

16 September 2017

## **FAIRVALE HIGH SCHOOL, FAIRFIELD**

### **DESIGN QUALITY STATEMENT**

JDH Architects has undertaken the design of the new learning building, multipurpose hall & covered outdoor learning area (COLA) and upgrade of the administration facilities at Fairvale High School. The scope of works includes construction of new permanent general and specialist learning spaces, a multipurpose hall, covered outdoor learning area (COLA), upgrade of staff and administration facilities, upgrade of the main school entry and the removal of existing temporary learning accommodation and existing hall accommodation (Bini-Shell). The design of these buildings has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Education Facilities Standards and Guidelines (EFSG) as published by the NSW Department of Education. The design is consistent with the requirements of the EFSG.

In accordance with the State Environment Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017, under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act of 1979, the design of this project has considered the following principles:

#### **Principle 1 – Context, built form and landscape**

The design of the new buildings has considered the existing site context, location of existing buildings, neighbours and the local community. Most buildings on the site date from the original 1969 development (four courtyard buildings and the canteen) apart from the existing hall housed in a “Binishell” constructed in 1974. Unfortunately, the Binishell has required significant structural reinforcements during its lifetime, and to date has not met the spatial requirements of a hall for a school of that size. There are also 19 demountable buildings on the site which have been added over time to support the growing population of the school. The building proposal recognises the need for adequate teaching facilities as well as the schools position in the residential context. The new multipurpose hall, replacing the “bini-shell,” will be located adjacent to Avery Park, ensuring neighbouring properties are not affected by overshadowing and ambient noise. The location of the new hall, adjacent to existing sporting facilities and the library, also favours future opportunities for community engagement and use.

The street fabric has been given consideration with the bulk of the new learning facilities located well within school grounds. The materiality for both new buildings is sympathetic to its context, providing a modest reference to the immediate surrounds, while incorporating modern features.

The site currently does not have a clearly defined public entrance, with various student/service entries scattered throughout the site. The location of the administration facilities within the new building have been carefully considered to provide a welcoming and inclusive entry for staff, students, parents and the community. Both buildings will be complemented by new landscaping, with trees and plants selected to suit the requirements of the local area.

## **Principle 2 – Sustainable, efficient and durable**

The new multipurpose hall has been oriented to maximise access to northern/southern light, existing outdoor sporting facilities, and to take advantage of existing parking/bus access. Combined with appropriate shading the location provides the best solution for court orientation as well as large scale school and community gatherings.

Due to site constraints the new learning building is oriented east/west. To address this the building design features appropriate vertical shading, considered openings and services located primarily to the east. The width of the building has been driven by the need to maximise cross-ventilation and minimise reliance on mechanical cooling. Learning spaces including science and food technology are designed to open to common balconies and open space to allow for external learning opportunities.

The buildings have been designed in accordance with the NSW Department of Education “Education Facilities Standards and Guidelines” to incorporate passive environmental design elements that reduce the need for mechanical heating and cooling, including building orientation, sun-shading, natural ventilation, solar energy and thermal mass. In addition, all materials selected are durable and do not require ongoing maintenance. Solar panels will be installed to assist off-set the electrical load of the new works.

The project aims to incorporate the value Fairvale High School places on the quality of the working/learning environment by providing outdoor connections. This includes opportunities for classrooms to open out onto the landscape, balconies that encourage education, future focused learning, reflection, and creative endeavour.

## **Principle 3 – Accessible and inclusive**

Fairvale High School believes in an open and welcoming environment that promotes safety and accessibility to the whole community. Regrettably, the school for the most part is not accessible at the current time and it would be very difficult for a student, parent or staff member with a disability to navigate around the school. All the original buildings are two storey without lifts on site, with limited access to the ground floor facilities.

The school site is relatively flat and there are opportunities to introduce more equitable and accessible classrooms in the new facilities. The new proposal has carefully considered the siting of the buildings to address access for staff, parents and students. The new administration facilities are integrated in the new learning building and is positioned immediately adjacent to the existing Block A which will be

refurbished with new staff facilities. The building surrounds will incorporate new ramps integrated into the existing landscape to gain access to the assembly courts and blocks B and E. The building is designed with a central lift, and a bridging link on the first floor to provide access to the mezzanine level of the hall.

## **Principle 4 – Health and safety**

The project considers the health and safety of all potential users to ensure that everyone can enjoy the new facilities safely. Safety in design has been considered at all stages of the project and any identified safety concerns have been designed out early in the design process.

The building has been sited carefully to consider the general safety of the public domain. The buildings have been located adjacent the boundaries on Thorney Road and Zarlee Street which assist in providing passive surveillance to the public domain, while ensuring that school remains accessible, welcoming and considerate of its neighbours. The new learning building also provides a central breezeway to ensure connections to maintain lines of sight between the new hall, canteen and the existing buildings on site. In addition, the canteen has been situated to maintain constant passive surveillance of the sports field, while the staff and admin facilities are able to supervise the flow of visitors on and off the site.

## **Principle 5 – Amenity**

The completed project at Fairvale High School will provide a range of pleasant and engaging spaces which can be enjoyed for educational, informal and community activities. There will be landscaped areas provided around the building which will enhance the amenity of the site and soften the appearance of buildings. The project incorporates planting of additional trees to improve the appearance of the site.

The project increases the amenity for students and staff with varying mobility by improving access to sports courts and existing building throughout the site. Ensuring physical and visual connection of the new and existing areas on site has been a key driver of the design and remains central to the project. The design also opportunity for a community use, strengthening the use and connection to Avery Park with the positioning of the multipurpose hall.

## **Principle 6 – Whole of life, flexible and adaptive**

When designing any educational facility, it is crucial to understand that the way we teach changes over time, and any teaching space must embed the potential to adapt to a variety of uses, be able to be re-configured easily and be suitable for future changing needs. The project has engaged the services of an Educational Planner to ensure the design of the new learning spaces adheres to the schools current and future needs. Collaborative learning spaces are designed to connect to general learning spaces, and breakout spaces which enable different learning activities, combined class activities and ensure no space is left un-utilised. The diversity of adaptable spaces promotes flexible classroom programs. The design also integrates technology to support the teaching methodology of the school and adapt as needs change and develop.

The learning building provides flexible options for the size and layout of the classrooms to assist with reconfiguring spaces to adapt to changing and developing teaching styles. This provides a planning structure that supports collaborative learning, individual learning and combined class activities. The project at Fairvale High School will provide learning spaces that are suitable for the many different learning styles that it caters for in its very diverse school population. Not only will these flexible learning spaces focus on academic achievement but also allow the students to be emotionally and socially prepared for life beyond the school.

## Principle 7 – Aesthetics

The masterplanning and location of the new buildings on site have been carefully considered to address the existing layout of the site and improve wayfinding, access, lines of site, connection with community and the outdoors. The buildings actively promote the connection of students to outside spaces and outdoor learning, as well as providing opportunity for community engagement. Much attention has been given to enhancing visual and physical connection through the overall layout of the site.

The project aims to engage the community and it's context through the selection of complimentary materials and finishes, and by enhancing the street presence of the school with respect to the residential neighbouring blocks. The buildings provide a contemporary form to undertake a respectful dialogue between the "old" and the "new". The proportions of the buildings have been carefully considered to add a new and innovative character to the school, without generating an overbearing bulky structure. The selection of materials and finishes has been developed to compliment the context, while providing a sophisticated palette of finishes.



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NSW Reg: 9635