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Executive summary

This Master Plan has been developed by the Hurlstone Enterprise Advisory Board in association with school staff and others with an interest in the future of Hurlstone. It aims to articulate the vision put forward by the Peter’s Report which was prepared in 2009 and provided a direction for the future of the school. The Report’s recommendations were accepted in full by the Government. The report recommended the appointment of an Enterprise Advisory Board to assist the School and Department to implement its recommendations.

The Board identified the need for an overall plan for the redevelopment of infrastructure for the farm and residential resources on the site. The Board does not deal with any of the day school infrastructure or have any involvement in the day to day running of the school, farm or boarding facilities.

Since the commencement of the writing of the Master Plan some funds have been provided for electrical services planning and for renovation of some student bathrooms. The plan does not go to the level of detail where all future redevelopment projects are identified but recognises the significant need that exists for basic infrastructure upgrades.

The Report proposed that the redevelopment of the School be funded through the sale of some land. This sale is contingent upon land currently subject to the construction of the south west railway link eventually becoming available to the School. The consequence of these arrangements is that there is no net loss of land.

Areas for development are identified as well as areas which need to be conserved. Further consideration and planning is required regarding development and conservation.

The potential of the school to support agricultural education within the Sydney Basin is significant and needs to be kept in mind through reading this Master Plan.

Significant needs exist within the Australian community for improved learning about sustainable food and fibre production. Hurlstone is in a position to demonstrate the latest technology and best practice.

The Master Plan takes a long term view as to what Hurlstone can become through building on its past excellence in agricultural education.

Acknowledgements

The Hurlstone Enterprise Advisory Board acknowledges the assistance of Ms Kerrie Wratten, Principal, Ms Danielle Krix, Enterprise Development Manager at HAHS, Mr Paul Dait, Business Manager, Mr Ross McGregor, Head Teacher Agriculture and other staff at Hurlstone in the preparation of this Master Plan.

The Master Plan represents the views and intent of the Enterprise Advisory Board and not necessarily those of the School or Department of Education and Communities.

Intent and scope of Master Plan

The Master Plan aims to articulate the vision of the Peter’s Report of 2009 into a clear direction for the development of the school’s farm and residential infrastructure. It must be read in conjunction with other documents, in particular, the 2012-2014 School Plan and the Peters Report. The purpose of the document is to encapsulate the wide range of potential developments that can occur at Hurlstone and to also identify the
The scope of the Master Plan is to deal with the farm and residential infrastructure as it provides a direction to future development. It draws upon the overall educational operations of the school as they are now, but also looks ahead as to where they may be in the future.

**Stakeholders**

The announcement by the then State Government in 2009 that it intended to sell much of the Hurlstone land for real estate development sparked a strenuous defence of Hurlstone in order to stop the sale of the land going ahead. The School found itself in the midst of a battle to save its farm and maintain its distinct role in agricultural education. From that process a wide range of stakeholders were identified who then were able to have an input into the Peter’s Report.

Normally a master planning process would call upon stakeholders for their input into identifying the direction for an entity subject to the master planning process. The processes leading to the Peter’s Report and the report itself have done this with the report identifying the concept of healthy foods in healthy environments. It is, therefore, not necessary to identify the stakeholders or undertake an initial consultative process. A consultative process will occur after this draft Master Plan is circulated to all interested stakeholders.

**Feedback**

The Board is seeking feedback on this draft document. A sheet is attached to this Plan to enable this feedback.

**Vision statement**

Vision Statement for Hurlstone’s Farm and Residential Infrastructure:

*To provide highly sought after residential and educational resources to support agricultural and related education which inspires young people to excel in careers that support sustainable food and fibre production for the well being of current and future generations.*
Background

Hurlstone Agricultural High School (HAHS) is an agricultural and selective, co-educational, public high school, located in Glenfield, a south-western suburb of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. It is the oldest government boarding school in New South Wales (NSW).

Hurlstone is unique in that it is the state's only public selective and agricultural school that also includes a coeducational boarding facility. The 112 hectare campus includes an operational farm, sporting facilities and student accommodation.

