



Rebuilding Northcote High School Masterplan Working Group

Background

Northcote High School (NHS) completed a masterplan with Baldasso Cortese architects in the later part of 2017 for the redevelopment of certain school buildings and grounds. This masterplan now sits with the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) awaiting funds to be allocated by the government to commence the capital works.

The existing masterplan relies on the removal of both the John Cain library and the Olver Hall as staged developments.

If funding is allocated to NHS for building works, the Council will have the opportunity to consult with the VSBA and make relatively minor adjustments to the masterplan, including: the potential location, the nature of the buildings, and the sequence of the build.

The Olver Hall is in a poor state of repair, and current estimates to make it stable for a period of between 5-10 years are at \$535,000, most of which school will probably need to fund.

The current library does not accommodate the number of students who wish to use it during the day, nor the parent groups who attend workshops. Estimates of a renovation to expand it are in the realm of \$250,000 - \$300,000 for the structural works only. These works would only be a temporary solution, given the masterplan requires the removal of the existing library building.

The school does have financial reserves in its building fund and otherwise, and these have been largely raised by the school community. These have been saved towards supporting a co-contribution to the masterplan.

If NHS spends these funds on the library expansion and hall repairs, and a masterplan is subsequently funded, then effectively we will have wasted the money on short-term fixes.

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Masterplan working group would assist the school to advance our progress towards rebuilding the school with modern, purpose-built learning and recreation spaces.

The working group would work on two aspects:

1. Buildings

While the VSBA and the appointed architects have significant control over a building program, the school leadership team provides advice and feedback and works collaboratively with them.

The school leadership team would appreciate a small group of volunteers with expertise in the technical and design aspects of non-residential buildings to act as a sounding board and to provide advice from time to time on request so that the leadership team are

armed with relevant, reliable knowledge in order to make informed decisions. Advice would relate to:

- a) Establishing a priority order of building development
- b) Refining the purposes of the buildings
- c) Evaluating the best location for the first part of the masterplan, and subsequent sequencing, keeping in mind the challenges with the hall and the library, and the loss of classroom/recreation spaces during any build phase

2. Mobilising the School Community to advocate for funding

- a) Investigating the best way to leverage support from our local Member of Parliament, Kat Theophanous, to advocate for NHS and prompt the Government to fund the masterplan.
- b) Identify any other advocacy mechanisms for funding.

This may involve, but is not limited to:

- Raising a petition and having it presented in Parliament
- Mobilising parents to advocate for the school
- Forming partnerships with other groups eg. Darebin Council to lodge joint submissions for facilities

Duration of the Working Group

It is expected that the working group will be ongoing. The working group and its terms of reference will be reviewed after an initial term of 18 months and then annually.

Frequency of Meetings

It is expected that the working group will meet monthly for the initial six months to develop a strategy, and then meet once a term on an ongoing basis.

Reports and makes recommendations to School Council

Working group minutes and recommendations will be tabled at School Council, which meets most months.

If you have skills and experience in architecture, engineering, project management, advocacy or government relations, and are interested in joining the Masterplan working group, please contact school council via the info@nhs.vic.edu.au email address, including Masterplan Working Group as the subject line

OR

Sue Harrap, Principal via Susan.Harrap@education.vic.gov.au including Masterplan Working Group as the subject line

Thank you for your contribution to our school community

Sue Harrap
Principal.