholders and the broader community to review and provide comment on the concept plan.
2. Demonstrate links between community feedback received during Phase 1 of consultation and what has been presented in the concept plan.
3. Highlight DoE's work to progress the redevelopment of Sorell School and the commitment to inclusive and accessible community engagement.
4. Encourage greater levels of stakeholder and community support for the redevelopment of Sorell School.

The following activities were initiated specifically to deliver on these objectives.

Objective	Activity
1. Provide opportunity for key stakeholders and the broader community to review and provide comment on the concept plan.	Direct mail out of the concept plan to all Sorell LGA residents and businesses. DoE webpage featuring the concept plan with email address for the <i>Get Involved</i> team and the DoE phone number
2. Demonstrate links between community feedback received during Phase 1 of	Addition of 'community voice' information on the concept plan containing feedback received from the community during the phase 1 consultation process.

consultation and what has been presented in the concept plan.

3. High DoE's work to progress the redevelopment of Sorell School and the commitment to inclusive and accessible community engagement.

Create dedicated *Get Involved* web presence. Deliver two rounds of broad community engagement for the project to maximise community participation.

4. Encourage greater levels of stakeholder and community support for the redevelopment of Sorell School.

Implement a broad activity schedule focusing on local business door knocking, advertorial, stakeholder group meetings, mail out, social media and online presence.

CAMPAIGN OUTPUTS

Phase 2 of the *Get Involved* campaign for Sorell School ran for six weeks, commencing on Thursday 19 September 2019 and concluding on Friday 1 November 2019. Key communication and engagement outputs of the campaign were:

- Full page advertorial feature article in the Sorell Times on 3 October 2019
- Media event at Sorell School on 19 September 2019
- 7,351 direct mail outs to all residential and business addresses in the Sorell LGA and surrounds
- Sorell School infrastructure project page on the DoE website
- 10 posts on DoE and Sorell School Facebook pages
- One group presentation
- One pop-up stall at the Sorell School Community Fair on 1 November 2019
- 25 corflutes and 21 posters placed around the Sorell LGA

PARTICIPATION

A relatively small amount of formal feedback was received during the second phase of engagement. This feedback came from a mix of teachers, students and community members.

Feedback was received via the following channels:

- Hand written submissions
- Phone calls
- Emails via the *Get Involved* email box
- Social media (Facebook)
- Pop-up stall
- One-on-one conversations with *Get Involved* team members

WHAT WE HEARD

The primary mechanisms for collecting community and stakeholder feedback were via emails to the *Get Involved* email box or the DoE general telephone number.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Received	Format	Topic/Issue(s)	Action	CM Ref
30/10/19	Email	Concerns around separation of Early Years from Primary learning areas, and the perceived stress around transition across this distance for younger children	Direct response to correspondent thanking them for submission and forwarded to the project team for attention	DOC/19/214815
28/10/19	Email	Concerns around separation of Early Years from Primary learning areas, and question on provision of library, kitchen and play equipment	Direct response to correspondent thanking them for submission and forwarded to the project team for attention	DOC/19/214831
22/10/19	Hand written letter	Request for school's grounds, infrastructure to have drainage connections to town water and wastewater network as concerned about sporting grounds run off into the street from watering	Forwarded to the project team for attention	DOC/19/214843
22/10/19	Email	Offer of assistance to engage students through an equine program to re-engage with education	Forwarded to the school's principal for attention	DOC/19/214866
18/10/19	Hand written letter	Concerns about the provision of one learning centre and special Ed facilities to cater for all age groups. Concern about the proximity of primary school students to secondary students. Question about primary school playgrounds.	Received from the project team for reporting	DOC/19/214883