The following extract from page 1 of the 'Peters Report' explains part of the context and background to the preparation of this Master Plan for the farm and residential facilities of Hurlstone Agricultural High School:

In the 2009 Mini-Budget, the NSW Government announced its intention to accelerate the sale of selected lands held by the Department of Education and Training that are determined to be surplus to educational needs, with the intention of providing new resources to upgrade existing facilities.

The Department of Education and Training has recommended that up to a maximum of 140 hectares of the site occupied by Hurlstone Agricultural High School, Ajuga School, Campbell House School and Glenfield Park School could be sold as part of this program.

According to the Mini-Budget decision, half of the proceeds from any sale would be available for reinvestment in new and upgraded infrastructure for the affected schools. The Government has called this Inquiry to determine how much of the site should be sold and in what ways any proceeds should be used in order to maximise educational outcomes for current and future students.

The findings of the inquiry mentioned above were published as a 276 page report titled "Hurlstone Inquiry, Report by Mal Peters – October 2009". The executive summary and recommendations of this report are attached to the Master Plan as an appendix.

One of the recommendations of the Peters Report was the establishment of an Enterprise Advisory Board, supported by a commercial manager, to identify opportunities for additional revenue raising and increased use of the Hurlstone facilities, and among other things to promote pathways for students to pursue careers related to Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments.*

A key element of the Report’s findings was that some land could be sold and the proceeds used to redevelop the school farm and residential facilities. This Master Plan is predicated on the sale of Lot 5 for residential development. The lease of Lot 4 was identified as needed to be established prior to the sale of land (lot 5). The Board believes an overall plan is necessary if the greatest benefits are to accrue to the school in the long term.

The Report also recommended that agriculture (or primary industries in Years 11 and 12) be a compulsory subject from Year 7 to the Higher School Certificate. The resource implications of this recommendation are significant. The Enterprise Advisory Board strongly endorses this recommendation.

* This Master Plan has adapted the vision expressed in the Peters Report into terminology which is consistent with current educational discourse and the need to focus on sustainable food and fibre production through education and training of young people who will undertake tertiary studies in agriculture and related disciplines.
Community consultation

The information and sentiments expressed as community consultation in this Master Plan have arisen from the community's strenuous defence of the school in the face of the possible loss of the farm to real estate development. The Peters Report captured much of this and the Enterprise Advisory Board has further represented the interests of agricultural education.

During the course of the Peters' inquiry, extensive community consultation with a range of stakeholders was undertaken through submissions, public forums, meetings and site visits. Since the release of the report in April 2010 there has been an ongoing process of community consultation in various forms by the school.

Valued features

The features of Hurlstone greatly valued by the community include its:

- green space;
- agriculture and farm;
- academic standards and operation as a selective school;
- boarding school.

![Five top words that represent the identify of HAHS](image)

Data collected by Survey Monkey. 64 responses are represented in the top five ‘words’ that respondents identified with HAHS. A scale is not used as respondents could choose more than one option.

Important icons

The community has identified the following features as iconic for Hurlstone:

- HAHS farm;
- Clarke House;
- Residential (boarding school) accommodation.

Challenges for Hurlstone arising from the Peters Report

The most important challenges arising from the Peters Report for Hurlstone are:

- provision of high quality teaching and learning programs to all students in agriculture and primary industries including the introduction of flexible curriculum structures;
- increasing the numbers of students in its residential facilities to capacity;
• opening up the farm facilities for use by students from other schools;
• developing some residential facilities for short term occupancy by visiting groups of students and adults;
• developing a commercial business model for the operation of its farm and residential operations.

**Potential opportunities for Hurlstone's future**

A number of potential opportunities for Hurlstone's future have been identified. These include:

• greater use of farm by schools from the Sydney region and beyond;
• greater use of boarding facilities by community and sporting groups;
• greater use of education and accommodation facilities by interstate and international guests;
• increased linkages to primary, secondary and tertiary institutions;
• increased linkages to other State departments;
• increased training courses conducted by DEC in addition to other governmental departments;
• ongoing development of an environment education centre;
• development of sustainable programs such as solar energy and site water collection and recycling;
• increased understanding between rural and city dwellers;
• strengthening the boarding school to increase numbers of students who aspire to university studies.

