

Roma Mitchell Secondary College

Gepps Cross, South Australia

**2012 James D. MacConnell Award Submission
by Thomson Rossi Architects**





Contents

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1. Introduction



Executive Summary

DECS Education Works PPP

Roma Mitchell Secondary College

Gepps Cross, Adelaide, South Australia

Thomson Rossi were a key team member of the Pinnacle Education consortium that delivered the Education Works New Schools Projects PPP, commonly referred to as the 'Super Schools'. We provided full architectural services for the innovative \$70 million Roma Mitchell Secondary College at Gepps Cross, catering for 1,330 students.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College is a completely new campus containing cutting edge facilities and environments that explore the idea of "schools within schools", which essentially creates a campus of 'sub-schools' to reinforce identity and individuality for students. These new learning environments allow middle and senior year students to develop and articulate goals for their future learning and employment pathways. A unique feature of the campus is the integration of four specific 'schools' on the one site: a co-educational Middle and Senior School, a Girls Only School, Early Years and a 100 student Special School, allowing students with disabilities to participate in a broad, balanced curriculum. In this unique, shared environment, all students become the centre of a range of complimentary, integrated and coordinated services that are also supported by staff, family/carers, advocates and specialised support agencies. In addition to their own dedicated facilities, Special School students will have access to the adjoining standard schools for further educational options within special classes designed to meet their diagnosed sensory and mental health issues.

Thomson Rossi were involved in all facets of concept, design, documentation and construction. Our team developed all initial concepts, which progressed through detailed design. The scope of the project was complex and extensive, including highly interactive learning spaces, learning commons and Da Vinci Studios supported by Learning Studios for Health Food Technology, Performance, Music Practice, Drama & Dance, Specialist Science, Visual Arts & Ceramics, Health Food Technology, Health Human Performance and Music Practice.

In addition to a strong focus on excellence in sport, Roma Mitchell Secondary College also provides pathway opportunities through a series of vocational facilities that offer trade skills training in Health Food Technology (specifically VET Food Technology and Hospitality Certificate III), Construction Workshops to support teaching and learning in VET trades skills, production systems and OHS&W, plus studios for the use of ICT/CAD CAM in metal, wood, plastics production.

In conjunction with our client, Hansen Yuncken, the design development process operated under a series of 'Reviewable Design Data' workshops with the SA State Government, acting on behalf of DECS. Delivered under a Public Private Partnership (PPP), the project carried a significant risk profile in terms of 'fit for purpose' interpretations of the Brief and substantial abatement penalties if critical deadlines were not achieved.



1. Introduction



In order to meet program constraints, the documentation phase was structured to provide the sequential release of trade packages to allow site works to commence well before the timing expected within a traditional delivery method. Needless to say, effective and accurate coordination between the consultant team and contractor was critical to ensure the multiple deadlines were met.

Recently completed, Roma Mitchell Secondary College provides a new paradigm for the integration of students on a village style campus.

Statistics

Project value
\$70,000,000

Size
13,600 sqm

Completion
July 2011

Scope of Work

Briefing for Roma Mitchell Secondary College commenced with the creation of a completely new campus on a greenfield site, capable of accommodating 1,330 students across an internal functional area of approximately 14,000sqm. The detailed brief was presented as follows:

Early Childhood Facilities

(30 child places)

Special Education Facilities

(Yr 8 to Yr 12 - 100 student enrolment)

Girls Only Middle Years Facilities

(Yr 8 – Yr 9 – 160 student enrolment)

Girls Only Senior Years Facilities

(Yr 10 – Yr 12 – 240 student enrolment)

Co-educational Middle Years Facilities

(Yr 8 – Yr 9 – 320 student enrolment)

Co-educational Senior Years Facilities

(Yr 10 – Yr 12 – 480 student enrolment)

Girls Only & Co-educational Common Shared Facilities

(Yr 8 – Yr 12 – 1,200 student enrolment)

Budget

Roma Mitchell Secondary College was delivered as one of six 'super schools' through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) procurement process. A total budget of \$385 million was allocated through Education Works SAA (a division within the Department for Education and Child Development), which represented a 30 year investment through the PPP consortia. The specific capital works budget for Roma Mitchell Secondary College was in the order of \$70 million.

"These are state-of-the-art schools providing our public education system with the latest in teaching technology and equipment and a further example of how the Rann Government is committed to rebuilding the State's ageing infrastructure like no previous Government,"
Mr Kevin Foley, Treasurer, SA Government 2008.

Key consortia members for the bid included Hansen Yuncken (Construction), Spotless (Facilities Management) and CBA (Finance)



2. Project Details



Community Engagement Process

The Education Works SA program heralded a program to provide 6 state-of-the-art new 'super schools' to replace 18 existing schools and preschools with obsolete facilities. Roma Mitchell Secondary College was the largest of the proposed new schools.

Prior to embarking on the new program, the Department for Education and Children's Services (DECS) – now known as the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) undertook a substantial community consultation program with existing school communities.

- **Identify stakeholders**

The Project Sponsor was the Deputy Premier and Treasurer of South Australia, with delivery of the project entrusted to DECD in accordance with the *Partnerships SA* policy. Key stakeholders included:

- The various schools to be closed and transitioned into the New Schools
- Feeder schools, where appropriate
- Industry associations, including the Australian Education Union, the Primary Principals' Association and the Secondary Principals' Association.
- Dept of Trade & Finance
- Dept of Health
- Dept for Families and Communities
- Dept for Transport, Energy & Infrastructure
- Office for Recreation & Sport
- Local communities; and
- Individual local councils, including the City of Playford and the City of Port Adelaide Enfield

- **Name challenges**

Challenges for the project included the presence of probity protocols for the interaction between the State and Proponents, requiring specific enquiries through the Questions and Answers process.

Delivery of the completed school on time was also a critical challenge, requiring a rigorous consultation program with State and fast-tracked documentation and construction.

- **Describe available assets**

The site for the new school was a greenfield site with no available assets.



2. Project Details



- Describe value of process and project to community at large

Roma Mitchell Secondary College is an education community in its own right as well as being connected to the wider community in which it is located. The education community at the school is considered as a market place of activities and events to be experienced by users. Teachers and children spend a lot of time in these educational spaces and the wider community will access education, care, health and family-support service facilities during and outside normal school hours for a range of activities and programs. As such, the site planning, the location of entrances, placement of buildings, location of car parking and drop off areas are all considered in the context of maximising community access.

