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THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2 ON MONDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2015.

MONTROSE BAY HIGH SCHOOL

Mr ROBERT WILLIAMS, DEPUTY SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT SERVICES, AND **Mr TONY LUTTRELL**, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; **Ms MANDY REYNOLDS-SMITH**, PRINCIPAL, MONTROSE BAY HIGH SCHOOL; AND **Mr JOHN BUTTON**, PRINCIPAL/ARCHITECT, HEFFERNAN BUTTON VOS ARCHITECTS, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIR (Mr Brooks) - Welcome, everyone. Thank you for appearing before the committee.

A committee hearing is a proceeding in parliament. This means it receives the protection of parliamentary privilege. This is an important legal protection that allows individuals giving evidence to a parliamentary committee to speak with complete freedom without the fear of being sued or questioned in any court or place out of parliament. That applies to ensure parliament receives the very best information when conducting its inquiries. It is important to be aware that this protection is not accorded to you if statements that may be defamatory are repeated or referred to by you outside the confines of the parliamentary proceeding. This is a public hearing, so members of the public and journalists may be present and this means your evidence may be reported.

Mr WILLIAMS - Thank you for taking the time to come to Montrose today. This is the fourth project that has come to this committee out of this year's state Budget, which projects \$95 million into the forward Estimates for school and LINC developments around Tasmania. This is an exciting project for Montrose Bay High School.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - I am very passionate about my school. Montrose Bay High is in its sixth year. It was a merged school from previous Claremont High and Rosetta High. At the time of its merge it received quite a significant build, however that did not enable the site to be fully refurbished or reconfigured. The school has had sections not developed since 1965, which you visited today. The administration block is on the wrong side of the school since the merge. The school in the majority services families from widespread areas of Montrose, Rosetta, Glenorchy, Austins Ferry and Claremont. The main feeder schools are Rosetta Primary, Austins Ferry and Windermere. However, we also pick up quite a few students from Goodwood and Glenorchy, which are shared primary schools, for our high school site.

The school was built in 1965 and as such is quite old-fashioned in the sections we looked at today and not geared at all towards contemporary understanding of teaching and learning of adolescents in the twenty-first century. Our economic base is around the city, with some employment gained from the paper mill and hop farms further up the river. There is a lot of trade-based occupancy, officer workers and generational unemployed within our community. Our school is governed by the association. It is proactive in making its voice heard and is very passionate about the build that is about to resolve some of the difficulties we have been facing.

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The community is very proud of the school and very proud of the amazing performing arts centre, which was part of the initial merge build. As a school we've been working hard on building a new culture for Montrose Bay High, one that is quite aspirational, and having a clear vision of empowering our community through educational excellence and our motto of, 'Connect locally and globally, innovate for the future and educate for a changing world' is what we're actually focussed on trying to establish and achieve through the additional funds for the build.

We want our general learning areas to be both practical and inspiring, but more than anything we want them to be flexible to meet future paradigm shifts in education. That is really critical to maximise from the build. We have strived with the planning to create light and open spaces that can work together or work separately, with students and staff being able to access the spaces easily and have vision across quite a wide area. The combined spaces would also enable master classes for instructional teaching and whole grade gathering.

The new spaces will also enable us to personalise our learning considerably for students because we will be able to have vision with students actually being able to be in other spaces. Today when we were outside the bottom of B block and Adriana asked me about the corridors, I said, 'In actual fact, in the way that has been designed it will actually be part of the learning space for the students'. Part of the new way of teaching involves response to interventions, so regrouping our students and enabling students to be able to move into different places. The build will enable us to do that.

This year our staff have been trialling professional conversations and using video collection of observational data and further developing our collaborative planning teams. That has been quite tricky because our spaces have not been designed for that. However, with the restructuring of our timetable and the restructuring of the buildings, the design of the building will really enable us to support that style of practice.

The redevelopment has been thoughtfully planned. The grade-based general learning areas actually create a learning village that will enable our students to have a sense of pride, belonging and connection. The year 7 area will enable our youngest cohort to have a space to come into in the morning in the internal courtyard, which we visited, and a wonderful breakout area to gather informally, undertaking personalized learning in their own block. B block will actually be refurbished along the same thinking. The new spaces will be contemporary, open and connected, where teachers can both plan and teach together, and students will own their classrooms without losing their discipline-based teachers.

The model is not a middle school model, but it is around keeping students connected to their own learning village or hub - however you would like to describe that. It's an environment that we have designed to minimise bullying and harassment issues and is respectful of students' needs, but also mindful of dealing with large numbers of adolescents. Those two things sometimes are a tension, but I think the design enables us to cover both of those things. We are wanting to create an exciting and practical learning space that will service the needs of our communities for decades to come. We want something that creates spaces that our communities are proud of, and also will further our aspirational culture.

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Mr BUTTON - From our perspective the project breaks up into effectively four different components, two of those being A block and B block, with the general learning area refurbishments and reconfiguration to meet the newer paradigm. The admin building was there to correct something that's fundamentally wrong with the building campus at the moment to do with front entry.

The project has been quite difficult in terms of meeting the budget. There is no question about that. We are trying to spread the dollar a long way and covering off many different parts. In working with Mandy right from day one - and she is very passionate about this - our instruction has been that it is about the education, not about the offices, not about the grand gesture. It is to do with the education. That is the driving factor behind it. That is what we have attempted to achieve, to spread that money across all the parts and get really good value, but also make it work practically and provide the school with a very presentable identity and front door. That is where we -

Mrs TAYLOR - You might like to talk to us about what consultation there has been with students and teachers and community.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - The consultation process has been over many years in a sense because this is the second part of the build for Montrose Bay High. The first part of the merge involved enormous community consultation, which evolved into the plan. This is really the second part of that plan. However, this build consultation has involved our community, through our school association, looking at draft plans and informing the school team where they would like it to go, and involving our school community through open consultation. We did offer to run an evening except we did not get any takers for that, so we put it out on Facebook. We had the school plans at the front office and a comment board there for our parents, either anonymously or identify themselves, to provide feedback to the plans.

The student consultation - I run a student think tank every year and this year the focus of the student think tank had a specific focus around the build. I talked in grades 7, 8 and 9, assemblies. With 10s going out they are not actually impacted in that sense, although I had a group of year 10s in the student consultation think tank. I talked with them around what was being planned, what we were hoping to achieve. The think tank has informed some of the things students have been asking for, like an improved gymnasium, so over the last three years that has been information that has actually informed our thinking.