**Potential threats to Hurlstone's future**

The potential threats to Hurlstone's future, as identified by the community, include:

• State Government goal for reducing debt through sale of Hurlstone’s land;
• short sighted vision of State and Federal Government for training future agriculturalists;
• changes in DEC policy on the funding provided to Hurlstone;
• loss of value of Hurlstone’s green space by local governments;
• subdivision of Hurlstone (owned by the Crown);
• change in executive mission and values;
• loss of community support for preserved green space;
• failure to adequately fund repair and maintenance of the Hurlstone site.
Site characteristics

Natural environment

Hurlstone is one of the few remaining tracts of land still undeveloped in the original greenbelts of Sydney. It is situated on the Hawkesbury sandstone substrate plateau which is part of the Cumberland plain. The original vegetation is dry sclerophyll forest that included ironbarks, grevilleas, gums, paperbarks and native grasses.

The landscape has been highly modified by two centuries of European Land use and now consists mainly of introduced and native pastures. Within the farm is a patch of Cumberland plain remnant vegetation (see map 3). This is now seen as being rare and it is important that it be conserved.

The gentle undulations on the farm form a gully on the northern side. The soil type is predominantly clay loam, with the poorest areas along the ridge and some higher quality soils in the south east corner where some alluvial creek flats are located.

Built environment

Hurlstone's built environment comprises three main complexes, namely the day school, residential accommodation, and the farm education precinct. Map 3 provides further details. The plan does not deal with the day school precinct.

Heritage

The whole Hurlstone site including some land previously owned by HAHS was classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) in October 2009. This listing carries no legal force and does not impose regulatory constraints on the development of the site. However it does recognise and highlight the cultural significance accorded to the site by the community, and the listing may assist eligibility to apply for various heritage funding grants in the future. Map 6 shows the area classified by the National Trust.

Clarke House, identified as an iconic feature of Hurlstone by the community

A feature of Hurlstone's heritage is the memorial forest. It was established to commemorate the service of Hurlstonians in the world wars. The design allows for a ceremonial ground adjacent to Roy Watts Drive.
An ideal location – drivers for development

There would not be a better location for a school like Hurlstone within Sydney. Why?

Hurlstone is adjacent to:

- a major railway line with direct route to Sydney Airport and the CBD in much less than 1 hour;
- the intersection between Sydney’s main arterial roads, the M7 and F5 which can quickly bring visitors from the south, west, north and east in the Sydney region;
- the fastest growing part of the Sydney region.

Regional context

Hurlstone is located within the Campbelltown Local Government Area on the south-western edge of the Sydney metropolitan area, approximately 53 kilometres from the Sydney CBD and occupies an area which is approximately 312 square kilometres. The LGA, which extends from Glenfield in the north to Menangle Park in the south, comprises 32 suburbs and is surrounded by 5 other LGAs including Liverpool, Camden, Wollondilly, Sutherland and Wollongong. The population predominately lives within a linear urban corridor that follows the alignment of the F5 Motorway/Hume Highway and the Main Southern Railway line.

Campbelltown was developed as a satellite city in response to the Sydney Regional Outline Plan of the 1960s and is part of the Macarthur Growth Sector (together with the Camden and Wollondilly LGAs). In 2010, The NSW State Government finalised the Metropolitan South West Regional Strategy which sets out a vision for the management and development of the south west region incorporating the Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly and Liverpool LGAs. This strategy identified the Campbelltown LGA as a major centre with the potential to become a regional centre.

The current land use within the LGA is characterised by a variety of urban and rural land uses. The dominant housing form is low density detached dwellings with groupings of medium density housing in suburbs, and a limited number of apartments located in the CBD.

Campbelltown City is a significant regional centre, offering opportunity and lifestyle. Bounded on one side by the Georges River, and on the other by rolling hills, the area offers the perfect combination of city and country.

Part of the Macarthur region, the city is less than an hour by road or rail from the Sydney CBD and airport. There is a major regional hospital, university, two TAFE campuses and a significant tourism industry.

Total population for the region is in excess of 150,000, 25% of whom were born overseas. The population is increasing at approximately 2% per annum. These are spread across the employment fields with an approximate third in manufacturing, construction and retail.

