



Reimagining White Hills Primary School

BENDGIO, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA
Victorian School Building Authority, Department of Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The White Hills Primary School refurbishment represents the first stage of modernising the school. It has transformed the school’s physical environment into a connected series of spaces and supports its transitioning curriculum delivery by creating learning Neighbourhood clusters.

Early on, the school identified a disconnect between the approach to learning across its facilities. The school’s newer spaces provided vastly different opportunities to the other traditional classrooms (in the main building and portables). This difference confused educators and learners as they transitioned between settings. The school desired a consistent approach to learning across its year levels.

The school’s main building was built in the mid-1980s and was ahead of its time. However, it formed a messy set of individual teaching and

administration spaces. It had a lot of internal circulation that was uninviting and hard to navigate and created isolation between learning areas that restricted movement. The building has a large, deep footprint that isolated occupants from the outside world. The refurbishment opened up the facility and improved connections with two internal courtyards (Sun Labs) to transform the building’s character.

The outcome is engaging flexible pedagogical environments that support a student-centred personalised approach to teaching and learning. The Sun Labs are adjacent to Learning Neighborhoods and are designed to make it easy for day-to-day learning to move outdoors. Additionally, they provide immediate access to specialist learning and administration spaces, ensuring continual access to outdoor learning environments throughout the building.

The School’s Learning Neighbourhoods provide flexible spaces that enable student movement and agency over learning. Each neighbourhood contains learning studios, calming small break-out spaces, presentation areas, and collaborative maker spaces with additional support through withdrawal and intervention spaces for students. The school wished to enable broader school community events, with a multipurpose area for regular Parents and Friends group members to meet and work. This space also caters to smaller and mid-sized functions, including the growing Karen (English as Additional Language) population, to promote the value of education in their community and support them.

The refurbishment project has created a welcoming atmosphere that fosters engagement with all parents in the learning program through improved wayfinding and widespread display of student work



GRADES
P-6

STUDENTS
650

BUDGET (AUD)
\$4.2m

BUILDING AREA
2,388m2/ 25,700SF

CORE PRINCIPLES



IMPACTFUL

Focusing on regeneration rather than rebuild/new build ensures the project can go further and maximise its impact on the campus facilities.



CONSISTENT

Creating consistency in learning environments across the school supports students as they grow and allows for a unified approach to teaching and learning.



STUDENT-CENTRED

Modernisation of existing spaces to align with the educational goals and aspirations of the school. Providing a variety of settings and integrated access to specialist spaces, allowing for student agency with visual and physical supervision.



INCLUSIVE

Creating enriching learning environments that consider the needs of all occupants in their design. Clustering students in 'neighbourhoods' that foster a supportive environment for student wellbeing.



WELCOMING

Creating a welcoming and supportive environment for students, staff, and the wider community.



SUPPORTIVE

Improving opportunities for learning support and student wellbeing. Creating an environment that supports staff to work effectively, develop their skills and work as a team.



*'It has been fabulous having the library open. It creates a sense of community as a gathering space'.
Teacher Comment*

LOCAL CONTEXT

White Hills is a suburb located in the city of Bendigo, in Victoria, Australia. Bendigo is approximately 150 kilometres northwest of Melbourne, the capital city of Victoria.

White Hills Primary School is in the Northern growth corridor of Bendigo and provides formal education for students from Foundation to Grade 6. The school had an enrolment of 579 students in 2022 and has an enrolment cap of 650.

Students have a medium SFOE of 0.4755 (The Student Family Occupation and Education is a measure of ‘context’ which speaks about the demographic of the school community.). Around 10% of students have English as an Additional Language, and about 5% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Workforce composition comprised 59.4 equivalent full-time staff: 2 principal class, 43 teachers and 12.4 Education Support Staff. This is a significant

increase in Education Support staff from previous years due to the changeover to the Disability Inclusion funding model in 2022, providing more funding to schools for students requiring substantial adjustments. This team of professionals is committed to ensuring the positive tone and ethos of White Hills PS are reflected in their practice and standard of education delivery.

The White Hills learning community is characterised by open communication and the formation of genuine relationships between staff, parents and students. All community members ensure our school is a caring, positive and stimulating environment.

EXISTING ASSETS

1877

White Hills Primary School opened at its original location

1985

Construction of new school completed on new site by a local architect, Mr David Breden. Main school building (A) constructed housing 14 classrooms and shed.

2011

BER building constructed with 6 GPLAs and major library area.

Additional Portable classrooms brought on to address student growth.

EXISTING SCHOOL



REJUVINATION PROJECT



BEFORE (ZONAL MAP)



