

Architectural Design Statement

Project: St Stanislaus College
Job Number: 2499.19
Location: 220 Bentinck St, Bathurst NSW 2795

Project Description: Alterations and additions to the existing main building at St Stanislaus College including new circulation and access stairs, lifts and ramps, refurbishment of existing boarding facilities and upgrades to existing learning spaces and administration.



View of the North Western aspect of the existing McAuliffe O'Reilly Wing, St Stanislaus College, from the Brilliant Street front Oval.

Introduction

This Architectural Design Statement has been prepared on behalf of St Stanislaus College, to support the lodgement of a Development Application (DA) to Bathurst Shire Council.

Specifically, this DA relates to mostly internal alterations and additions to the existing three (3) storey education building incorporating specialist and general learning spaces, boarding facilities and administration services. The proposal also includes ancillary works around the main St Stanislaus College building including the provision of new hard landscaping to the

central courtyard to improve accessibility, construction of new covered ways and lifts connecting the existing building wings, the internal refurbishment of existing learning spaces as well the relocation of the existing main public entry to the College to the more prominent location of the central 'Marble' Hall. This report has been structured against the principles outlined in the SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.

Summary of proposal

St Stanislaus College was established in 1867. As the College population grew plans were developed for a purpose-built facility which was constructed on the current site and occupied by the College in 1873. The college is the oldest Catholic boys' boarding school in Australia, and caters for approximately 600 students from year 7 to 12 including approximately 120 boarders. The early history of the college is intertwined with that of the short-lived St Charles' Seminary; both institutions shared the original towered section of building facing Brilliant Street until the latter closed in the late 1800s.¹

The original Victorian styled building, generally described as the McAuliffe O'Reilly Wing and Horan Wing was built in stages from 1872 through to 1907. The eastern Gallagher Wing which currently contains the boarding kitchen and dining hall and the western Slattery Wing housing the clinic are both extensions from the 1940's. The Chapel, prominent in the centre of the building addressing Brilliant Street was extended forward towards the front oval in 1954. In 1962 the first stage of the Southern John Hall Wing was built. This was closely followed by the Southern section of the Slattery Wing which was opened in 1965 by Sir Robert Menzies. Completing the current donut shape of the main College building were the Guthrie Library in the Southwestern corner of the courtyard and the John McMahon Wing completing the circle to the South in 1985. There have been many minor additions and alterations to all these buildings within the 150year history of the College.

As the learning spaces have aged, the approaches to delivering learning has evolved to where the current facilities are limited in their support of the new pedagogy. A desire to modernise and make transparent the learning and activity of the College have found limitation within the current building fabric. A program of upgrading of the facilities has been considered and this development proposal is looking to start providing the College with improved learning and boarding environments. The project includes 5 phases of construction to facilitate continued occupation of the College during the upgrade period. These are generally described as follows:

Phase 1

- Horan Wing, Ground floor – Internal modifications to the O'Reilly Room, Wilkinson Room and Senior Refectory to accommodate the administration services for the College.
- McAuliffe O'Reilly Wing, Ground floor - Construction of a new exterior entry ramp to the western façade of the McAuliffe O'Reilly Marble Hall including modifications to the side entry door. Internal modifications to the rear of the Marble Hall display area to accommodate a relocate public and student reception. Refurbishment of the existing administration spaces into a College Community Café space and Central Learning Hub (Library) facility. Modification of some exiting external windows and doors to the Southern façade of the McAuliffe O'Reilly wing.
- Slattery Wing, Ground floor – Internal refurbishment of the current student clinic spaces. Internal modifications to the current student boarding reception offices to accommodate part of the new Central Learning Hub.
- Guthrie Library, Ground floor – Internal refurbishment of the existing library into a new Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths (STEAM) Hub. New external doors to Southern façade.

¹ 'St Stanislaus College (Bathurst)' *Wikipedia website*. Retrieved 8 December 2022.

- John McMahon Wing, Ground floor – Modifications to internal spaces to accommodate new Food Technology classroom and a uniform shop and store. New roller shutter counter to external courtyard façade.
- Construction of a new external Covered Outdoor Area adjacent the Southern Main Oval.
- John McMahon Wing, Ground floor to Second floor – New lift and connection to external Southern Façade.
- John McMahon Wing, Upper Ground floor – Internal modifications of existing storage spaces into flexible learning seminar & study space.
- John McMahon Wing, First floor – Internal modifications and Upgrades to existing learning spaces.
- McAuliffe O'Reilly Wing, First floor – Internal alterations to existing Vincentian Brothers accommodation to accommodate student boarding facilities.
- John McMahon Wing, Second floor – Internal modifications and Upgrades to existing learning spaces.

Phase 2

- McAuliffe O'Reilly Wing, Ground floor to Second floor – External courtyard modifications to accommodate new verandah circulation above and new stairs.
- Slattery Wing, Ground floor to Second floor – External courtyard modifications to accommodate new verandah circulation above.
- Gallagher Wing, Basement to Second Floor – External new lift and connection to external Southern Façade.
- McAuliffe O'Reilly Wing, First floor - Internal alterations to existing Vincentian Brothers accommodation to accommodate student boarding facilities.
- Gallagher Wing, First floor - Internal alterations to existing student boarding facilities to accommodate teaching staff study and resource space.
- Gallagher Wing, Second floor - Internal alterations to existing Vincentian Brothers facilities to accommodate boarding staff communal living facilities.

