

Trinity Grammar School (Summer Hill Campus) - The Renewal Project

RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

06 NOVEMBER 2020

P M D L 



INTRODUCTION

Trinity Grammar School - The Renewal Project

Trinity Grammar School submitted a SSD application (SSD-10371) in April 2020 for the development consent of the Renewal Project at its Summer Hill campus.

The proposed development seeks approval for the future development of the campus to provide a framework for the future development of the School, ensure the implementation of modern teaching and learning facilities and the ongoing evolution of the School.

In June 2020, the School received a letter from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment seeking response to submissions on a number of items. This document has been prepared in response to the following matters:

“1. Built form and heritage

- *The majority of the new buildings are located within the SP2 under the Ashfield Local Environmental Plan 2013. While there is no stipulated height limit within the SP2 zone, the five-storey built form at the centre of the site appears to be bulky and would adversely impact on existing views currently enjoyed by the neighbours.*
- *While the impacts of the development on the views enjoyed by the neighbours is assessed as low to moderate, the Department considers that design options should be explored to reduce the overall the height and bulk of the five-storey built form. This may involve reducing or relocating the extent of program accommodated by the new teaching and learning and performing arts buildings and/or further articulation of envelopes and facades.*
- *The proposal should demonstrate how Aboriginal culture and heritage has been incorporated in the design proposal including built form and landscaping.”*



RESPONSE BUILT FORM

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Response

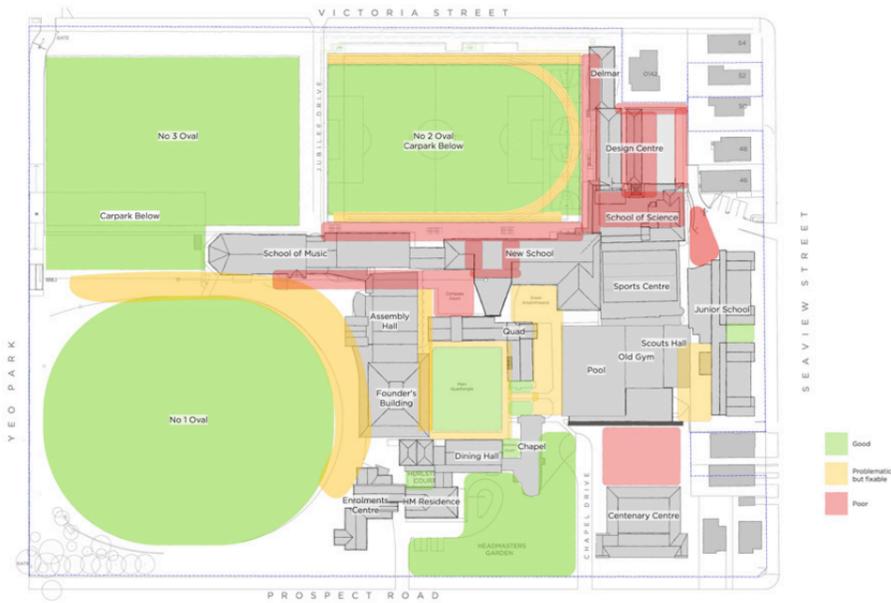
The design of the building has been an evolutionary and consultative process with the School's input to achieve their quantitative and qualitative brief as well as ensuring the new building is a contextual response to the existing and future architectural context.

In this report we will break down the stages of the planning and design process to demonstrate that the design of the Renewal Project built form has been carefully considered in both the context of the campus and more importantly the context of the neighbourhood. The stages are as follows -

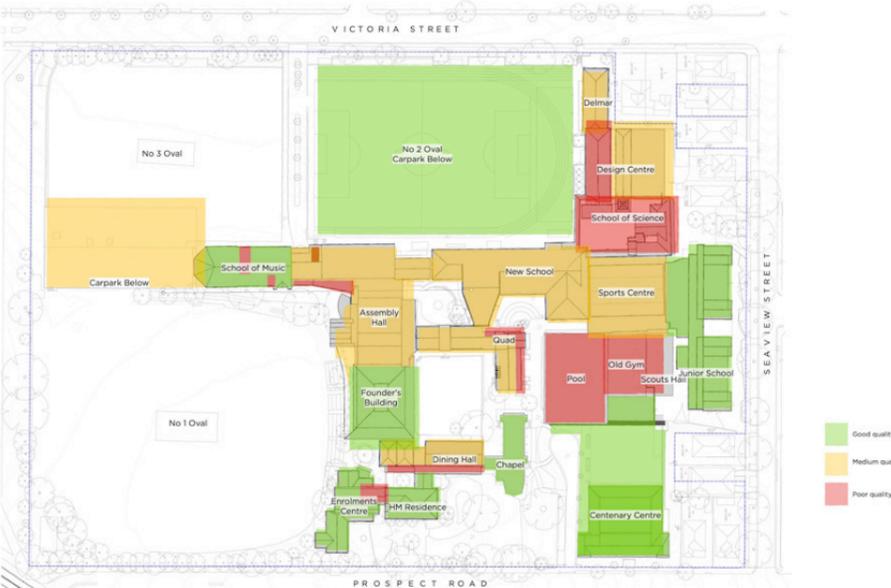
1. Facilities Assessment and Brief development
2. Site Analysis and Development Opportunity
3. Built form
4. Architectural Treatment



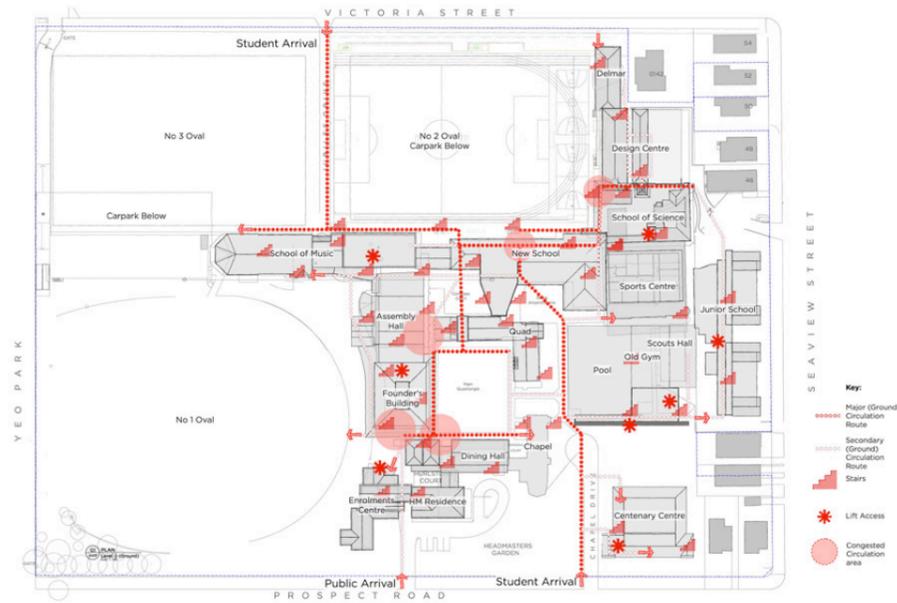
RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 1. FACILITIES ASSESSMENT AND BRIEF DEVELOPMENT



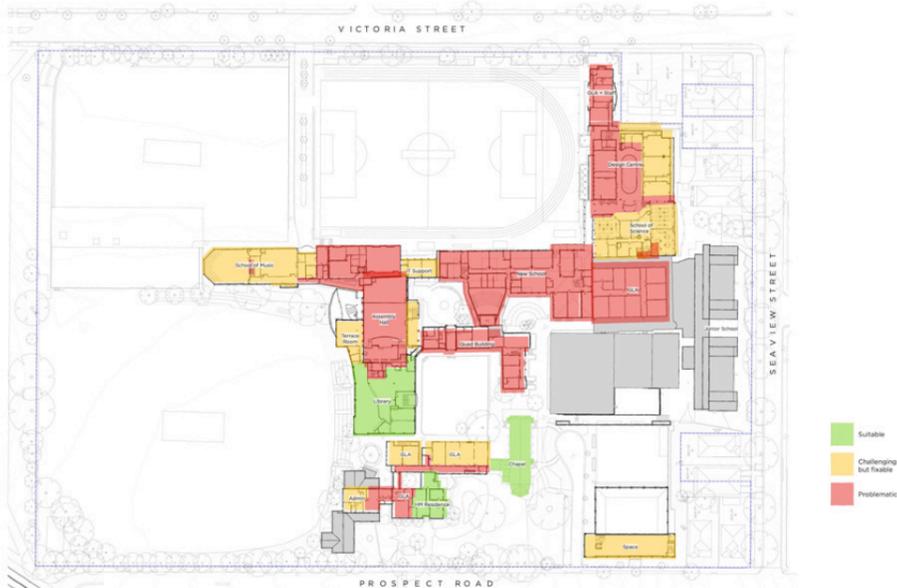
Site Evaluation - Due to the close proximity of the buildings and the development over time, many open spaces suffer from a lack of amenity, accessibility and are poorly designed/arranged. Within the given footprint, the new design elevates learning spaces to create much needed covered, outdoor spaces to activate the ground plane and provide much needed outdoor environment for learn and play.



