

To

Mr Peter Wright
Independent Consultant
Department of Education and Training

PROPOSAL

To relocate Gosford Public School to within
the grounds of Henry Kendall High School



Current Henry Kendall High School Site with Proposed Relocation site outlined.



This proposed site is bounded Faunce Street to the south, Batley St to the east and Racecourse Road on the north. The western boundary adjoins a large Energy Australia compound and Sub-station. Certain parts of the school site are steep in gradient and there are pockets of vegetation on the site.

PREFACE

On behalf of the NSW Minister for Education and Training, Ms Verity Firth MP, DET personnel have initiated a relocation proposal for relocation of Gosford Public School to within the ground of Henry Kendall High School.

At the Gosford Public School P&C Association meeting held on 27th July, 2010 it was decided that the P&C Association were opposed to "The Henry Kendall High School Relocation Proposal" and a submission would be submitted to that effect.

The Gosford Public School P&C Association believe that the DET's consultation process is flawed as the Department has failed to ensure the proper delivery of all the facts associated with this relocation proposal to the entire school community. The provision of a booklet setting out the relevant history and details of the relocation proposal would have been of great assistance to the greater school community.

The Department of Education and Training has also failed to properly advise those members of the school community who are from a non English speaking background, currently approximately 15-20% of the school population.

It should be noted that an extension to the consultation period, to three months, was requested by the Gosford Public School P&C Association, however the Regional Director, Ms. McKerihan has indicated that this is not an option at this point in time.

Given that there has been continuous inference and speculation of the school relocating for many years now, much of the school community have been disheartened by this long process, the lack of transparency and action at various levels. This must be taken into account when summarising and evaluating this consultation process.

The appointment of a DET employee as the "Independent Consultant" also appears to be a flaw in this consultation process. The appointment of non government consultation would have been preferable and deemed more appropriate.

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1. ACTUAL RELOCATION PROPOSAL:

Extract from presentation by David Cullen SED on 15 July 2010.

“It appears likely that Gosford Public School will need to be relocated. Relocating and building a new school within the current grounds of Henry Kendall High School has been proposed.”

“The Department of Education and Training will consult with the school community about the proposal and any future plans to make sure the best interests of the school’s students are served.”

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For this matter to progress to this stage, it is apparent that a Business Case has been submitted to the Minister for Education however, no formal or written relocation proposal has been supplied to the school or the school community at this point in time. Therefore, the actual terms of the relocation have not been made completely transparent to the school community.

On 15th March 2009, Ms Maree Roberts, Deputy Regional Director, Hunter Central Coast area, Department of Education and Training along with Leonie Baldwin from the State Government’s Strategic Planning Office met with the Principal of Gosford Public School, Mr Alan Wort and the school’s P&C Association president at that time, Mr Gary Jackson. Minutes attached; (Annexure a)

As a result of this meeting, a proposal of a possible relocation to the Henry Kendall High School site was discussed. Following on from this meeting, a bus trip was arranged for Ms Roberts, Mr Wort, a number of teachers, and representatives from the P&C Association. The day excursion included visits to the Henry Kendall Site and other new schools and their facilities, i.e. Warnervale and Wadalba schools.

During the day, various questions were asked of Ms Roberts as to the facilities, number and type of classrooms that would be provided if the school was to relocate. Ms Roberts was unable to give any specifics about classroom numbers or sizes or any other facilities that would be provided.

At a Gosford Public School P&C Association meeting held on 25th March 2009, it was decided to send Ms Roberts a formal request for the actual details of the proposal. (Annexure b)

Ms Roberts later sent a written response indicating that the relocation proposal was in fact “unfunded” and that she was seeking “in-principle” support of the proposal. (Annexure c)

The matter did not proceed beyond this point. The P&C Association did not take this information to the school community as it would have created a certain amount of confusion.

2. CONSULTATION TERMS OF REFERENCE:

The purpose of the consultation is to provide advice to the Minister for Education and Training, through a report and recommendations, on the proposal to relocate Gosford Public School to a site within the current grounds of Henry Kendall High School.

Reports and recommendations should include:

- Implications for both schools in relation to the proposed relocation;
- Any advantages that may be delivered to each school as a consequence of the proposed relocation;
and
- Any disadvantages that may arise for each school as a consequence of the proposed relocation.

NOTE:

Due to a number of reasons, a significant percentage of the Gosford Public School community are not aware of the full nature and circumstances of the Relocation Proposal.

Those reasons include;

- Approximately 15-20 % of the school population is from “Non English” speaking background and the Department of Education and Training has failed to address this factor with this consultation process.

This is despite comments from Mr Coutts-Trotter, DET Director General to Gosford Public School P&C Association in February 2010 stating *“You make a valid point about the ability of some parents from non-English speaking backgrounds being able to understand the survey. **This is something that we always need to take into account when sending any material home to parents.**”* (Annexure d)

- The extremely short notice, 2 days, given to parents and community members to attend the only information session provided by the Department of Education and Training. (meeting held at Henry Kendall High School on 15th July 2010)
- Some parents are not members or involved in the School’s P&C Association and as such were unable to access the information provided during our meetings.
- Certain members of the school community are from low socio-economic demographics and may have poor literacy skills.

There is a need to individually advise all parents of the full details of this relocation proposal so that all persons can make an informed decision.

Gosford Public School P&C Association believe that the responsibility for this rests with the DET.