Campbelltown supports a high level of native biodiversity. Approximately 17,940 hectares or 58% of the LGA still contains native vegetation which supports a diverse range of flora and fauna species, including species of conservation significance. This vegetation is made up of 18 vegetation communities, seven of which are listed as threatened ecological communities under the NSW TSC Act 1995.
The largest areas of intact vegetation are located in the eastern portion of the LGA within the Holsworthy military area and along the Georges River Corridor. However, other significant remnants and vegetated corridors have been retained throughout the city’s urban and rural environments.

Hurlstone has Glenfield train station at its door, with direct access to both International and Domestic airport terminals and Sydney Olympic Park. It is only 40 minutes from the centre of Sydney on the M5; and is located adjacent to the on ramp of the M7. There are a number of developments within or adjacent to its geographic boundary. The developments include proposed sale of some lower quality farmland on the western side Hurlstone (lot 5) and the construction of the south west rail link through lot 4 of the southern side of the school farm.

For details of the south west rail link see the following online map:


**National context**

Broader national factors that may influence the development of HAHS over the next 40 years include:

- a continuing skills shortage in Australian agricultural industries should support HAHS's core function of agricultural education to youth;
- an ageing population, with more demand for leisure and tourism services, will generate opportunities for HAHS;
- an increasing concern about carbon retention will present opportunities for HAHS's agricultural and land management activities to provide examples of best practice;
- the increasing demand for alternative energy sources could result in wind or solar farm installations on HAHS, with a high visual impact;
- a greater emphasis on environmental and agricultural education in the school curriculum, leading to opportunities for HAHS to form or expand strategic alliances with other key sites, for example Camden Park Environment Education Centre;
- a heightened concern for the environment and wildlife by the general population could lead to new opportunities for adult education and ecotourism at HAHS;
- issues of biosecurity, food safety and animal welfare will increasingly impact on agricultural production;
- the central role of electronic communications in lifestyles will present challenges for infrastructure installations at HAHS including possibilities such as a phone tower, a more extensive underground network of fibre-optic cable and retro-fitting of heritage and architecturally sensitive buildings with new communication capabilities.

**International context**

- international interschool relationships which are developing or are in place with countries including Japan, Holland, China and India.
**Business model and funding**

This Master Plan is about the physical resources but it is necessary for the Board to examine how these businesses could be run in the future.

At present the school’s accommodation and farms are run within the DEC and is based on public sector business structures and procedures.

There is little flexibility for commercial growth, grant seeking or philanthropic input. The Board believes there is potential to grow the farm, residential and other businesses if a more flexible structure were employed.

There is more investigation to be undertaken in this area, however, a meeting with the National Art School showed an alternative structure in place within the NSW public sector. In this case the NAS is now run as an independent not-for-profit government owned company which trades as a normal business. It is funded on fee income, grants, donations and a government appropriation. The NAS has a skills based board.

Another model is Tocal College and its CB Alexander Foundation. The Foundation operates a commercial farming enterprise and obtains grants to revegetate and enhance the biodiversity of the Tocal property and to conserve Tocal Homestead. It could not do this within the business structure of the NSW DPI. The operation of the DPI and the Foundation are complementary. The potential exists for the same to occur at Hurlstone. Unless there is more flexibility in the business structure there is a risk the enterprises will flounder despite a possible injection of capital funds for redevelopment.

Under a new business model the following income streams have been identified for the Hurlstone enterprises:

- sale of agricultural produce;
- fees for day visits by students to the farm;
- accommodation fees from visiting groups;
- grants from government and other organisations;
- site fees from events, photography/film shoots;
- rental fees from other organisations located on the property;
- hospitality income from visiting groups either on a daily or overnight basis;
- usage fees from facilities constructed which may service both the School and the community eg gymnasium, swimming pool.
Current and possible future activities, businesses and functions

Youth activities

- operation of the day school with strong integration of day school educational programs with the farm;
- agricultural events for schools and others;
- day visits for agriculture by regional schools;
- rural youth activities;
- overnight visits from schools in NSW for agriculture and related studies;
- sporting and cultural (non agricultural) visits from country NSW schools on a day or overnight basis;
- international school group visits on a commercial, overnight basis;
- development of stronger links with tertiary institutions.

Adult activities

- use of facilities by adult local groups, such as service clubs for meetings;
- use of facilities for teacher professional development (day visits related to agriculture and other subjects);
- professional development for teachers on an overnight basis;
- community use of sporting, cultural and education facilities;
- other community use such as farmers' markets.