WET AREA



CLASSROOM



CORRIDOR



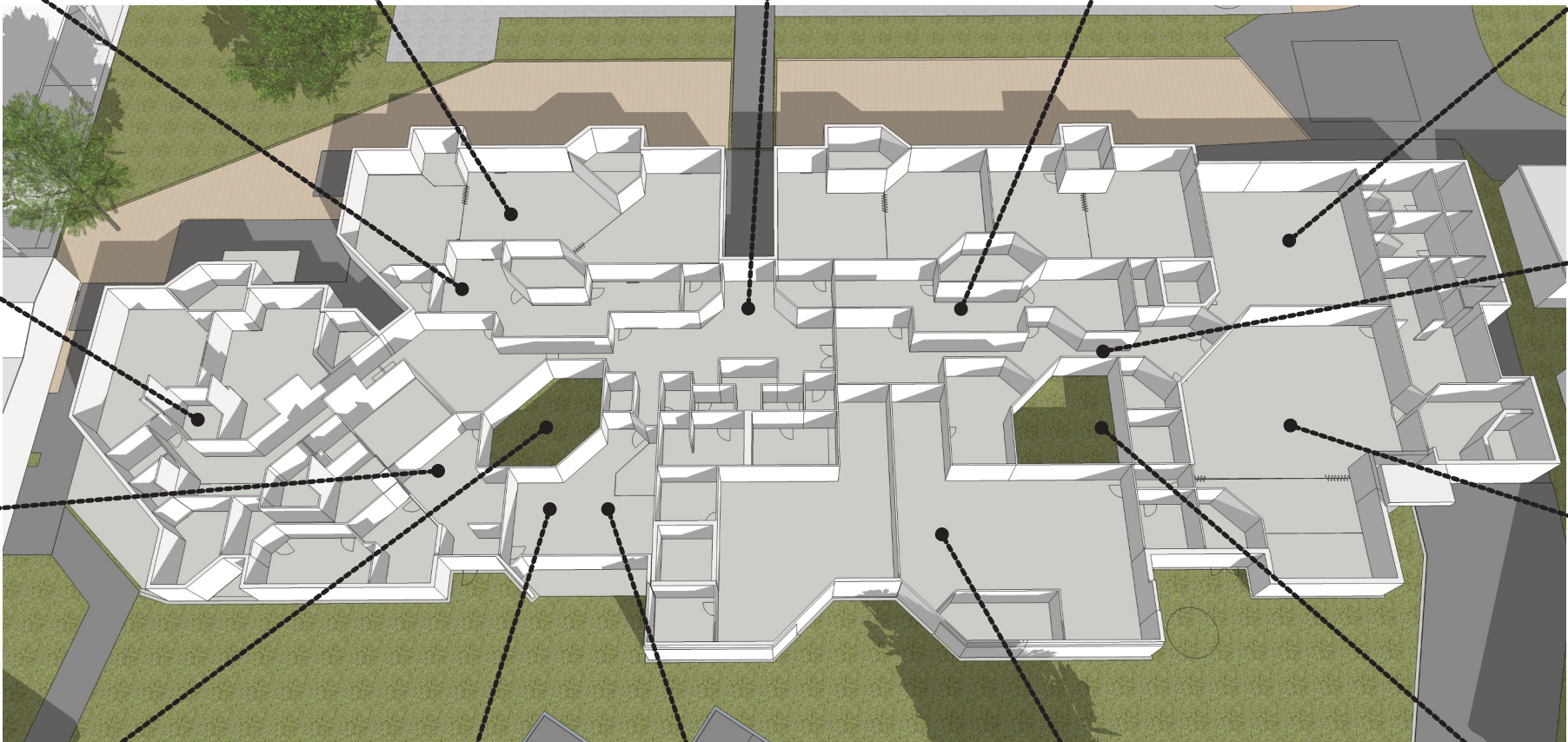
BAG STORE



CLASSROOM



STAFF WORK



CORRIDOR



FOYER



HALL



SUN LAB



STAFF CENTRE



STAFF CENTRE

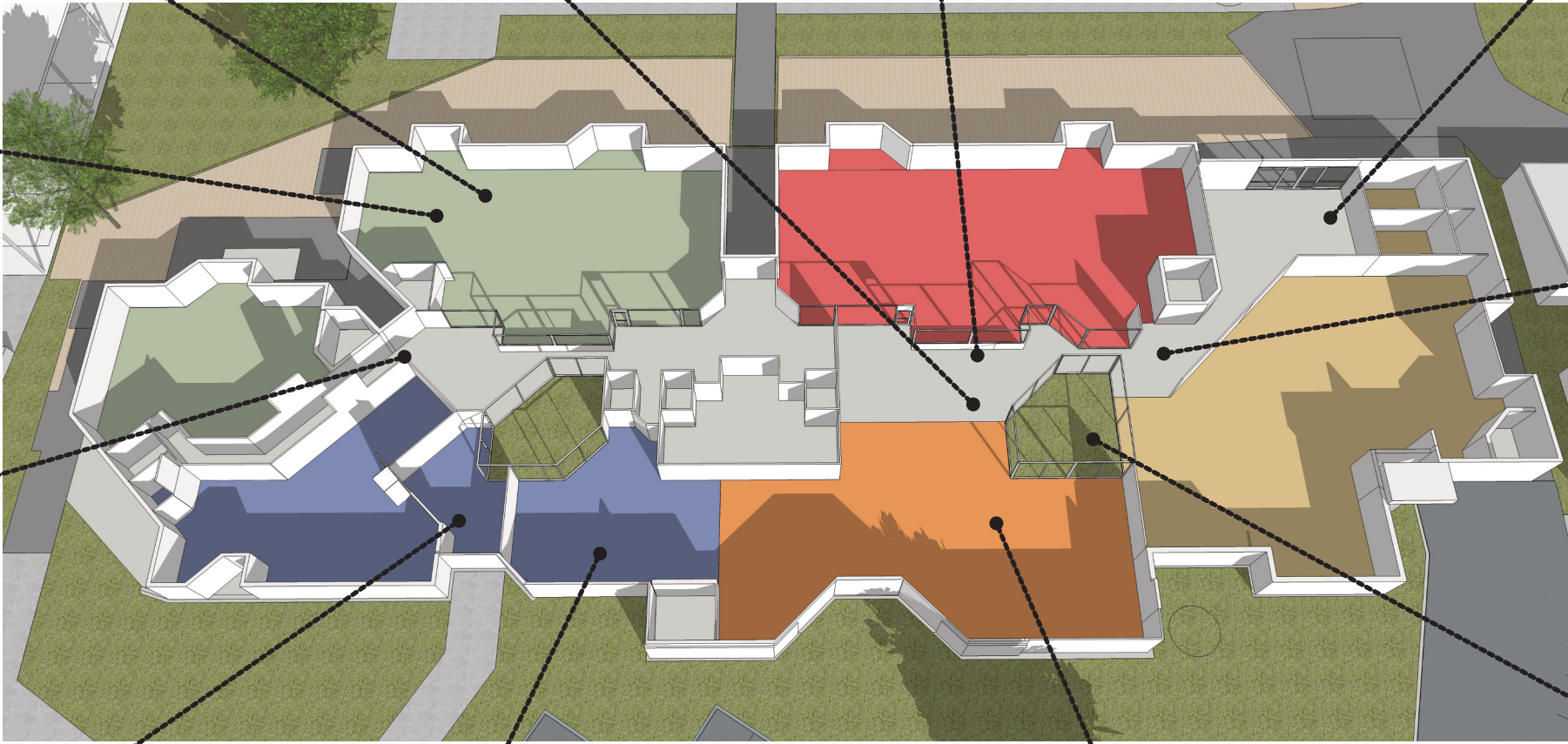


LIBRARY



SUN LAB

AFTER (ZONAL MAP)



The project's thorough consultation processes involved students, teachers, leadership staff, the school council, the broader school community and local community groups.

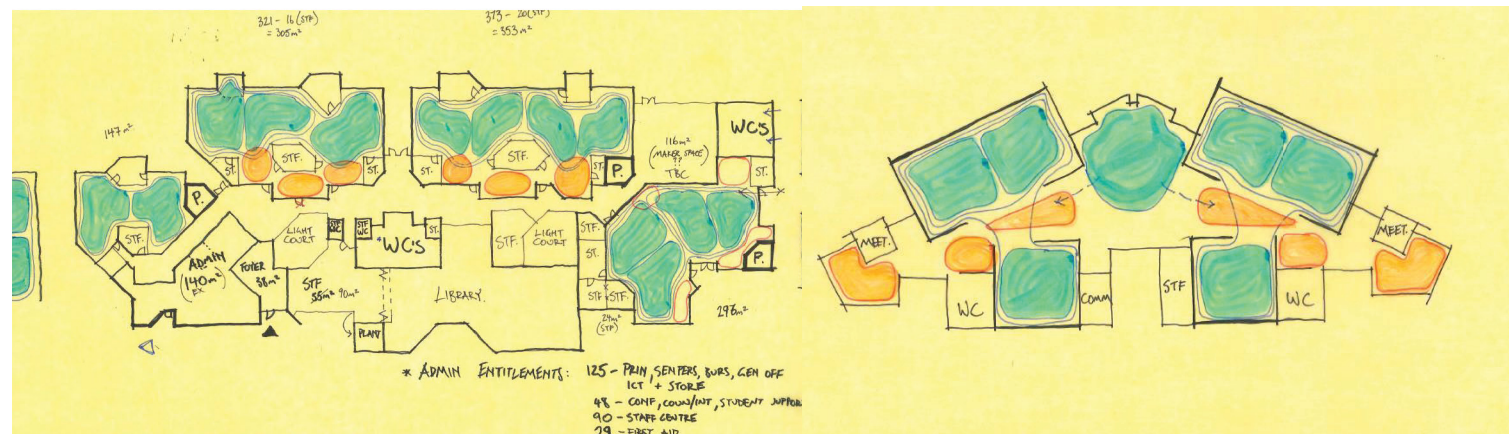
Activities included workshops, presentations, Site tours to precedent schools, observations of teaching practices & activities and "a day in the life" activities.

Additionally, the process included educational specialist support, with Dr Scott Alterator (IDE) conducting workshops with the school to develop critical thinking around their desire to develop and implement year-level Learning Neighbourhoods.

These activities assisted with the development of year level Neighbourhoods. They provided an understanding of support spaces required, such as presentation spaces, maker spaces, art studios, sun labs, community hub and the global learning centre, not to mention staff support spaces for wellbeing, student intervention and staff professional development.

The educational brief was refined through this process with the following:

- Discussions on aims and connection to design approach,
- Reflection on current practice,
- Zoning/mud mapping,
- Time of use studies,
- Creation of terms to identify space/activity,
- Reviews of physical requirements,



REFLECTION ON USE OF BER BUILDING



HUBS

SHARED MAKER SPACE

MEETING/
SMALL GROUPPRESENTATION/
BREAKOUT

NEIGHBOURHOOD SITE PLAN



CHALLENGES AND RESULTS

CHALLENGES

The consultation process identified several key stress points for the community and created a series of questions that the stakeholders collaboratively worked on.