Age and Condition criteria provides a visual assessment of the relative condition of the space in terms of materials, finishes, services etc. Much of the facilities at the centre of the campus are medium to poor quality, as expected from their age and nature of use.



Pedestrian Circulation - The campus has grown over time with a range of new buildings and as a consequence, connections between buildings are “ad hoc”. Many areas are not accessible and left over spaces in-between developments are major WHS concerns. There is a disconnect between the Junior School and the main campus. Level changes and the need to traverse through other buildings to gain access to the Junior School creates a sense of confusion.



Fitness for Purpose is assessed against the ‘intended future use’ criteria. The ‘New School’ may not be the worst in condition of the onsite facilities, however its learning spaces are small, rooms are silo-ed and lacks agility. There are no spaces for flexible, varied modes of learning. While other spaces on the campus have been identified as poor against the Fitness for Purpose criteria, It is apparent that Trinity is in dire need of contemporary general learning spaces to meet demand for increase in enrolment and provide opportunities of 21st century learning.

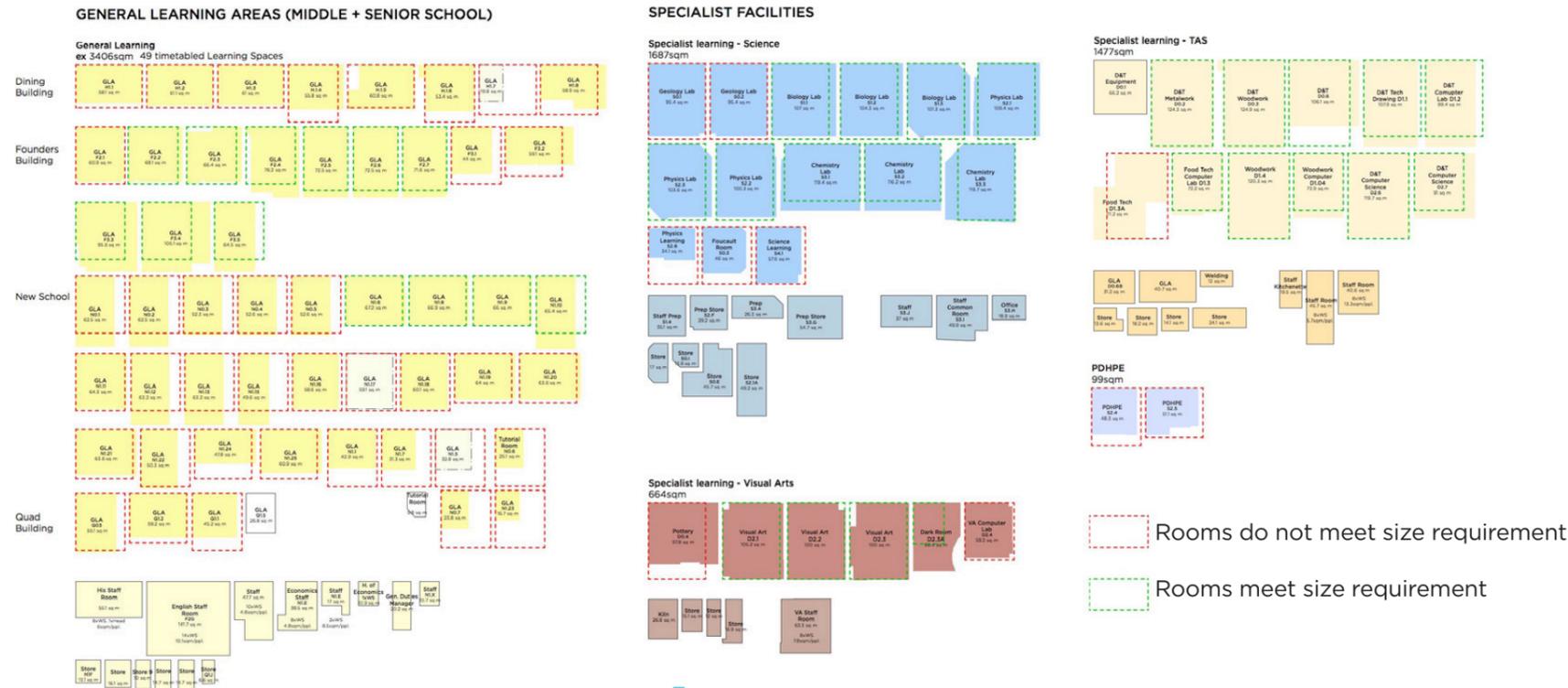
Facilities Assessment

At the start of the planning process, PMDL performed an in-depth assessment of existing facilities at the Summer Hill campus. The facilities are reviewed against criterias such as age, conditions and fitness for purpose. The campus-wide analysis was undertaken to ensure the findings provided PMDL and the School a deep understanding of current status of the campus to enable a holistic, School-wide approach to the development of the brief and vision of the Renewal Project masterplan.

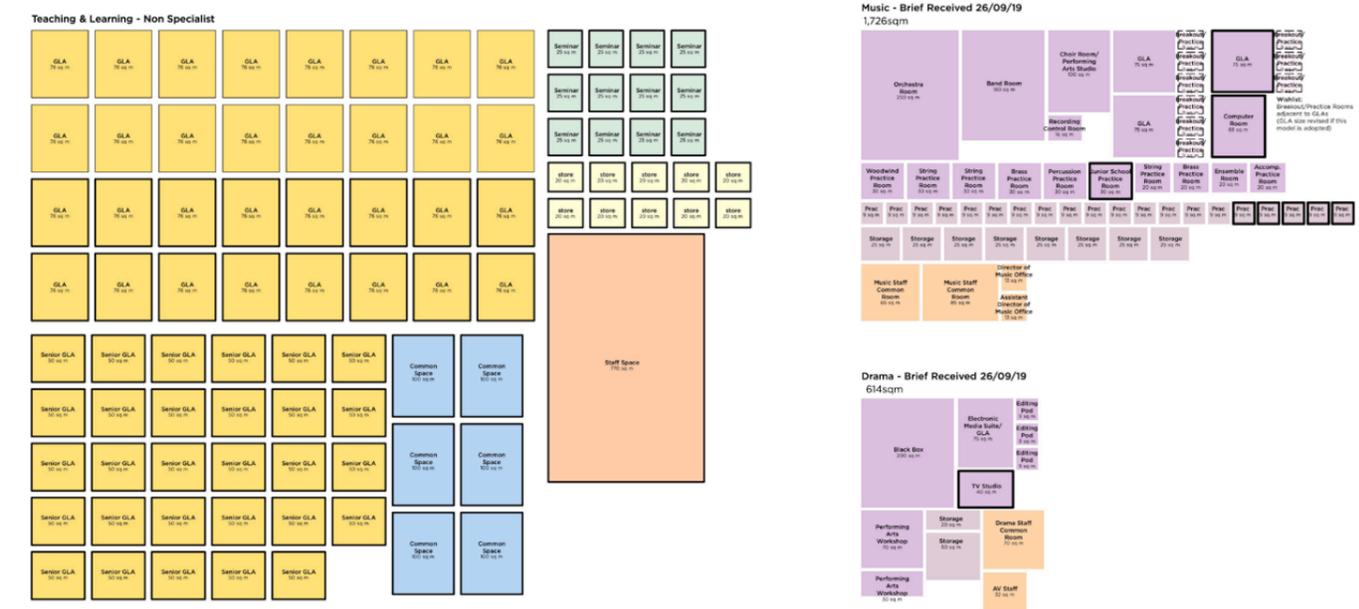
The outcomes of these assessments were indicating that the centre of the campus is where this main issues lay. The ‘New School’ may not be the worst in condition of the onsite facilities, however its learning spaces are small, rooms are silo-ed and lacks agility. There are no spaces for flexible, varied modes of learning. Its close proximity to adjacent buildings and the ad hoc nature of development meant it suffers from a lack of amenity, poor connectivity and accessibility, and no quality connections to outdoor space.

