9 October 2022

Director - Social and Infrastructure Assessments
Planning and Assessment
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Dear Sir or Madam

NEW HIGH SCHOOL IN BUNGENDORE
APPLICATION NO. SSD-14394209

I refer to the above state-significant development application.

I support us having a great high school in Bungendore, I do not support the idea where you want to put it. I am 3 years old, I will go to Bungendore Pre School, public school and highschool. I love my town and I want it to stay special, healthy and safe. And I want a very good school for science and running around, and relaxing.

I think that you didn't think about the people who live here, and you made some choices that will give unhelpful consequences, and so try again. You just do it. Its Ok. Find a new place for my school please so it can be a good school with lots of space, and I also have my park. It's not that hard to me. If you want my help, I can show you why the park is good and the school needs to go somewhere that isn't there.

I saw your map and your pictures at the library and I think that you can make something look good in your picture but it isn't good for real life. For real life grass is good, running is good. Riding my balance bike between preschool and big school is good. Flying a kite is good. School should be a really nice place for kids to learn and be helped to live to grow up and have a happy life. How can you do that when our school which is supposed to be brand new and cost more than lots of millions of dollars and it doesn't have enough space for me and my friends? Did you know we are all supposed to run around for 3 hours a day? And when we play and relax outside and go inside we can do good reading because we can focus more. And mums and dad and grannies shouldn't lose their park just so I can have a school. You trick us thinking we can only get one not two. We need two, a school and a park. No tricks anymore, just do your problem solving like we do.

My grandmother picks me up from school. My grandfather picks me up from school, they have rights too. They want a park to spend time in with us. And they want what is good for us and healthy and for a good school. My mother loves to walk and ride along the street you want to demolish. Kids and parents want safe spaces. And trees and grass. That's why we live here. So. You read what my grand ma says and remember – think about the kids and all the people in the town. That way you can see that you need to put our highschool somewhere else close by that is a good place instead of eating all our nice places up in our town. You can read what my family thinks if

you want to hear it from a grown up, but you should listen to me and my brother just as much as grown ups and you should listen well.

I **object** to the location of the high school, for the following reasons.

As a family who pays tax of NSW and a rates payer of Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) I find it indefensible that $71 million will be spent on the school, making it the fifth most expensive public school ever built. This on a site that is below the Department of Education's (DE) size recommendation, is completely unfit for purpose which allows no room for expansion and which allows only a very small area for expansion, and which, according to DE's Site Map of September 2022, has effectively no playground. DE guidelines state that the minimum size for a regional high school in 4 hectares, but the proposed location is a mere 2.9 hectares!

The September 2022 Information Pack addresses a number of issues highlighted during the exhibition of the EIS.

The amended design clearly shows the impact that the sub-standard size has on the high school's design and underlines that the site is very much unfit for its core purpose, the provision of a 21st century standard school. Both a number and size of the proposed buildings have been reduced and yet the capacity remains at 450. How can that be an acceptable response to the questions raised that followed the initial draft?

The proposed capacity of 450 manifestly understates the potential enrolment and disregards the expanded drawing zone that now includes Tarago-Bungendore Road to Collector Road and Taylor's Creek Road, Mt Fairy Road and Western Leg Road (Tarago). The well documented residential developments in and around Bungendore, including the newly opened Elmgrove estate and two further residential developments in Bywong and Sutton, both in the school's drawing area, will dramatically impact on enrolment numbers.

Information obtained under a Government Information (Public Access Act) application indicates that the DE anticipates student numbers will reach 478 in 2026, 511 in 2031 and 566 in 2036. Such is the expected increase that the local Member has stated publicly that the school would "accommodate more than 700 students…down the track". Where on this site would those extra students be accommodated?

The indicative "Area for Expansion" on the site map appears to be significantly smaller than the games court (F on site map). What is the actual size of that area? What number and size of buildings could be built on it. Or is it the DE's plan to simply declare that more of Bungendore Park is needed to meet the increased enrolments, thus denying our community even more of our green space?

Bungendore Park was created as part of the original grid pattern of the village with access to all of the community. The plan provided for the erection of the buildings that now make up the historic heart of the town and streets that allowed uninterrupted traffic flow. The proposed "School Avenue" and landscaping, designed to "reinstate the original Majara Street alignment" does not align with the original town plan and completely restricts traffic flow and public access. Indeed, the disruption to traffic is very significantly increased.

As the fifth most expensive school in NSW I would have expected much more than what appears to be just two “Games Courts” (F on site map) shown within the “Indicative Site Boundary” for at least 450 students. Where are the students going to play? Where will the school sports lessons and training, the athletics carnival, PE lessons and other outdoor activities be held? On two games courts? Where will the students sit to eat lunch and morning tea? On two games courts? Where will 450 students go to sit, chat and relax? On two games courts?

We are continually reminded that access to outdoor green space is essential for our mental health. However, DE obviously feel that two games courts is adequate for 450 students to sit, eat, play and relax. I am sure that prisoners in even medium security prisons have more space than which future Bungendore High students will enjoy.

It is proposed that the buildings will have amended “colours and finishes”, no amount of ‘amending’ could make these buildings appropriate for the historical centre of Bungendore.

The amended transport and parking arrangements again show that Bungendore Park is a site unfit for purpose for a high school.

Bungendore community has not been consulted about any of the major changes to parking in Turallo Terrace.

Has the DE gained formal agreement with QPRC for the changes to parking in Turallo Terrace?

As a grandparent who drops and picks up a child from the preschool, I am appalled at the proposal to make this area even busier. Any extra traffic in Turallo Terrace will be placing the lives of our children at risk. Especially our preschool students who will not have access to the area beside the preschool as this is where Abbeyfield House will be located.

