

I strongly object to the current proposal for the New High School in Bungendore.

- It is an education facility which is a replica of the past which we know will fail to deliver the opportunities that students of the future need
- The site offers no opportunity for expansion, although the village and surrounding area is continuing to expand in population
- It is a proposal conceived in pre-Covid times, with a building which will be inadequate for the educational, physical, mental health and wellbeing needs of staff and students in the future.
- The proposed site fails to address the current trends in education which increasingly focus on outdoor education and connections to nature, open spaces and mutual interactivity with the environment.
- It fails to recognise the enormous potential which exists because it is in a rural area with proximity to Canberra and surrounding towns. There is therefore a golden opportunity to create an educational resource which could be a magnet school with a unique identity, drawing pupils with interest in agriculture and the environment from these areas, in addition to the immediate village pupils.
- Because of its urban confines the proposed site fails to accommodate the potential linkages with the local agricultural organisations (including, but not limited to, The Mulloon Institute which is a globally recognised not-for-profit organisation connecting farming, environment, and society, through education); tourism and hospitality around the region; regional industries including the alternative energy and waste management industries; and local educational institutions such as the CSIRO, ANU, University of Canberra and the Vocational Education sectors in the region
- The current location and iteration of the High School limit regional possibilities for rich collaboration, micro-accreditation, inspirational employment opportunities and pathways for university entrance.

Furthermore

- The proposed location is at the expense of community harmony
- There has been no public hearing
- By encroaching on the existing limited green space in the village, the proposal ignores best practice town and environmental planning, which deliberately creates green spaces to bring people together, nourish our bodies and minds and enhance community for the improvement of the health and wellbeing of all
- By shoehorning a small footprint building into a limited space it is at odds with the village feel of Bungendore, which attracts tourists from all over the world and from around Australia to the Internationally renowned Woodworks Gallery

In conclusion, we live in a world experiencing increasing extreme weather conditions; ongoing stress and repercussions from the current pandemic; and huge yet to be fully understood or quantified impacts on all aspects of society. Moreover in particular there are the continuing traumatic impacts on the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

We therefore need to not merely protect the current green spaces we have, but to actively create more places which offer connections to nature, fresh air and

community; education through hands on involvement with growing plants and food; managing the environment and exposure to outdoor living which all contribute significantly to empower, inspire and build resilience in young people .

The proposal in question fails on all these points and all young people deserve better. They deserve an educational facility which is in step with current educational thinking. They deserve an educational facility which is innovative and forward looking in design, linking the lives of students and staff to the great outdoors which is integral to the identity of our region. They deserve rich and creative opportunities which will equip them for the challenges which the world is throwing at them.