This outcome was presented to the School executives and user groups to be cross checked and confirm their validity.

RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 1. FACILITIES ASSESSMENT AND BRIEF DEVELOPMENT



Renewal Project - Learning Facilities Brief



As informed by the School, based on 280 per year group.
 T&L non-specialist will need
 - 32 GLA's @ 75 - 80 sqm
 - 29 Senior GLA's @ 50 sqm
 - Seminar Rooms - as appropriate

Staff Room Growth is estimated based on a growth pattern proportionate to the growth of students

Spatial Brief Development

Workshops with the School occurred on a regular basis to define and refine the brief for the new development. These workshops included School representatives from the School Executive, Teaching and Learning, Pastoral Care, Co-curricular and Operations & Facilities Management.

The workshops provided the forum to discuss issues of teaching and learning, operations which currently exist at the school, and visions for each user group for the future. The process re-affirmed the School's commitment and vision to provide contemporary teaching and learning spaces for their staff and students.

Trinity Grammar School offers a diverse academic program for its students. This includes the NESA HSC framework, Vocational Education and Training courses and the International Baccalaureate programs. Trinity also has an extensive co-curricular offer which range across the spectrum, from music, to performing arts, humanities and sports programs.

Assessment of the School's pattern of use across the academic, pastoral and co-curriculum offerings shows there is a significant shortfall in appropriate, fit-for-purpose spaces to support Trinity's academic and co-curricular offer, in particular the Teaching & Learning and Music departments. This result drove the focus and development of the Renewal Project around creating additional contemporary Teaching & Learning facilities, and improving the Performing Arts and Music department's offers.

RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 2. SITE ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

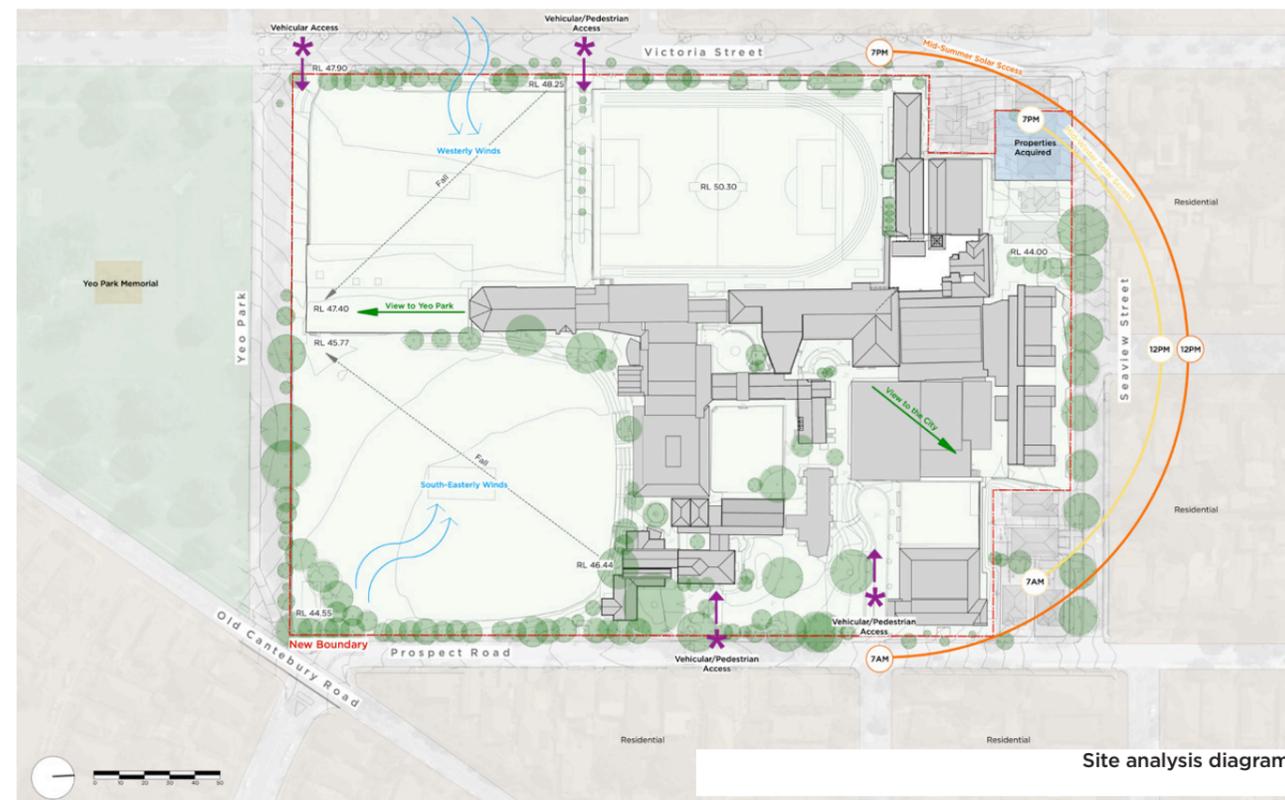


Site Analysis

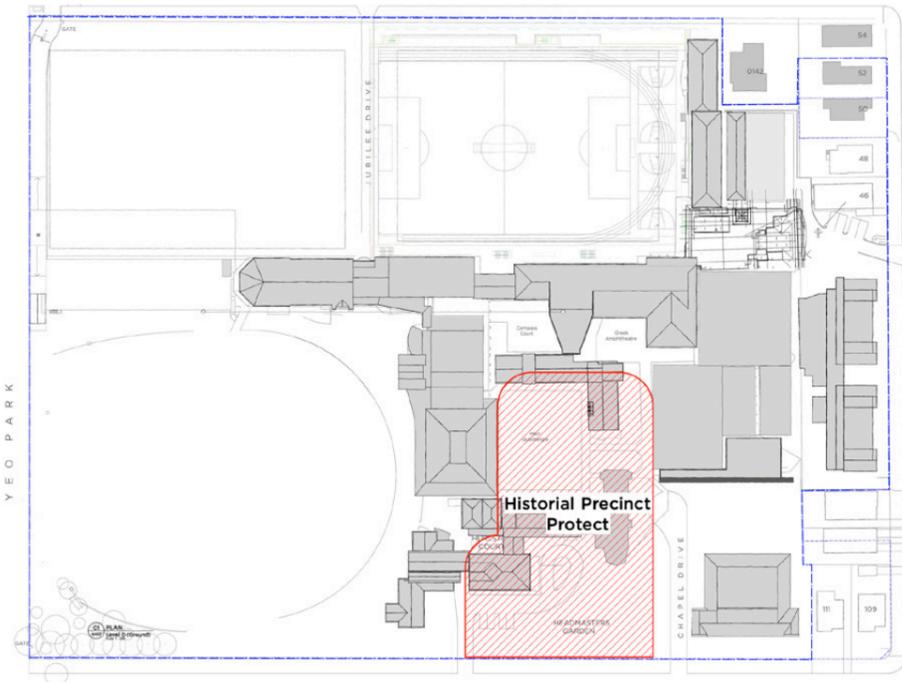
As described in Richard Lamb & Associates Visual Impact Assessment report, the existing Trinity Grammar School occupies the majority of a block bounded by Prospect Road to the east, Seaview Street to the north and Victoria Street to the west. Most of the existing built form on the campus is massed in the north-east quadrant and as a spine of buildings running generally north-south between sports fields to its east and west. The built form of the School varies in bulk and scale from the equivalent of approximately 2 to 4 residential storeys, the tallest form being the ridgeline of the centrally located Assembly Hall building.

Summer Hill is a distinctive suburb, rich in heritage and cultural diversity. The dominant architectural styles are Federation and Inter-War. There are many buildings and places in the suburb that have historical significance. Along with the Head Master's Residence and Chapel at Trinity Grammar School, many of the neighbourhood homes are heritage listed and/or are located within a heritage conservation area.