These included:

- How to facilitate the introduction of year-level neighbourhoods and assist with an educational model change?
- How to arrange these neighbourhoods within the confines of the existing building footprint?
- How utilise vastly under-utilised spaces that previously existed within the building?
- How to increase supervision and connection between the classes within on year level?
- How to provide spaces that would support student learning?

Encouraging stakeholders to engage with questions critical to the successful delivery of the project enabled a smoother transition into the new learning environments. This reflection process ensured that the development was targeted to

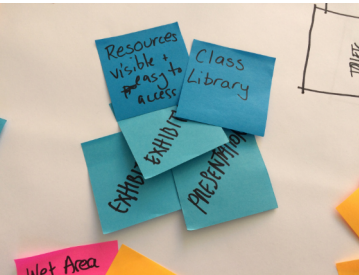
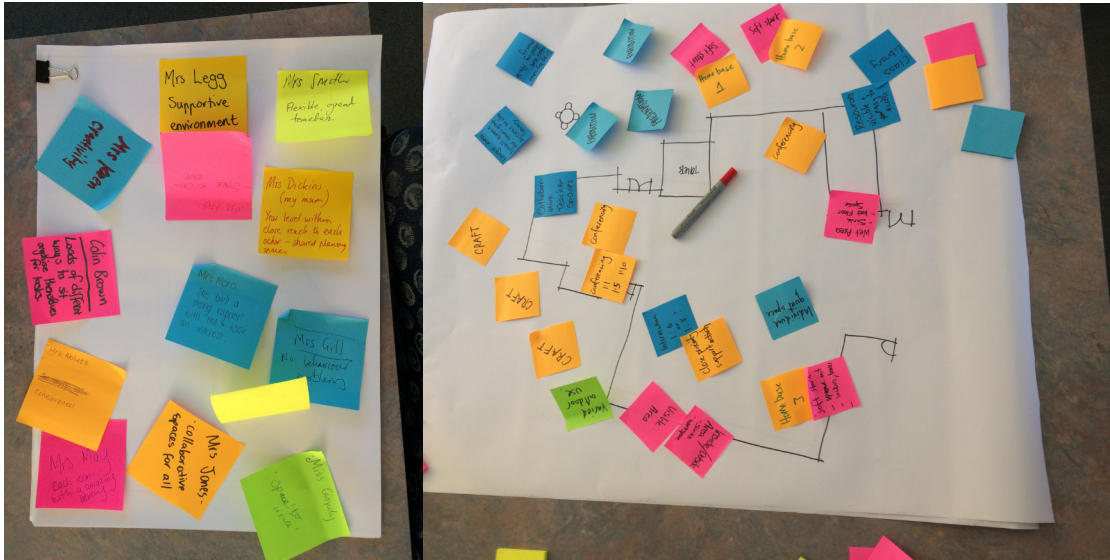
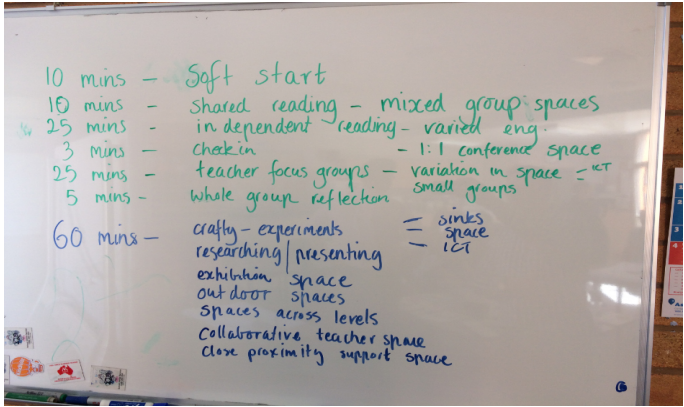
maximise its impact based on the knowledge and desires of the occupants. It provided the time and space to allow stakeholders to consider how they would use the new facilities, ensuring their voice was heard and building support for change at the school.

CONSULTATION RESULTS

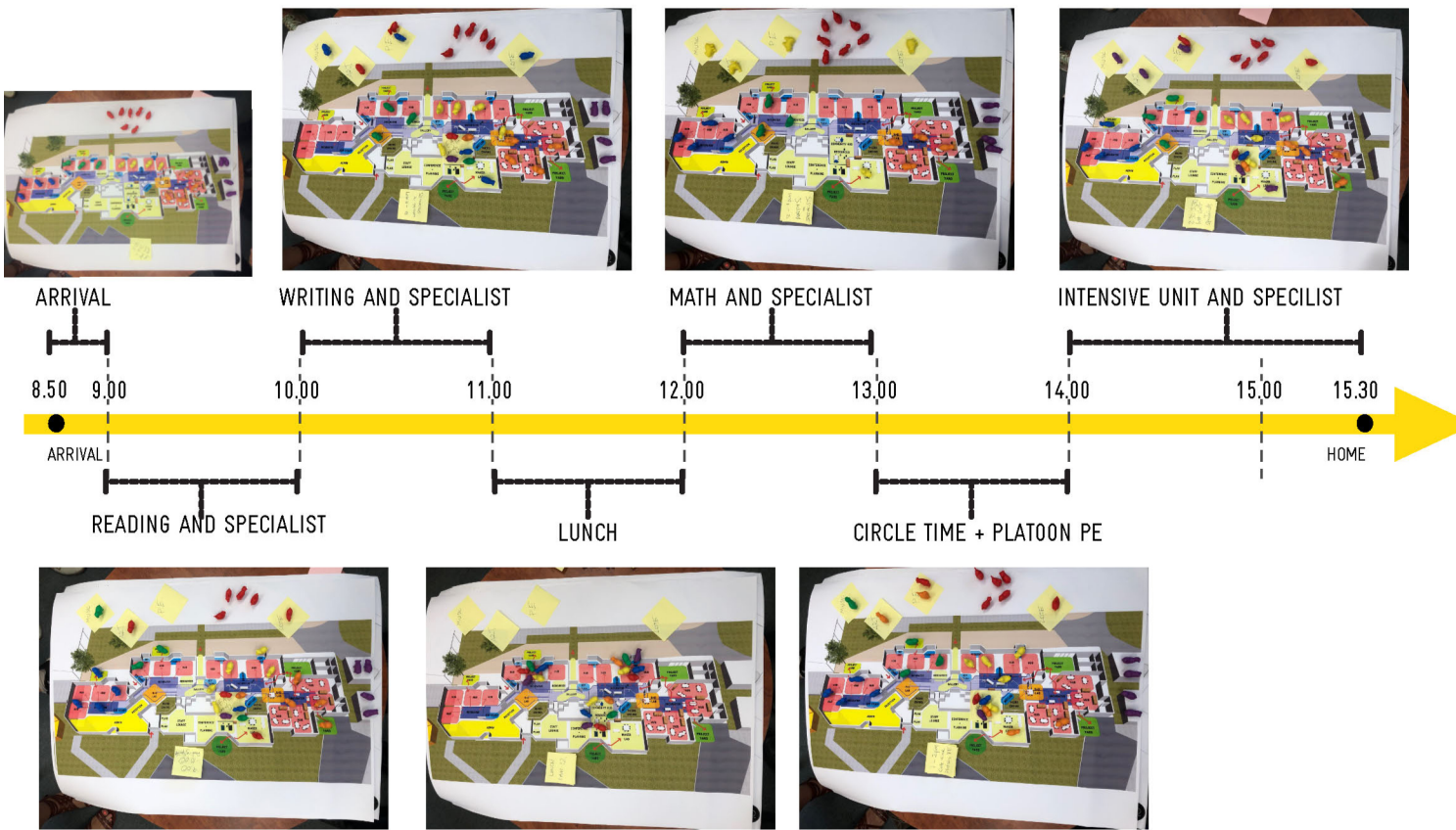
The planning process shaped a clear direction for providing a consistent educational model across the school.