The new school offers opportunities and actively encourages all members of the community to engage in learning in a way that is effective and meaningful for each individual. Exposure to the community includes:

- Stronger links to business, local industry and job sites;
- Liaising with Futures Connect on school-to-work pathways and Vocational Education Training available in the area;
- Pursuing links with local wineries or viticulture programs, and
- Using community expertise in school programs and activities, as well as encouraging students to access community facilities.

Educational Environment

- Describe & illustrate how the environment supports the curriculum

The design of Roma Mitchell Secondary College includes the development of “Schools within Schools”, which makes a large campus feel smaller and more intimate and provides a focus for student gathering, which is the centre or the “heart” of that particular element. The environment supports the curriculum by providing spaces that cater for:

- Formal instruction
- Collaborative learning in groups of varying sizes
- Practical and experimental activities
- Small-group and individual research and study
- Informal learning
- Social interaction and social activities
- Student support services
- Amenities for staff and students
- Circulation and travel
- Separation of student and public visitor activities
- Administrative functions, and
- Storage, plant and equipment requirements



2. Project Details



Specific requirements include:

- Learning Units with a range of spaces to cater for different teaching and learning requirements on a regular basis for future changes of function and for potential additional accommodation requirements;
- The various age cohort components (Schools within Schools) have their own facilities identity on the site but remain part of an integrated campus;
- The Learning Units provide a more intimate community for learning, where relationships are developed between students as peers, and between students and staff. Such units include learning areas and support spaces to provide a level of autonomy, relevant to the age cohort.

- **Describe & illustrate how the environment supports a variety of learning & teaching styles**

Different spaces are provided for formal and informal teaching and learning, small and large-group activities, individual and small-group study, practical activities, project work, socialisation and relaxation. The spaces are multi-functional, able to accommodate the delivery of a range of specialisations, subject areas and pedagogy where these are compatible. Roma Mitchell Secondary College accommodates a flexible and adaptable environment for a variety of learning and teaching styles, including:

- Explicit Teaching/Instruction
- Collaboration
- Practical Activity/Project Work
- Research/Study
- Formal Meetings
- Informal Meetings
- Outdoors/External

Facilities are designed to cater for change, being flexible and adaptable. Spaces are designed for multiple users and multiple purposes concurrently and consecutively where appropriate, minimising the number of spaces designed for a single purpose to those that have a highly specialised function.



2. Project Details



Further to the Schools within Schools concept, each of the Sub-Schools is separated into distinct Learning Units. Externally, each Sub-School façade is presented with a clear identity, utilising pre-finished colour panels to introduce an element of fun, scale and a gesture of welcome. The courtyard space between each Learning Unit optimises a new level of interaction between indoor and outdoor learning areas. These courtyards in turn feed into a central courtyard or gathering space for each of the Sub-Schools, making what could be a large campus far more intimate than would otherwise be the case.

The central canopy covers a meandering 'street' of external learning spaces, which contributes to the seamless transition between spaces and the delivery of education. We regard this central outdoor street as a key protagonist in allowing students a seamless transition between Sub-Schools, Learning Units, Learning Areas and Studios and it is the design team's intention that this central street will create a 'market place of activities and events' for the Roma Mitchell Secondary School education community.

The overall resolution clearly moves away from any notion of an institutional environment, both in terms of planning or Architecture. Travel distances are minimised; learning environments are inextricably linked together; way-finding is easy; access to every space is available to all users and circulation is clear and interesting.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College presents a very clear picture of the 'Schools within Schools' concept. The picture is clear from every perspective: when viewed from visitors entering the school site from Briens Road; when viewed from State Sports Park as community members approach the School from a future network of inter-connecting walking and bicycle tracks, or simply as viewed from students walking into each Sub-School courtyard from the linear drop-off zone.

The new school reflects the 'Schools within Schools' concept by developing an arrangement of Learning Units along the themes of **IDENTITY, INTEGRATION** and **AUTONOMY**.

IDENTITY

As the site plan and elevations of the proposal suggest, each Sub-School is characterised by a coloured façade system for ease of recognition, allowing each Sub-School a means for identification and land marking for ease of recognition. The central canopy becomes the linking element across all Sub-Schools and in turn becomes the element that binds the whole school together.

INTEGRATION

Learning Units within each Sub-School are linked externally by inter-connecting linear courtyards which are accessed off specific internal Learning Areas.



2. Project Details



AUTONOMY

Each of the Sub-Schools has the option to operate autonomously or inter-actively with each other. In all the permutations available, each Sub-School will expand and develop curriculums that build on their current principles. Early Years will offer an advanced model of integrated care and education for young children, with unprecedented access to a wider School environment. Girls Only will introduce facilities that allow a 'can-do' pedagogy to advance within a discretely separated identity. The Co-Educational School will provide a myriad of pathways for students, with a particular focus on sporting excellence and allied health/ sports support programs. Special Education will embody the agenda of inclusion by providing a strong opportunity for inclusion with 'mainstream' educational environments to further support each student's quest to develop independent living skills.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College provides an ideal and flexible environment where relationships between students as peers and between staff can fully flourish. Over a 30 year period, the internal planning of Learning Units can be re-arranged to accommodate changes in learning/ teaching activities or even the mix of the various age cohort activities.

These are elements that will allow the school to thrive in an environment that promotes **IDENTITY, INTEGRATION and AUTONOMY.**

The entire premise for Sports Park Multi Campus is driven by the creation of a built environment that will easily and readily adapt to changing educational requirements over time by providing a consistent 'building type' to form the basis of a typical Learning Unit.

Essentially similar with only slight architectural variations, the rectilinear plan of each Learning Unit allows the internal volume to be easily transformed without the need to adapt to odd angles or corners. Clear roof spans are employed where possible, with minimal intervention to the floor plate for supporting columns. This level of flexibility allows each Learning Unit to be economically re-configured whilst keeping the appearance of each building largely intact.