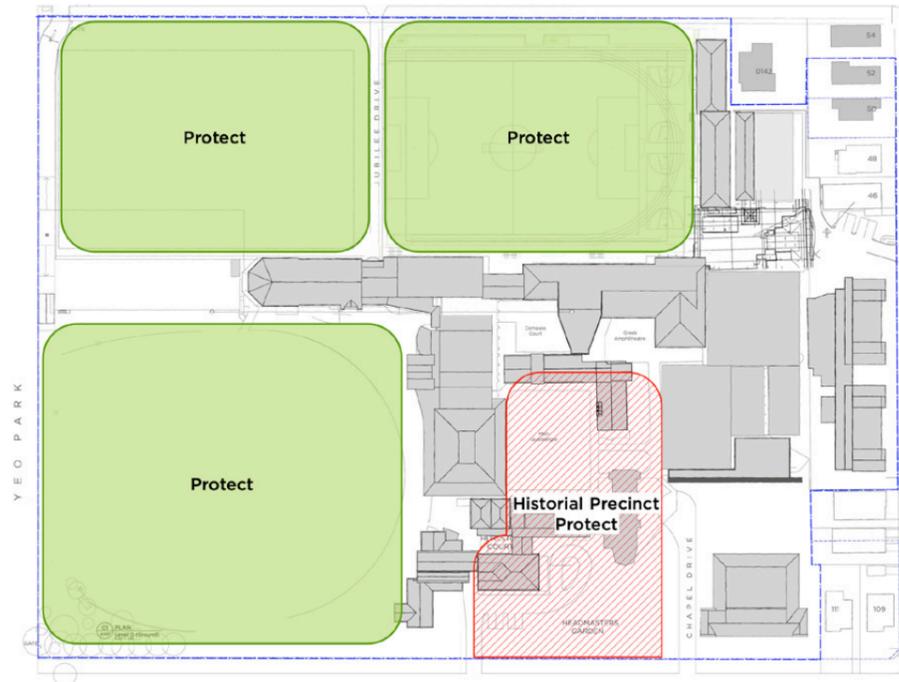
The Renewal Project proposal considers the potential impact on local character and nearby important places. Whilst Richard Lamb & Associates have assessed The Trinity Grammar School Summer Hill campus and stated it is not identified in or under a local environment plan as a scenic protection area, the design team is still mindful of the potential bulk and scale of the proposal and the impact to the vistas across the School grounds.



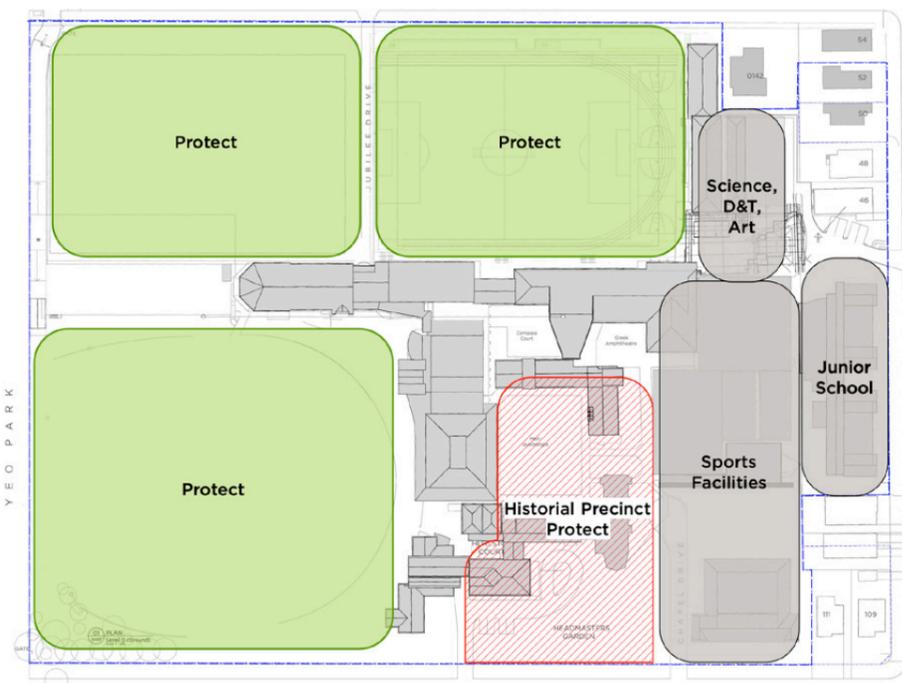
RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 2. SITE ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY



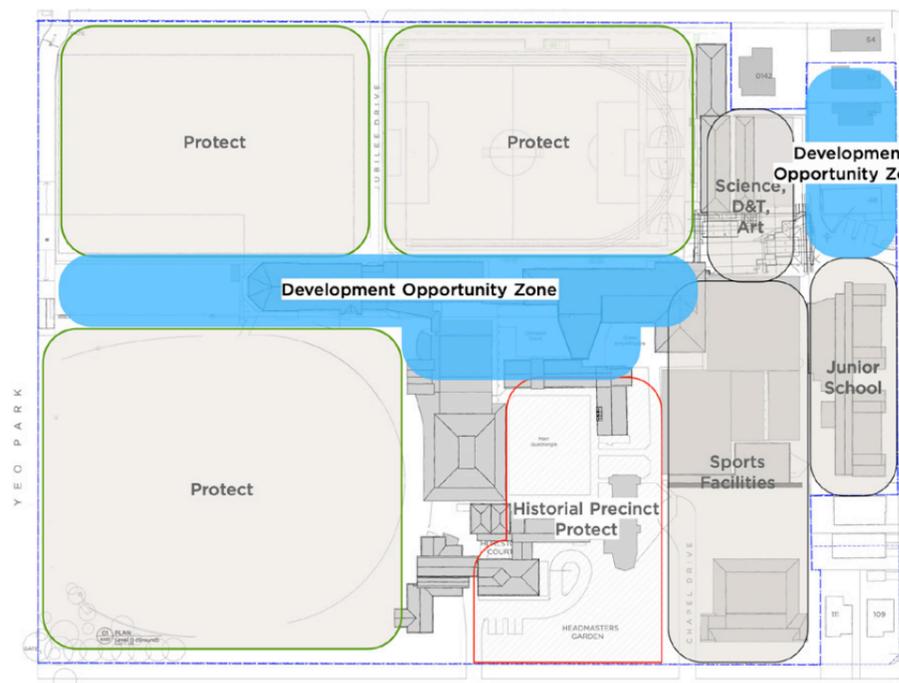
1. Historical Precinct to be maintained and celebrated



2. Retain all three ovals on the campus



3. No development proposed for the sports, junior school and science/D&T/Art facilities



4. Development zone identified from the planning process.

Development Opportunity

By conducting extensive site analysis, various planning studies and site arrangements, PMDL and the design team determined that the most appropriate location for major development is to be at the centre of the site. This outcome is a response to the following planning and design strategies:

1. The historic precinct around the Quadrangle War Memorial Chapel, and Oval 1 to the eastern quadrant of the site is to be preserved and enhanced and no major development should occur in this precinct.

2. The green sporting fields along Victoria Street are to be maintained to facilitate the high usage demand by the School and the wider community. In addition, these green spaces provide a separation between the boundary and the new built form, maintaining the existing leafy character of Victoria Street.

3. The New School, Old Sports Hall, and Old Science form the central campus building group. These buildings are in various stages of ageing and less-than-optimum conditions, whilst other buildings supporting teaching and learning, such as Founders, can be modified to improve their functionality. It became evident that the centre of the campus would be the most suitable location for significant development.

The development opportunities revealed themselves to be the centre of the campus suitable for significant development.. Developing this area will open up opportunities to provide 21st century learning facilities, provide connections across the campus and allow for growth of the School.

RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 3. BUILT FORM



Block diagram as presented to Government Architects

Built Form

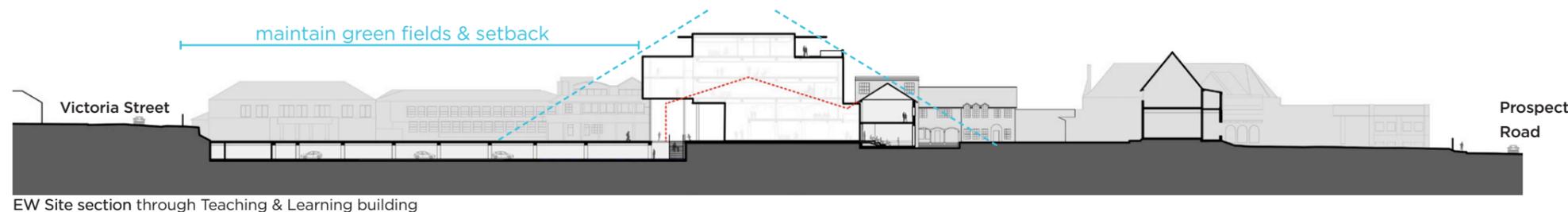
Based on the previously mentioned criterias, assessment and workshop outcomes, PMDL deemed the centre of the site the most suitable location for the new development.

The new developments in the Renewal Project orientates East-West and is concentrated at the centre of the site as a result of the inherent campus context and the need to meet the usage demand and maintain the green field atmosphere.

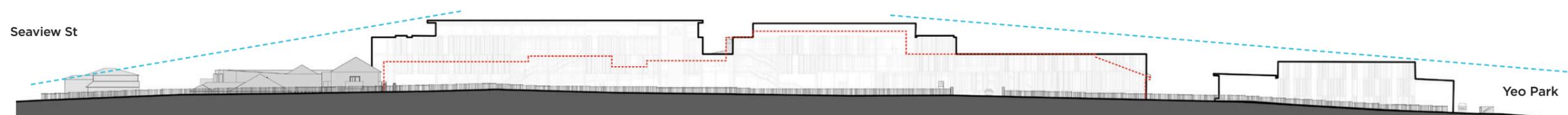
The resulting built form comprise the new 5-storey building to meet the spatial requirement as set out in the design process. The main development will be nestled between the existing School of Music, Sports Centre, Quad Building and Assembly Hall (the tallest building on site at present). To successfully integrate the built form within the existing fabric, the main bulk of the new building elements are confined to the centre of the School's site, with the building height dropping closer to the boundary, which reduces the volume and visual impact and provides a gradation that blends into the adjacent buildings.

The top level of the main development consists of teaching and learning spaces and central plant system (air cooled), chosen for its longevity and environmental benefits. This floor which is set back from the footprint of the main development (i.e the wedding cake effect) in all orientations, coupled by difference in material treatment, will reduce the overall perception of height and bulk.

The Renewal Project proposes minimal built work near the boundary. Where there is work proposed, landscape strategy improves on the qualities of the streetscape and mitigates negative impacts onto neighbouring sites.

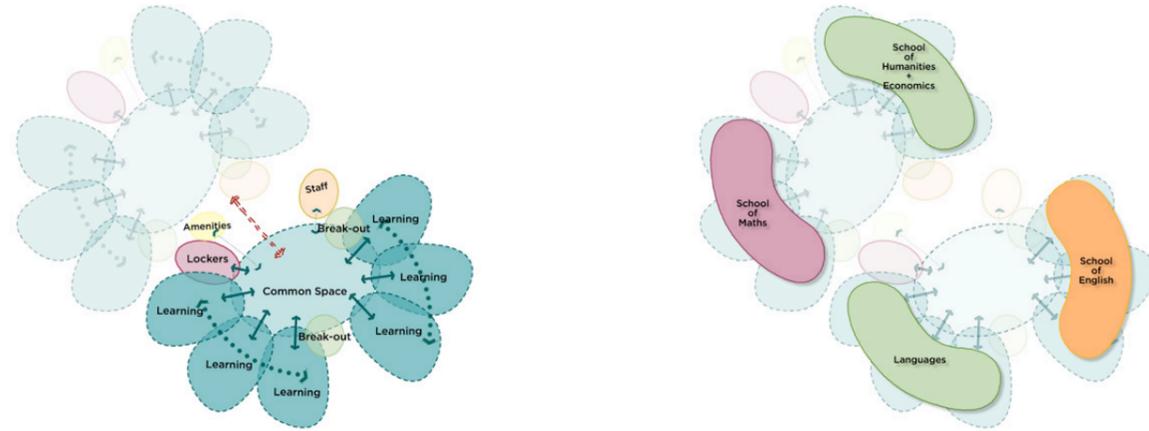


EW Site section through Teaching & Learning building

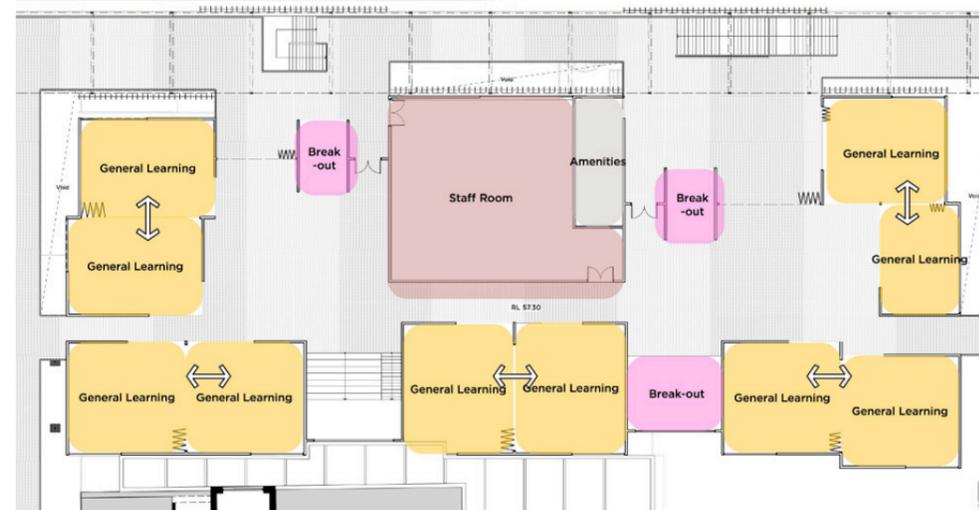


North South Site section through Victoria Street

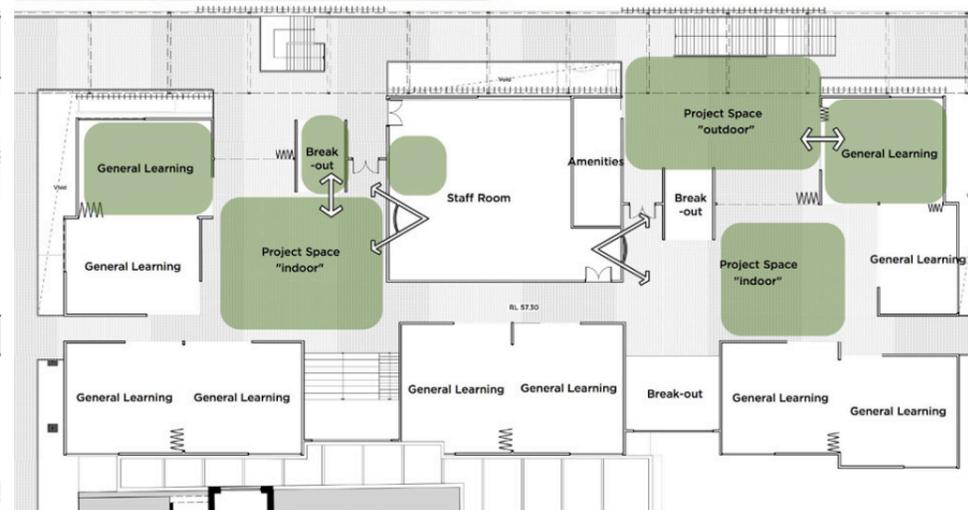
RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 3. BUILT FORM