Phase 3

- John Hall Wing, Basement – Internal alterations to the existing student amenities to accommodate a new boarding kitchen facility.
- John Hall Wing, Basement – Modifications to the external Eastern pavements directly adjacent to the new kitchen facilities and activity spaces (phase 4).
- John Hall Wing, Basement – External additions to courtyard façade to provide a new external verandah, lift and circulation to the Western façade.
- John Hall Wing, Ground floor – Internal alterations to the existing boarding facilities to accommodate a new boarding dining hall and kitchen.
- John Hall Wing, First floor – Internal upgrades and refurbishment to existing boarding facilities.
- John Hall Wing, First floor – External addition of circulation verandah.
- Slattery Wing, First floor – Internal modifications of existing boarding facilities to accommodate student wellbeing and support services and infirmary (clinic) staff accommodation.
- Slattery Wing, Ground floor to First floor – External additional lift to phase 2 verandah.

Phase 4

- John Hall Wing, Basement – Internal modifications to existing boarding facilities to accommodate a new boarding student activity space and upgraded amenities
- John Hall Wing, Second floor – Internal upgrades and refurbishment to existing boarding facilities.

Phase 5

- Gallagher Wing, Ground floor – Internal modifications to the existing boarding kitchen and Dining Hall to accommodate a new Staff Development Hub and staff amenities.
- Gallagher Wing, Upper Ground floor – Internal refurbishment of existing boarding staff accommodation facilities.

Design Quality Principles

This section provides a response to the relatively universal design principals as outlined in schedule 8 of the SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 in relation to the proposal development at St Stanislaus College.

Principle 1 – context, built form and landscape

Schools should be designed to respond to and enhance the positive qualities of their setting, landscape and heritage, including Aboriginal cultural heritage. The design and spatial organisation of buildings and the spaces between them should be informed by site conditions such as topography, orientation and climate.

Landscape should be integrated into the design of school developments to enhance on-site amenity, contribute to the streetscape and mitigate negative impacts on neighbouring sites.

School buildings and their grounds on land that is identified in or under a local environmental plan as a scenic protection area should be designed to recognise and protect the special visual qualities and natural environment of the area, and located and designed to minimise the development's visual impact on those qualities and that natural environment.

The proposal is for alterations and additions to the existing education buildings of St Stanislaus College. The College is listed as an item of local heritage significance and is located within the Bathurst Conservation Area C1. The external façade of the main building of the College contributes significantly to the character and heritage nature of the College campus. The design for the refurbishment work responds to the heritage value of the fabric in not proposing to alter any elements of this northern façade with the exception of the addition of an external access ramp to the Marble Hall. The external views of the College from both Bentinck and Brilliant streets will remain unaltered in the streetscape preserving the current amenity of the neighbouring sites. All new external building fabric is confined to the campus internal southern façade and courtyard and will not be visible to any street address or approach to the College.

External interventions are predominantly proposed to provide improved access and circulation and compliance with current building codes. They will have limited impact on a small number of existing garden planter beds and will not impinge on any natural bushland or vegetation. The physical and impact by the proposed works on the landscape will be minimal. Visually, the new lift towers will have the greatest impact on the Southern facades of the main building. None of these towers are proposed to exceed the existing building in height and will not be visible from the street address.

Principle 2 – sustainable, efficient and durable

Good design combines positive environmental, social and economic outcomes. Schools and school buildings should be designed to minimise the consumption of energy, water and natural resources and reduce waste and encourage recycling.

Schools should be designed to be durable, resilient and adaptable, enabling them to evolve over time to meet future requirements.

The alterations to the internal learning spaces of the College are intended to facilitate modern approaches to teaching. Current spaces have been unaltered since built in the 1980's. Pedagogy has evolved in the interim demanding more flexibility and diversity in the physical environments to support learning and the new fitout to the John McMahon Wing and ground floor of the McAuliffe O'Reilly Wing reflect this.

Natural light and ventilation will be maintained and improved to all learning spaces. New covered ways are to provide better sheltered connections between the disparate existing building levels as well as bringing contemporary compliance for equitable access to all learning, administration and boarding areas.

The new external verandahs and lift towers are to be constructed of galvanised and painted steel and glass. These materials have been selected for their durability and low maintenance. They will provide a distinct contrast with the timber and brick fabric of the existing buildings making these new additions clearly identifiable from the earlier construction.

Principle 3 – accessible and inclusive

School buildings and their grounds should provide good wayfinding and be welcoming, accessible and inclusive to people with differing needs and capabilities.

Note. Wayfinding refers to information systems that guide people through a physical environment and enhance their understanding and experience of the space.

Schools should actively seek opportunities for their facilities to be shared with the community and cater for activities outside of school hours.