More importantly, the use of a repetitive yet varied Learning Unit model gives the site solution a sense of order to what is a complex educational brief. In planning the site layout of the 'Schools within Schools' response, the Learning Units create a campus that is both separate yet seamless. This approach aligns with our overall view that "communities have the knowledge, ability and desire to affect educational change now more than ever before".

Within this environment, educational requirements can be altered or transferred across each building type to suit year level fluctuations or curriculum developments into the future...without compromising Learning Unit identity.

The disposition of buildings across the site has carefully considered the outdoor linkages between the Sub-Schools to further enhance the future delivery of education programs across Learning Units, which aligns with our understanding of schools as 'systems of relationships, connections, knowledge and organisation' within a non-institutional environment.



2. Project Details



Physical Environment

- **Describe & illustrate the physical attributes of the environment**

The physical environment adds value to the teaching and learning experiences of the learners, parents and staff through attributes of design detailing, choices of materials, finishes, furniture, fittings and equipment. Specific attributes include:

- Exposure of some of the building structure, construction and services to provide learning opportunities, including environmental awareness;
- Selection of materials and finishes to make learners feel comfortable, to stimulate learning and to nurture curiosity while still being robust and easily maintained.
- Provision of opportunities for learners to display their work and projects, thus celebrating the success of children and students' work and provide information to the parents and the community, and
- The provision of opportunities for students to personalise their work environment

Roma Mitchell Secondary College is a unique vision executed on a very unique site. The physical challenges presented by the site are significant and well-known; a falling gradient, existing swales and detention basins, access to be gained from a main arterial road...all challenges that require address in meeting the unique attributes of the site, which include adjacency to State Sports Park and magnificent views from an elevated position.

In formulating the fundamental design concept, we established that the single greatest point of action in reconciling the site's challenges with its advantages would involve a single level building solution for all principal learning areas. Adoption of this concept allowed the design team to address the following critical design criteria:

- A single storey solution for the majority of learning areas would ensure access for all to all general and specialist learning and studio facilities.
- In line with the State's Brief that the 'potential of each site is maximised', the single storey solution spreads the learning environment – both internal and external – across the most valuable areas of the site. In this approach, every square metre of land is utilised for an educational purpose.
- Separating individual buildings into manageable sizes allows the site layout to achieve optimum orientation for the majority of internal learning areas.

Further to this strategy, the design team developed a campus of buildings that were both separate but whole. Single level Learning Units are positioned across the site in a deliberately planned method to create the "separate and integrated learning hubs in line with Schools within Schools". In turn, the scale and size of individual Learning Units (in terms of height and floor plate) generates a 'village feel' to the School.



2. Project Details



Our proposal has created a network of learning environments which will recreate an “intimate neighbourhood atmosphere” and in turn meets the over-riding aim of the ‘Schools within Schools’ concept, which is to make a larger campus more intimate.

Another key strength of the design solution lies in the considered disposition of the buildings within the overall campus plan as a reflection of the educational functions to be accommodated. Specifically, this considered disposition relates to both the **discrete separation** of the Girl’s Only School or **discrete integration** of the Special Education School. Of immediate impact is the location of Common Shared Facilities, clearly positioned within the heart of the campus for equitable access between the Co-Educational and Girls-Only Schools.

As the Common Shared Facilities are the only buildings of significant height to accommodate Activity Halls and Resource Centre, the design team have positioned the building to allow a discrete separation of the Girls Only School from the remaining campus. This level of discrete separation also applies to sports fields associated with the Girl’s Only School, which are screened with landscaping to maintain the notion of a ‘School within School’.

In the case of Special Education, we promote an agenda of inclusion through both the Architectural language (the buildings are of a similar public presentation as the adjoining school buildings) and the location of the Learning Units (in close proximity to the Co-Educational School).

In both scenarios, a central canopy provides a strong visual and functional link; starting above the Special School access point, across Co-Educational, Common Facilities and culminating into the heart of the Girl’s Only School.

As per the State Brief, the design of the School is to provide a focus for student gathering, “a centre, or heart”. Roma Mitchell Secondary College provides a central courtyard, disposed as a series of terraces that lead towards the main School Oval and provides for whole-of-school gatherings. However, the solution expands on this idea by providing a centre and heart to each School within a School, hence an internal courtyard for Special Education, a central spine courtyard to Co-Educational and a similar courtyard to Girl’s Only.

The courtyard arrangement and planning of individual buildings has a flow-on effect in terms of enhancing educational functions by allowing the creation of a second network of landscaped and sheltered external learning areas between each of the Learning Units. This allows further inter-connectivity between Learning Units within the Sub-Schools, fostering a unique level of interaction and multiple flexibility in how Learning Units are populated and operated.



2. Project Details



The School provides a series of key innovations based on a unique relationship between buildings and site. An excellent starting point for our design team was the adoption of the 'clean and green' approach to site planning, whereby the majority of car parking is confined to site perimeters. The impact on a site this size is immediate, with the public presentation of the school developed along a well-planned drop-off zone and each School building presentation approached through a sustainably designed landscaped zone.

Sports fields and playing courts are a key component for a School with a sports focus. The main oval is centrally located as an iconic landscape feature, with the School site's central axis progressing from the main campus gathering area down onto the main oval. All other sports fields are located to the perimeter of the site, allowing future integration with the State Sports Park Master Plan.