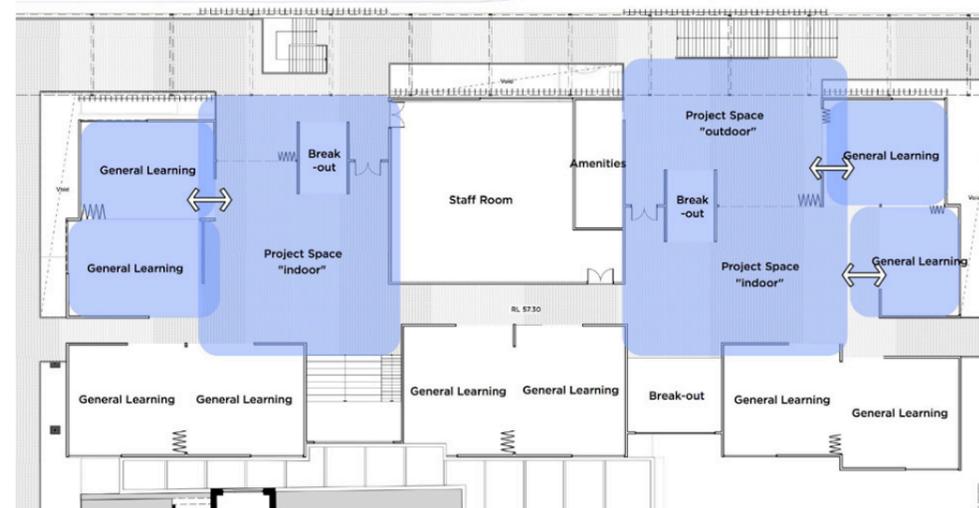
Spatial Relationship Diagram



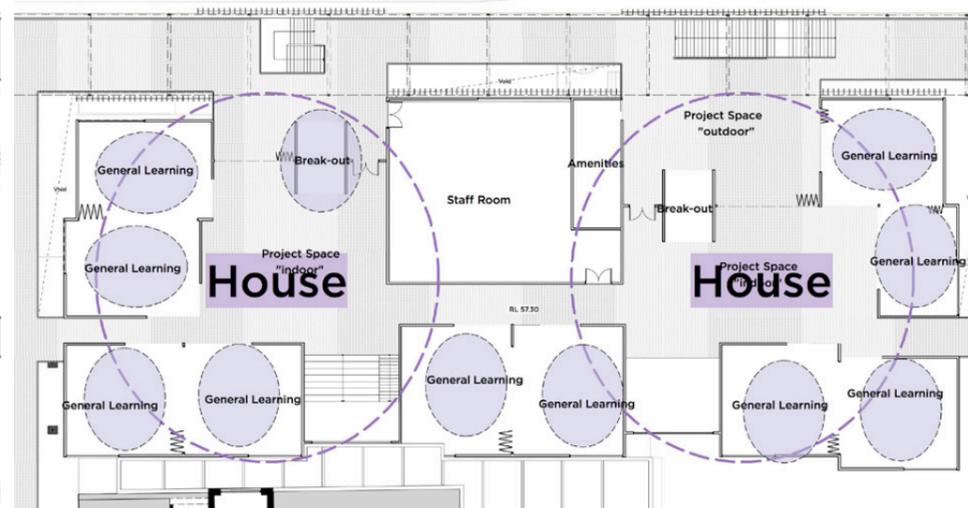
Typical T&L Floor - Classroom arrangement



Typical T&L Floor - Co-curricular program arrangement with staff supervision



Typical T&L Floor - Co-teaching, project based, collaborative learning arrangement



Typical T&L Floor - Pastoral house group overlay

Efficiency in Planning

The planning of the Renewal Project is very much driven by efficiency in the functionality of spaces. General Learning Areas are overlaid with varying uses to maximise efficiencies in planning. These include faculty departments, Co-curricular spaces and pastoral care areas to create multi-dimensional and efficient environments to meet the demands of the brief and increase in enrolment in the future.

The Renewal Project is driven by a brief that is the outcome of a rigorous design consultation process. The new development, along with refurbishment of existing facilities, will provide essential spaces necessary to provide the future students and staff with a contemporary learning environment.

RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 3. BUILT FORM

Visual Impact Assessment

The siting, planning and design strategies are all consistent to create a result that causes minimal change to the composition of the views, retention of the character of the streetscape and enhancement of the amenity of the views.

The proposed design has been assessed in detail by Richard Lamb & Associates (RLA) in the Visual Impact Assessment Report submitted as part of the SSD application. Their summary conclusion is as below:

- “The visual context beyond the site includes predominantly low-density residential development and public open space.
- The potential visual catchment is small and highly constrained by the adjacent subdivision pattern, scale of buildings and vegetation.
- The most extensive potential visual catchment is to the west would be limited to the close and medium range public and private domain views from Victoria Street.

- The effective visual catchment includes a limited number of immediately neighbouring residences, some of which are likely to have limited or no existing access to distant scenic features beyond the site.
- We do not anticipate that either public or private domain view loss is likely to be a significant issue.
- Public domain locations of higher sensitivity for example parks and reserves have been considered. Impacts on specific heritage items and views have been considered by others.
- We anticipate that the visual effects of the proposed development will not create significant negative visual impacts in relation to the character or quality of views assessed.
- Certified photomontages prepared for a representative range of views demonstrate that the proposal would complement and enhance the visual environment of Trinity Grammar School and its visual catchment.”



RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 3. BUILT FORM



VP3 View east from adjacent to 153 Victoria Street



VP3 Proposed



VP4 Detail view north-east from the corner of Holwood Avenue & Victoria Street



VP4 Proposed



VP5 View from adjacent to 175 Victoria Street



VP5 Proposed

RtS DESIGN AMENDMENT

Reduce height of Level 5 Roof by 500mm on T&L block and Mechanical enclosure by 400mm

As part of the response to submissions process, the design team has undertaken the exercise to review opportunities to reduce the height and bulk of the building.

The original proposed roof RL to top of Teaching & Learning block was RL69.30. The new updated design drops the level to RL68.80.

The original proposed mechanical plant enclosure was RL68.60. It is now proposed at RL68.20.

Updated elevations are submitted as part of the RtS and new photomontages with supporting visual impact assessment commentary by RLA in reference to the amendment.

Further clarification from RLA was prepared and submitted in the RtS, with particular emphasis on the bulk and scale as perceived from the Victoria Street frontage. RLA's response is as follows:-

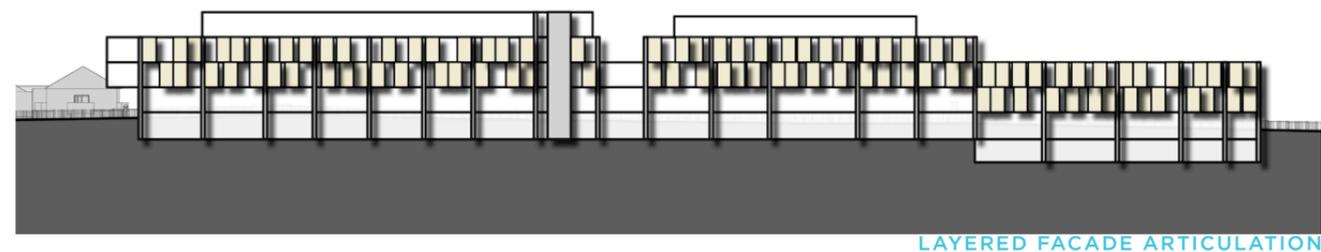
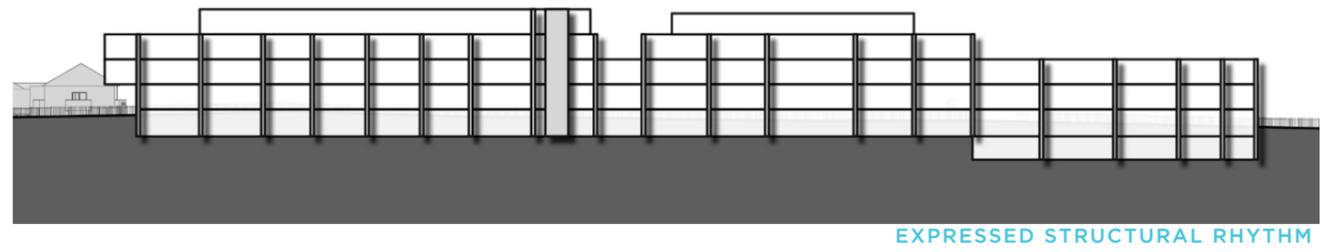
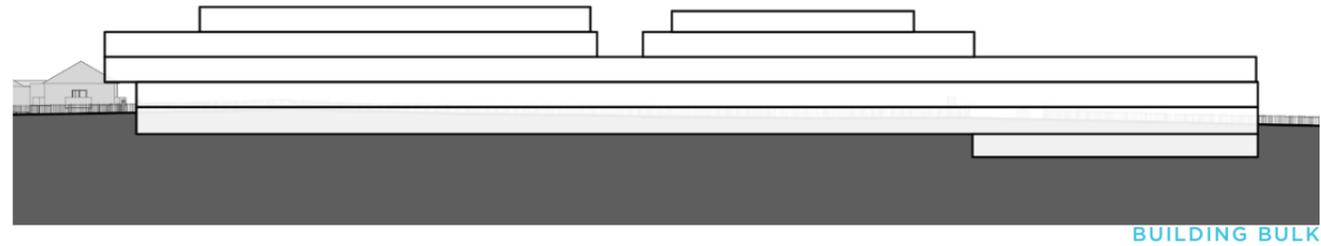
“The proposed modified design is subtly but detectably different from the existing application, with reduced bulk at the upper level, reduced height and greater articulation.