Mr Woolley, our head of operations, has been meeting with our grade teams. He meets with the grade coordinators who then go back to their grade teams, who then meet with us around the draft plans. The heads of learning areas that are being impacted on with the build have met with me and gone through the plans carefully, and then go back to their team and talk around what our plans are. So the consultation has been at a range of different levels. The team - Spencer, Sharon and myself - from the school have worked closely with John around the build and he has very kindly provided plenty of drafts to go back to staff.

Consulting with our cleaners and administration staff has been an important part of this build too because we have learnt where we did not consult as much as we should have perhaps around the last build. There are some practical things we have learned. I am a farmer's daughter. I am very practical; I want this build to be as good as I can get it for

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my community. I also want it to last, so it needs to be sensibly designed and something to be proud of.

Mrs TAYLOR - Thank you for the students who were there with us today.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - The two senior students were Anna Brett and Andrew Nicholson-Gibbs; our year 8 students were Hannah Barwick, Sylvia Reynolds and Kane Thorpe. They are our year 8 students who will benefit mostly from the build.

Mrs TAYLOR - They were very impressive and obviously involved in wanting the development to occur, but having thought about it and very happy to engage with us, which was a nice compliment to you.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Thank you. Some of them were in the student think tank and some of them were not. The others have been in briefings around the build with me.

CHAIR - Certainly the students were articulate, were wonderfully presented and passionate about the project. That is a great reflection on the school, on the community and also the leadership they are given. I felt it was excellent.

We mentioned briefly about the community consultation with the community and the parent body. Was there any negative feedback or concerns raised that, 'No, we don't want this' and 'any of that'.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - No. The school association is really excited about it. There has been a lot of feedback over the years around the administration block being in the wrong place. As some of the group experienced today, we have visitors and members of the public arriving at the wrong end, particularly new parents. We try to deal with that. The feedback has been around, 'You need to get this sorted', and now we have been able to. There has not been any negative feedback. Certainly there has been plenty of questions asked around the build and why we would do this, and they have been very supportive of our responses.

Mrs TAYLOR - I am familiar with the school, and with that exact problem you are talking about. One of the issues over the years has been students being dropped off on the highway. I know you have made a big effort to get the buses to come around to where -

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - All of our buses come in, yes.

Mrs TAYLOR - Will this make any difference to that?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - I would be crystal ball gazing if I would guess that. I believe with our seven cohort, if we are training our parents, 'This is now the administration, that is where they have to come in', we have far more hope of them coming in because that is where the parents have to go. They are not going to park on the highway and walk all the way down through the school to the very end. I believe this is probably our best chance of getting our parents to come in.

Mrs TAYLOR - Will students still be able to walk in from the front, from the highway?

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Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Yes, they will be able to come across the overpass. That is really important because a number of our students come in on the other buses, which are on Main Road, Glenorchy. We have been looking at the security system during the day of how they will access those back doors because that will become the official -

Mrs TAYLOR - It will be the grade 7 block, yes.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Yes, that's right. We have had our IT guys working on quite a clever solution for that that point.

CHAIR - On that, you have 602 students -

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - It is about 630 at the moment.

CHAIR - Is there much more capacity for parking under this for drop-offs? I am looking at page 17. If we were wanting to flow more traffic stopping on the side of the highway and into this area here, wouldn't there be quite a traffic jam in the morning?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - I don't know that it will be as bad as we think because we have hundreds of students come in on buses. At the end of the day we have the same thing; we have hundreds go out on buses. What I would say is that when we are having an event where we do need to have more parking, if you look at the foreshore area opposite where the red arrows are coming out, there is a big area that our parents use for parking. I am assuming that we will be making use of that if we are getting more coming in.

Mostly in high school there will be a lot of dropping off, not actually coming in. It is not the same as a primary school. But it is a bit of crystal ball gazing. We have capacity to increase parking if we need to officially, but as to how many parents will bring their students in, or whether they will drop the students off and they will walk across the overpass and in - some will do that as well.

Mrs TAYLOR - There is a fair sized parking area at the front -

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Yes, we have.

Mrs TAYLOR - Will you continue to use that for parking?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Our staff will park there and we will ask those who park in the bottom carpark to move around so we have all that access to our community.

CHAIR - So the crystal ball gazing - don't worry, it's only the public record. We won't hold you to account for it in a couple of years -

Mrs TAYLOR - Not in the way we would parliamentarians!

Mr FARRELL - What have the really big issues been with having your entrance at the back end? Apart from the confusion to everyone, how does it affect the whole flow of the school day?

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Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - In a range of ways, I suppose, is the answer. There is a security issue for us as well, and that is something that we have been very mindful of. We have had strangers roaming through the school and so we are getting phone calls saying 'There's somebody on site. They don't have a visitor badge', et cetera. Now they have to come through the front section of the school. Despite the signage we still had people coming up through the school and this creates a more secure system for us.

In terms of the flow of our community members coming into the school, it is problematic when they come in the back of the school now and we have to get them all the way down through the school to the performing arts centre. Despite the fact we say to students, 'Get your parents to go down there', they are used to coming to the front of the school. So there is that whole traffic of moving the community right through the school. That is going to be resolved by them coming into the front of the school and being connected to the very public face of the school where most of our events happen. Then there is that nice connection straight through to student admin. Usually that is done in front office but sometimes parents need to go through to student admin and now they are going to be able to walk straight through. We will not have that issue of having to have someone guide them all the way down, because there is no hope of them finding it on their own.

As to student flow, the student flow will be great for things such as the outdoor education. No longer will they have to be up in B block for their teaching space and then work their way all the way back through the school to where the resources are. They will be right beside their resources, which is a major bonus for us with this space. For student movement in and out of the gym to use the toilet and access their drinking fountains, all that will now be provided for within the gym. The supervision will be much better and much easier for our students to access so the flow of students in and out of our gym I believe would be significantly enhanced with the new model.

In terms of the A and B block, one of the most significant improvements for us will be not having years 9 and 10 students coming up into the junior school. That has been problematic moving them up into the spaces. If you see the year 10 boys, they are quite large and then if you see some of our little year 7s who haven't got to puberty yet, they are quite small and it can be quite intimidating for them to see large groups of tall people moving in. That will be resolved: the 9s and 10s will have their block and the 7s and 8s will have their own block. There will not be that constant moving of students in and out of all the different blocks. They will have their own learning area, they will be much more settled. The transitions between lessons will be able to be in their own space. They will not be moving all over the school like an old-fashioned, traditional high school. The build will resolve a whole range of issues to do with transitions between spaces.