The resulting project has transformed the facilities into open and welcoming spaces that support learning opportunities for all students, assist educators in their practice and provide links for the school community. The settings are light-filled and engaging and provide enriching experiences for all.

TIME USE PROTOTYPING SPACE AND RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS



SPATIO TEMPORAL MAPPING TESTING DISTRIBUTION ACROSS A DAY



WELCOMING COMMUNITY

White Hills is keen to support its broader school community, ensuring that parents/friends are welcomed and encouraged to build links.

The design supports community use out of hours of Community-Hub and Global-Learning-Centre, with access to meeting spaces (PD centre) and other facilities/support structures. These spaces open up various learning options and possibilities, including parent tutorial sessions such as the school's ESL (English as a second language) program.

The design supports learners and their families beyond the classroom. The updated foyer and reception are warm, welcoming, and inviting, providing easier access to dedicated meeting rooms and well-being staff at the front of the school. Additionally, the library space, positioned in the middle of the main building, now supports school community use and includes a sun lab for outdoor seating within the main building.

EDUCATIONAL VISION AND GOALS

VISION

White Hills Primary School’s vision is to provide students with the appropriate skills and foster a community of global lifelong learners striving for excellence. We provide an environment that acknowledges students’ individuality and supports independence, resilience, self-motivated and responsible students who enjoy and are purposefully engaged in ongoing learning.

MISSION

White Hills Primary School’s mission is to cater for academic, physical, social and emotional needs. Our School’s motto, “educating for the future” enables students to understand, contribute to and succeed in a rapidly changing society. We will ensure that students receive a high quality education to develop both the skills and the competencies essential for success. We seek to create an environment that achieves equity for all students and ensure that each student is a successful learner, fully respected, and learns to respect others.

PURPOSE

White Hills Primary School’s objective is to prepare our students to contribute productively to an increasingly globalised world.

VALUES

The school values are Resilience, Responsibility, Respect and Aspire. Students are treated with a consistent approach, ensuring they have a shared understanding of behavioural expectations. Children are fostered to be independent and self-motivated. Our students are engaged in learning and motivated to succeed through the establishment of authentic personal learning goals. Student-led conferences with parents enable our students to have ownership of their own learning and the opportunity to share their achievements.



‘Education Support staff move fluidly with students into the library and within the Maker Spaces. The Maker Space has been useful as a withdrawal space for students with additional needs to comfortably continue with their learning while retreating from the classroom space’.
Teacher Comment



SUPPORTING THE CURRICULUM

CORE CHALLENGE TO A CONSISTENT MODEL OF EDUCATION

During the master planning stage of the project, a significant challenge raised by leadership and staff was the disconnect between the learning opportunities for students in the main building and those within the newer BER facility due to the condition, size and location of the main building's general purpose learning areas.

The teachers identified this disconnect as a significant obstacle to achieving consistency in various vital aspects such as school identity and culture, quality of teaching and learning, planning, student wellbeing and behaviour and expectations. Through consultation, the decision was made to introduce the concept of Learning Neighbourhoods as part of the main building's revitalisation to address this challenge.

This design approach aimed to establish a consistent model within a uniform environment across the school, thereby promoting a cohesive and equitable educational experience for all students.

NEIGHBOURHOOD MODEL

The neighbourhoods cluster learners based on year level. Here students have access to shared settings that provide options and agency over learning.

Each Neighbourhood includes:

- **Studio Hubs** - for general learning and group work
- **Small Group Spaces** - for focused learning, reflection and retreat;
- **Maker Spaces** - shared resource-rich environments that provide integrated hands-on learning experiences and collaboration opportunities;
- **Presentation Spaces** - communication-focused spaces that allow for student-led presentation/discussion and group work and that can double as withdrawal spaces
- **Planning rooms** - supporting teacher collaboration in a team teaching setting

By organising the school into year-level neighbourhoods, teachers can collaborate seamlessly and have easy accessibility to one another during learning times. The proximity of teachers within these neighbourhoods and high

visibility across the space enables them to provide on-the-spot assistance and support to each other. This approach is beneficial for new teaching staff and Casual Relief Teachers.

The design facilitates team teaching opportunities and impromptu meetings. Moreover, it allows teachers to create similar timetables and conduct lessons simultaneously. Teachers now have a dedicated space close to the studios to plan for learning. This design encourages collaboration amongst learners within the same year level, fostering relationship building and facilitating access to shared resources.

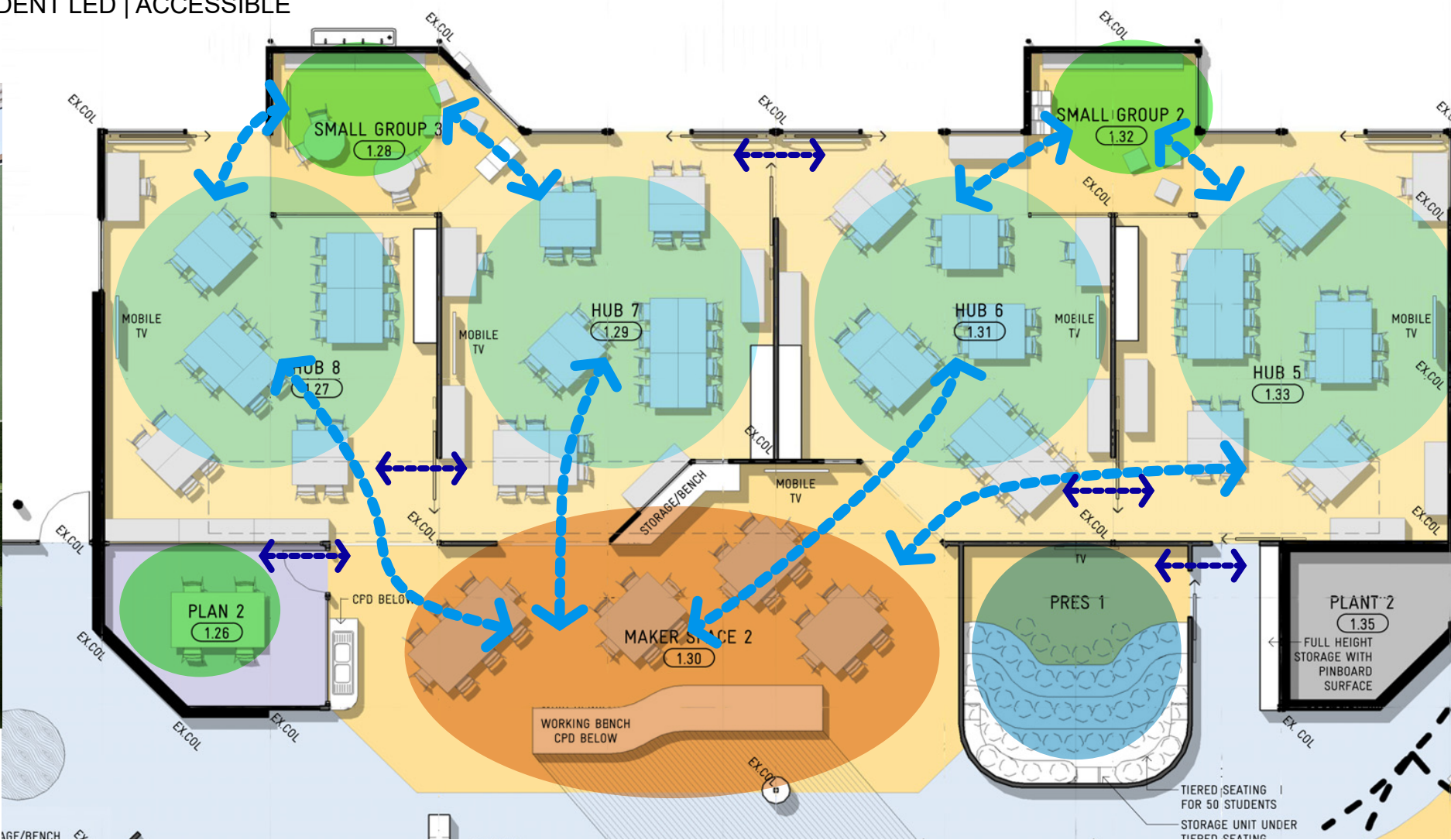
The year-level Neighbourhoods Model has created a cohesive community and culture within each grade level. Since the Victorian Curriculum is structured based on year-level standards, this design allows teachers to view their cohort as a whole, identifying instances where students can transition more seamlessly between educators and learning activities that specifically address their individual learning needs. The design promotes a holistic approach to education, where teachers can effectively cater to the diverse needs of the students within the year level.



