



Project Summary: NEW PUBLIC SCHOOL IN WAGGA WAGGA

The Site

The new public school in Wagga Wagga is a K-6 public school, located at the southern boundary of Charles Sturt University (CSU), on Estella Road, Estella (Wagga). The site is bounded to the north and west by CSU; to the east by recreational facilities (currently on CSU land, but soon to be transferred to Wagga Wagga City Council ownership) and to the south by the residential area of Estella. The site for the new school is approximately 3 hectares. The new public school will cater for the residential growth areas of Estella and Boorooma, in North Wagga Wagga.

Brief

The new school is proposed to include 16 Home Bases (classrooms), catering for 370 students, with a master planning provision for a future increase to 24 Home Bases/ 552 students. The school's common facilities (Administration, Staff, Library, Hall, Canteen, Stores and Student Amenities) will be provided to cater for the full 24 Home Base capacity (21 Core School, according to SI NSW's Educational Facilities and Guidelines), to allow for the future anticipated growth. The school will additionally provide for staff parking on site and ample open space, exceeding for the Department's minimum 10m² / student allowance.

Site and Environment

The defined and usable outdoor spaces will enable student learning throughout the school, in addition with allowing for student curiosity, creativity and exploration through passive and active play spaces. The built form of the proposed design deliberately defines the outdoor areas, which are connected by a meandering circulation path, which winds its way from the 'welcome mat' at the front of the school, through community kitchen gardens, the school heart, learning courtyards, and through to active play areas at the north of the site.

The proposed school addresses its unique site, and embraces its community neighbours, and also responds to environmental constraints and opportunities. The buildings are located along a winding path that steps up the slope of the site, engaging the school with the natural topography of the site, and simultaneously allowing for accessible site access along sloped walkways. Additionally, the buildings align their long elevations to face north, allowing for appropriate control of solar access into the interiors; and are also allowing for cross-ventilation. Opportunities will be made for recycling and reuse, both in construction and operation of the school. Additionally, rainwater harvesting and reuse will be utilised, and this and all environmental features will be highly visible and incorporated as educational tools for students and the local community.

Community Partnerships

The school will be a partnership between SI NSW, Charles Sturt University and Wagga Wagga City Council, with joint community facilities on the school site, including community meeting room(s), kitchenette, trainee teacher facilities and public toilets. The school will foster and support evidence-based, collaborative and innovative teaching practices that will enable a quality education for students, staff and trainee teachers alike. Additionally, core facilities, like the Hall and Library, would be accessible for shared community use after hours. The placement of, and access provisions for, the joint and shared community facilities have been carefully considered to enable separate public entry, maintaining the secure perimeter of the school (and the safety of students) during school hours, and providing for clear and direct access out of school hours.

The planning of the school site has deliberately made allowance for use of the school's open areas for out-of-hours community use. In this way, the school will break down the traditional boundaries with the adjacent community areas. Additionally, the school would have access to many surrounding CSU and recreational facilities will enable a rich education experience. CSU teaching, lecture, maker spaces, art gallery and the library/ resource centre would be available for shared school use. A public dental clinic in the CSU Dentistry Facility would be close to the northern boundary of the school. The school is also located close to the Yindyamurra Reconciliation Place, located north-west of the site on CSU land. Provision would be made for clear links to this important Wiradjuri site, with opportunities for learning about Wiradjuri heritage, culture and the notion of 'caring for country' embedded in the school. Additionally, the school would have access to the adjacent Peter Hastie oval, in addition to proposed sports courts, bike and walking tracks in the Council recreation area. In this way, the school would form part of an active and engaging community education hub, supporting life-long learning for all.