3. THE GOSFORD CHALLENGE:

The 2004 NSW Government's "City of Cities" strategy designated Gosford as the regional city for the Central Coast. (The Masterplan page 3)
To date very little has happened to substantiate that title.

In 2007 Gosford City Council commenced The Gosford Challenge project to initiate the Redevelopment of Gosford City. The aim of the project is to revitalise the City Centre of Gosford and ensure that facilities and infrastructure within the CBD cater for the expected population increases over the next 10-15 years.

Since then design consultants, The Cox Group, have been appointed and The Gosford Challenge "Masterplan" developed as an implementable design document that will guide the revitalisation of Gosford City Centre. *"Everything in this document is possible if there is community resolve and political will. Both these critical attributes have been harnessed and amply on display in the processes and events that led to the development of the Gosford City Centre Masterplan"*. (Extract from Masterplan page 10)

The Gosford Challenge Masterplan suggests a Transport Management and Accessibility Plan (TMAP) that looks at all modes of transport that will be the means by which new policy and new initiatives will be identified and prioritised. Including all facets of transport will ensure enhancement of public transport, cycling opportunities and pedestrian movement. This plan is yet to be instigated.

The proposed relocation of Gosford Public School is a direct result of The Gosford Challenge. If the Gosford Challenge had not submitted a Concept Design Proposal which included the relocation of Gosford Public School, the **B**uilding **E**ducation **R**evolution project for the school would not have been placed on hold and BER project would now be completed and the school's future in the inner city secured. Add to that, the fact that Gosford Public School is number two on the Hunter / Central Coast Major Capital Works list and this would have meant in excess of \$12 million in funding for renovations.

Department of Education and Training officials and the Gosford Public School P&C Association representatives participated in The Gosford Challenge Design Charrette workshops to look at the future and revitalisation of Gosford. Having been placed on the Education table for Charrette workshops, a variety of population projections were tabled and considered when formulating the future of Gosford. (Annexure e)

It is therefore imperative that all issues concerning the future of Gosford Public School and the proposed relocation to Henry Kendall High School must take into account the details and projection figures discussed in the Charrette workshops. If the population projection figures and The Gosford

Challenge are to be ignored, then Gosford Public School should not be relocated.

The Gosford Challenge projection figures and the “Masterplan” will be addressed in depth throughout this submission. The Gosford Challenge “Masterplan” can be located at:

<http://www.thegosfordchallenge.com.au/files/Gosford%20Report14July2010lowres.pdf>

Quote from the Masterplan (Page 15)

“Ensure that education is at the forefront of the plans to revitalise Gosford, giving recognition to the fact that with education comes greater job diversity and improved social conditions for the community.”

And yet there really are *no new plans for education within the Masterplan*, other than moving Gosford Public School out of the CBD.

All the Gosford Challenge indicates is the upgrade of school ovals for the use of other sporting organisations. This project has not worked at Erina High School and most likely will not work at Henry Kendall High School and Gosford High School.

Gosford Council apparently laid the incorrect type of turf for a sporting field that has such regularly use. The current state of the oval, after one soccer season, leaves a lot to be desired. Some sporting clubs have even complained about the state of the turf indicating that it is dangerous.

Since the Council took over control of the field, Erina High School students have had little, to no use of the field.

Even the Gosford CBD University facilities that were so highly talked about at the Design Charrette workshops are hardly mentioned in the Masterplan.

4. IMPLICATION FOR BOTH SCHOOLS IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED RELOCATION:

For both Gosford Public School and Henry Kendall High School there will be some major difficulties as a result of this proposed relocation. Both schools will have to deal with the loss of identity associated with the proposal. It could be said that nothing will change in respect of identity, but things will inevitably change and impact upon both schools.

Gosford Public School has been within the heart of Gosford CBD since establishment in 1865. To be now located in the back blocks of the Gosford, out of sight and out of mind, the school's community profile will be lost. The school has always performed a community role within the CBD having performed at many Christmas celebrations, ANZAC Day Memorial Ceremonies, Opening of Kibble Park, to name a few. That long proud community interaction, may well be lost if the school is relocated to Henry Kendall High School.

For Henry Kendall High School, still in the process of losing students to the new Kariong Mountains High School, there will be a feeling of a DET wasteland. Just throw in another school and don't worry about loss of facilities and sporting field area.

Will Gosford Public School and Henry Kendall High School continue to be their own schools or blended into a education campus for K-12, pooling resources and becoming one? Each school has a right to remain individual and every effort should be made to ensure this status.

Given the element of surprise and hurried nature of this relocation proposal and consultation, there has been little if any communications between the two schools. There is resentment from Gosford Public School community at the thought of losing the current school site. There is possibly resentment from the Henry Kendall High School community at losing a large section of their proud school to another school, with many parents already contemplating withdrawing their children due to them being again disadvantaged with the impending redevelopment and Primary School building construction within the site. This is not the best way to start a relationship between two interconnected schools.

How will these schools co-operate? How will they interact? Has anyone bothered to plan for this? How will the individual school start and finish times operate and be coordinated? If the children are to share buses, won't the start and finish times have to be the same? What sort of congestion will this create? Some of Gosford Public School's children currently travel on public bus routes, not designated school buses. How will these be re-routed to Henry Kendall High school?

So many questions that need to be thought through thoroughly prior to any decision being made.