As noted earlier (in the RtS VIA report), we don't consider that the height or bulk of the existing application are excessive, nor that there would be significant impacts on views from the neighbours. The reduction in height does not provide better views of any items beyond the site.

However, the proposed modification do provide a perceivable reduction in bulk of the upper levels of the development and a minor improvement to the apparent articulation of the proposal on either side of the lift core.”

“The height and bulk of the proposal has been taken into account at every level of the RLA methodology. The overall visual impacts were found to be low.”

RESPONSE BUILT FORM - 4. ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT



Breaking Down Scale

The key design elements proposed in the Renewal Project aim to visually breakdown the bulk and scale of the new development, with particular attention paid to the western walkway structure, known as the "Arrow Building".

The Arrow Building is both a contextual and functional response to the site and brief of the project. It is a consolidation of horizontal and vertical circulation paths, connecting the new developments with the old, and link from carpark level to the upper most floor. The implementation of this 'plug-on' circulation is a multi-dimensional solution to improve circulation, provide greater flexibility and agility of use of the internal building footprint, provide an environmental response to the conditions and also architectural treatment to the development.

The structure consists of columns and slabs as a means to provide a lightweight, layered element to the bulk of the building behind. The columns and slabs are clearly expressed to proportionally break down the long span of the Renewal Project.

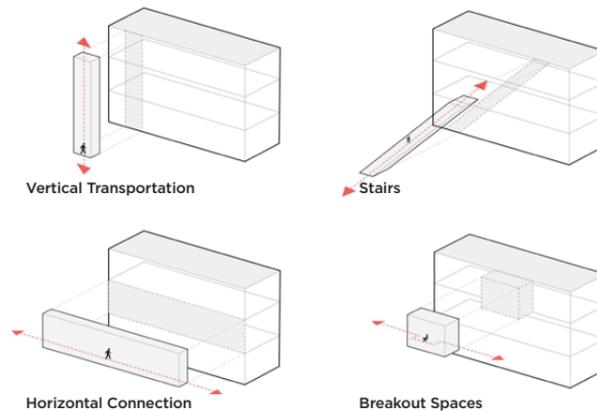
The form of the arrow is a response to its function, so the clarity of the actions are visible and defined as part of the overall strategy to define the environment and articulate the facade. In plan, the Arrow Building steps in and out, creating zones which pop-out to form social and gathering spaces. This plan is translated into the elevation, creating a dynamic western profile with varying planes and providing visual relief to the building's length.

Key place makers such as the lift tower and Assembly Hall foyer are emphasised through varying architectural expressions and treatments along the frontage which breaks up the scale of the overall appearance of the development.

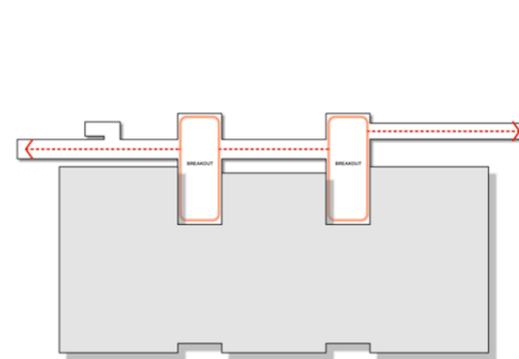
Whilst the Arrow Building is a continuous structure, transparency is achieved in the treatment and the result is a breakup of the building volumes whilst still maintaining a coherent appearance from the western viewpoint.

Furthermore, the top level of the main development sets back from the footprint of the main development (i.e the wedding cake effect) and coupled by difference in treatment, reduces the overall perception of height and bulk.

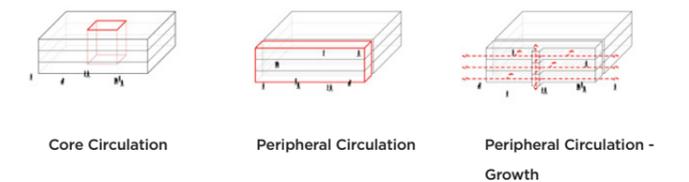
FORM AND FUNCTION



VARYING PLANES



CONTINUOUS CIRCULATION / 'PLUG-ON'

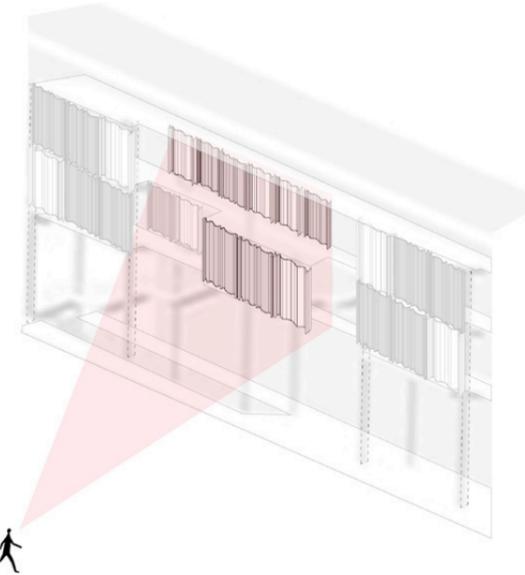


RESPONSE

1. BUILT FORM - 4. ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT



The combination of perforation of light weight screens, irregular install and layering all contributes to de-bulking the overall aesthetic of the Renewal Project.



CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

A holistic composition of undulating screen installation spanning 1.5 ovals in length when viewed from afar will appear like a facade of irregular, vertical lines, gives the project a homogeneous yet, dynamic appearance. The shadowing effect will further contribute to this appearance, Furthermore the 'look' will evolve throughout the day, as a result of the changing lighting and weather conditions. The combination of colour, form, perforation and material will create a facade that reacts to the environment and moves and transform as the viewer moves around the campus.

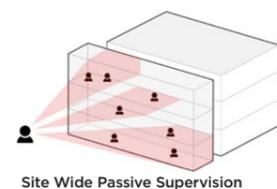
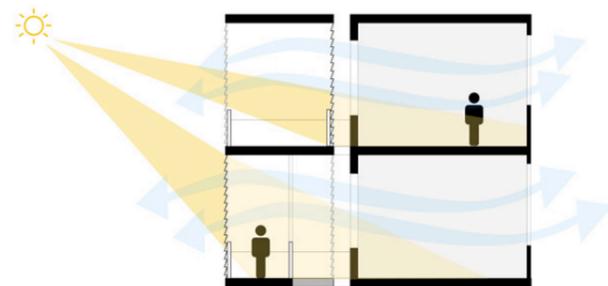
Materiality and Screening

The Arrow Building extends across the new proposed Teaching & Learning Precinct, Performing Arts Precinct and refurbished Music Building. Undulating perforated metal screens set in an irregular rhythm are proposed to shelter the façades of the learning spaces beyond. The screens soften the perceived bulkiness and the application of screens at different planes of the Arrow Building introduces depth and modulation to the proposed development. The translucent nature of the screens ensures the break-up of volume and bulk via the architectural expressions of the Arrow Building's structure, expression of the precinct's built volumes beyond is maintained and visible. It provides a refreshed facade to the existing buildings, unifies the western frontage and de-bulks the overall appearance of the Renewal Project.

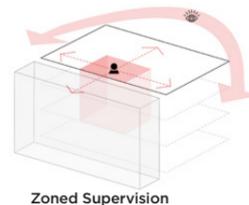
The top floor of the proposed 5 storey Teaching & Learning development is stepped back and articulated differently to mitigate the visual impact of the perceived bulk of the overall development.