NEIGHBOURHOOD MODEL

VARIETY | RANGE OF SCALE | RESOURCE RICH | FLUID/VISIBLE | STUDENT LED | ACCESSIBLE

PRESENTATION
Student Led Presentation and Reflection



SHARED SMALL GROUP
Quiet Reflection and Withdrawal

HUB
Group Home Base



MAKER SPACE
Inquiry-based learning, Resource Rich,
Immediate Specialist Space

PLANNING ROOM
Intensive Sessions, Team Coordination
and Support

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

STUDENT-AUTONOMY

The original building contained long gun-barrel corridors and rabbit-warren spaces that did not facilitate movement or collaboration between classrooms.

The refurbishment has created learning areas linked by a seamless connection of active teaching spaces that provide a fluid layout and high visibility. Where appropriate, students have agency to choose their learning setting. Line of sight considerations were incorporated into the design of spaces, ie. windows, openings and positioning of studios etc. The neighbourhoods allow students to work throughout their areas while still being supervised.

VARIETY OF SETTINGS

Each neighbourhood provides a range of settings: (class studios, small group areas, presentation spaces, maker spaces, wet areas, planning rooms, and outdoor spaces). These shared settings are immediately accessible and support students however they learn. This agile solution supports group work, individual tasks, student-led presentations, reflection, quiet withdrawal, small group discussion, project work/resources, intensive 1-1 support and more. The ability to easily access and move fluidly between open and

closed spaces depending on the learning needs has been an innovative change to the building. The maker spaces allow for team teaching to occur.

SPECIALIST FACILITIES

The project has also created high-quality specialist settings that stimulate learning and interest for students. This includes Art and resource-intensive learning spaces, dedicated STEM space, and integration of global learning centre into the heart of the neighbourhoods (bringing it back in from a portable).

Embedding this inclusive space within the learning neighbourhoods has resulted in a hub-type area for different Neighbourhood groups to come together and engage in multi-age interactions. Its proximity to the learning areas has meant resources are at the fingertips of students at the time that they are needed. Parents and students use the space before and after school.



FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTIBLE

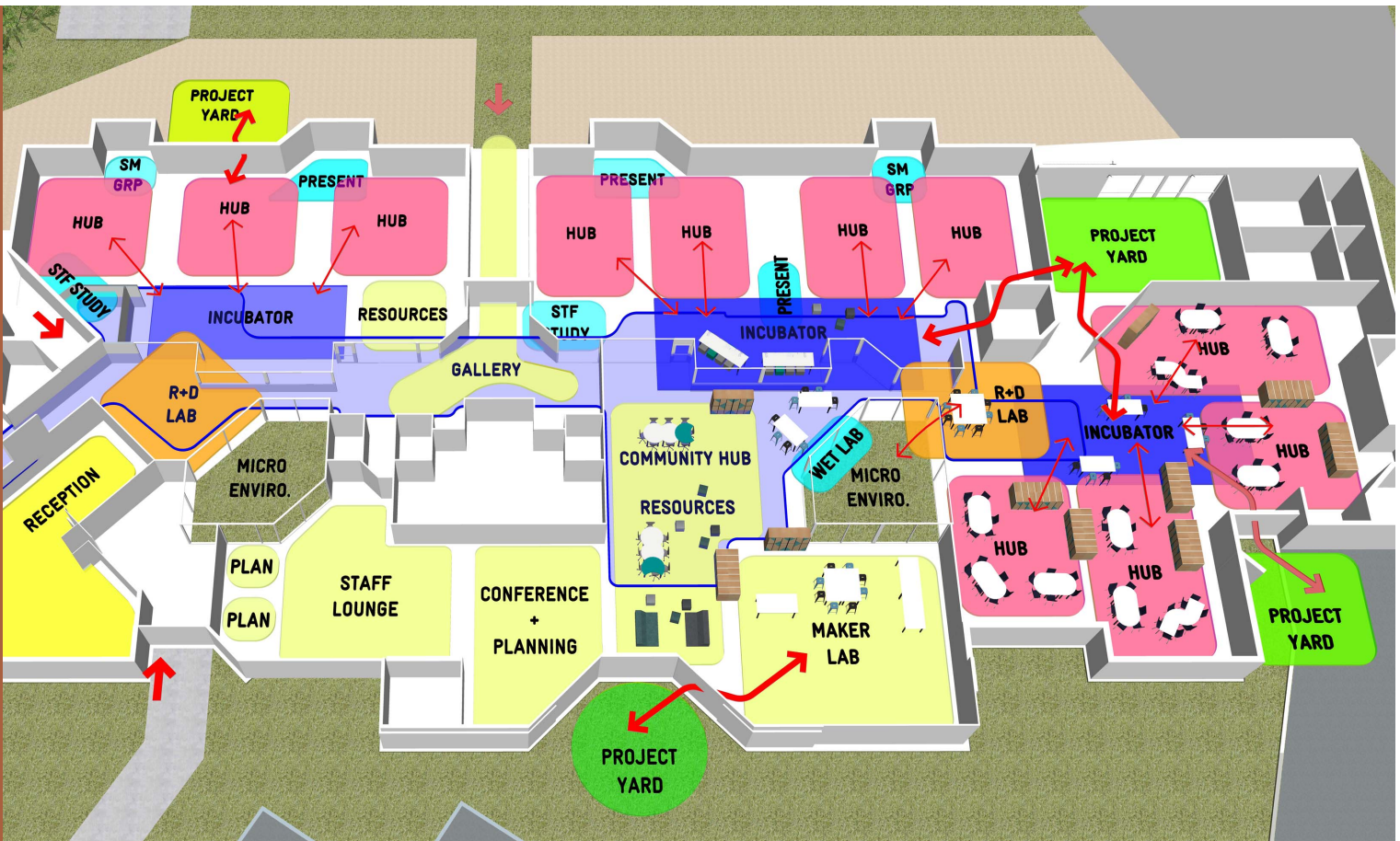
AGILE LAYOUTS AND ELEMENTS

The project has opened up the building to create a facility that is easy to navigate and allows students to adapt to spaces and flow between zones to suit their needs. The neighbourhood model provides learners with a range of settings enhanced with easy-to-use elements such as sliding doors, large openings and openable glazing in outdoor spaces. These offer easy options to open/close zones within the building so space can morph to suit students' needs. External areas are connected with openable glazing to allow external/internal integration and flow.

FUTURE-PROOFING

The learning spaces are inherently flexible and can accommodate a range of programs and changing pedagogical approaches. The building's long-span structures, raised ceilings, and glass portions allow for easy space modification if necessary. Learning areas can be open or closed to accommodate contemporary or traditional educational models.

Maker spaces are spread throughout the school and can be adapted to any number of programs or uses, providing direct access to many specialist options in day-to-day learning.





SCHOOL STATEMENT

The central objectives of this project included:

- Revitalising 40-year-old main building
- Create contemporary learning neighbourhoods for students
- Creating a consistent environment for teaching and learning across whole school
- Integrating specialist learning
- Redeveloping staff centre and PD and meeting capabilities
- Improve opportunities for learning support and student wellbeing.
- Creating a welcoming environment for whole community

The school is delighted to report that these outcomes have been met.