5. ANY ADVANTAGES THAT MAY BE DELIVERED TO EACH SCHOOL AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE PROPOSED RELOCATION:

It is obvious that any submission which objects to the proposal will have few, if any, advantages to highlight. However, in fairness, this submission will address the following points.

5.1 State of the Art facilities

If the proposed relocation was to take place, an obvious advantage would be new “State of the Art” facilities for the Gosford Public School children and teaching staff. However, DET have been unable to advise exactly what the composition and configuration of the new buildings would be. Some very basic figures were provided at the Parent Presentation at Henry Kendall High School on 15th July 2010.

These “State of the Art” facilities are what the P&C Association have been pushing for years on the current site and yet the Department of Education and Training have continued to ignore and find other schools that have taken precedence over Gosford Public School.

5.2 Effective Local Management Groups

Whenever School Local Management Groups are implemented effectively, there is the opportunity to provide and enhance the educational facilities and resources. By pooling knowledge, facilities and resources, students and teachers have an opportunity to explore new horizons and experiences. Although Gosford Public School belongs in such a LMG with Henry Kendall High School, so far there has been little interaction between these schools and no real benefits gained.

5.3 New Special Educational facilities

The addition of a new “Special Ed” facility at Henry Kendall High School would also be of great benefit to those students that currently utilise those facilities. Again, there is little known about this project as the DET has not discussed this with the Gosford Public School Community. The matter has been discussed with the Principal of Henry Kendall High School as she was well aware of the projects when the “March 2009 bus trip” took place.

These are probably the only advantages to be gained by the proposed relocation of Gosford Public School.

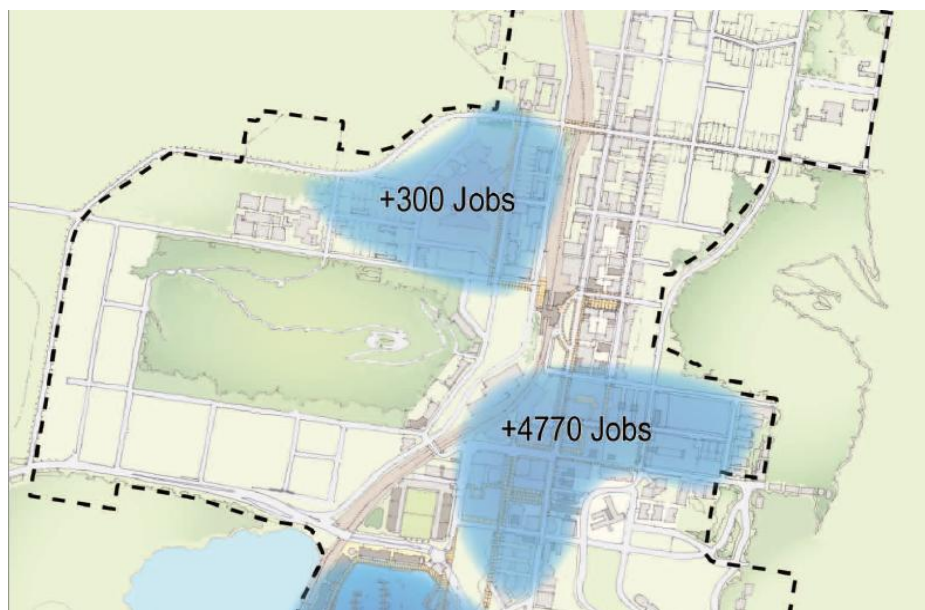
6. ANY DISADVANTAGES THAT MAY ARISE FOR EACH SCHOOL AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE PROPOSED RELOCATION:

6.1 Traffic and parking in vicinity of Henry Kendall High School



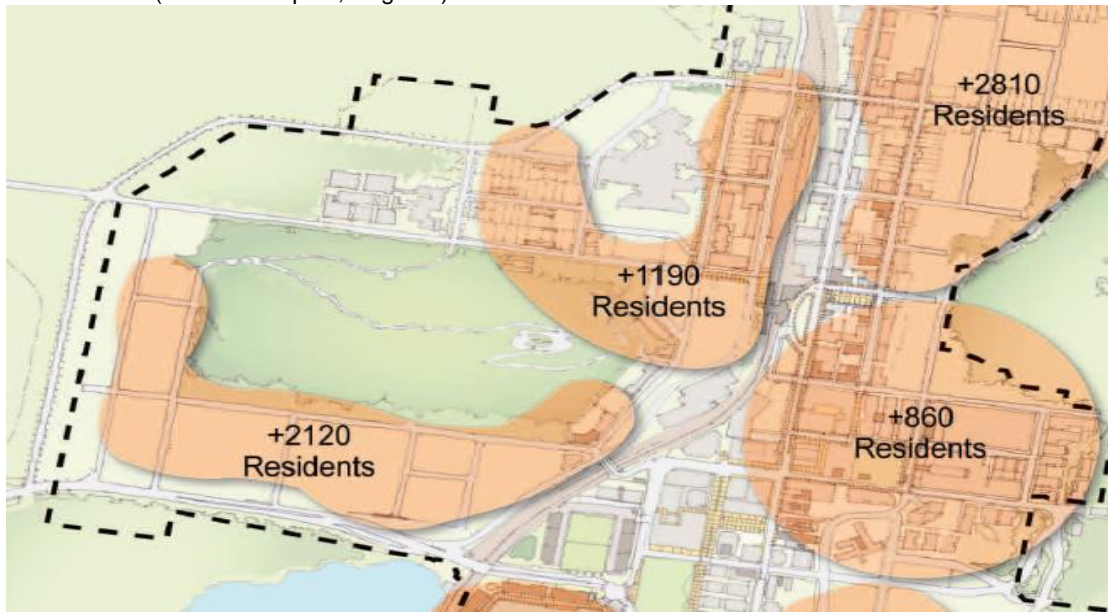
This photo was taken in Faunce Street West, Gosford outside of Henry Kendall High School. It can be easily seen that there is minimal parking available in this area. (Taken on a school day, 9/8/10).