Our surveys indicated the two hot spots for our school were transitions between lessons and the locker bay. More than 85 per cent of students indicated they think our school is a safe and orderly learning environment, and 99 per cent of the students feel connected to our school. So it is not a huge issue but they are the hot spots our students have named, and this build resolves both those issues.

Mrs TAYLOR - When you are looking at who this is for, and why you are doing this, it is partly because it is better learning and providing better facilities, but are you doing it for the teachers as well? I would like to think the teachers are going to be benefiting from this as well. I know how important teachers are in learning.

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Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - I feel very nervous that this is going to be on the public record but one of the things that is perhaps a hallmark of my practice is that I put the kids first, so I will be really honest and say the build has been led absolutely about creating the very best teaching and learning spaces I can get.

I totally understand as a senior experienced principal that if I do not look after my staff they are not going to look after my students either. I believe we have very nice, purpose-built staff study spaces so the grade team is based in the centre of the grade. Currently they are tacked on the end in an old classroom without any sort of purpose, storage spaces, not designed for collaborative planning - that has been a major issue for us. The places are built with students' needs as part of that, putting it very central to the corridor so there is high vision, high accessibility for the students to staff, but also a nice environment for our teachers as well. There are toilets in each of the blocks so they are close by but not in an inappropriate learning space.

I believe the teachers are being heavily consulted around these spaces - the classroom design, support - probably leading-edge work we have been doing - around improving quality teaching. One of the things we have been very focused on is improving professional conversations between teachers and depersonalising practice. The design of these rooms will enable us to do that.

Mrs TAYLOR - When we were there you were talking about the bigger open areas in A and B block being available for small groups as well. In particular, you might have said you were expecting to have double the number of students with special needs next year than you have this year. When I talk about teachers, I am absolutely in line with you for the best result for students, but the best results for students comes from the best environment for teachers to work in. Are you looking at greater numbers of teachers? How are you going to manage that when this build is done? If you have small group stuff then you have to have people to lead small groups.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - No, not necessarily. There is a range of different strategies in place. If I take A block, for example, where there are three spaces that are separate but also can be opened up and connected, there are three teachers available to that space. We would also use our support teacher, so that creates a fourth person to support our special needs students, and we would also have aide support, plus our senior teachers. The notion would be that we would regroup and split children into different spaces by bringing those people in.

Part of the biggest issue for us is that currently we do not use our corridor space because there is no vision. If the teacher is in the corridor, they cannot see what is going on in the classroom. A young student I was speaking about before - Tamara - is highly personally motivated and does quite a lot of her work in the library, because we have a library technician or a librarian in there, because she does not need to have direct instruction. Once she is clear about what her purpose is, she will go away and work quietly on her project, but we have line of sight and vision, so she is supervised.

We would use the same model up in our corridors for those students we know who can actually work independently there. We can see them and see that they are on task. We are

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going to be able to do that. We currently cannot do that. We do not have students working in the corridor because there is no supervision for them.

Mr WILLIAMS - That is really important because we modelled a lot of this, in terms of the department, on a school like Burnie where they have taken these old corridors and turned it all into glass. They can do collaborative teaching by opening a door up and then closing it off if they want to shut it down again. They can see. There is the breakout space where the kids are. You can see that from the classrooms, so the teachers are constantly in contact visually. That makes a huge difference to how they can use the space.

Mrs TAYLOR - I am just trying to make sure that you are not complicating matters for teachers and making it more difficult for them.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - No. We are splitting the difference in the sense that we are aware that all glass will be problematic for our students. They take some time to settle into their learning et cetera, so we are using a combination of glass and timber so that we have really good vision, but we have also got places that students can work unsupervised where they are not distracted by anything that is going on outside. It is a good combination. It is ultimately practical. It has to be flexible. It has to be used in a range of ways, but the school itself has actually been trialling quite a range of things. It is quite scary having someone come and watch your practice, if that has not been part of your practice, but our teachers, a group of them, have been volunteering to have professional conversations and video them, and collect video evidence in their classroom. There is a very strong feeling they know that by working together we will improve our practice.

The model we are putting into year 7 next year is very much a team teaching model. It is very open and it is moving into the other grades as well. De-privatising practices might be a bit of a catchphrase, but it is very much around where we have been headed as a school. We have been doing classroom walk-throughs for a number of years now and feedback to staff and to the grades. I do not think we are complicating it for them. I think we are actually value-adding to their practice.

Mrs TAYLOR - We have been to a number of schools already. You all seem to be doing the same kind of design which I guess is twenty-first century teaching up to the current standards. Have you been to see any of the others? Where have you got your design from that made you want to do this? As I say, everybody is doing this more or less, which sounds great.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - I have been the principal of quite a number of schools in Tasmania, so I have seen schools through different builds, but I also work on a national committee. As part of that we meet in different schools around the country. I have had the opportunity to have a look at quite a number of the builds, all going this same way, creating flexible learning spaces. We did take a team down to look at Kingston High, and another school. I have previously had a look at Newtown, Taroona, Ogilvie and Burnie. I have quite a few schools in my background to look at, mostly recently informed by schools I have been visiting at a national level.

Matt, our department architect, has brought quite a lot of photos of other developments to show us what has been going on. The team have been able to see what has worked well. We have been able to learn from mistakes other places have made, and strengths.

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Mrs TAYLOR - That is where my question is going.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - We have. We visited one school and we were really clear about some things that weren't working very well, which is why we opted for a hybrid model in the sense of having lots of glass, having some glass and good vision but also still having an entity that can be operated as a separate thing if it needs to.

Mr LUTTRELL - The department has also worked in other jurisdictions to not so much formalise that but bring that into support documentation for schools and principals. Mandy has looked at others in her role but that is not always the case with principals, so we are trying to make that a lot more accessible by all the other principals.

Mr WILLIAMS - We have a set of design principles - two or three models - that people can use as the basis for this. Then if you want to deviate from that then there has to be a good reason. We are getting the right-sized classrooms with the right sort of vision and right sort of flexibility to open up. Getting rid of these corridors is one of the things. Kings Meadows is doing it in a slightly different way but it is all the same model.

CHAIR - Isn't that what has caused the problem in the first place, having the same model for each school?