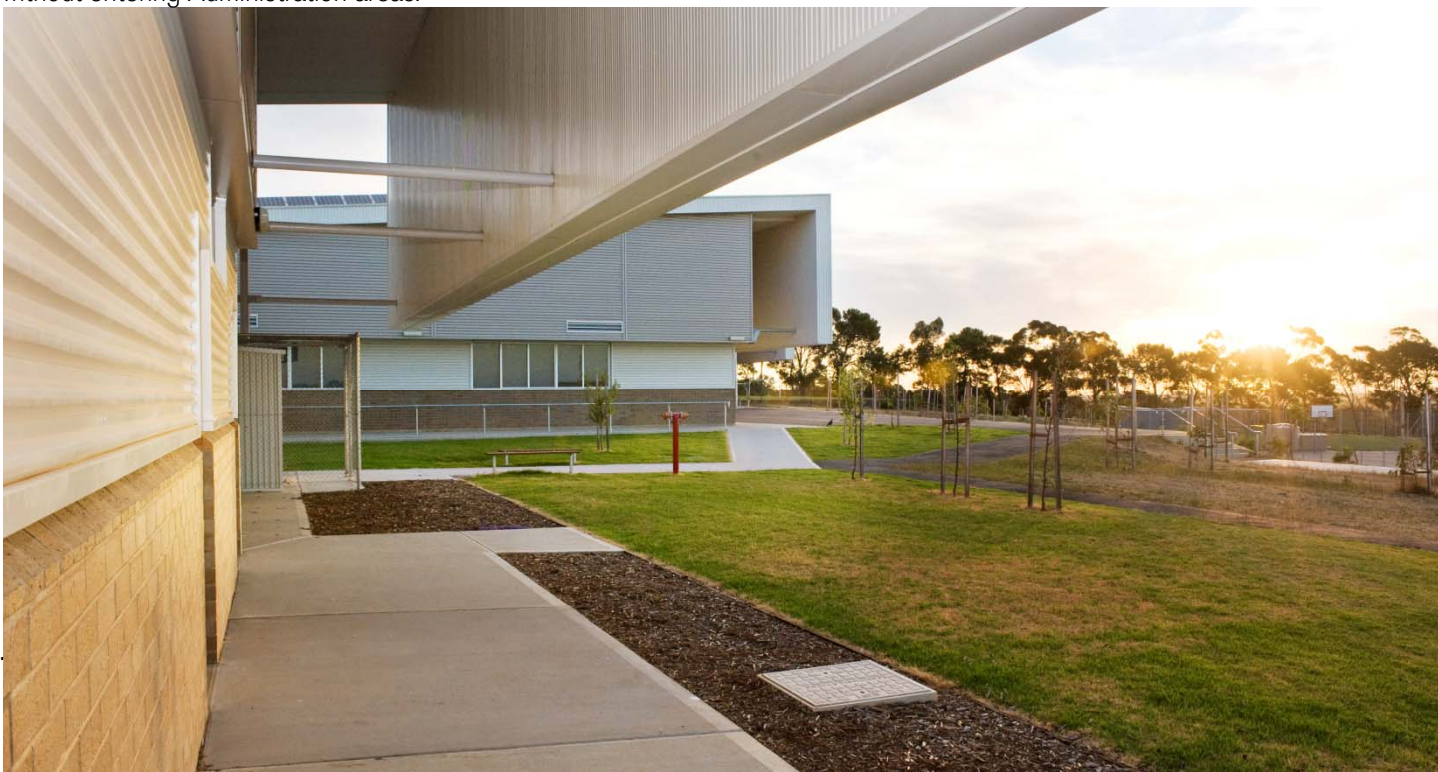
A key element of our scheme is the provision of a design solution that presents an identical series of School building elevations to either Briens Road or State Sports Park. Our design team deems it critical to address the frontage of Briens Road and State Sports Park with the same level of prominence.

A clear and direct traffic network into the site allows separate and discrete entry for each Sub-School, with clear pathways developed to ensure surveillance of all visitors to the site from the prominently located Administration areas. The absence of a sea of car parks in front of the School allows sensitive/passive barriers for security (surveillance from Administration points) with clear channelling of visitors to each School's control point. Students on the other hand will have the ability to freely access their Learning Units without entering Administration areas.

All buildings are aligned to optimise North/South orientation for major building facades and the disposition of Learning Units and are such that an extensive network of outdoor teaching and learning spaces are created.

The essential layout is based on an array of Learning Units to form Sub-Schools, which are set out either side of centrally located Common Facilities. The Common Facilities are the only two storey elements on site and form the heart of the overall School campus. The grand scale of the Activity Halls is used to elevational effect by introducing a high wall of pre-finished colour panels to the East and West presentations. The adjoining Resource Centre on Level One is predominantly glazed, affording views into the space from Briens Road and allowing magnificent views out from this Learning Studio out towards State Sports Park and the coastal horizon.

The Sub-Schools are readily identified by their high elevational treatment, again both towards Briens Road and State Sports Park. The lightweight, pre-finished panelling to the ends of the skillion roofs are coloured coded for ease of identification of each Sub-School and also providing a sense of individual identity. Note that despite a specific response to their educational brief, the Special Education School presents as much as possible in the same theme as the adjoining Co-Educational Sub-Schools.



2. Project Details



The Learning Units themselves adopt a simple yet highly flexible approach in terms of structural systems, allowing a large yet simple skillion roof to cover as much column-free internal volume as possible. Operable perimeter windows extend along the long elevations, with masonry wall up stands punctuated with louvre vents to facilitate controlled passive cooling and ventilation. Pre-finished lightweight metal sheet cladding is installed above the window heads to maintain a high quality finish over a significant period of time. The East/ West elevations incorporate pre-finished colour spandrel panels, above single storey wall sections that include fully glazed walls to allow views into the learning environment. A series of secondary, low-level canopies are included to link the entry to each Learning Unit to again reinforce the linkages between all the Sub-Schools.

The main central circulation corridor and through the campus incorporates a level change from the first bank of Learning Units to the next. This level change has been exploited and utilised to great advantage as a unique student centred environment, incorporating ramps and seating to foster a **marketplace of activities**. A distinctive central canopy rises above this outdoor learning environment, providing shade, shelter and a unifying statement that advertises the presence of Sports Park Multi Campus on what will be a site of great community and visual presence.

A consistent theme in architecture is apparent, employing a common building form for Learning Units and then applying colour treatment to distinguish identity. The design team believe this creates a simple but effective statement on the balance between integration and separation, in effect, "we are individuals but all from the one family".

The Learning Unit buildings incorporate a strong, uni-directional roof element that sails above the internal building volume below. The end return to each roof element becomes a 'vertical billboard', which incorporates pre-finished colour panels to elicit an identity to each building that is 'easy on the eye'. In this sense, colour becomes an important external marker to introducing vibrancy and identity to each building, not to mention an important element of fun.

Building materials are selected on the basis of familiarity, durability and creating a clean aesthetic presentation. Face brickwork is employed at low level to ensure a durable, low maintenance surface, whilst long glazing runs allow maximum penetration of controlled daylight into the Learning Areas. Metal cladding with pre-finished colour coating is employed above the window line and to soffit linings to ensure the 'freshness' of material finishes endures for a long period of time.