If you examine the Gosford Challenge Masterplan, it can be seen that there will be substantial **increases in employment** within the Gosford CBD (4770) and Hospital Precinct (300) (TGC Masterplan Page 65). These people will have vehicles and need to park somewhere, further spreading the parking problems within Gosford CBD and the area surrounding the Henry Kendall High School site.



The Masterplan states “Public transport use is very low on the Central Coast” (TGC Masterplan, Page 74). It also indicates that the city must have a Sustainable Future and the use of automobile traffic will be reduced. Unless the council is prepared to subject motorists to heavy parking charges and at the same time increase the availability and quality of public transport into the CBD, people will continue to use their vehicles as the most convenient means of transportation available.

The Masterplan also predicts a sharp increase in residents within a short distance of the Henry Kendall High School site, in excess of 3,300 new residents. (TGC Masterplan, Page 71)



The Masterplan also shows Faunce Street as a “streetscape” but the document does not really define what changes a “streetscape” will provide. Given the highlighted detail of the illustration, one can only imagine that Faunce Street will become a more substantial thoroughfare for Gosford CBD. (TCG Masterplan Page 52)

The streetscapes that will create this connection from north to south are Mann Street (pictured in hues of red), Hills and Watt Streets (the same street pictured in green) and Baker Street (pictured in blue). Another important streetscape will be around the Gosford Harbour (also pictured in blue). The east-west connections are made by Etna, Faunce and Donnison Streets (pictured in orange)



There is mention of additional parking facilities in Faunce Street West but this appears to be parking for the President's Hill Trail Network only (TGC Masterplan, Page 95).

In respect of the traffic and parking around Henry Kendall High School it is obvious to most, if not all residents of Gosford, that traffic and parking in the area is currently at its limits. Peak hour traffic can often bank-up along Racecourse Road for considerable distances.

The availability of parking for Gosford Public School is minimal due to closeness to Gosford District Hospital and its enormous volume of workers. Street parking in the area of Racecourse Road is often gone by 7-7.30am on weekdays.

The traffic and parking situation will only get worse as the number of workers and residents (Masterplan Predictions) in the area increases over the next 10-15 years.

In 2005, Landcom submitted a Development Proposal (City Link Project) for the area of land adjacent to Henry Kendall High School and bounded by Batley Street to the west, Cape Street North to the East, Faunce Street West to the south and Racecourse Road to the North.

Council supported in principle this project, however, there were concerns from many councillors about the Transport and Road infrastructure in the area. On the 27 June 2006, the Mayoral minutes indicate that the project was no longer feasible or financially viable to proceed and the project opportunity was lost.

6.2 Pedestrian access in vicinity of Henry Kendall High School

Extract from The Gosford Challenge Masterplan (page 82)

“Make land use decisions that create a more efficient and more walkable city”

**Has the DET done this with its current relocation proposal?
Will the new location be more walkable for the young students of Gosford Public School?**

Faunce Street West Gosford has remained untouched by Gosford Council for many years. This is despite the fact that Faunce Street West caters for the High School and Hospital traffic. At the present time there is only kerb and guttering in vicinity of the school and newer unit developments along the street.

If the younger children of Gosford Public School are going to be walking to school then Faunce Street and surrounding streets are totally inadequate. Young Street West Gosford will be one of the main thoroughfares for children walking to Gosford Public School. As you can see from photo below the current condition of this roadway and lack of footpaths is far from adequate.

Photo: Young Street West Gosford looking south towards the Central Coast Highway. No footpaths.



Gosford City Council will need to fund footpaths throughout the Henry Kendall High School area and the surrounding streets in order to provide safe access to the proposed school site.

For children coming from the actual CBD area of Gosford and walking to school, they will have to negotiate Faunce Street between Showground Road and Cape Street North. This section of roadway is extremely steep and most of the younger children will have some difficulty in climbing this incline/decline.

Photo: Faunce Street West, looking from west to east.



Photo: Faunce Street West, looking from east to west



Photo: Hargraves Street to the east of Henry Kendall High School with no footpath provided.



Photo: Faunce Street West near intersection of Cape St North looking west



6.3 Gosford Public School to be located in near vicinity of Energy Australia depot and sub-station.



Photo: Electrical Sub-Station at West Gosford

On the western boundary of Henry Kendall High School is the West Gosford Energy Australia Depot and sub-station. This depot has been situated in that position for many years, since 1958, and plans are now underway for the depot to be relocated to Ourimbah by 2014.

This relocation would still leave in place a major electrical sub-station. The West Gosford 132/11kV sub-station currently houses two 50MVA transformers and supplies low level power to the majority of the Gosford LGA.