Mrs TAYLOR - They are all 1960s schools and they all have the same problem. We don't want to make a design now that is going to have -

Mr WILLIAMS - They are design principles. For example, one of the principles will be that the size of the classroom can't be less than a certain size.

Mr BUTTON - And no internal gutters.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Some of the issues with old buildings are that it is really problematic to deal with all the wiring and cabling. We could spend a fortune trying to put all of them inside, which is almost undoable in parts of our building, but taking a common sense and attractive way of managing that. I am really wanting to have a well-finished build but I am also wanting to get the best value for money. I think our community will be really pleased with the attention to detail. I know we have spent some very long hours going over and over, taking the plans back and then staff saying, 'The movement of traffic here is not going to be so good. We have identified this', and then we come back to John. Poor old John has the tracing paper out every time we meet and makes constant changes to give us the very best option.

When you asked me that question I was thinking, 'Well, we're not going with a particular model'. The build is informed by our needs, by what is going to work for our community and for our students. There is not an overall model I am operating on, but certainly the notion of twenty-first century learning spaces is the underpinning principle. I am wanting to make sure that whatever we do is flexible to meet any shift in paradigm in the future.

Mr FARRELL - Linking back to community use, it has been really clever design and planning around your existing gymnasium. It is very clever to cover a building that is basically a big shed.

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When we were briefed the whole idea is to try to complement Mona across the river, because that is probably the peak of design around southern Tasmania. I think that is going to look really good and I am pleased that was considered, because quite often other buildings and plans are not taken into account when someone builds. You see that all the time.

With the gymnasium, currently you would like to utilise it more. How will this help you utilise the gymnasium to a better degree for the community?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - In a range of ways. Currently we cannot have the gymnasium being used after cleaning hours because of security issues. While there are cleaners on site we can give them access to the building, but after hours we can't because there is no security. We have to give them the keys to the school, basically. With the new model there will be toilets and change rooms. They are individual change and toilet cubicles, not big open spaces because we know that that is not a place to go to. They will have an entrance straight off the carpark, being able to come into the gymnasium to use that, and within that gymnasium they will have the change room areas they can access. Currently they can't do that.

There are also spaces that will be teaching spaces which will be free and more flexible spaces, as opposed to, say, our mini gym at the moment, which is not a teaching or open space where coaching groups can come in and run their teaching part and then do the work in the gym, so we are creating a space for them. It is more designed for us but it will enable the community to use that space because it will have toilets and change space. There will also be security that stops them accessing the rest of the school.

Mr FARRELL - You already have a bit of experience with your performing arts centre being used by the community.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - We do. Our performing arts centre has its own toilets and change area and its own security and is used every weekend of the year. It is hired, which is a great source of income that keeps our performing arts centre looking really good. We can use that money to keep it refurbished. More than anything it means that our community is using the facilities within their base, which is wonderful. We are hoping to give our community greater access to our gym once we can resolve the security issues.

Mr FARRELL - Linking to that and the experience you have had with the performing arts centre, the students today spoke about having pride in their school. They are obviously very proud of the performing arts centre. You mentioned the performing arts centre and Eric are respected and looked after by the students and it is only the older sections that seem to suffer any mistreatment.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Certainly the newer sections of the school look pretty much as good as they when they were built six years ago. Our students love the contemporary spaces and look after them. The older sections of the school are the sections we have to do a fair bit of maintenance on because they are old and grotty. The students do not feel perhaps they are worth looking after so much. It is not a big issue, but it is something we have to stay on all the time. As young Kane mentioned, you feel better when you come into a nice modern space; you feel you want to come into that space to learn. When we

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were down in that very dark, dingy corridor, it does not inspire you to be proud of that space.

It was very interesting when we had our 130 year 6s come on site the other day for next year. As they came into the performing arts centre there was silence and they slipped into formal mode and filed in and sat down and there was a real sense of it being an important space and 'We need to look after it and be on our best behaviour'. There is that sense in our library as well. The really modern spaces, our students engaged in. More than 70 students use our library at recess and lunch. I am often on duty in there and it is a massively used space. With our previous library we barely even bothered opening it at recess and lunch because it was so old and grotty.

I believe the students have a sense of pride in their school and having those lovely spaces our community is thrilled about. I think the front entrance to the school is going to value-add to the whole school and give our parents that pride in the school.

Mr FARRELL - The students were saying, in relation to the performing arts centre, many students are more encouraged to go on to drama and musical pursuits when they leave your school.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - There are definitely high numbers of students who go from us. As young Andrew was saying, he is going to do senior drama and he has been one of our drama students. Because the facilities are so wonderful we have quite high numbers and the auditions for our production next year attracted very high numbers. One would hope that with improved sporting facilities that would encourage students to go into that space. I am also hoping that for the hospitality, that will give us an edge in that space. The little program we run on Second Bite, we have had lots of students wanting to get into that program but we haven't been able to facilitate that because we don't have the kitchen space to do it. This will enable more students who wish to pursue the hospitality area to be encouraged to go into that industry as well.

Mr FARRELL - So currently you have one kitchen for 600 students?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Yes.

CHAIR - Your home economics has the mobile work stations. Is that following on from the concept from Latrobe?

Mr WILLIAMS - Yes, and Mandy could explain. I am not sure whether you were with us when we were looking at that particular part.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - My thinking around that and talking to other schools, mostly my experience comes from Devonport High. Matthew Jago was the person who ran the catering kitchen up there. I believe when I was principal at Devonport High, it used to have \$150 000 worth of catering go through that small kitchen, and Matthew is pretty awesome in that space. So I have learnt a whole lot of things from talking and working with Matthew for a number of years; creating flexible spaces in the kitchen and having work benches that can actually be moved and reconfigured, depending on what that particular course is, or program, or the group you are working with is really important.

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There are some places that are built in but most of the things will be standalone, all linked around the bench. It perhaps will not look like it is mobile but the design is so that you can actually remove things easily and put new upgraded facilities in over the years as kitchens change, and also reconfigure the space to make it work for particular groups of students needs. Matthew has probably taught me that it is important to do that.

Also having free access down the pathway through to the refrigerators rather than having that behind closed doors so a lot of the planning for that, and that is still a draft and it has to go back to our home economics and aids and people who work in that space, but a lot of my thinking around the mobile space has come from learning in the kitchen with Matthew.