The scale of the building has also been addressed in the way the building meets the ground. Lower levels are set back to present a light weight, elevated form, reducing the perceived scale. Landscaping is used to enhance the educational and recreational opportunities on the site as well as softening the ground plane to which the new building hovers over.

PERMEABILITY - VENTILATION AND LIGHT CONTROL TRANSPARENCY - SUPERVISION AND CHILD SAFETY



Site Wide Passive Supervision



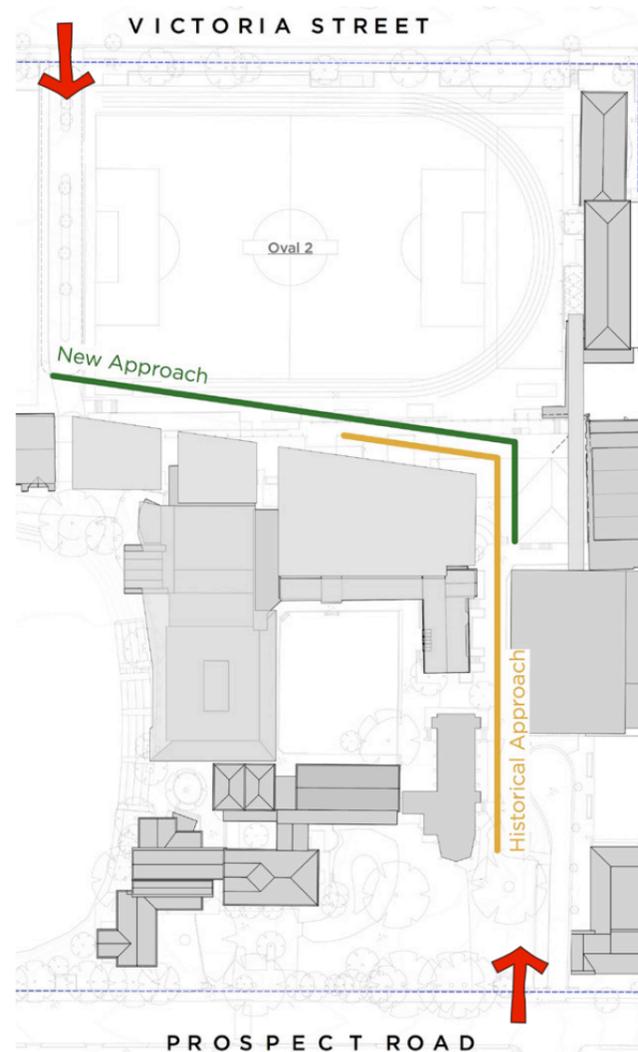
Zoned Supervision



HUMAN SCALE EXPERIENCE

The façade gains movement and depth the closer one approaches. The wave forms can be experienced up close. The distinct panel forms will create a dynamic experience at a human level. The undulated perforated aluminium panels allow light and air to permeate. The play of light and shadows will transform the aesthetics of the screens as well as the environment they shelter.

RESPONSE BUILT FORM AND HERITAGE - 4. ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT



New Approach

The agora will be the new civic heart for the campus, it is the convergence point for all whom comes to the school. This is also the space where the past transgresses into the future.



Historical Approach

Building Material Approach

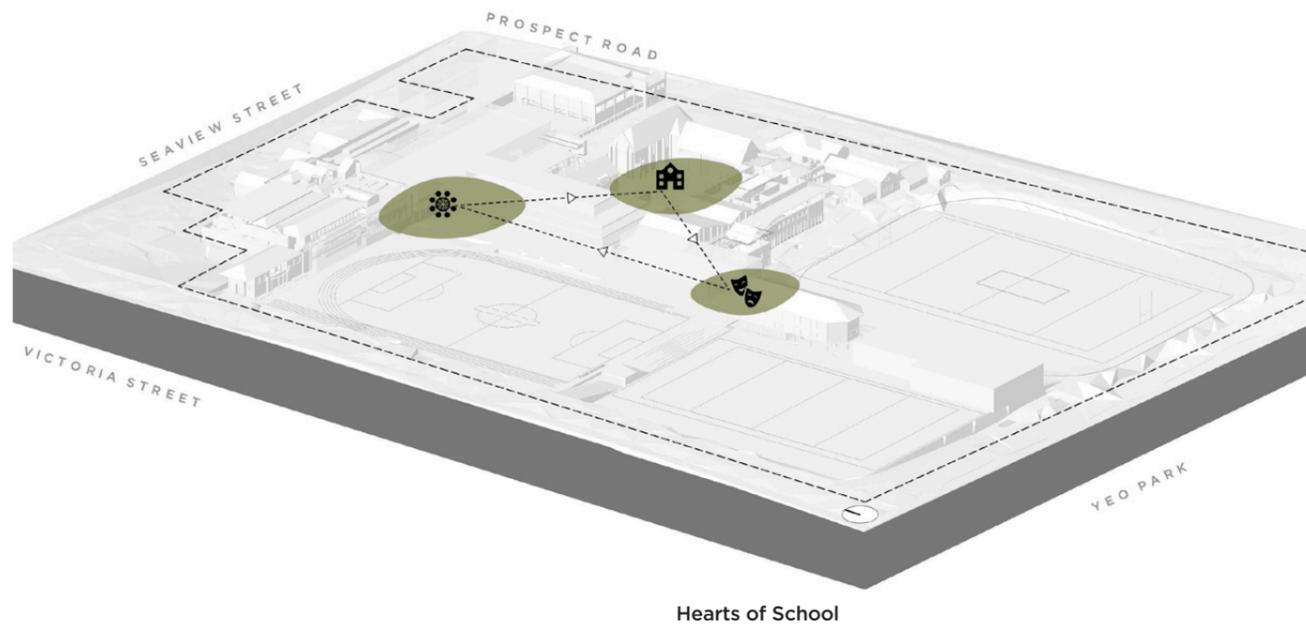
The Renewal Project will enhance the overall campus aesthetic and improve the presentation to the public realm, through a design that is respectful to the context whilst presenting a contemporary, and inviting solution that celebrates the Trinity Grammar School identity.

A visual study of existing building typology provided a good reference for the approach to built form, articulation and materiality.

The exterior architectural approach and material selection acknowledges that the School has a number of historically iconic buildings but does not need to emulate the old. The undulating screens are a new element introduced to the existing campus aesthetic, but as a nod to the existing characteristics, a variegation of champagne / bronzed toned panels provides a references back to the variegated brick and sandstone character of the key iconic buildings on site.

The design responds to the positive elements of the site, enhances the greenery and the natural materials of the surrounding neighbourhoods. The resulting aesthetic will become a coherent backdrop and cause minimal change to the composition of the views, retains the principle and positive character of the campus and enhancement of the amenity of the views as a background plane to the foliated streetscape.

RESPONSE HERITAGE - INDIGENOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE



Hearts of School



- “The proposal should demonstrate how Aboriginal culture and heritage has been incorporated in the design proposal including built form and landscaping.”

Response

Traditional Darug themes of “Country” have been drawn upon and meshed with the strong community spirit of Trinity Grammar School. These include an overall site planning strategy stemmed from Aboriginal meeting places focusing on:

- Ceremony -Hearts of school - Agora, Quadrangle and Performing Arts Precinct.
- Learning - Internal and external breakout spaces to support formal teaching spaces
- Meeting Places - a range of spaces that vary from intimate and introspective, to active and extroverted settings.

These spaces offset from the ‘Arrow Building’, an artillery walkway structure that provides equitable connection to new and existing facilities. Architecturally the structure is lined with screens to provide shelter and privacy to breakout areas, whilst holistically maintain visual connections to the campus. The intension is to create awareness of one’s presence in the Trinity Grammar School campus, and instil a strong sense of belonging and strengthen communal bond for its students and staff.

Thus the key offers of the Renewal Project are bound by core traditional Aboriginal qualities that include: collective gather; inclusive spatial planning; and non hierarchical spatial equity.

There will be opportunity to integrate Aboriginal culture and heritage references in meaningful ways for this project through way finding, materiality, placemaking, landscape design and public art. Further consultation will occur during detailed design of the project to ensure cultural references and story telling will be carefully articulated and celebrated.



SHRUBS



GROUNDCOVERS



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