Many parents have expressed concerns over Gosford Public School being relocated next to the Sub-station. From the current western fence line of Henry Kendall High School it is only 155 metres to the centre of the sub-station. If believing Dr Cullen's slide presentation of 15th July 2010, his western side school boundary indicated a fence line even closer to substation, which would bring the dangers of Electro-magnetic fields/radiation even closer.

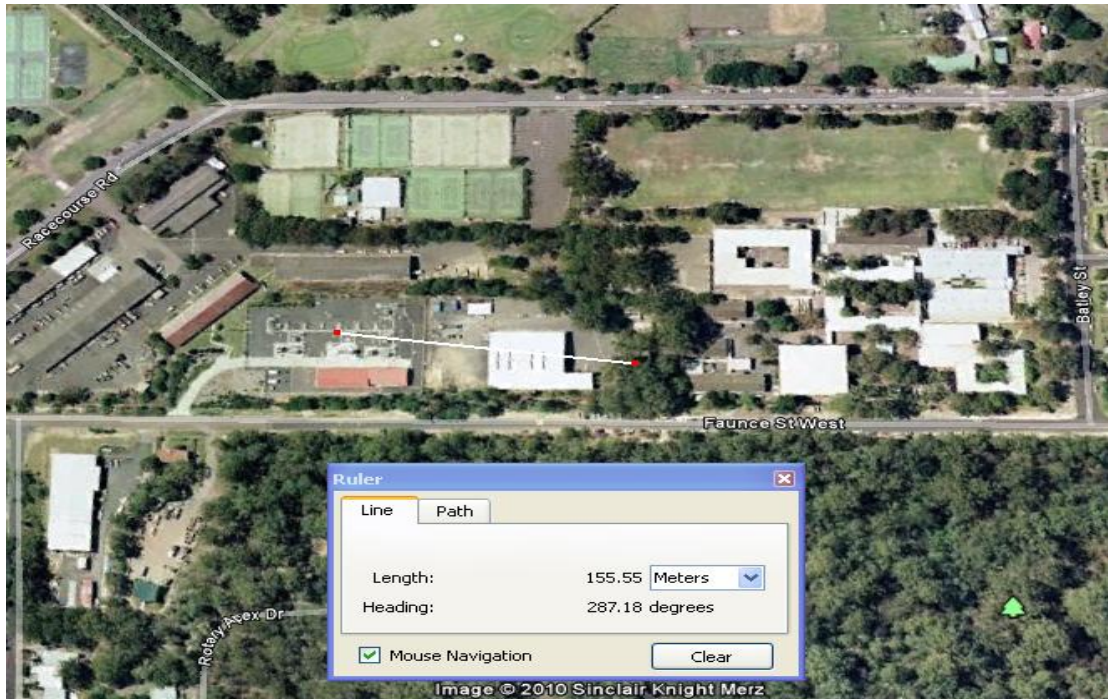


Photo: Satellite image showing proximity of Energy Australia to Henry Kendall High School.

Whilst consensus is still out on the implications of a house or school being located in the vicinity of high voltage power lines / substation and the risk to Electro Magnetic Radiation, there is obviously a need to **proceed with caution and a full risk analysis to be carried out.**

Note: Many authorities worldwide have recommended policies of 'prudent avoidance' or 'precaution' to reduce people's exposure from EMR (EMR Australia Pty Ltd).

The following is a quote to a parent from Wamberal Public School from NSW Department of Education and Training, General Manager of Asset Management, Beryl Jamieson; "*The Department has a policy of **prudent avoidance** regarding high-voltage (132 volt) transmission lines and requires that the electromagnetic radiation generated by any electrical infrastructure near schools not exceed the Australian Exposure Guidelines.*" (Annexure f)

P&C Association hereby formally request that the Department of Education and Training conduct scientific research into the emission levels from the adjoining sub-station to assess any associated health and safety risks. This should be carried out prior to any attempt to relocate to the site. It is also requested that any results be provided to both Gosford Public School and Henry Kendall High School's P & C Association.

It has been seen recently in Sydney's CBD that there is the potential for large and dangerous fires with any Sub-station. Electrical sub-stations within the city have caught alight and created major problems in respect of power, traffic and pedestrian issues.

Given the fact that Energy Australia will be moving from the West Gosford Depot by 2014, it is more than likely that most of the sheds on the site will be removed to allow for future development. It would appear that most of the buildings on this site have a high volume of asbestos material, in particular the roof sheeting, which will have to be removed under very strict procedures. Will it be necessary for the school to be closed during this time? In particular if the wind comes from the south, south-west?

And what will replace the depot? Has the Department of Education and Training given any consideration to undertaking an investigation to establish an enhanced Vocational Education School presence at Henry Kendall High? As previously stated, this was proposed at the Gosford Challenge Charrette workshops.

The concept has enormous potential particularly for those students that are now required to stay at school until 17 years of age and have no plans of completing the Higher School Certificate.

Does it then make any sense to locate a primary school in between a Secondary school and a TAFE college which may possibly be interacting very closely?

6.4 New facilities on offer to Henry Kendall High School

One would normally think of any new facilities as an advantage. Again, without knowing all the relocation details, rumours have surfaced that some of the High School's facilities will be demolished and lost forever.

J Block is a good example. J Block currently houses 6 Science classrooms. Initial indications are that these classrooms will be demolished and only two to four science rooms constructed to replace them.