CHAIR - For *Hansard's* sake, Latrobe High School is rebuilding theirs in a similar way. I think they call it the Master Chef version. It is not a facility like the television show but it is the concept of -

Mr WILLIAMS - I think people have tried really hard to get to really maximise - this is basically half the build of Latrobe and you have seen the financials, the contingencies, squeezed down probably lower than you would normally do. This is all to try to maximise what we can get into the school with the money we have. It has been around and around lots of different designs. It is easier to do something in Latrobe because of the quantum and the size of the project. It is harder to get as much as they have got out of this one into Montrose.

CHAIR - I was more talking about the concept of design of the home economics section and obviously Matt Jago is well-known teacher in Devonport and the north-west.

Mr LUTTRELL - There are a couple of similarities in that with the Latrobe one we are designing in the new area, the fact there that the canteen, the cafe and the kitchen facilities, I think you took us through, Mandy, where there is that general area that the students like and enjoy, amenities, so having those kitchens there may actually leverage off those.

Mrs TAYLOR - But it will not actually be a cafe for students to be able to ...

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - We do not have the actual space. We do believe in the planning that at times we will be able to run the back that has been set up with the coffee machines, so we think there will be occasions we can do that. But it has not actually been set up as a cafe the whole time. We do not have the space and there is not the money in the build to do that.

It is primarily around providing a teaching and learning space for hospitality skills because our students are actually letting us know they are really keen to be doing a SecondBite program which it focuses on. It is a good, practical plan to maximise that use of space with an economic approach.

Mrs TAYLOR - You would be familiar with Moonah Primary School which used their BER money to make a commercial kitchen and also a little restaurant, and they have a Stephanie Alexander garden, as well. They have done the whole thing of growing the food, cooking the food, then eating the food and serving the food to the public. It is a fantastic setup. A number of your students will be coming from there. Is it one of your feeder schools?

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Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Moonah is not, we do sometimes pick up some special needs students from there because of the inclusive nature of our program. We actually grow food and cook food and eat food as well. We do not have a whole Stephanie Alexander program. You will have seen our garden and our students who are involved in that. Also, we get a lot of produce from SecondBite, which our students are involved in, preparing and some eating, and also preparing for meals. As part of the SecondBite program this year, it was tricky given our facilities, but we actually had a number of people from an aged care facility and the SecondBite students prepared the meal for them and then served the meal. We actually served it in that space we are turning into a catering kitchen, so we put our classes in another space. Whilst we don't have a dedicated space, we do play in that space. I would love for you to give me another \$1 million and I will be able to create a cafe, but we have looked at that al fresco-type setting beside there and it gives us the possibility to run those events in the warmer weather.

Mr WILLIAMS - Those doors are all sliding onto the open space.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - There are dual purposes really. It means the back end of that will let light through into that back corridor and connect that space to there as well. We also think that could be a service counter if we were having a hot cross bun and hot chocolate day or chocolate chip cookie day, so they could be sold to students out that other side. Or it could be a special function where we can pull the doors back and use the courtyard and the balcony.

The other part of that is being smart around accessing plumbing, lighting and those sorts of things rather than spending another \$50 000 and putting it somewhere else in the building and having to get it there. We have been trying to maximise the spaces we have and I think that is a clever use of that space. It would be lovely to have more facilities but I think the site of it is well-thought-out to maximise what we already have.

Mrs TAYLOR - One of the things that concerns me, and we mentioned it this morning, when you originally got permission to do this, the amount of money that was allocated then is the same amount of money that is allocated now. It was something like three years ago and obviously costs have gone up in that time. You have talked a number of times about 'if we had another bit of money we would do this', or 'we've had to do the best we can with the money we have'.

Does that not concern you, Mr Williams? Three years later the same amount of money does not go the same way and you are having to cut things off the plan that might be important.

Mr WILLIAMS - I guess there are two issues there. The first is that it is an issue for the Government to talk about as to how much they allocate in the Budget to these sorts of projects. There isn't a single project we do that another \$1 million wouldn't add something more to the whole process. Notwithstanding what Mandy said that you would love to be able to do the next bit and the next bit, we now have -

Mrs TAYLOR - This is different; this is not add-ons. This is as the project was originally designed and it has had to be cut.

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Mr WILLIAMS - Every project is cut in that whatever we are allocated we come up with the plan we want and then we have to scope it back to fit within the funding envelope. In one sense it is a bit of a cat-and-mouse game, as you are suggesting, but whatever we get everyone wants more and we are always cutting back.

Mrs TAYLOR - I don't think it is quite the same thing. If you decide on a plan and say it is good and you cost it and say this is how much it is going to cost, and then three years later what it would have bought then it won't buy now, why doesn't that get indexed or something?

CHAIR - Unfortunately this committee cannot change the scope or the funding, but what I think you will find -

Mrs TAYLOR - I might be saying this for future reference to you as the Government.

CHAIR - Absolutely, Mrs Taylor, we are the ones that fund it. Latrobe has been on the drawing board for six years at least, maybe 10 years. They missed out significantly in the BER. The high school has been identified by the Government as a significant priority for investment, but unfortunately there is only a certainly amount of money. When we look at the priorities - and I am sure the minister did this with the department - these are the priorities and this is the bucket of money that is available, and they have tried to make it fit into as many schools as they can.

They may even see, as we have seen in previous Public Works hearings, projects coming in under. Given the tendering process, there may be some scope in there if it came in under, for example. We know the Westbury Road upgrade came in significantly under the expected cost. I am not sure if we added two kilometres of road to it, it is not the Education department's problem but -

Mr WILLIAMS - My sense is that this one, because it has been so tight to try to get as much out of it and the contingency is right down, is not going to be the one where there is going to be money left over. It has been tight to get as much as we can out of it.

I take your point about indexation. It was the same in the prison project. Eight years ago, what you could buy for the money is much less than -

CHAIR - It is a valid point, Mrs Taylor. The challenge we had was that this stuff should have been done a decade ago. It wasn't.

Mrs TAYLOR - I know we are playing catch-up.

CHAIR - We only have \$90 million or \$60 million for high schools -

Mr WILLIAMS - The Government gave us \$95 million in the Budget but, as you know, they have given us another \$9.7 million for additional projects after the budget process. We are at about \$105 million over the forward Estimates, which is pretty significant. We have had to put extra consultants on in our Facilities team because of the volume and the desire to get these in front of the kids as fast we possibly can.

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Mr LUTTRELL - I add that we are going through a process at the moment, and Mandy referred to it when we were on site, with capital investment. We have asked for bids from all schools. Those bids have been received and the Facilities team and asset management team are going through those and scoping. We would expect there would be some refreshing of the estimated cost of construction as a result of that process.