		Statement about importance of positive school culture		
15/10/19	Email	Concerns about the flow between indoor and outdoor spaces, statements about the need for natural light, requests for facilities for teachers and appropriate storage spaces. Preference was for Early Years and Primary learning areas to not be so far apart	Direct response to correspondent thanking them for submission and forwarded to the project team for attention	DOC/19/214847
9/10/19	Email	Concerns about separation of Early Years from Primary learning areas – identified the 'buddy' system currently in place and highlighted importance of the transition process from Early Years to Primary	Direct response to correspondent thanking them for submission and forwarded to the project team for attention	DOC/19/214861
9/10/19	Email	Requested Year 6 students be back with the Primary learning areas, energy efficiency of the new and refurbished buildings, and adequate car parking. Commented that they were satisfied with existing layout of the school	Direct response to correspondent thanking them for submission and forwarded to the project team for attention	DOC/19/837
3/10/19	Email	Request for further information about the redevelopment	Direct response provided with the concept plan and further information about the project	DOC/19/214859

PHONE CALLS

Received	Topic/Issue(s)	Action
----------	----------------	--------

9/10/19	Query concerning impacts to neighbouring properties as result of redevelopment	Contacted correspondent and advised no impact to neighbouring properties as works confined to inside the school's existing footprint
2/10/19	Statement about the need to ensure appropriate classroom sizes. Concern about students use of mobile phones in the classroom and request to escalate this issue to the DoE Secretary	Respondent's feedback forwarded to the Office of the Secretary

POP UP STALL

Received	Topic/Issue(s)	Action
1/11/19	Provision of sports facilities at the school post-redevelopment. Request for cricket and football facilities	Advise to correspondent that sports facilities were included in the redevelopment process
1/11/19	Overall satisfaction with the concept plan and request to receive further information as project progresses	Correspondent added to distribution list to receive further updates

SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK)*

Comment date	Topic/Issue(s)	Action
19/9/19	Comment that redevelopment appeared to be focused on childcare	Noted comment and compiled for reporting
19/9/19	Comment about one oval for the whole school	Noted comment and compiled for reporting
19/9/19	Comment about one canteen for the whole school	Noted comment and compiled for reporting
14/10/19	Question about which buildings were new and which were refurbished	Response provided to the comment by DoE

* Table excludes likes, general positive comments or friend tags

WHAT WE LEARNED

The second phase of community engagement for the redevelopment of Sorell School has provided formal feedback that will be used to inform refinement of the concept plan for Sorell School.

Anecdotal sentiment was also received via direct personal engagements undertaken by the *Get Involved* team.

- There is strong support for the redevelopment of Sorell School from within the local community, with the majority of respondents expressing positive sentiment about the project.
- 17 submissions were received during the second phase of community engagement, 10 were considered either positive or neutral and seven expressed concerns about some aspects of the concept plan.
- The total number of responses received relative to the population of the Sorell LGA was low. This may be interpreted as being due to overall community satisfaction with the concept plan. Four submissions specifically highlighted concerns with the proposed separation of Early Years from the Primary learning areas. These came from a mix of parents and teachers who cited the perceived impact this separation could have on young learners transitioning from Year 2 (Early Years) into Year 3 (Primary). Similar verbal feedback was also received by *Get Involved* representatives. While this could suggest these views might be broader than the campaign data indicates, this cannot be quantified and the overall low number of submissions remains the key indicator of sentiment.
- No feedback from the community was received in relation to the potential consolidation of the Midway Point Kindergarten onto the school site, despite the concept plan highlighting this as a possibility. This could be interpreted as being due to overall support for this consolidation. There are significant benefits in combining the Midway Point Kindergarten with the second kindergarten located at the school site to form a single integrated Early Years learning area. The proximity of the new Child and Family Learning Centre to be located on the school site and the primary learning areas offers benefits for both learners and their parents. Verbal feedback received from kindergarten staff also indicates the current separation of the two kindergarten campuses is problematic for teaching staff and school operations. However, further engagement with the school association and teachers is required to test sentiment in relation to this.

NEXT STEPS

This report will be provided to the Minister for Education and Training, DoE Learning Services and Facility Services Divisions, and the Sorell School's leadership team for consideration in the detailed design process.