Will there be a new Library and School Hall for the students of Gosford Public School? If so, where will it be located and will this substantially reduce the amount of green space available for the children to lay on?

6.5 Shared facilities within the Henry Kendall High School site.

The sharing of facilities such as the school hall and sporting field will cause some difficulty for both schools. The fact the school hall will be tied up for at least 10 weeks per year with HSC trial and HSC final examinations will make it extremely difficult for the Primary school students to utilise the hall at probably the busiest time of the year.

The proposal from David Cullen indicated that the School oval would be a shared facility and have a fence crossing over the actual field itself. This is something that really has not been thought through. A fence across the middle of the field would cause restricted use of the area by both schools. Timetabling the use of the field is possibly a better option which does not appear to have been examined.

6.6 Loss of financial income to Gosford Public School due to relocation and associated implications.

Gosford Public School, like any other school, is subject to tight financial restrictions. DET allocate a budget and it is the responsibility of the Principal to manage that funding in the best way possible.

Gosford Public School on its current site in Mann Street, Gosford, is in a unique position, in that, the school is able to generate additional income via two ongoing arrangements to utilise the school grounds as car parking facilities. If the school were to relocate it would result in a loss of significant income which benefits the school.

How does Gosford Public School utilise these additional funds? Currently, the additional funding allows for the hiring of two Teacher's Support staff that provide assistance to students with special needs such as reading recovery, ESL, learning difficulties, socialisation issues and other educational assistance activities within the school.

The school's excellent and improving NAPLAN results are achieved by the staff of Gosford Public School with the assistance of the additional learning support, provided by the additional funding from the car parking arrangements. (Annexure g 2008-2009) If the school was to relocate and lose this additional income, it would be difficult for the school to maintain such excellent results over a sustained period.

It is the view of this P&C Association that the children of Gosford Public School should not be disadvantaged in any way by a DET decision to relocate a school.

6.7 Waste of State Government funding and resources to implement this project.

Any Government Department needs to be responsible for all financial expenditure. Anything to do with Gosford Public School seems to be the exception. Some of the issues associated with this lack of financial planning will now be examined.

Firstly, the Government has failed to spend money on the school for the past ten years, thus leaving the buildings and facilities in a poor state. Some monies have been spent on maintenance projects such as toilets, drainage and 'Investing in Our Schools' projects however, that is where it ends.

In other attempts to find a suitable solution for Gosford Public School, Mr John Della Bosca, Minister for Education in 2007, approved Government Funding to finance an overseas trip for a number of officials to visit Christchurch, New Zealand. The purpose of this trip was to investigate the possibilities of an inner city CBD school for Gosford City.

At that time, the trip was deemed to be very successful with the potential to establish new initiatives between the DET and Council on the establishment and infrastructure associated with new schools. (Annexure h)

Kariong was the first new Public High School to be built, post the New Zealand trip and were any lessons learnt? NO. Kariong High has now been open for 6 months and there are still unresolved problems in respect of traffic and pedestrian movement around the school.

More recently there was the Central Coast bus trip arranged by Ms Maree Roberts to show off the proposed school site at Henry Kendall High School. This trip however was an unfunded proposal for relocation. So where did that money come from?

If the current relocation proposal goes ahead there will be considerable amounts of government funding, previous and current, which will go to waste.

A good example of this is the recent renovations at Henry Kendall High School that provided basketball courts under the National School Pride Program. With a budget of \$200,000, a COLA was placed into this area and an upgrade to the basketball courts was carried out. All this will be destroyed if the Relocation Proposal goes ahead.

There will also be considerable expenditure involved in the relocation of the Special Education facilities at Henry Kendall High School. Whether it be new rooms on the oval or another storey on top of the library, the cost will be significant and added to the overall project costs.

If the old Special Education facilities are to be removed from the current school site there will need to be particular attention paid to safe removal of asbestos material from these classrooms and school area. This will also be at considerable expense. This activity may also result in temporary closure of some areas of the school and what arrangements have been made for this?

The use of various DET personnel during various aspects of this proposal and others leading up to this point must come at considerable cost. If DET had simply made the decision to maintain and renovate Gosford Public School on the current site and not been coerced by Gosford City Council, millions of dollars of government funding could have been saved.

However, in the Government eyes there is the potential sale of public lands, i.e. Gosford Public School for an estimated \$15-20 million and this apparently makes all that other expenditure worthwhile. The public may become aware of this as the state election draws nearer.

6.8 Increase in financial expenses for parents

Given Gosford Public School current location within the heart of the CBD, many excursion costs are minimal. Things such as swimming carnivals and sports carnivals have no associated costs due to the school's location. Community visits such as band and choir performances at Legacy House, speaking with elderly at various churches within Gosford, Anzac Day Memorial Ceremonies, Radio show broadcasting, Christmas Carols in the town centre and alike will now have an associated cost or become unaffordable.

There is a proud tradition for Gosford Public School and its long community involvement. This should not be lost because of this proposal. Will DET fund the buses to get to these community events?

Many of the parents at Gosford Public School come from low socio-economic backgrounds and will have great difficulties in paying for these additional expenses. Their children may miss out on such community events as a result.

6.9 General safety concerns for primary school students

Previous sections have dealt with the parking and traffic conditions around Henry Kendall High School. There is also an increased risk / danger for the younger students in the area of Henry Kendall High school. Currently there is very little in the way of footpaths in the streets surrounding the school, streets such as Young Street, Hargraves Street and parts of Holden Street.