The design team worked closely with the school leadership team and staff to reflect on and consider current teaching and learning practices and the advantage of flexible learning spaces when considering our needs and requirements. This approach provided the school with the opportunity to reflect on what currently happens in our learning spaces, how they are utilised in different year level and included site tours to other schools that assisted us to decide what we needed at our school and to look at recent school building programs.

On reflection, we could see the disconnect between the types of learning environments available within our main school building (the one to be refurbished) and our BER facility supporting very different learning opportunities and spaces to our traditional classrooms. This disconnect had the possible impact of inconsistent and different teaching practices operating in our school that affected both students and staff. The planning process, suggestions, dialogue and transparent discussions opened possibilities on how our facilities could be used and provide a more consistent approach to learning across the school.

The resulting design created 'Learning Neighbourhoods or Hubs' that cluster our year levels together and provide shared and easy access to resources and 21st century flexible learning spaces such as Maker spaces, planning rooms, presentation spaces and small group areas. This flexible model supports student centred learning and greater possibilities in how students engage with their learning.

The design supports learners and their families beyond the classroom. The updated foyer and reception are warm, welcoming, and inviting and provide easier access to dedicated meeting rooms and wellbeing staff now located at the front of the school. Additionally, the library space, positioned in the middle of the main building now supports school community use and includes a sun lab for outdoor seating within the main building. Staff have access to a dedicated professional development room for team meetings and other activities and this also provides flexibility to extend the staff facility. A data room off this space allows staff to display student data on the walls and provides the opportunity for staff to use the visual data whilst planning.

The project has given our main building a new lease on life, opening up dark and insular spaces to create a bright, vibrant, open and welcoming environment for students, staff and the broader school community. The original wide corridors and bag areas have been repurposed and integrated into the teaching and learning areas, enabling the school to make better use of wasted available space.

Andrew Schaeche Principal

ACHIEVING COMMUNITY GOALS

The meeting rooms have effectively served as essential spaces for the school nurse, as well as external specialists including Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists, Social Workers, and Psychologists. With a bright and inviting atmosphere, the library has become a popular spot for parents to spend quality time with their children before school. Student work is prominently showcased to the community around the school. Dedicated areas within the Professional Development area provide parents and community members with suitable spaces for productive collaboration on fundraisers, events and school council meetings.



RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

UNINTENDED USES

The design's inherent flexibility has allowed for in-situ adaptation to suit the school community's needs. For instance:

Including a large sliding door between the Staff Center and the Professional Development space has proven advantageous in providing parent groups with a distinct and separate area for conducting parent meetings, complete with access to their own TV. This partitioning capability not only grants privacy to the meeting participants but also ensures that staff wellbeing is at the forefront and teachers can reclaim the Staff Center as their private retreat.

Meeting Room 3 has transformed into a sensory space for students to come and go as they please freely. The adjacency of this room to the wellbeing room ensures that immediate support is readily available when needed. Students utilise this room as a safe and secure sanctuary throughout the day.

This arrangement has eliminated the need for classroom teachers to 'send students to the office for behaviour issues', and instead provides them with a dedicated space to regulate their emotions and find calmness before returning to the

classroom spaces.

BANG FOR BUCK

The design proved very cost-effective, allowing the budget to broaden over a wider floor area – i.e. to the entire Building A (approx 2300m²). This extent of work would not have been possible with a new building project or major extension. Due to the limited budget, this strategy proved critical, ensuring that all neighbourhoods within the main building could be fitted out.

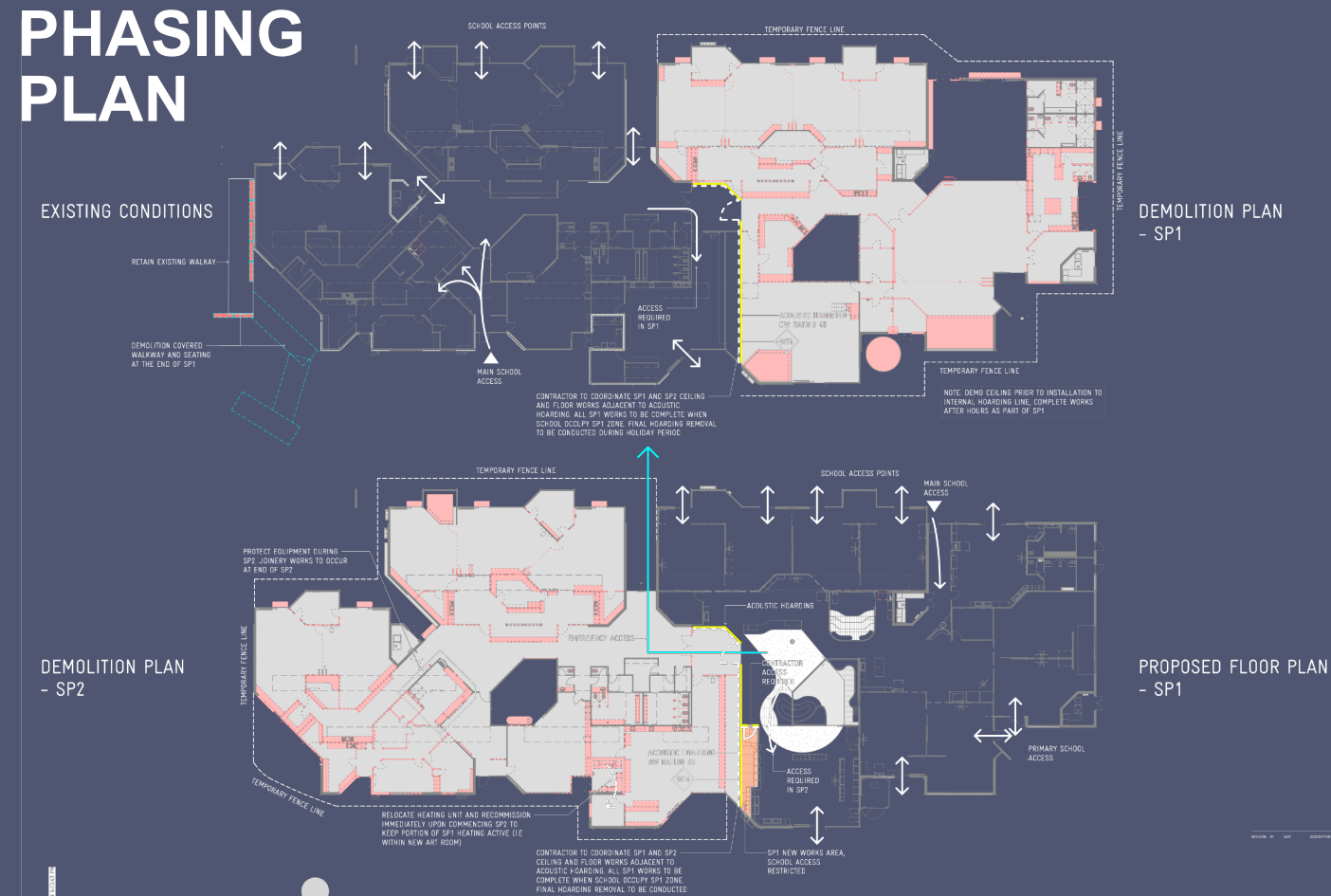
PHASED APPROACH

As the project refurbished the school's main building (including most of the school's learning areas, their art, music and administration spaces), this could not be undertaken all at once. From very early on, it was determined that the building would be refurbished in two 'halves'. This additional construction time outweighed the requirement for transporting many temporary portables to the site.

The project was delivered on time following the anticipated extended timeline, with sufficient contingency left to relocate two existing portables to create a 7th learning neighbourhood at the school.



