

**Submission
No 71**

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF SCHOOL
INFRASTRUCTURE IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Mr Andrew Molloy

Date Received: 9 February 2022

Submission by Andrew Molloy

Summary

This submission relates the current state of Educational infrastructure for residents aged 12-18 from Southern Bankstown; and the lack of foresight in not resuming or purchasing a site with existing infrastructure at Milperra – being the former WSU campus.

I refer to your terms of reference:

(b) the adequacy of plans by the NSW Government to deliver educational facilities for every NSW public school student, and

(e) the adequacy of demographic planning for anticipated school enrolments,

Current Overcrowding

I discuss the high schools situated in the southern Bankstown district that is bounded by Georges River at Milperra in the west; along the Georges River to Salt Pan Creek at Padstow Heights in the east; then bounded by Canterbury and Milperra Roads to the north.

The four public high schools in aggregate are bulging and relying upon a lot of demountable buildings, something that the Coalition promised would be a thing of the past two election cycles ago.

A home room for a teacher is a rarity now. Instead for instance an English teacher will share with Maths teacher or any Faculty cross-sharing with resources distracting to the learning of the main subject.

A political solution

From 2022, the Coalition Government have included students from year 7 who reside south of Canterbury Road, bounded by Little Salt Pan Creek and Salt Pan Creek into the Menai High School catchment area.

In August 2021, we were told that our son, then in year 8 had no chance of transferring as Menai High School were then 17% over cap.

This student body was switched to prevent overcrowding in the southern Bankstown high schools by landing them into a school which was 17% already over cap. There are estimates in coming years Menai High School's previous area will decline in numbers as those homes built in the 1990s and 2000s see that wave of children through high school.

However, no quick and adequate solution is offered to educate those students locally, as current plans and spending on Picnic Point High School appear to be mostly to re-build, but not actually enlarge the school substantially.

There has been no suggestion of large amounts of funding for the other three high schools.

There are Psycho-Social, Emotive, practical and logistical problems with shifting students suddenly from one year into a different catchment area – and educating students is not just about sending them to another Woolworths Store to get the commodity called "Education". There are connections.

Numerous people in Padstow South and Padstow Heights went to Picnic Point High School as students and their own children have done so. This is an emotional issue for many, particularly if you are splitting the sibling set up, ie the first two already at one school and the last one or two at the other school.

The social side includes that often after school social visiting and activities like Soccer, Netball, Dancing and the like can be harmed somewhat by effectively moving people from one local district to another district – particularly when it is peninsular to peninsular; there is a large bridge involved and a certain sense of additional wealth in housing and income on the other side.

The practical and logistical side of switching students in a new area to hide the overcrowding in one area needs to have proper planning. The overall Education can be impacted by additional travel. For instance students, some 100-150 impacted by the changes have been exposed to no specific bus route and transport from Padstow South and Padstow Heights to Menai High School.

The bus routes are a collection of sharing with main stream public and usually involve long walks and/ or two buses. The additional travel time for these students is up to ten hours per week – and they did not choose to be changed from their catchment area – where their older brother or sister likely has a bus to Picnic Point High School.

Education is not solely buildings, it is the whole experience from home to returning home. This has caused stress and havoc for so many parents. Between 8.30 and 8.50am the ramp is piled back to Alford's Point Road – great environmental waste and lost productivity for all those parents.

Remember the switch of catchment area was a failure to plan from the late 1990s when the southern Bankstown started being home to numerous duplexes and increase in population.

This has already been a disaster. Students have been turned away in the afternoon by the dozens in a lottery for a spot on the slim choice of buses as the additional students have overwhelmed capacity.

This is a poor planning. It is infrastructure at its worst. It is exposing students to additional time away from home; to crossing Henry Lawson Drive/ Davies Road/ Alma Road and the like; and it is exposing them to Covid-19 by two buses with the general public.

Education is about People and providing infrastructure. The bus issue and related health, safety and productivity for parents and students would not be one if adequate planning had been undertaken. "Needs" are all round – not just sending someone elsewhere, but feeling part of the community.

Population Growth to make it worse

The population of the local area whether the NSW Government sets targets or not will grow exponentially. There are many blocks every week being cleared to build two dwellings often where an elderly person/s have died or moved away.

The growth over the next 20-30 years could conservatively be estimated at another 30% increase in population.

Lack of Planning

The WSU Milperra campus could be resumed or purchased to make an additional high school for young people residing in southern Bankstown – whether it be co-ed; Selective or Senior.

The campus has a massive library which could be converted into a modern open technology learning space. It has lecture theatres and Science Laboratories. There are modern classrooms.

There is plenty of parking for staff.

A century ago – often staff were lured into positions by offering housing as a package deal. There is opportunity to use the student dormitory accommodation to offer cheap housing to teachers not just at a school here – but across the southern Bankstown district.

This could be a new initiative being a residential hub for single, or divorced teachers to enjoy a lower than market rent as a reward for teaching.

