

Brigid Cassells

Bywong NSW 2621

12 October 2021

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 OBJECT** to the proposal, for the following reason(s):

- The location for school has not been thought through with the best interests of the town and the long term impact of the town
- The heritage precinct around the park contains the core of Bungendore's village history.
- The town is losing its appeal through bad planning decisions. Already you can see how disjointed the planning of the township is. There has been no foresight in the planning of facilities for the demographics of Bungendore both young and old.
- The fact that there were other suitable sites but deemed unsuitable is a lie. It is obvious only one site was ever going to be considered and the **whole process has been done dishonestly and those people involved should be exposed for the corrupt dealings and process undertaken.**
- There is no reason for a school to be plonked in the middle of a small township. Other towns on a similar scale to Bungendore have schools built on the perimeter of the township. The location of a high school isn't based on being sited next to the local primary school. Planners could include recreation pathways for children to ride their bikes, walk to school if it was sited on the other locations put forward and will go towards many of the traffic congestions and safety issues the proposed site will experience.
- This could encourage them to increase their physical activity with the right infrastructure. In Australia currently 1 in 4 children between 5 and 17 yrs are overweight and 1 in 12 of those are classified as obese (AIHW, 2020). Here's the Department's opportunity to be a ground breaker and opportunity to plan and design a school in the right location with the infrastructure to support a more physical and active younger community and can be used by all. Without degrading an already wonderful asset and historical feature of Bungendore.
- The sudden announcement to close Majara Street, a vital thoroughfare from Elmslea Estate to the Railway Station and Kings Highway, between Turallo Terrace and Gibraltar Street, to provide extra land for the high school was made without any community consultation or feasible traffic

studies. This closure will undeniably lead to traffic congestion, parking problems and safety issues at the drop off point between the kindergarten/preschool and high school, mixed with through traffic from Elmslea. Traffic will be diverted down Butmaroo Street, an urban street and pedestrian thoroughfare from Elmslea across Turallo Creek footbridge to the Park, IGA and commercial centre. The only realistic traffic survey was done by a very patient local with an academic/science background.

- The almost total disregard by the Department of Education and School Infrastructure NSW for honest and open engagement with the community in the planning phases, and any understanding of the location and history of Bungendore village and the changing demographics with new, planned and future housing developments adjacent to the village, including surrounding farmlands and settlements, did not inspire confidence in the attention to detail in the early planning stages.
- There is no evidence that the State Government consulted stakeholders” of the Mick Sherd oval, the Community Centre, Swimming Club, and St Mary’s church, owner of the kindergarten/preschool property. The outcome of the two Information Sessions at the primary school Hub, and the online questionnaires claimed that there was overwhelming support for the high school. However, no objections to the proposed site were ever taken into account!
- The demolition of community facilities, namely the swimming pool complex and the Community Centre, in this central location, and the restrictions imposed on community use of Mick Sherd oval during school hours, 7.30am-6pm, with proposed 2.1m fencing around the school buildings, will have a huge impact on the nature, character and use of Bungendore park. These facilities were the result of community fundraising initiatives and efforts. Who will be responsible for maintaining Mick Sherd oval, a green grassed playing field that, unlike the Warren Little playing field across Turallo Creek, doesn’t flood in winter?
- The Bungendore Park is also a high traffic area used by travellers/tourists passing through Bungendore. A quiet place to relax where they can have a cuppa and sandwich. If the current plans go ahead with the fencing it will have an impact on the use of the Bungendore park. Travellers/tourists will cease to stop off and continue on rather than stopping and providing an economic boost to the town.
- Both “the Common” and Bungendore Park, are on Crown land. It is evident that this has not been considered or addressed in the acquisition of land for the high school complex. The high school plans to subsume a large portion of the Common for agricultural plots and sheds, and possibly parking. Majara Street road infrastructure between Turallo Terrace and Gibraltar Street will be demolished along with a street-scape of trees. The swimming pool and change rooms, storage shed, built of bricks from the mid 1800s, and the Community Centre will also be demolished. The Rotunda and Bush Balladeers stone memorial at the other end will be removed to another site. With this space, and land taken from the Park and Mick Sherd oval, three 12m high prefab buildings, a hall, a gym, library, canteen and administrative facilities will be constructed, buildings totally out of character with a heritage precinct of single storey stone, brick and timber buildings.
- The heritage precinct around the park contains the core of Bungendore’s village history; Railway Station and railway cottages, School of Arts, original Primary School, PO, Court House, Cobb and Co. Stables, St Phillips Church, Old Catholic Convent, and heritage wooden cottages, all beautifully maintained; low set and built of stone, bricks and timber; a relic of Australia’s colonial history. The vistas to Mt Gibraltar will disappear. The scaled down replica of the Menin Gate War Memorial, built over 100 years ago, visited by tourists regularly and huge crowds on ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day will be overwhelmed, and suffer because of limited access and parking. The Social Impact Assessment of the high school on Bungendore Park almost got it right; “a low positive impact on the community”.
- The loss of 73 mature trees, many planted by individuals and Landcare groups, (“don’t ask for Council permission, just do it”) that transformed a “windy, flat, dry and dusty treeless wilderness” in the late 1970s into a pleasant area for community use and recreation by both

tourists and locals alike will be replaced by fenced school buildings, out of character with a heritage precinct.

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

Yours faithfully

Brigid Cassells