The current main building to St Stanislaus College has been added to and extended over a 150 year period. There are a multitude of floor level changes within each main floor level. Current wheelchair access across the building is limited, convoluted and indirect where it is possible and inequitable. The proposed additions to the building look to address this and bring equitable access across the learning and boarding facilities.

The re-organisation of the accommodation facilities seeks to modernise the living arrangements for the boarding students, improving the standards of the accommodation, increasing the amenity and improving the logic and readability of the spatial layout. The relocated kitchen and dining hall will enable ease of compliance with modern catering facilities and well as providing a more central location which will lend itself to being utilised by parents, day students, functions and other activities that may relate the adjacent Chapel and courtyard.

The modifications to the McAuliffe O'Reilly current administration space into the Central Learning Hub is intended to assist in making learning visible. It will bring the activity of the school closer to the public interface of the reception foyer and facilitate the monitored interaction between parents and the public and students through the café and lounge spaces.

Principle 4 – health and safety

Good school development optimises health, safety and security within its boundaries and the surrounding public domain, and balances this with the need to create a welcoming and accessible environment.

The relocation of the main entrance to the College via the Marble Hall will facilitate improved wayfinding to and observation of all visitors and deliveries. This new approach into the campus will also provide an improved welcoming experience to students, parents and visitors. The relocation of the reception to Marble Hall will enable staff to quickly identify visitors, register their presence on site and provide assistance. It provides defined entry points to the campus which will better facilitate the identification of welcome and unwelcome visitors on site.

Principle 5 – amenity

Schools should provide pleasant and engaging spaces that are accessible for a wide range of educational, informal and community activities, while also considering the amenity of adjacent development and the local neighbourhood. Schools should include appropriate, efficient, stage and age appropriate indoor and outdoor learning and play spaces, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, outlook, visual and acoustic privacy, storage and service areas.

The new refurbishment works at St Stanislaus are designed to consolidate zones of activity in logical groupings with the intent to provide transparency of wayfinding, transparency of learning and improved

functionality. Current spaces, especially in the boarding facilities, are aged and do not easily support communal and homelike spaces. The new arrangements provide for clusters of boarding around de-centralised kitchen and lounge spaces enabling boarders to be part of a 'house' rather than part of an institution.

A benefit of the refurbishment work is the review, adjustment and thus upgrade to current standards of the ventilation and light to all boarding bedrooms and learning spaces. Current boarding bedrooms at the lower ground floor (basement) of John Hall will be relocated to upper levels where security and access to light are improved, modernising and bringing an uplift to the general amenity for the boys living spaces.

Principle 6 - whole of life, flexible and adaptive

School design should consider future needs and take a whole-of-life-cycle approach underpinned by site wide strategic and spatial planning. Good design for schools should deliver high environmental performance, ease of adaptation and maximise multi-use facilities.

A major objective of the proposed program of building at St Stanislaus College is to update or replace the existing 1980's era or older classrooms with modern flexible learning spaces. The existing buildings are proposed to be refurbished rather than demolished and re-built with an acknowledgement of the continuity of history and environmental sustainability of re-use rather than new build. The refurbishment will bring the flexible and adaptable Central learning Hub to the front and publicly accessible entry to the campus. In the new location the Central Learning Hub provides for a casual café and shared meeting and seminar rooms for parents, teachers and students alike according to time of day or need. The parents can see learning happening while waiting at the café, the public can interact with the school community in a transparent and supervised way.

The relocation of the Central Learning Hub allows for the existing library to be adapted into a flexible, non-subject specific STEAM Hub. This space will be supportive of contemporary enquiry based rather than content focused approaching to learning.

Principle 7 – aesthetics

School buildings and their landscape setting should be aesthetically pleasing by achieving a built form that has good proportions and a balanced composition of elements. Schools should respond to positive elements from the site and surrounding neighbourhood and have a positive impact on the quality and character of a neighbourhood. The built form should respond to the existing or desired future context, particularly, positive elements from the site and surrounding neighbourhood, and have a positive impact on the quality and sense of identity of the neighbourhood.

The new building works to the BBQ area will apply the same brick materiality of the existing main building. Apart from the new entry ramp, all the new external interventions will not be visible from the street address and therefore will have negligible impact on the public campus aesthetic. Where new vertical and horizontal circulation is proposed at the southern façade in the courtyard and oval, the materials are to be colorbond or painted steel and galvanised steel as well as prefinished compressed fibre cement board or composite timber decking boards. These materials are to be simple in their colour palette choice and deliberately contrasting to the red brick of the existing painted timber and red brick of the existing building. This will inject a clear contrast to the red brick of the heritage fabric and identify the new insertions enabling a clarity in reading the various additions to the campus building. New fresh air intakes and ventilation vents have been discussed with the mechanical engineer and will utilise existing windows and penetrations and be located on the southern façade where possible.

Conclusion

The proposed redevelopment at St Stanislaus College will increase the amenity for the College community as it will be provided with learning spaces responsive to contemporary pedagogy in an accessible building thoughtfully designed to respond to its heritage context and functions. They will improve the visibility of learning, the wayfinding and grouping of same functions and return the John Hall auditorium to its original central communal and high ceiling volume. These



works will allow the College to continue to make a positive contribution to the broader community in a 21st Century built environment.

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