2. Project Details



The Common Shared facilities are a central 'landmark' group of buildings in the heart of the campus. As a result of the functions contained within, the two storey volume of these buildings is enhanced by balancing a contrast between coloured wall cladding and large glazed wall planes to maximise transparency. Pre-finished wall panels allow colour-coding of the Common Shared facilities, whilst glazed walls to the first floor Resource Centre allow the public clear views into this elevated facility...effectively showing the 'school in action'.

Careful attention to material and colour selections will apply to the Special School, where the internal environment will provide a safe, predictable and calming scenario for this student group.

Clear definition of recognisable boundaries is important for children with autism or other sensory impairment. This includes attention to easily defined pathways for entering and leaving activity areas, clear definition of where the floor ends and wall begins and avoiding continuation of colours or materials from floor to wall. Stress for children in this environment can be related to lights, colours, patterns, high contrast or movement that will affect their senses and a child's ability to interact with their environment.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College enhances the ideal of equality for access for each School. This ideal commences with the compact and direct approach to vehicle management and the effective separation of vehicles from pedestrians. Access and egress by students is achieved by filtering through the School grounds, with direct access to Learning Units.

A critical aspect to movement across the site is a central circulation spine that allows large groups of students to move effectively across the campus in a linear and orderly fashion. This clear direction route also allows effective access to the Common Shared facilities and the location of these central facilities provides a natural separation point in maintaining separating for Girls Only access.



2. Project Details



- **Describe & illustrate how the facility fits within the larger context of the community**

Roma Mitchell Secondary College contributes to the South Australian government's Social Inclusion Initiative through a focus on targeted groups of disadvantaged young people to increase their success in education and enable them to pursue pathways to training, further education and employment. The key elements of social inclusion are the provision of flexible, responsive joined up services across agencies that address the educational, social and emotional needs of young people, inclusion in mainstream schooling and the development of culturally appropriate curriculum and pedagogic modifications to facilities. Students with disabilities are provided with particular facilities to suit their physical and intellectual needs.

- **Describe & illustrate how the project inspires and motivates**

The vision for the new school is that of a learning environment fit for the needs of all learners in the community, with the flexibility to grow with needs as they evolve and expand over the next 30 years. At the heart of the vision is a school of the future going beyond the traditional definition to a school focused on the needs, aptitudes and aspirations of learners, providing them with a rich, accommodating but challenging and versatile environment in which to flourish.

The "Schools within Schools" model has the potential to contribute to a greater sense of student wellbeing, a sense of student community and higher student achievement. Roma Mitchell Secondary College provides a high quality curriculum, student care and wellbeing program for some 1,330 students and has an intensive focus on excellence in sport.

The core elements of the pedagogy for the school are increasingly to individualise the learning programs in line with preferred learning styles, aptitudes and interests. Learners here have access to a diversity and choice of learning activity. At the centre is a focus on leading-edge thinking, plus flexible and adaptable working; a variety of size and configurations of learning spaces; a prevalence and ease of access to ICT infrastructure; and a detailed consideration of the relationships of adjacent spaces and the teaching/learning support facilities, ICT rich and encouraging of collaboration.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College is a fully integrated environment that links buildings of high architectural merit within a stimulating learning landscape. Individual Learning Unit buildings are simple yet striking structures, employing a single skillion roof with a projecting linear skylight that admits daylight to the central Common Learning Area.



2. Project Details



Internally, each Learning Unit explore opportunities to expose elements of building structure and services for student learning opportunities, particularly in relation to active ESD components related to natural ventilation. Internal materials, textures and colours are educationally supportive by communicating good design as essential to providing an uplifting and positive atmosphere in which students can pursue high achievement.

Wall, floor and ceiling finishes have been selected on the basis of durability, acoustic performance and aesthetic compatibility in connecting the internal theme with each building's external appearance. Accordingly, the palette of internal finishes and colours links strongly to the external colour coding of each Sub School or Learning Unit.

The internal spaces and colour schemes allow students to display their work in a variety of ways, either attached to walls or suspended from catenary wires. Through these means, the internal environment becomes highly interactive; promoting the display of learning results and processes and also enhancing the benefits of a sustainable built and natural environment.

IT infrastructure allows communication and learning aids to be accessible across the Sub-School's to facilitate maximum mobility for staff and students alike. The international education program is supported by state-of-the-art technology to facilitate curriculum activities in Science, Construction, Vocational Studies and Performing Arts etc.

In addition, information and computer technologies are extended to appropriate technologies that allow staff and students to positively interact with building elements as educational tools, including initiatives to generate electricity, harvest water and nurture sustainable landscapes.

All external areas are utilised to their fullest potential in terms of outdoor facilities to enhance areas for meeting, gathering, movement, learning and play. We delivered this utilisation by creating a principal courtyard for each Sub-School; a central, secure courtyard for the Special School, a central, linear courtyard below the central canopy for Co-Ed and a similar courtyard below the central canopy towards the Girl's Only School.

Further to these Sub-School courtyards, each Learning Unit enjoys access to a series of long courtyard spaces between adjoining buildings, which enrich opportunities for students to work collaboratively or explore new learning situations.

All these intimate courtyards feed through the central circulation spine under the wave canopy, which contains ramps, steps and landscape elements to sustain a 'marketplace of activities'. For whole of school gatherings, the central courtyard provides a focal meeting point from which terraces and ramps cascade down to the main playing fields.

Site safety starts with identifiable and logical drop-off and pick-up zones to the front of each Sub-School. Prominently located Administration areas for each Sub-School allows visual surveillance and fencing is introduced at strategic locations to channel new visitors directly to formal entry points.

The Special Education School receives particular attention in response to specific student needs, including a secure yet visually un-obtrusive perimeter fence and the inclusion of a secondary enclosure to serve four designated Learning Areas as briefed.



2. Project Details



Results of the process & project

- Explain how the project achieves educational goals and objectives

To understand the flexibility of a typical Sports Park Multi Campus Learning Unit, we undertook a comprehensive analysis of the desired pedagogy. From the State Brief, it was clear that one of the underlying aims of the educational community was to provide 'individualised learning programs in a flexible and adaptable environment'. Specifically, this aim required a built environment that catered for all the goals and potentials offered by the unique mix of facilities offered on campus; an international education program, a focus on sports and physical activity programs, state of the art IT infrastructure and sciences and vocational programs, all delivered from these Learning Units and Common Facilities.