For students walking from the Gosford CBD who will travel across Showground Road and then along Faunce Street and across Holden Street, there is a distinct lack of Traffic control lights and pedestrian crossings. Even the students from the nearby High Schools have some difficulty in crossing Showground Road in the morning peak hour traffic, with the motorists as equally frustrated waiting for the waves of children to cross.

This will be in stark contrast to the current situation through the Gosford CBD and around Gosford Public School where there is ample pedestrian safety facilities in place around the school. It must be noted that Gosford City Council have delayed requests for relocation of the pedestrian crossing on Mann Street, Gosford, away from the roundabout at Georgiana Terrace. Equally, the RTA has failed to install "School Zone" warning lights properly around the school.

The proposed relocation places the students within close proximity to the Gosford District Hospital Precinct. For young students that are required to walk to school, some may be exposed to the near Mandala Mental Health Clinic and also the Methadone Clinic. Whilst High school students may be able to walk these area and avoid the mentally ill or drug affected, that will not

be so easy for the young primary school students. Who will be there to protect these young students?

What will be the cost of Government funding for this project alone? Who will pay for the footpaths, pedestrian lights, pedestrian crossings and alike? It is unlikely that Gosford City Council will have the funding available to properly equip the streets surrounding Henry Kendall High School in a sufficient manner to ensure the safety of these young students, and it is also unfair to place any more financial burden upon our city's ratepayers. It is strongly rumoured in Gosford that Administrators are about to be appointed to Gosford City Council due to poor financial management. Council employees are being told if they resign from their positions, those positions will not be filled as Council does not have sufficient funds to employ new staff.

By placing the Primary School and the High School alongside one another, there will be joint use of current bus facilities. The fact that children as young as 5 & 6 years of age will be forced to travel on buses with older High School students could cause problems if the situation is not closely monitored. These older students have a habit of forcing their way to the back seats and not bothering about how they get there.

6.10 Demographics

“Sydney continues to grow and the NSW Government’s Metropolitan Strategy and Central Coast Regional Strategy identified growth targets throughout the region. In the next 2 decades, the Central Coast is expected to add some 100,000 new residents and 55,000 new jobs. While most of these will be in the north around Tuggerah, Gosford City centre is expected to add 6,000 jobs and 10,000 new residents”. (Extract from The Gosford Challenge Masterplan)

To date, the Department of Education and Training has not supplied any documentation to the school community which would indicate any analysis of future population projections for this area. There is a need for professional and independent demographic analysis to accurately predict the future needs for Educational facilities in Gosford for the next 10-15 years.

An independent Demographic Analysis for Gosford / Wyong was commissioned by the Gosford Challenge and is attached (Annexure i). This report was prepared by Bob Birrell, Genevieve Heard and Ernest Healy Centre for Population & Urban Research, Monash University.

Within the report is a prediction of a 39% population increase for the Gosford and Wyong Local Government areas over the next 30 years. Within the Gosford area there is predicted increase of 15,000+ people for the Gosford LGA over the next 15 years.

LGA	2011	2016	2021	2026
Gosford	166,900	170,500	176,200	182,400

As for the actual number / percentage of school age people amongst those figures, that would be a matter for the Department of Education and Training to calculate.

During the Design Charrette workshops for the Gosford Challenge, the predicted population increase for Gosford CBD was estimated to 10, 000 people over the next 10 to 15 years. At the Education table of the Design Charrette workshops, certain calculations were done by David Cullen and another employee from DET head office and it was estimated there would be a need for another primary school within the Gosford CBD during the next 10-15 years.

David Cullen also estimated that for students of Secondary School age, any future increases would be accommodated within the existing Henry Kendall High School.

Facts that were considered whilst arriving at these figures included;

- The loss of students to Kariong High School over the next 5 years.
- DET population projection calculations. (i.e. For every 1,000 persons there will be x amount of secondary students)
- Existing secondary school populations in surrounding areas.
- Increase in leaving age for secondary school students.
- possible diversion of some students in new areas to existing schools;
- impact of existing or proposed non-government schools;
- the type and speed of residential development;
- the possible need for additional sites in large developments to cater for temporary enrolment peaks; and
- the nature of the population.

NSW DET Policy indicates that “One primary school site per 1500-2000 new homes and one high school site per 4500-6000 new homes” are the guidelines for New School Sites. (Site Procedures for NSW Government Schools, 2008)

Based on the Gosford Challenge’s population increase predictions of 10,000 persons and 6,000 dwellings, there is a predicted need for a minimum of three additional primary schools and one additional high school.

Given these figures there is an urgent need to re-access this Relocation Proposal and look at the additional sites that will be required.

7. SUMMARY

There really is no need to move forward with this Relocation Proposal. Gosford Public School is currently in a great location within the Gosford CBD and the DET should embrace this location and utilise it for the benefit of the students of Gosford Public School and the greater Gosford Community.

The following is from the Homepage of a CBD school that embraces its position;

“Located in the heart of Sydney’s CBD, St Andrew’s Cathedral School is a vibrant, coeducational institution providing students from Kindergarten to Year 12 with a strong academic programme, extensive opportunities for involvement in sport, music and the dramatic arts and nurturing pastoral care; all set within a fast-paced, cosmopolitan cityscape.”