Mrs TAYLOR - I like that word.

CHAIR - The challenge with that is that we are going to spend \$5 million-odd here, and it is going to make it a little challenging in the short term for this high school to be back up on the list of needs and expenses. That is just because we would love to double it, and triple it, and fund more, but the state doesn't have any more money.

Mr LUTTRELL - There is another aspect to Facilities, and that is some minor work. We have both capital and a minor works. It is obviously not significant pieces of work to schools, but schools such as Mandy's can make submissions through the minor works, and some of those things we have discussed may well qualify for that funding.

CHAIR - Mrs Taylor, in our deliberations you may bring that up as an issue of concern. It is a valid point.

Mrs TAYLOR - Yes. As mentioned, eight years is what you budget for and then it is built eight years later.

Mr WILLIAMS - The harsh reality is if we put another million into this, it is a million that comes off Latrobe, or somewhere else in the system.

Mrs TAYLOR - It sort of is, or else you spread it out a little longer and you say, 'We've got this much so let's do the jobs to the extent that we would like to do them'. It means one school might be left off this year but -

Mr WILLIAMS - It is always a delicate judgment.

Mrs TAYLOR - Absolutely. I am sure you are doing the best you possibly can.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - We are pretty thrilled to have the money and will absolutely make the most of it.

Mrs TAYLOR - I am sure you will. It is a very interesting site. 'Interesting', is probably the word. People would say it is difficult because you are so spread out on the site. In other ways that is a benefit because it means you can have a grade 7 area, and a grade 8 - you can separate them. The fact that you have so many levels makes it a fairly challenging site for your students as well as your teachers.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - It is one of the best sites I have ever had as a school principal in terms of its environmental site, but also creating unique learning environments. This build really enhances that possibility and it is an inspirational site.

CHAIR - It is an awesome site.

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Mrs TAYLOR - I was around when the first build was done, when the amalgamation happened, and I remember the huge argument there about whether there would be a lift where you now have it. Saying, 'Will we have a lift', and saying, 'We have to have a lift because the upper levels have to be accessible' - you have so many steps. 'It is a huge cost to put a lift in, we could do so much else with the money'. That is an issue that many other schools don't have being on flat site.

CHAIR – The principal's office will be above the admin area - do I have that right?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Yes, that's correct.

Mrs TAYLOR - Is there a lift to your office?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - A set of stairs.

Mr WILLIAMS - There is a lift at the northern side. If you look at the link that comes from the rest of the school, suddenly the principal's office and the conference room and the staffroom are all actually running straight into the school again.

CHAIR - My father was principal at Ravenswood High for a couple of years. He gave me some examples of parents that are sometimes challenging in understanding the value of education and school teachers and the like. He often said it is key that the office creates a space that is welcoming and calming. I certainly think that would assist in that way.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - There has actually been quite a bit of clever planning put into thought around keeping a secure site with all the issues that schools face these days, but also making it warm and welcoming to our community. I think John has worked really cleverly with us around discreet security, yet making sure our staff do feel safe, and interview spaces that do not enable community members who may be upset to get right up into our building where our students are. It is actually respectful but smart.

Mr WILLIAMS - You are on a beautiful river. Tarroona High gets that pleasure. This school should absolutely maximise every bit of that location, because it is stunning.

Mrs TAYLOR - The first lot of build you did has a lot of wood externally and on the performing arts centre as well, which looks stunning. I know it ages and it takes some maintenance probably, but it is beautiful. There is not that kind of detail in these plans at the minute, but are you planning for more of that. I would hate to think that you might, because of cost, just build in concrete and not have it.

While we are on MONA, I was quite involved when MONA was being planned. I was mayor of the city at the time. I know from David Walsh that at the time when it came to planning he said, 'This is not going to be about the building. We are not building a building that looks fantastic. What we want is for the collection to be fantastic. We want people to come and see the art, not the building. So we are just going to build it out of concrete and steel.' There were a lot of people at the time who said, 'How ugly', but MONA has been such a success that it is now one of the buildings in Tasmania, but it was not intended as such. I would hate to think that people are now saying, 'Because MONA was so successful, let's build everything in concrete and steel'. He certainly did not intend the building itself

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to be the focus, whereas here in a sense we do. Certainly we intend for the building to be welcoming.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - My brief to John was that, because it is the front face of the school, it is where our community first comes to the school. It is in a significant landmark space, so it needs to make a statement, but it cannot be an expensive statement. I do not want bucketloads spent on the facade of the building, but I do want it to say, 'Wow, this is pretty contemporary. This school is in a great spot and they've taken some time to do their planning.' Where the building wraps around back into the performing arts courtyard, where the staffroom runs along and looks out into the courtyard, which is so nice with our staffroom being connected to the courtyard, there is a really strong feel from staff that the external part of that needs to have some sort of timber cladding that creates an automatic link with the building there, the courtyard and up into that space. The timber that was used on the performing arts centre is extremely expensive, so we may not go with exactly the same, but we do not feel that it needs to be, but that connection of having the timber we believe is really important.

I am pretty impressed with the way John has really listened to us the whole way along, working with us. It has been a big ask for him because we are trying to get as much as we can and do the best we can for the students. I do not think it is about the building being such a statement that it has to look like MONA or it is taking a whole lot of money, but I really love the design that John has come up with that is sympathetic in design. It does not copy them, but there are some elements that actually link the whole thing. Obviously we are not going to be able to do that amazing external facade that MONA has. I think at this point we are looking at compressed cement sheet.

Mr BUTTON - Compressed cement sheet with a finish of some sort on it, something that doesn't take a lot of maintenance - a stain, a patina, something that will be interesting. A lot has to do with the shaping of the wall. It is not an ordinary building, but kept quite simple and economical is what we are looking for, but also to be quite different.

Mrs TAYLOR - Remember that Tasmania has a forestry industry and that we celebrate that in our buildings. We tend not to when we are building this fantastic building on the other side of the windows here - the new Parliament Square building, which so far has been nothing but steel and concrete. We need to think of local industry and resources as well.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - We are recycling a fair bit. I did say to John that I am keen to have timber and glass and light - three things this building must feature. In the old library part we are looking to reuse quite a lot of the dado, and a lot of the classrooms will feature dado and timber wall, so there will be a lot of recycling from the site to maximise the use. We are on about sustainability with our students so we need to model that in our own build. From the previous build we have some of the dado left that is going to be recycled for some of these spaces, so I think our new build will feature timber.