Related activities

- other education institutions (primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary);
- professional development for rural industry and other related groups eg short courses;
- sporting and cultural;
- regional tourist operators;
- gymnasium and a new indoor pool for use by the school and the community.
Elements within the Master Plan

This section describes the elements of the site that the Hurlstone Master Plan needs to cover in the short, medium and long term. It is based on the current activities of the site, previous developments, input from the community, and the current context of stakeholders, client needs, the Peters' Report and broader development in the region.

Accommodation

The Master Plan needs to provide for upgrading and refurbishment of Hurlstone's residential accommodation which consists of the boarding school and short overnight stay facilities.

The Peters Report recommended extensive renovation, reconfiguration and in some cases adaptive re-use of the HAHS boarding facilities.

The Master Plan also needs to provide guidance for possible further residential facilities in the medium to long term, in the existing precinct and/or in an expanded or different precinct. These facilities could be for additional school groups or for a conference facility as described further on in this report.

Indoor and outdoor farm teaching facilities

The Master Plan needs to provide guidance for the expansion of indoor and outdoor teaching facilities on the farm site in the context of:

- future needs of the day school in particular 6 agricultural laboratories and staff facilities to support the increase in teaching of agriculture and primary industries;
- future needs of the farm education precinct to accommodate increased teaching of primary industries;
- future needs for ancillary facilities associated with day and short-stay education activities, including toilets and other amenities;
- construct multipurpose teaching exhibition facilities to enable multiple groups of students to be given agricultural experiences.

In the short to medium term, the Peters' Report has recommended the construction of a range of teaching facilities in the farm education precinct, including an environmental education centre. It has also recommended demolition of some farm structures and construction of others.

A farm education precinct has been identified as a cornerstone of the Master Plan. It is important that movement areas are clearly delineated for OH&S purposes as well as effective education and training. Further work is required to develop a plan for the Farm Education precinct.

Farm production facilities

A range of options needs to be considered for the farms redevelopment:

- redevelop the dairy if a long term future for it can be determined in the context of changes in the industry. This discussion needs to include the great value a dairy can add to the educational process in agriculture if fully integrated into the teaching program;
- redevelop the intensive animal enterprises;
- upgrade feed supply system for dairy including improved irrigation and a facility for supplementary feeding;
- upgrade other facilities on the farm which will allow for a profitable and educationally valuable activities;
- maximise benefits from the possibilities of storm water harvesting if the opportunity arises. During the preparation of this Master Plan a proposal was under consideration that storm water may be available from a nearby subdivision for use by the school farm. At the time reservations were expressed regarding water quality issues but the Board felt the matter was worthy of consideration.

**Potential development of conference facilities**

Hurlstone is well placed to be centre for conferences to service the Department of Education and Communities as well as the wider government and business market. A stand alone conference facility could be established which would be a source of income for the School’s business and it would also provide the school with broader profile within the education, government and business sectors.

A facility would need to be located so as not impact on the ongoing operation of the school but also be synergistic through its operational processes.

**Community, sport and recreation facilities**

In the medium to longer term it is possible that funding will become available for the construction of various community and sporting facilities on the site. Therefore the Master Plan should identify the location of such developments, including indoor sports and swimming centres. The potential for these to funded in a way that they can used by both the school and the community needs to be examined. If a community based model is deemed possible then the siting of the facility would be of the utmost importance.

**Office accommodation and government agency facilities**

The site currently hosts a range of office accommodation associated with the day school, residential operations and various government agencies located on the site.

Given that HAHS is a NSW Government institution, significant development pressure could be placed on the site for the following:

- construction of additional office accommodation and other agency facilities such as storage and service centres, possibly at short notice in order to implement a government policy decision; The Board notes that the Department of Education uses the site for purposes not related to those of the school such as storage;
- adaptive re-use of existing office accommodation and agency facilities.

Given the above, guidance for the location and characteristics of additional office accommodation and agency facilities is an essential component of the HAHS Master Plan.

The Board only supports the location of activities that will bring benefits to the school such as activities which are synergistic with agricultural and related education or provide a substantial income stream for the School’s business enterprises. Ideally the sites which are currently occupied by other Government agencies within the HAHS
precinct ought to in the long term be vacated to afford greater use of the site for school activities.