In addition, I refer to the terms of reference:

(h) school design that promotes health and safety, and

The site has numerous advanced trees for shade and natural cooling effects. It is ideal for the safety for protection from the Sun. Furthermore the campus boasts numerous advanced gardens and courtyards – ideal for Mental Health and Well-Being.

Destruction of the environment and waste

What planning enables advanced trees, established gardens, buildings for education and housing to be demolished into rubble when it could be re-used? The money saved on buildings could help offset the cost of the land. In addition – part of the land could be sold off overlooking the M5 to help to pay for the land and in addition re-furbishing.

A Template for re-use, re-cycle, re-model, re-purpose

There is something about our society that has to knock down and destroy. The Milperra site could be a case study in re-purposing rather than knock down.

The local district is already overcrowded in high schools. A good section is being shipped to another district without any thought or planning how they should get there without impacting on their Educational day.

The planning of taking over former industrial, office or educational buildings should be paramount. The Milperra site at the moment is an example of such lack of planning for the future.

The History of Milperra (2006) by Andrew Molloy

In 2006 I wrote a 210 page book. The original school was a block from the original Bankstown Soldiers Settlement which was provided for the purposes of Public Education. Every student in the 2018 were children of returned Soldiers from the Great War (1914-1918). The site has a great Historical significance to that War effort and the idea in the post-war years their children would have this land for Public Instruction.

Prior to European settlement the Aboriginal people used the estuaries and swampy waters of Milperra for food. The name Milperra is Aboriginal for “company” for “a meeting place”. There is evidence of their use of the land as far south as Yeramba Lagoon at Picnic Point, to Williams Creek across the Georges River from Deepwater Park. This is open space and community land with remnant adjoining bushland in the north-eastern corner. The bushland, the Aboriginal and Soldiers from World War 1 all create Historical significance.

Aboriginal Studies

The original Milperra Teachers College (1975), then later the Milperra College of Advanced Education (1978), later Macarthur Institute of Higher Education (1985) and finally UWS/WSU had nation-wide best practices in Aboriginal units on site. The special studies in the fields of Arts; support for students across all faculties produced many Aboriginal leaders in our Community.

The tradition could be carried on by providing a specialist southern Bankstown/ South Western Sydney unit for the recognition and extension of Aboriginal studies and production of extra-curricular drama, history, art, cultural studies and Leadership projects. There is the space and the natural remnant landscapes.

Support of Mr David Coleman, MP, Member for Banks

I have discussed ideas and plans with The Hon. Mr David Coleman and outlined the needs for such an additional high school when the current ones are overcrowded; they are shipping students over the Georges River to a school 17% over cap and whether there is State Government target or not our population is going to rise substantially.

Mr Coleman has represented this submission on behalf of me to the NSW Minister for Education, Ms Sarah Mitchell, MLC. I enclose a copy of this letter with the submission.

Please contact me for further information:

Andrew Molloy *MBA MA BA GradDipEd*



DAVID COLEMAN MP

Federal Member for Banks

Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister for
Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Hon Sarah Mitchell MP
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

24 January 2022

Dear Minister Mitchell,

I was recently in contact with a local resident, Mr Andrew Molloy of regarding his concern about the need for the development of a high school at the Western Sydney University, Milperra campus.

Mr Molloy believes the former Western Sydney University campus in Milperra should be used for the development of a high school. Mr Molloy believes this would benefit many families in the local area.

Mr Molloy requests that the NSW Government consider the development of a new high school at this location.

I write to you to pass on Mr Molloy's request.

Your advice on this matter would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

David Coleman MP
Federal Member for Banks

A Multi-Function Educational Socio-Hub by Andrew Molloy MBA MA BA GradDipEd

The former Milperra campus of WSU is an Experiment waiting to happen. There are so many innovative opportunities for revenue at the facility to provide social support to all people within its community at a huge reduction in cost to State and Federal Government.

Housing and Accommodation:

- a. There are 228 single rooms purpose built for housing. Current rent starts @ \$200 per week (maximum two rooms per tenant \$400. These could be leased to early career teachers at \$120 a week @ \$6000 per year who work on site or in cluster of schools.

The early career teachers would already enjoy a substantial market discount to @ \$400 for a granny flat equals @ \$14 000 per year after tax saving. At the conclusion of five years of service, the teacher could be granted the cost of rent back in full @ \$30, 000 – only if they are using as a deposit for a first home or unit.

The teacher has an effective \$100, 000 house deposit which has been provided by the school hub which has cost taxpayers little or nothing. The social benefit of stability in staffing and retaining the teacher is huge. It is society's commitment back. Even a modest \$30, 000 per year saving plan provides a 29-30 year old with \$250k.

The social benefit delivers: Major incentive for teachers with near zero cost to both Governments; less pressure on rental market therefore on house prices rising due to higher rent returns; environmentally friendly as walk to work. Emergency refuges for women fleeing domestic violence funded by Centrelink. Revenue: \$2-4, 000, 000

- b. Where is the compromise at this site? Why not keep the buildings purpose built for Education and develop 1/4 of the site in the dip of land adjacent to the M5? Utilising the drop in the land - twin 6-7 storey units with surrounding town houses – up to 150 publicly owned homes. Half of them leased at full market rent, the other half at subsidy for teachers, administration or cleaning staff and their families; or leased to single parents who have children attending this school or another school in the hub.