Mrs TAYLOR - The other thing I wanted to ask about is traffic management. I know what the intersection is like there, with people trying to get across the highway. It is a continuing problem. Are you still looking at traffic lights? Is the Government still looking at traffic lights on that site?

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Mr WILLIAMS - We are not aware of that being something they are focused on at this time. We raise issues with them from time to time.

Mrs TAYLOR - It's not that I want more traffic lights, I assure you, on the highway there. That is a significant traffic point. I travel that bit of road every day and there is a concern with people coming in and out of the school and trying to cross the highway. If they just come out of the school and turn left, that would be fine, but they don't.

Mr WILLIAMS - I guess that is for traffic management experts. I cannot really make a comment on that.

Mrs TAYLOR - You have a school with 600 kids on the wrong side of the highway.

Mr WILLIAMS - I know DIER do traffic management studies and they're putting in lights at the Elwick Showground, so they obviously have their eye on that stretch of the highway.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - There are a lot of management structures we put in place. You are right, it is problematic. I come in and out of that space quite a lot. We talk with our staff around the fact that they need to be very careful. We have trailers with dozens of kayaks coming in there, so we have the strategy of going down and around and coming through if we believe it is unsafe. We talk to our staff about using that. All of our buses turn left and use the lights to come around. We talk to our parents around being smart about how they exit and enter the space. It is something we continuously manage and we will continue to work with the department and roads and traffic to resolve it. That is a very busy piece of road and it is getting busier, so we continuously make our staff aware of the issues of trying to get across that space and how they might avoid putting themselves at risk there.

Mrs TAYLOR - I am thinking more in terms of parents than staff because your staff are probably super-careful.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - We advise our parents around drop-off zones. Many of our parents opt to put their children out where they can use the overpass to walk into the school. That is probably the way the parents have resolved the matter. There is quite a safe place for them to pull off there to do that.

CHAIR - Is there anything in the specification or scope that is imported from some native village in Switzerland or somewhere, or is it stuff we can get from the local independent small business owner's hardware store?

Mr BUTTON - All local. We do not have anything exotic in there at all at the moment. We have shied away from expensive glass, frameless glass - anything like that. We are looking at recycling some other bits and pieces, but fundamentally it will be simple, ordinary everyday materials and fixtures.

Mr WILLIAMS - Most of this stuff would be what is available.

CHAIR - There is no weird timber stain we will have to fly in if we run out and need an extra litre?

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Mr BUTTON - No, not at this stage.

Mrs TAYLOR - Double glazing?

Mr BUTTON - There is the potential of double glazing because we are required to work under part J of the Building Code. Where we have to use that to achieve the standards we need, we will be using it, but it is not necessarily everywhere.

We are leaving the existing windows in the existing building blocks because they are all there. That is not perhaps the ultimate; it would have been nice to replace all the windows but the budget doesn't allow for it. That is being left. Everywhere else we will look at in terms of the code requirements - issues of comfort, solar gain and all those things. We are having to keep to the budget and modify it to keep it as economical as we can, so we are not rushing in and doing the gold plating at this stage.

CHAIR - No marble, no gold-plating and no imported stain for the timber from Portugal.

Mrs TAYLOR - You have a thing about this.

CHAIR - I have because I have a specific example from a previous government school. It won't happen again as far as I am concerned. I am going to ask about specs and carpet and all the weird stuff that some put in there that I think is excessive and a waste of money.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Because I inherited the last build and much of it was underway as I moved into the space, I didn't understand some of the choices, so I have talked with John about making sure we have really robust vandal-proof-type fittings that also look contemporary and modern, but which need to stand up to the use of 600 to 700 adolescents on a daily basis. The practical side of things has to be right because we want the school to look as good as it will look in five or 10 years. John has assured me that we will be looking at suppliers who will be providing those sorts of fixtures and fittings. He is really clear that I don't want some fancy thing for which I am going to take money out of the teaching and learning spaces.

CHAIR - On the supply side, the local benefits test will apply to this contract?

Mr WILLIAMS - Yes.

CHAIR - What is the weighting the department will consider putting to that? The Treasurer's Instruction is a minimum of 10 per cent.

Mr WILLIAMS - It is normally 10 per cent.

CHAIR - That is the minimum - 10 per cent.

Mr WILLIAMS - That is what we normally put in to the weighting of our considerations. While I have been in the job we have not let a contract to someone who hasn't been in Tasmania.

CHAIR - We will see if we can maintain that - in a fair and balanced way, of course.

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Mr WILLIAMS - We have had a lot come through this year. We saw local architects, it has all been local construction firms, and we source as much as we can. That is in the contract with the builders that we have the local impact considered.

CHAIR - We are continuing to work on the subcontractor involvement as operates previously on a given - probably not down here but the competition in the north-west and other areas of Tasmania where the prime contractors underwrite the contract and then squeeze the subcontractors on prices, even though it is after they have been submitted. How do you manage that?

Mr WILLIAMS - Ultimately it is the head contractor's responsibility. We require them to behave in an ethical manner. I guess if we found out about something like that we would have to have a conversation with them.

CHAIR - Do you check?

Mr WILLIAMS - No, that is up to them to. We have quantity surveyors and the architects who get involved to make sure we are not getting out of the tolerances of what you might reasonably expect. I have never seen it where we have had to have a question about someone spending less than we thought they might.

CHAIR - An example I have been given previously has been that there is a lot of competition for a government project. They will get subcontractors to submit their prices; it might be, say, \$30 an hour for example, or \$50 an hour. The prime contractor then will reduce their bid by 10 or 20 per cent to win the project. Then of course they will not take the haircut, but they will turn around to the local electrician and say, 'Drop your price to \$20 or I will ring your mate next door. Take your pick'.

I have a concern around that activity. I am certainly not saying there are specific Tasmanian businesses that do it, but I certainly know some multinationals have taken part in that before. I want to make sure that the department is aware of it and you actually explain, as part of the contract tender process, that we are not going to put up with it.

Mr WILLIAMS - They have to give us a list of contractors they are going to use when they come in for the contracts, so we know who they should be using. If they want to use someone else, they have to then talk to us about some sort of variation. We would know that they are supposed to use XYZ Electrical; if they do not, then they have to talk to us about that.

CHAIR - I even think them being aware we know it can happen, tends to stop it anyway.

