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

Lodged electronically

Dear Sir/Madam

**NEW HIGH SCHOOL IN BUNGENDORE
APPLICATION NO. SSD-14394209**

I refer to the state-significant development application SSD-14394209 for the proposed new Bungendore high school (**Application**).

I would like to make it clear that I do not object to the construction of a high school in Bungendore. The construction of the high school and the associated facilities is long overdue and will have a positive effect on job creation and social infrastructure in Bungendore and surrounding areas.

I do, however, strenuously object to the Application for the following reasons:

1. the community consultation has ignored the valid concerns of the community. It has been cookie-cutter in its approach and been directed towards validating the decision of the former Deputy Premier and Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council (**QPRC**) to locate the high school at Bungendore Park/Mick Sherd Oval (Lot 701 in DP 1027107) and the adjoining "common" across Turallo Terrace (**Bungendore Park Location**). The manner of consultation, including the questions put to the Bungendore community, have avoided any real engagement on the legitimate concerns the community has about the impact of a school in the Bungendore Park Location;
2. while I would ordinarily be keen to support adaptive re-use and re-purposing rather than destruction of surplus buildings, it is difficult to view the use of the former Palerang Council offices in the new school – and QPRC's support for the Bungendore Park Location generally - as being more than a means to offset some of the inherited liabilities of the amalgamated council (see point 1 above);
3. the Bungendore Park Location has limited potential for expansion beyond the initial 450 students proposed for the high school. As the Bungendore Park Location is

constrained by a range of existing features, including the railway line, the road layout and community facilities and dwellings – rather than being “fit for purpose”, the high school is being “shoe horned” into the proposed location. It is not hard to see that any expansion of the high school in the Bungendore Park Location would only occur at the expense of open space – the “shared facilities” (see point 8 below) – which would be used to locate demountable classrooms;

4. there are alternative sites around Bungendore which have been offered by private landowners for the construction of the high school. These are larger than the Bungendore Park Location and will permit significant expansion over time to accommodate students from the growing population of Bungendore and surrounds;
5. construction of the high school will necessitate the destruction of a range of much used existing community-established and community-funded facilities, including the community centre and memorial swimming pool and the limit the use of the Mick Sherd Oval which is a summer-time centre of touch football and cricket and the winter home of the Bungendore Tigers rugby league club and the Mudhooks rugby union club. The construction of the Bungendore Sports Hub is being put forward as a *quid pro quo* replacement of those facilities and this is not correct. Those facilities have been approved since 2016 are in the course of construction;
6. the heritage centre of Bungendore around the Bungendore Park, including the railway station, St Mary’s church, post-office, primary school and preschool is not in need of re-invigoration or urban renewal and will be irreparably damaged by the reconfiguration of roads and traffic movements, the introduction of prefabricated classrooms and multi-storey structures. I am alarmed that, in apparent anticipation of the Application being approved, Majara Street, which was part of the original layout of the village being is closed and its infrastructure removed;
7. Bungendore Park and the common across Turallo Terrace, which have been community facilities since 1884, are areas of Crown land dedicated for public recreation. They are neither owned by the Department of Education nor QPRC and cannot be incorporated into the design of the high school unless re-dedicated. The Application had been drafted without apparently acknowledging this issue;
8. Bungendore Park will be compromised in terms of size as a recreation space. It will be fenced, built on and removed from community access if it becomes part of the high school and the remaining open space will only be available outside regulated school use (including before and after school lesson times). This constrains or nullifies the use of the park as a shared facility;
9. the removal of mature trees around Bungendore Park is a loss to the biodiversity of Bungendore and the streetscapes of the village. It will leave the perimeter and approaches to the high school, and those areas incorporated into playing fields of the high school as shade-free (or covered by shade sails), windswept and dusty; and
10. the Bungendore Park Location is in close proximity to the Canberra-Sydney railway line, where levels of lead contamination have been identified, linked to the former mining activities at Captains Flat. Construction is likely to disturb topsoil and expose

residents around the Bungendore Park Location and students of the high school to lead contamination.

The Environmental Impact Statement, prepared by Mecone and submitted to the Minister for Planning in conjunction with the Application (**EIS**), supports siting the new high school at the Bungendore Park Location. I would argue that the key reasons given in the EIS for approving the high school at the Bungendore Park Location are either capable of being satisfied by the construction of a high school anywhere in the vicinity of Bungendore or are demonstrably incorrect.

I am not and have never been a member of any political party.

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



Alastair Gregory