PHASING PLAN



BEFORE AND AFTER



STAFF - BEFORE



Modern facilities

Extendable/
dividable with direct
access to PD space

Range of
furniture
options



STAFF - AFTER



CLASSROOM - BEFORE



Direct access
outside

Shared access
to retreat space

Range of
furniture/
seating options

High visibility
across space



HUB - AFTER

BEFORE AND AFTER



ART STUDIO - BEFORE



- Good daylight levels
- Resources within space
- Range of furniture/engagement options
- Direct access to external spaces



ART STUDIO - AFTER



SUN LAB - BEFORE



SUN LAB - AFTER

Lots of glazing and openings

Purpose built elements such for presentation experimentation(sandpit) etc

Traffic able and low maintenance surfaces to encourage continued use

BEFORE AND AFTER - PASSAGEWAYS



PASSAGE WAYS - BEFORE

BAG STORE

WET AREA

↓
Good circulation
and welcoming
atmosphere

Resource rich

Collaborative

High visibility

Immediate access to
presentation space from
neighbourhoods

Acoustically
separated

Shaped for
discussion

Empowering
student lead
presentation



PASSAGE WAYS - AFTER (MAKER SPACE)



PASSAGE WAYS - AFTER (PRESENTATION)

CONSISTENT LEARNING COMMUNITY

A core principle of the project was to create a consistent learning and teaching environment across the whole school community.

Careful consideration was given to the capacity of all learning spaces to support a neighbourhood approach, including integrated access to specialist resources, location of support spaces and ability to provide supervision across the school.

This process ensured that the project focused on areas that were underperforming against the desired educational model, maximising the impact

on students and educators across the school.

Additionally, the design ensures there is consistency in education as students graduate. White Hills Primary School is a feeder school for nearby Weeroona College. The school's educational model and learning spaces provide a consistent approach to learning for students as they transition into their secondary education.

SITE ANALYSIS PLAN



‘Wellbeing attendance has increased dramatically. Families feel comfortable in approaching wellbeing staff, as they can now access safe spaces to do so’.

Teacher Comment



PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

The design drew on the educational brief and core principles to create environments with the following attributes across the school:



Creating a variety of scaled settings



Enabling student movement – indoor/ outdoor, throughout spaces etc.



Providing connections to outdoor learning spaces



Providing specialist equipment/technology/ spaces nearby and adjacent to key learning areas



Providing consistent learning settings across the school



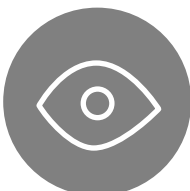
Supporting a variety of learning options within spaces



Providing a community hub that will facilitate parent engagement



Flexibility/agility of spaces



Visibly across space (supervision/modelling/ belonging/connection etc)



Design inclusivity (ease of movement, sensory spaces, variety etc), particularly in reimagining the central courtyard (sunlab).



INSPIRING LEARNERS

DISPLAY

White Hills Primary School celebrates student accomplishments through extensive display of student works. The project enhanced the school’s ability to display with a cohesive and structured approach that provides opportunities for display throughout the building and in prominent places.

Additionally, the design included large artworks and murals by a local artist that are bold and colourful. These moments of whimsy add character and playfulness that work to inspire children.

WELCOMING ATMOSPHERE

The original building was dark and rabbit warren-like and outwardly hostile to visitors and occupants by being confusing to navigate. The project opened up the building drawing light into its centre and maximising flow and visibility for occupants.

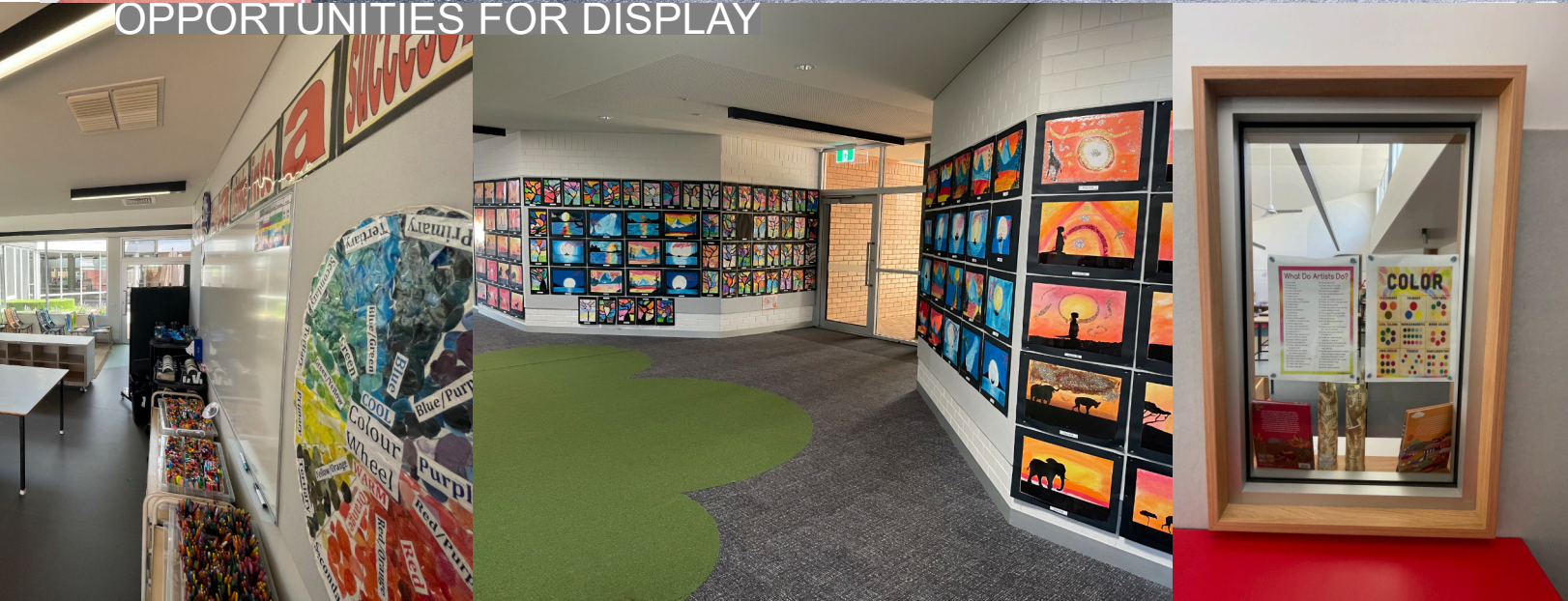
The building’s colour palette compliments this change creating warm and inviting interiors that form a comfortable atmosphere. Consistent materials and colours run through the building and are supported by Neighbourhood-specific colour schemes. These Neighbourhood schemes provide a sense of identity to the local communities and provide for wayfinding across the centre.



INCREASING IDENTITY OF NEIGHBOURHOODS THROUGH COLOUR



OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISPLAY



INCORPORATING WORKS OF LOCAL ARTIST TO CREATE WIMSY



REJUVENATION

AN EFFICIENT SOLUTION

The project has repurposed existing and redundant facilities, opening up and integrating underutilised spaces to extend the lifespan and value of the school’s main building. It provided a much-needed renewal and enthusiasm for the facilities.

A vital component was to improve circulation and flow throughout the building. The existing building was a rabbit warren of institutional and unwelcoming circulation, prohibiting student movement and agency. The modifications create an efficient footprint integrating circulation into overall learning spaces while providing sufficient circulation to limit interruption. Glazing and openings also improve sightlines and access to daylight throughout.