A Kiss and Drop point may be appropriate for a high school but preschool students need to be accompanied inside the boundary. Will there be designated parking spaces for parents dropping off and picking up students? And if so, how many spaces will be available and how will this be policed?

The amended plan does not seem to take into consideration what will happen on the days when Turallo Terrace is closed at the low-level crossing of Turallo Creek, as has happen on many occasions this year alone. Does the DE even realise that Turallo Terrace can be closed to traffic coming and going to Elmslea? If cars accessing the Kiss and Drop off point in Turallo Terrace cannot come from Elmslea or return to Elmslea via the low-level crossing, where will they turn around? Turning cars with no through road will make this whole area much more dangerous for all students.

The site plan now shows the Bus Bay on the Bungendore Public School (BPS) side of Gibraltar Street, an already busy area and an area that is very crowded before and after school. As a grandparent who frequently drops off and picks up at BPS, I can assure the DE that there is no room for a Bus Bay in this area.

Surely the physical safety of our children must be a priority but I can see no acknowledgement of the need for safety in any of the proposals outlined in the amended transport and parking arrangements.

The traffic increase that the current location and the risks to pedestrians in the immediate area is highlighted by an email sent to parents by the Before and After School provider regarding their continued service. It reads, to “ensure the future of our Service, the Bungendore Scouts have been supporting us to move our Service to the new Scout Hall. Unfortunately, we are unable to go ahead with the request for a Service Approval to operate the Country kids Club from the Scout Hall. Several issues have come up in particular the risk assessment conducted for the access from the Scout Hall to the school with the route changes when the build for the High School commences”.

The residents of Bungendore have every right to feel deceived by DE, not only regarding the school and its attendant shortcomings but in the loss of major community facilities. Our Community Centre is to be demolished to make way for the Games Courts, such as they are.

The moving of Abbeyfield House, a project which has received a huge a amount of financial and in-kind support from our community is clear instance where DE has shown no consideration for our community, let alone any empathy.

The Abbeyfield House plans are constantly being re-jigged. Now it will be squeezed into a small space between the Pre-School and a new "right of way" needed provide legal access for the rear block of the Pre-School which will cut past the Scout Hall, another facility that came about by a huge local effort. In addition, the $90,000 carpark, on the Scout Hall grounds is to be demolished, with no replacement proposed – and no nearby land area available for it! Furthermore, to protect the proposed Abbeyfield site, the levee bank must be extended due to flood threat. Plans for that extension are already underway, again at QPRC’s cost.

The deceitful manner of the DE is exemplified with two examples: firstly, rather than the promised open access to the school a high security 2.4 metre high palisade fence will enclose the school grounds and the grounds may well be declared “Inclosed” by DE, further excluding the community. While the indicative site plan currently shows the fence surrounding only proposed school site with a minimal encroachment further in to the park. DE’s deceit cannot be ignored, who can believe the proposed fence will not be extended to include all of Bungendore’s green, community space and the whole of Bungendore Park will be lost to the residents of Bungendore.

Bungendore Park was Crown Land and was zoned as “Recreation” at its establishment. Its importance is recognized in QPRC’s Bungendore Structure Plan, which states that “Bungendore Park is the primary recreation facility in Bungendore” (Page 10). The loss of this most important community will have a very great impact social impact on our community. We do not have another park.

DE has stepped away from its earlier promises to provide a range of community facilities including a library, health centre, and new council chambers. QPRC may well be facing a huge impost on its funds, which will be passed onto the rate payers! Both examples are shameful at best and a deliberate ploy designed to garner support for an not fit for purpose site.

Surely the building of a much-needed new high school be a reason to celebrate in a country town, DE’s disastrous proposal has ensured that this is not the case in Bungendore.

DE has:

- stolen the historical and recreational heart of this town from its residents;
- at best deceived the residents of Bungendore about the "trade-off" benefits that would be gained from have the high school on the park. The initial statements were that it would be open access with shared resources for the community and little impact on already established community facilities; obviously this was never going to happen;
- used the word "indicative" to describe the fencing. How long will it be before the "indicative" fence encloses and in closes the remainder of the park and it is stolen from the residents of Bungendore?
- shown complete disregard for the safety of our children with the amended transport and parking arrangements and by doing so has put the lives of all students, from pre-school to Y12 at risk;
- not taken into account any of the data showing the future growth of Bungendore and the future accommodation needs of the high school; in fact they have reduced the number and size of any already too small school;
- by its bloody mindedness in insisting on this site has completely disrupted the lives of the current students of BPS by taking away their playground, possibly for years;
- in acquiring the council building without upholding its earlier commitment to replacing the lost community facilities has placed a high financial burden on QPRC's rate payers.

All this for a site that is totally unfit for its purpose, rather than the site recommended by DPIE on which an offer had been made.

On 15 June 2020 Geoff Waterhouse from DE contacted DPIE with the inexplicable request that, "Can we please put a hold on the Bungendore property process until further notice". No further explanation was given other than a follow-up email that stated, "The Bungendore project has taken a significant change in direction. The preferred site has swung towards the Mick Sherd oval [Bungendore Park] and SINSW has and continues to engage with council and the Deputy Premier, both supporting the oval as the preferred site".

This decision was made despite DPIE's recommendation, following a survey of publicly-owned land undertaken at the same time, that concluded that Bungendore Park (the now proposed site) was "not suitable" for various reasons, including "insufficient land area and student safety concerns".

Surely, no matter how many changes the DE make to the layout and design, the transport and parking arrangements, the community facilities, and the fencing the basic fact remains that Bungendore Park is a site not fit for the purpose of a high school and ***the DE should stop disrupting the lives of all Bungendore residents and wasting taxpayer money and accept this fact and return to the original site recommended by your department.***

I have not, and no associate of mine, has made any political donation to any person in the 2 years preceding this submission.