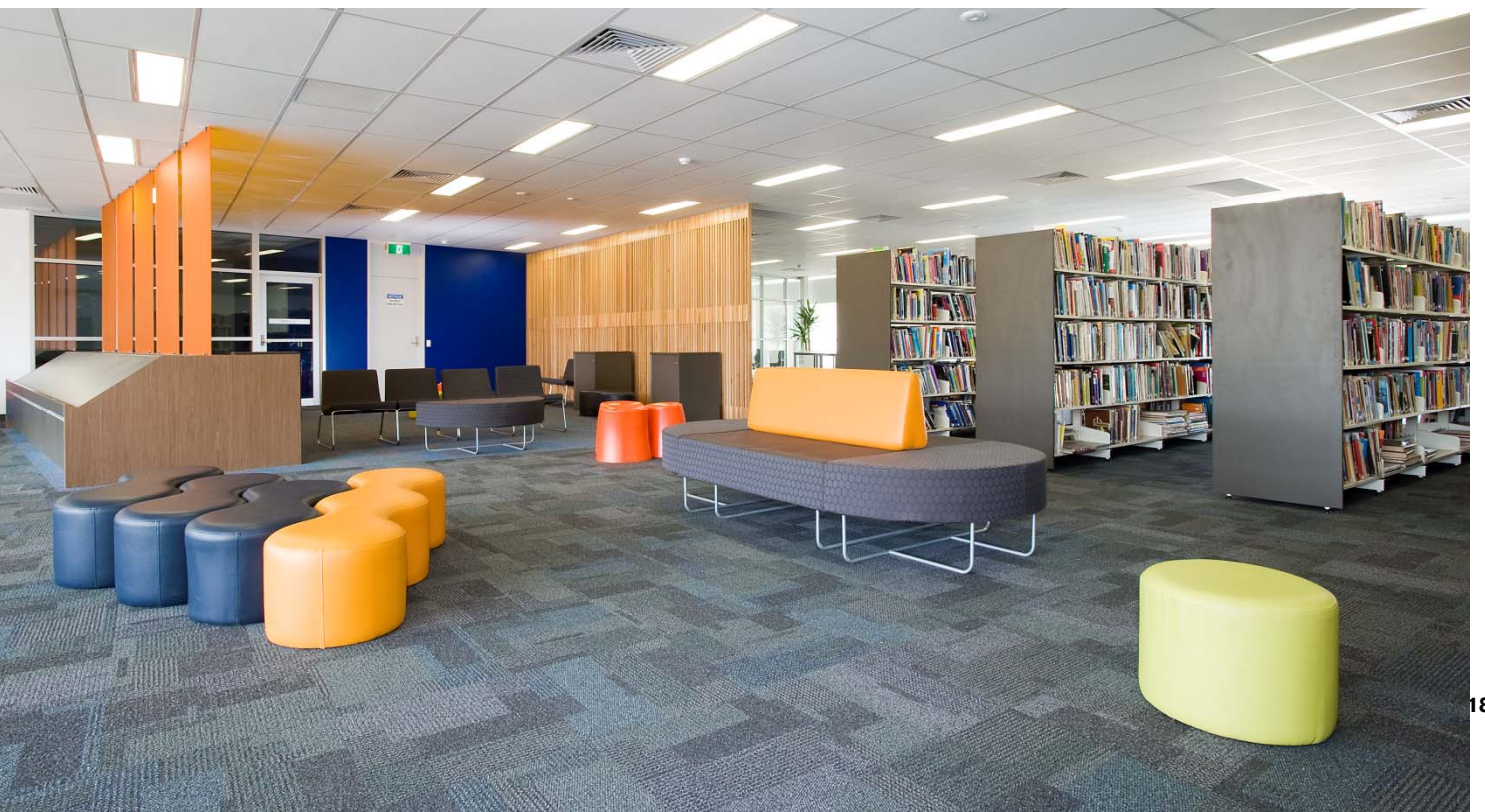
In terms of accommodating a variety of teaching/learning requirements, the Learning Units offer a simple but inherently flexible layout based on providing an open 'warehouse' volume with minimal internal columns. This volume is currently planned in a response to the State Brief, providing a range of open or enclosed Learning Areas, Learning Studios, Withdrawal spaces, Staff Preparation Areas etc. In all cases, the Learning Commons provides the open linkage between the arrays of Learning Areas, offering a variety of spaces that can be utilized for student work in a multitude of ways.

Over weeks, months or years of operation, the prevalence of internal non load-bearing walls allows individual Learning Units to be re-configured as desired.

- Explain how the project achieves school district goals

DECD identified the need for the provision of six New Schools to assist in improving educational and care outcomes in the northern and western suburbs of Adelaide. This package of schools were all newly built and include the Schools within Schools concept, Children's Centres and at Roma Mitchell Secondary College, includes multi-campus facilities. As part of this process, 18 schools and pre-schools were closed. The schools were generally in existing population areas with known demographic trends, with two schools built in an area of regeneration and new growth. The 18 existing schools were built from the late 1800's to the mid 1960's, with some schools having had upgrades in more recent years. The majority of these school sites are under-utilised, have significant backlog maintenance issues and not reflective of the current views of teaching and learning.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College is designed to reflect the local community and individual philosophies as described in the education and care briefs in the Department's Output Specifications. The school includes environmentally sustainable design and includes those features within the school's curriculum. The outcome of the project has had a major impact on the quality of learning outcomes for students who attend Roma Mitchell Secondary College, in addition to a major lift in education standards for the surrounding school district.



2. Project Details



- Explain how the project achieves community goals

Planning for Roma Mitchell Secondary College has always considered the benefit of community integration and this ideal has figured largely in the distribution of facilities across the site. Playing fields are positioned around the perimeter for future links into the State Sports Park. Car parking is grouped near the playing fields to facilitate community access for weekend sporting events.

Activity Halls present an excellent opportunity for afterhour's community access and are again prominently positioned towards the Briens Road frontage for immediate access during out of school hour's events.

The new school delivers a positive message about education and care for a large group of students and staff.

A precursor to this message is an Architectural treatment that delivers a frontage for each of the Sub-School buildings to clearly denote a welcoming entry point.