Mirvac could build twin buildings for the NSW Government, with ongoing revenues from full market rent and the social benefit with the Federal Government saving huge amounts for decades ahead not having to pay as much money in rent allowances.

The social benefit delivers: cheaper rent for staff at the school; walk to work; and less pressure on rental market. It is affordable housing for other workers in the district. Revenue: Substantial other revenue and savings into the \$ several million per year.

On 13 May 2021 Mr Anthony Albanese spoke about a Housing Australia Future Fund. *“The security of a roof over one’s head should be available to all Australians.”* He added *“The home I grew up in gave me and my mum so much more than somewhere to sleep. It gave us pride, dignity and security, and it gave me a future.”*

The local Federal Member for Blaxland, Mr Jason Clare then Shadow Housing Minister said *“This will make money, create jobs, build homes and change lives.”*

<https://anthonyalbanese.com.au/media-centre/housing-australia-future-fund>

Childcare Centre

There is a 67 place long day care centre on site. According to this report:
<https://www.burgessrawson.com.au/news/demand-sees-childcare-market-grow-up-fast> the average cost per child for leasing out a child care centre was \$2864 in 2020.

The social benefit delivers: localised childcare for teachers living in accommodation on site; less time for any teacher to re-connect with child after work; priority given to staff at school and indeed students who may have a child to support them studying.
Revenue: \$201, 000 per year.

After School tutoring centres

A local high school charges @ \$500 per afternoon for several classrooms. The campus could host multiple activities from pure academic to dance, drama and music in the Performing Arts Centre.

Revenue: anywhere @ \$150-\$300, 000 per year

Performing Arts Centre

The neighbouring Mount St Joseph Catholic High School apparently would like to take over the centre. This could be leased for 2 ½ fixed days @ \$500 per day.
Revenue: @ \$50, 000 per year

Departmental Conferences

According to a letter I have from a Department of Education Director, I am aware off-site conferences for school, or more than one school are "common practice". Sometimes they stay overnight even if the conference is held close to their school.

The former gym would make a great conference centre and the lecture theatre seats 500, break out rooms for discussions, toilets and cafeteria are all there! A part of the dormitories could be retained as accommodation for such conferences, or existing buildings stripped and re-modelled for accommodation.

Milperra itself and the broader inner South West is home to all kinds of large Australia wide and even multi-national corporations and the facility could be outsourced all year around to these companies as well as internal billing to schools inside and outside the cluster to use at significant discount to what they would pay.

Hospitality and Music students at the school could be paid for before and after school preparatory and cleaning up work.

Revenue: @ \$250, 000 + per year

Canteen

The canteen run by the school or by the P&C could earn significant revenue. A local high school alone pre-Covid was making \$300-\$400, 000 per year profit. A canteen could be re-located towards the dormitories and main road. They could earn the above figure with a student population of @ 1000 attending.

However, utilising the all day long and the all year round earning capacity models, the canteen could have ie a 4.30 to 8.30pm shift selling meals to those in the dormitories; those in the district and then a further 52 week revenue stream of selling the food and drinks to the planning conference. Again students at the school could be employed to work in the canteen. Revenue: \$800, 000 + per year for the school.

Playing Fields

If the current demands for population targets by the NSW Government materialise as residents see every day with new duplexes, we will need more playing fields. The school could lease out their playing fields to Council themselves or directly to sporting organisations.

The social benefit directly of maintaining such large tracts of open space versus tiny integrated sections of miniature village greens is intangible for future generations.

Space for innovation and STEM (cross Faculty) activities which earn revenue

The campus has additional rooms equipped with wi-fi technology and smart boards for untold development of new projects within and outside the existing curriculum and the time of the school's operational hours. Students could be encouraged to innovate inside and outside classrooms. For instance at East Hills Girls High School students learn how to propagate in Science; participate in a positive, healthy lunch time activity of nurturing plants and then at the annual Spring Fair these are sold. The money is then placed into consolidated school revenue. I believe Commerce students participate and study the way to market it.

This is excellence – students earning money to help support the school whilst learning how to create something and how to market. This is a part of school that is enjoyable, engaging, it is healthy for mind and body and actually reflects what happens after school ends. This site offers the technology for untold STEM projects.

The Cost-Benefit: 228-114 existing dwellings (or 300+ with new additions) part social housing and part full market housing versus 440 homes to be sold for @ \$1 million and plus. If leased would not be cheap either. The revenue could be greater than \$10 million per year, but the Social Benefit includes a once only chance to run a future schooling experiment that can fund itself, attract teachers and care for people. The public interest should come first and it has not been fully considered especially given the current demand for classrooms in the East Hills district not being met.