Mr LUTTRELL - Another factor here particularly in the south, given the amount of work, we are probably not expecting that type of behaviour. It is governed by market forces.

CHAIR - I think they have enough from the private sector, which leads me to a timing question. According to the program on page 14, tenders close in March and then the contractors are appointed in March. So it would take a good couple of weeks to appoint a contractor. You have the work scheduled to start the next month. Given the work that is on in the south, and even if a northern-based Tasmanian contractor was to win this contract, are they really

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going to have the ability to start this project within two to four weeks after they know they have won the contract?

Mr WILLIAMS - It will be part of the contract negotiations. I cannot tell you - it is one of the vagaries, one of the things we report to the government on these projects, the fact that we might not be able to get all of those things lined up. At the start we would be asking when we negotiate the tender and as everyone knows, we think the south is pretty tight, and we might have to adjust our time frames to deal with that. We are staggering going out to tender so companies have time to get into it. I cannot give you a guarantee because there are a lot of things going on in Tasmania at the moment.

Mr LUTTRELL - We have spoken to Michael Kerschbaum at the MBA, and with the program release coming up, so he has to communicate with his members so they will be aware of these things.

CHAIR - They will ring me and complain about it anyway. I suppose that then leads on to the next question where the committee is considering Latrobe - that report will be tabled at some point. If that were to get approved, and I am not saying the committee has made a determination one way or another, but if that were approved and we have Kings Meadows - that report has been tabled - Prospect High has been tabled. I want to confirm that we are staggering the release of these tenders so that every business that wants to tender can have a go at all of them, rather than them all being due within a tight time frame. It may suit, again, the bigger multinationals or the ones that have their own tendering department. The smaller builders that may still be pretty qualified have to then pick one or two; they cannot have a crack at them all.

Mr WILLIAMS - It has just happened that the natural of course events is that we have staggered them. As you know, we have been out to Kings Meadows and done that. We have notified the successful tenderer. We have Prospect - we have a whole range of them - they are probably reasonably well staggered. This one is closing in March. That comes off the big ones like Kings Meadows or Prospect that are already out and ones already filled. There are only a small number of firms that pre-qualified for some of those really big projects as well.

CHAIR - I think Latrobe's time was in January, wasn't it, for tender, from memory?

Mr WILLIAMS - I think that is right.

CHAIR - It will be subject to the committee's approval.

Mr WILLIAMS - If the tender goes that way, yes.

Mrs TAYLOR - I want to ask about the build time because you are talking about starting in April, hopefully, and finishing in January, which would be fantastic because you would like to think that it would start the following new school year with it finished. But that is pretty tight because it is autumn, winter, spring, and you have one summer and one summer holidays in there already. Obviously you are going to have to stagger the building process for this year from April to December because you will have students there.

Mr WILLIAMS - Mandy talked earlier about there being a series of stages in this one.

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Mrs TAYLOR - We need to get it on *Hansard*. That is why I am asking the question.

Mr WILLIAMS - We do part of it and decant students out. These processes have been thought through. Once again, it is subject to planning appeals; there could be lots of rain in a particular year. This year has been fantastic and we saw the Myer building went up because it was sunny every day here in Hobart.

This is our best estimate and this is what has been worked through with the architects, with our people who are doing a lot of this. Once again there are some vagaries, whether it is weather or more planning processes that could get in the way, but we think this is a reasonable time frame. I don't think we have been over-optimistic or too conservative either.

Mrs TAYLOR - So you will make a point of trying to get finished before the next school year starts?

Mr WILLIAMS - That is the aim of this one.

Mr BUTTON - Quite a lot of the work is internal in existing buildings, so we are not having to do excavation and come out of the ground. It is straight in, demolish, take down partitions and within weeks we will be starting the refurbishment.

Mrs TAYLOR - It's only the administration that is going to be new.

CHAIR - That would reduce the contingency requirement too, wouldn't it, if there is limited excavation?

Mr BUTTON - Yes, it would. There will be fewer unforeseens in that regard.

Mrs TAYLOR - So the weather won't affect it as much? You are taking the roof off -

Mr BUTTON - Only the essential portion.

Mrs TAYLOR - Does it leak anyway? Some of the other buildings we have looked at had that style of roof and it leaked.

Mr BUTTON - It looks like it does and from what I understand it does. There is a possibility because what we are looking at is going above that anyway. We can almost frame-up and build the roof over the top before we come back and take that away. There are things we can do with that.

Mrs TAYLOR - Good.

CHAIR - The committee has to consider a couple of things under the act. I normally ask this of the principal of the school and as a taxpayer. We cannot vary the work. We can only approve it or not approve it. So it is a go-no-go as far as this committee is concerned. The only way it can go ahead is we don't approve it is require an act of parliament through both Houses.

Mrs TAYLOR - Has that ever happened where the Public Works Committee have said 'no' and then there has been an act of parliament with both Houses?

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CHAIR - There was a threat on the Devonport Police Station but when we suggested - I don't know who suggested it, but someone from the committee suggested it - that they moved it to the left three metres and it might get re-approved because it could then accommodate a remand centre which was the stated purpose of it. That is the only project that was rejected that I can recall. The other two contentious ones were the Port Sorell Primary School and the George Town hub where we had to go back for a second day to fit all the public that had turned up to have their say.

Mrs TAYLOR - We have had no public submissions to this one, have we?

CHAIR - I don't believe so.

Do you feel this project, as outlined, delivers on what it is meant to do? Does it deliver for the purpose as stated?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Absolutely, and I think that is my responsibility - to make sure it does and I feel really confident that, yes, it does deliver.

CHAIR - Do you think it is necessary?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Absolutely, without doubt.

CHAIR - Do you think it gives the public good value for money?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - I really do. That has been a key consideration.

CHAIR - Thank you for attending today. As I advised at the commencement of your evidence, what you have said to us here today is protected by parliamentary privilege. Once you leave the table you need to be aware that privilege does not attach to comments you may make to anyone including the media, even if you are just repeating what you said to us. Do you understand that?

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Yes.

CHAIR - You can get sued if you speak negatively about someone. If you wanted to do that, now is the time to do it.

Thank you again for coming. What will happen from here is the committee will consider the evidence, we will draft a report, either approving or not approving, or requiring further information. We will try to get these dealt with as quickly as possible, one way or another, so people know what is going on.

Ms REYNOLDS-SMITH - Thank you, all, very much for your time today.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.