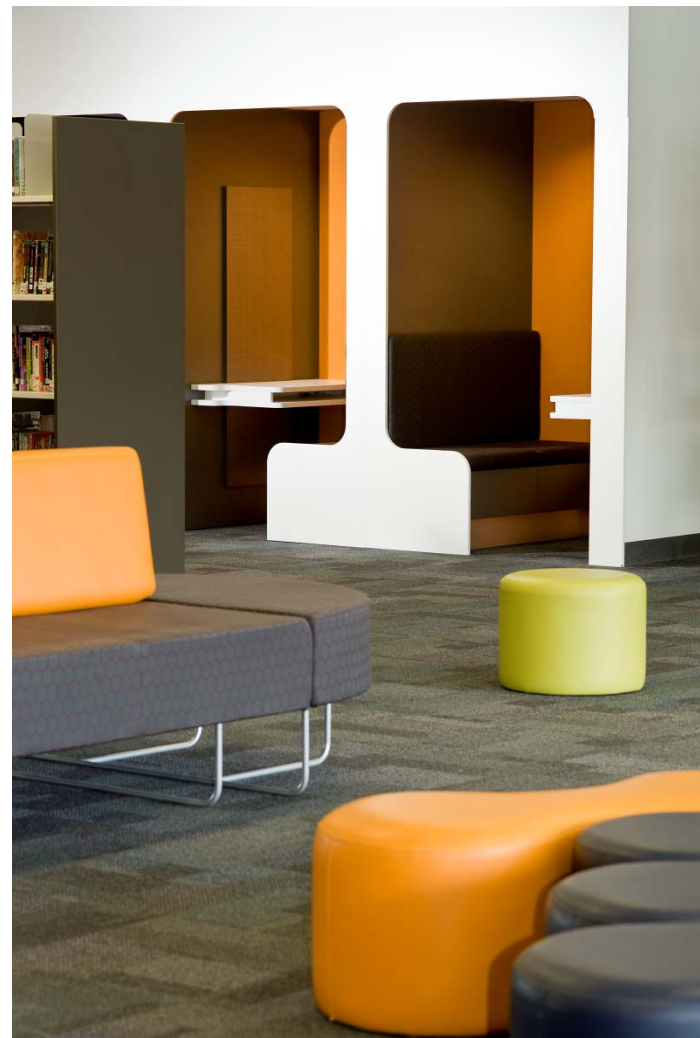
We have undertaken a deliberate approach in creating strong, easily distinguished elevational treatment to each Sub-School building through the use of colour as an identifying agent. The coloured paneling to each building elevation invokes a sense of 'fun and engagement' with students and creates an easy point of reference for first time visitors to the School. Once inside, each Sub-School will present entrance foyers which celebrate the individual life and culture of that particular School.

Within this commonality is attention to specific operational requirements. For example, the Special School incorporates a discrete but secure drop-off enclosure for transport departure.

We have also delivered a School environment that is sustainable and socially inclusive. A key means to achieving this aim is the provision of visual links between Sub-Schools and the definition of key physical links between Learning Units.

The central courtyard element is sheltered by an iconic canopy, which physically binds the School as a whole. Beneath this canopy, landscape elements are introduced to manage interesting level changes and create an interactive student environment. This zone will cater for the 'market place of activities and events' that will deliver a unique learning experience.

Safe and efficient access to the site from Briens Road is a key objective and the solution proposed adopts a single point of entry and exit from the school site. The scheme promotes a 'clean and green' approach to site traffic, with all staff car parking designated to perimeter zones. In order to enhance individual Sub-School identity, required drop-off lanes and visitor car parking zones are positioned in front of each designated School entrance. The drop-off lanes are linear, progressive and allow clear lines of vision for traffic to ensure pedestrian safety.



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The traffic layout also responds to the anticipated access by the wider community. Linear car parks are strategically located for access to education, health and family-support service facilities, whilst the main bank of staff car parking on the site perimeters allows community members to access the playing fields for after-hours/ weekend sporting fixtures.

Service delivery specifically allows for access to waste disposal/recycling hubs and access points for delivery of goods and materials to the Canteen and Construction Studios. Emergency access for fire appliances is provided off the perimeter network of car parks, allowing an extension of the road network onto the playing fields as required.

From this drop-off road, students have direct access to their respective Sub-Schools or Learning Units through a network of landscaped pathways without having to access the main building entrance points. The landscaped network in front of each building and between Learning Units incorporates materials and elements that provide useful learning opportunities in their own right. The circulation routes are clear and logical to allow easy and safe movement between buildings.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College will by its very nature raise standards across all points of performance measurement through its unique integration of diverse School groups under one, cohesive umbrella of learning and life/skill education.

Specifically, advancements in standards will be developed along the following lines:

Community congregation...the School as a whole presents an unprecedented collection of School identities on the one site, bringing together very specific needs and student profiles under a workable model of managed integration.

Community hubs...Activity Halls, Common Shared facilities and Playing fields generate a high level of public participation

Specialisations...elite programs in sport are balanced with sensitive programs for students with special needs. Specialisations in women's health and leadership are balanced with personalised learning plans in a sustainable environment. We believe the configurations are ground-breaking in their potential.

Ownership...the new school develops unique opportunities for group ownership, allowing flexible facilities and resources to be shared within distinct School groups. Students are empowered to take control of their own learning, develop their pathways and careers and personalise their educational experience to an unprecedented level.

Culture of success...the profile and level of accessibility envisaged for this School generates significant 'buy-in' from parents, allied support groups and the community. Given the representation from disadvantaged sectors, Roma Mitchell Secondary College will develop an entirely new agenda based on the **culture of success for all**.

The design team has closely considered the changing nature of intellectually disabled students and our response largely reflects our continuing drive towards an **agenda of inclusion**.



2. Project Details



Architecturally, the Special School on this site presents to the public in an entirely identical manner to the adjoining Sub-Schools. Despite subtle differences in the demands of space and staffing, children can be easily withdrawn, observed or integrated as their life skills develop; all within a built environment that is carefully integrated within the overall school 'neighbourhood'.