There are many possibilities of how the Gosford Public School, Mann Street site could be used to greater potential and blend in with any redevelopment that *may* take place in the surrounding area.

In 2007, DET were all in favour of a CBD school, one that could possibly be located in a shopping complex or large building. There was the New Zealand – Melbourne Discovery Tour. Agreement between DET and Council was on the way forward for such developments. So what happened? Along came The Gosford Challenge.

To date, the DET has not been transparent in any of the information supplied. Hurstville Public School in Sydney’s south is currently going through a proposed relocation ‘consultation’. For Hurstville Public School, DET has been able to supply documentation, enable extensive discussion and consultation between involved parties, recommendations from State Government Treasury, GANT charts for the project, Architect’s plan drawings, site plans and a full list of facilities to be provided. This is far superior to what is available to the Gosford Public School community. The Hurstville project even allow for options to be developed and discussed by school community members, DET and the local MP. Their discussions / consultations have being going for at least two years.

NOTE: The “Hurstville Education Project” has evaluated population and student numbers for the future and made decisions based on those figures. DET has decided to move the students and NOT the school. The future needs of educational facilities have been taken into account. Why does DET not consider this for Gosford?

The Gosford Challenge is far from a done deal. The State Government has approved Gosford as the Regional Capital of the Central Coast and allocated some administrative support for that concept to move forward. However there has been little, if any, financial commitment to date from either the State or Federal Governments.

One of the largest potential public investors for the Gosford Challenge project, Mr John Singleton stated in the Express Advocate (Friday 13/8/10), "It has been talked about for 30, 20 and 10 years – **nothing will happen.**" He may well be right.

If in fact the Gosford Challenge does not go ahead, Gosford Public School may have been moved and the site sold off. What a great loss of public lands that would be. And who would be held accountable?

DET needs to find more school sites for the future of public education on the Central Coast, not less. Our population and student numbers will increase in the very near future as it has done in the past and the need for more school facilities will increase. It is time to start planning for the future.

Let's not take a backward step by selling off Gosford Public School to obtain some quick revenue. Let's plan the future of education in the Gosford CBD for now and for the future. A 10-15 year plan will be vital for not only Gosford but the entire Central Coast given the predicted population increases.

The proposed relocation of Gosford Public School to within the grounds of Henry Kendall High School has not been thoroughly thought through and does not cater for the future educational needs of Gosford City. The site does not adequately cater for the educational needs of both a Primary school and a High School. Both schools will be disadvantaged by this relocation and the reduction of usable green space available to the students.

The actual size of Gosford Public School land area has been questioned on occasions by DET staff. Currently Gosford Public School is situated on 1.7 hectares of land. Throughout NSW there would be schools of similar students numbers on smaller areas of land however this information is not available at the present time.

The size of Gosford Public School is below the recommended 3 hectares that would be required for a new primary school site however, with the use of Leagues Club Field, there is ample room. Henry Kendall High School has a total of 7.4 hectares, including the Agriculture Farm. If the farm is taken out of the land area, as this land is only accessible to HKHS and GHS students studying agriculture, this would bring the Henry Kendall High school site back to 4.6 hectares. Well below the 6 hectares required for a new high school site. **Both a primary school and a high school site combined would require a minimum of 9 hectares.**

To place both a primary school and a high school onto 4.6 hectares of land is ridiculous. The minimum new schools site requirement would be 9 hectares and yet the proposed relocation would have both schools on just over half the required land area. This is totally unacceptable in this day and age. It is felt that this overcrowding and lack of play will lead to increased bullying and injuries to students as they physically struggle for room.

The actual land area allocated to Gosford Public School for this relocation proposal is 2.18 hectares which is only 0.48 hectares bigger than the current site. Once terracing and ramping of the proposed site is carried out, the students will in fact have far less area for movement and play.

Gosford Public School P&C Association are determined to enable the best learning facilities possible for the students of Gosford Public School. This is something that we have strived to achieve for many years.

It is time that money was spent on the provision of State of the Art facilities at the current Gosford Public School site. The school community and the P&C Association, when surveyed in December 2009 by Gosford Council and the DET, voted overwhelmingly to remain on the Mann Street site. Many members of the school community are disillusioned by DET's lack of response to, and understanding of, the survey results. **The School community want to stay on Mann Street.**

A further indication of strong desire of people to have Gosford Public School remain on the Mann Street site is the Facebook page, "Gosford Public School - against relocation". This page was set up in late 2009 by parents concerned about the school relocation. Shortly before the DET's Relocation Proposal was announced, there were 280 members. Once the proposal was announced, the membership jumped and now there are approximately 430 individuals who have joined this page. These Facebook members are ex-students, parents, community members and friends of the school.

It is possible for Gosford Public School and the Gosford Challenge to co-exist within the CBD. All that is needed is for Gosford City Council to think outside of the square and allow the Department of Education and Training to create a modern school facility within the Gosford CBD that will provide a modern learning facility that everyone can utilise. A true Community Facility.

Gosford Public School has maintained a place within the Central Business District of Gosford City for the past 155 years. There is a proud history for Gosford Public School in Gosford CBD which should not be ignored. Past and present students have achieved great results as a direct result of attending this wonderful school. Many parents choose to send their children to and become involved with public education at the school because of it's long and proud history in Gosford City.

Gosford Public School P&C Association believe that the DET's is a poor option for Gosford Public School and the proposed relocation should NOT proceed.