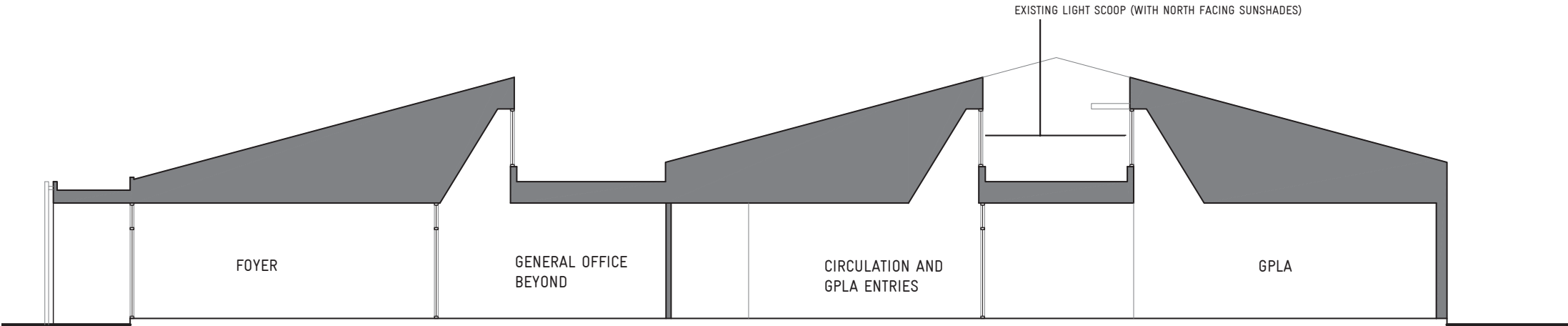
The redesign of courtyards and external spaces has expanded indoor learning settings. Extensive openings/glazing encourage movement, and purposeful design elements provide activators that draw learning outside. This approach supports the school’s focus on well-being for all by providing access to nature in everyday learning.

The landscape design provides a targeted solution to improve the quality of outdoor spaces. Selected plants are drought tolerant and include a mixture of indigenous and exotic species to prove an attractive and low-maintenance enhancement to the existing landscaping.

LIMITING ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT OF MATERIALS

The project utilises the existing building fabric as a resource and minimises the need for new materials. Doing so reduces waste and the project’s ecological footprint while providing an educational tool by exposing building elements. For example, reclaimed bricks form new garden beds, and where ceilings were raised, the internal structure was left exposed.

New materials are durable, low maintenance, low VOC, cost-effective, and improve the thermal and acoustic properties of the building.



‘The windows, glass and lights have been amazing!’
Teacher Comment

A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT



WELLBEING IS FRONT AND CENTRE

Wellbeing is a high priority at the school. The design includes a dedicated wellbeing space that allows for specialist support near the front of the school to create a supportive/integrated model of care.

Additionally, the building contains many retreat spaces that assist students who need to quieten and refocus. These allow students to remove themselves from the group environments of the neighbourhoods when necessary, supporting all students and their needs.

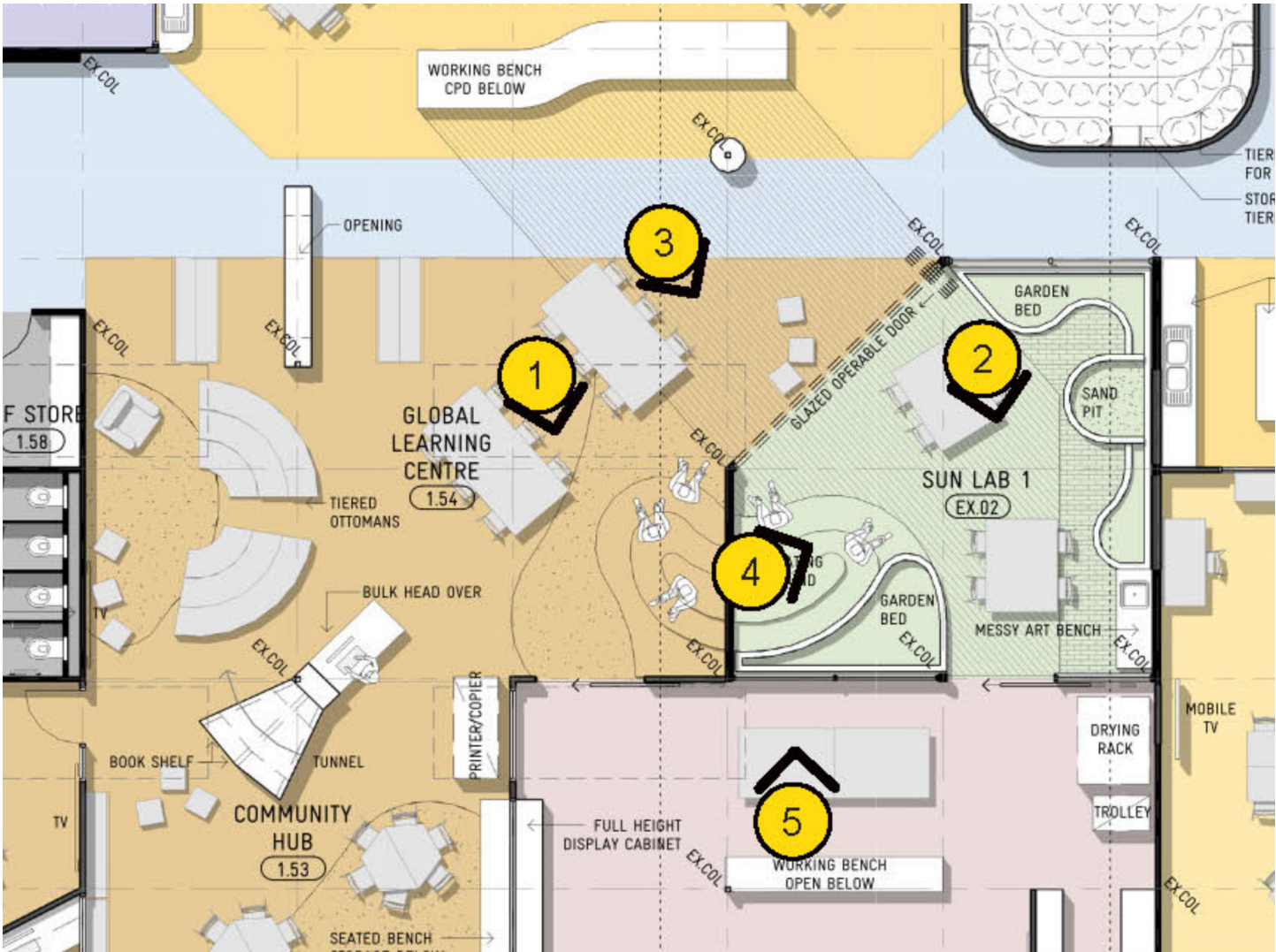
SUN LABS & OUTDOOR CONNECTIONS

The project redeveloped two underwhelming interior courtyards from overgrown, inaccessible and tired spaces into connected and celebrated environments that draw light into the heart of the building and provide an outdoor extension to learning spaces.

The Sun Labs is a highly accessible outdoor space that draws light and activity into the centre of the main building. The bright, welcoming and highly

visible areas provide students with the agency to take their learning outside. Extensive openings/glazing encourage movement, and purposeful design elements provide activators that draw learning outdoors, including seating mounds, cafe tables and garden beds.

Incorporating immediate access to outdoor spaces in classroom design enhances student well-being and fosters a vital connection with the natural world. This is particularly crucial when students are increasingly confined indoors and engaged in screen-based learning.




RESPONDING TO GUIDING PRINCIPLES



IMPACTFUL

The project has significantly transformed the school's ageing facilities, extending their lifespan. It has maximised the project's impact on the school community with modern, light-filled spaces that suit their educational needs.





INCLUSIVE

The design supports students' needs across the school, with universal design principles embedded in the design. Spaces provide opportunities for all learners to feel valued and supported.





CONSISTENT

The project has brought consistency to learning environments across the school, facilitating a unified approach to teaching and learning.





WELCOMING


The design is welcoming, inviting, and supportive for students, staff, and the wider community.



STUDENT-CENTRED NEIGHBOURHOODS

The project transformed educational spaces into environments supporting student agency and team teaching. Specialist spaces are integrated, and visual connections allow students to thrive in their learning neighbourhoods.





SUPPORTIVE

The environment supports staff to work effectively, develop their skills and work as a team. The neighbourhood model builds communities around students and staff and provides dedicated wellbeing programs and spaces.