From an educational perspective, the new school enhances special education provisions in South Australia by providing an unprecedented level of inclusion in preparing students for adult life. In the School environment, this means a curriculum emphasis on life skills, how students can build respectful relationships and merging education with pastoral, health and social advancement.

At Roma Mitchell, special education students will learn with a higher degree of dignity because the opportunities for integration will be much greater. The flow-on effect for parents, care-givers and allied health professionals in terms of community congregation are again significantly enhanced through integration with the remaining campus facilities.

We have strategically located the Girls Only School to fully address the balance between integration and segregation in an innovative manner. Whilst retaining a consistency in Learning Unit design across the campus, the Girls Only cluster retains immediate access to the central Common Shared facilities, in addition to immediate access to dedicated sports fields for Girls Only.

The Girls Only School continues our design approach of maintaining a dedicated public profile, with the School buildings defined by colour identification. Dedicated car parking in front of the Sub-School allows visitors to approach the Girls Only Administration 'front door' through a landscaped entry courtyard. As requested, the Early Years School is closely connected to the Girls Administration facility.

From this point, the Girls Only Middle and Senior Learning Units are closely linked through a series of courtyards and outdoor learning areas. Access to Common Shared facilities is direct and segregated; girls essentially approach all facilities from their school side. An Activity Hall can be dedicated to Girls Only use through installation of a curtain divider and the central Canteen facilitates a separate serving area for girls. All other Common facilities i.e. Music, Performance, Human Performance, Resource Centre, Counselling are accessed via discrete, separate entry points for Girls Only Sub-School students.

We ultimately aim to provide a nurturing environment for the Girls Only Sub School and the design team have developed a cluster of buildings that allow significant visual connection across their school buildings. Within the overall scheme, this cluster translates into a separate Sub School, using the Common Shared Facilities as a visual/ physical barrier from the Co-Ed School.



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The Schools within Schools concept is taken quite literally, with our scheme developing a series of individual buildings that introduce a human scale, enhance individual identity, encourage a sense of ownership and develop a physical idea of a network of schools.

Each Learning Unit is based on a consistent floor layout concept, engendering the principles of flexibility, transparency and sustainability. Whilst small idiosyncratic changes occur in each building where required from a learning or functional response, there is a pervading sense of familiarity for all students as they visit and interact with each Learning Unit in their relevant Sub School.

Moving from the physical presentation of each Sub School, we have further refined the Schools within Schools concept by integrating each Sub-School into a seamless relationship as the buildings are distributed across the Briens Road site. Each School contains a cluster of Learning Units which utilise carefully planned external spaces, level changes and landscaping to define individual courtyards.

Each Learning Unit combines Learning Areas, Learning Commons, Studios and Workshops to create a highly interactive environment and Pinnacle Education believe this dynamism will generate the success of the Schools within Schools concept. Each School will utilise their own central courtyard network for community congregation, leading to a whole of school assembly point within the centre of the campus.

The Children's Centre is sensitively located within proximity of the Girls Only Sub School and is adjacent to the Girls Only Administration Facility. Given the age group of children involved and the high level of parent interaction, the Children's Centre maintains a close and easily accessible location towards the main access road into the school site.



2. Project Details



Thomson Rossi work from the fundamental understanding that “the business of a school is learning”, and working in partnership with the State to develop outstanding facilities to this end. In order to achieve individuality for each School site, we believe innovation is driven by the commitment to ensure function presides over design.

Roma Mitchell Secondary College presents a sophisticated and challenging brief to deliver a vision of learning integration that will become a national paradigm. The political, social and community outcomes when successfully completed will be substantial and far-reaching.

Overall, our solution delivers a new model on how a large school can really succeed in creating a sense of welcome, sense of community and sense of interaction between staff and students, in due regard to the sheer breadth of potential at the level of integration involved for the specialisations of each school.

One of the flow-on benefits from the desire of government and society to encourage life-long learning is the creation of a ‘knowledge-based economy’, which reinforces the importance of full participation in all stages of schooling.

However, Roma Mitchell Secondary College is about articulating the beliefs and values shared by the acknowledged stakeholders and seeking ‘buy-in’ from everyone with a valid interest in securing a successful outcome. The ‘buy-in’ will create growth in the desired social capital, which in turn will enhance the individual and collective benefits and capabilities of both new communities and the communities seeking renewal through school closures proposed under the Education Works New Schools PPP.

The consultation process will explore the platforms for cooperation, including networks for learning, health, welfare, kinship and community to name a few.

The new school will become both a trigger for social renewal, social networking, integration and an exemplary facility for delivering flexible learning programs based on curriculum specialisations and a focus on excellence on sport.

The adjacency to State Sports Park is a clear marker for a unique School environment and our completed proposal creates a spectacular statement for integration of facilities. The Architectural response delivers flexible, individual buildings linked by a central canopy to deliver a message of unity; separation under a canopy of integration. The site is secure and every Sub School presents a clear entry point with discrete fencing to channel visitors into the controlled entry zones.



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The landscaping proposal of both intimate and large courtyards helps generate an external 'social scene' to balance the more internal social community. Common facilities will be available after-hours to inject access to sporting facilities that are currently in demand within the local area.

As an open, transparent School community, staff will have the facilities they need to empower them to monitor and personalise learning programs for individual students. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds will not be lost in an environment that breaks away from past stereo-types of institutions or homogenous, poorly scaled buildings.



We delivered significant objectives for this project based on our understanding of the KEY ISSUES:

- **Community Development...**Our brief extended beyond the immediate physical parameters to explore the essence of community involvement. This encompassed responses to future changes in parenting roles, child safety and how children are cared for by parents and the associated demands on new community networks.
- **A New Environment...**This became our glimpse into the "future school", delving into the realm of what networks will be needed to supplement learning within a diverse community.
- **New Name – New Community....** The new school creates a new, singular community and a sense of uniqueness. In moving from multiple sites to one community, a community of integration reaches out...
- **Flexibility to learn....**A holistic model for learning must evolve in a rapidly changing world. The facility responds and accounts for future possibilities in an affordable manner. Clearly, technology will become an important ingredient in 21st century delivery.
- **Change Management....**The ensuing impact on communities and required re-alignment of schools necessitated a seamless transition. A key ingredient involved engendering **excitement in new relationships** between the Schools within Schools concept; outstanding opportunities to explore partnerships and expand curriculums.