**Services**

Developments at HAHS will require planned upgrade and expansion of services including:

- security;
- electricity;
- water;
- gas;
- sewerage;
- data and communications.

It should be noted that the site's electrical supply is currently at capacity. The services for the site are being addressed by the School and the Department.

In the longer term the site could be placed under pressure for service installations with a significant visual impact such as phone towers and solar panel farms. These present both a problem and an opportunity, particularly if they can provide a source of ongoing income.

**Transport, access and parking**

The development of road access and parking will generally be planned in association with other developments. Listed below are a series of medium to longer term possibilities to be covered by the Master Plan:

- increased car parking for the day school;
- increased parking for residential including short-stay use;
- increased parking for adult use of sporting, cultural and education facilities;
- increased parking for the farm precinct and bus turning bays;
- audit and plan for heavy vehicle access, including materials delivery and bus turning areas in various precincts including the farm education precinct;
- an audit of disability access and development of a disability access plan;
- all-weather coach access to key farm features;
- pedestrian access to the site from outside, to cope with increased traffic due to developments surrounding the site, particularly the commissioning of the south west rail link and the associated increase in vehicle activity in the area;
- pedestrian access within the site, and pedestrian articulation between different site precincts. As the site usage by adults expands for education, sporting and cultural purposes, the site will come under pressure for upgraded and new walkways and paths, including lighting and cover from weather.
Map 4: Farm education precinct
Map 5: HAHS land details (from appendix 6A of the Peters Report)

Overall Area 159.2ha
(By Ded'n)

[Diagram showing land details with notes and measurements]

NOTE: CAMPBELLTOWN COUNCIL ADVISED THAT HEREIN LANDS ARE FLOOD-AFFECTED BUT NO FORMAL STUDIES HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN.
Issues associated with land acquisition and sale

Transport Construction Authority (TCA) is currently leasing lot 4 from the Office of Strategic Lands (OSL) for the construction of the south west rail link.

It is intended for some or all of the residual land following the construction of the railway line to come to the School. The northern section will augment with the existing land but there maybe access issues to the southern land.

The Board is of the understanding that none of this land will be officially available to the School until 2016.

The Peters Report indicated that there were opportunities to sell some of the School’s land to fund the upgrading of the farm and residential facilities but there ought not to be a net loss of land from the school farm.

Lot 4 is the key to increasing the size of the school farm so that other land can be sold. The problem rests with the timing of when the residual of lot 4 will be available to formally come part of the school farm.

Lot 5 has been identified as the most suitable parcel of land to sell enabling funds to redevelop the farm and residential facilities. Access to this land for residential or other development has not been resolved.

Council has approved the TCA application the use of a private road (Macquarie Links Drive, owned by Macquarie links Golf course) by TCA contractors during the three year development of the south west rail link.

DEC Property Management are applying to the Roads and Maritime Services requesting that the fourth leg of intersection at Beech Rd remain active after 2016.

DEC Property Management are currently trying to secure the lease of lot 4 (as set out in the Peter’s Inquiry recommendations) prior to the preparation of contracts for the sale of lot 5.

DEC Property Management have indicated that they are unable to proceed to the sale of Lot 5 until such time as the lease of Lot 4 has been secured in accordance with the Peter’s Inquiry recommendations.
Appendices

History of HAHS and recent developments

The name “Hurlstone” dates back to old English, literally meaning a place surrounded or protected by hurdles, a fence of wooden stakes. Such a name would seem more than appropriate for a high school whose purpose is the teaching of agriculture.

Hurlstone has been a name associated with education in Australia since 1878, when Mr John Kinloch opened the Hurlstone School and College at Ashfield. Kinloch, who was one of the University of Sydney’s first students, was the only surviving child of Mr John Kinloch and his wife Helen Hurlstone. They had immigrated to New South Wales when John Jnr was four years of age. The Kinlochs made every sacrifice to educate their son, his mother having died of influenza, as he was commencing university. It was with this background, that John Jnr took his mother’s maiden name for the school he was founding. In a very short time, the school ran into financial problems and with government involvement, the land and buildings became the Hurlstone Training College for female teachers. With the creation of a new teacher’s college within the University, Hurlstone was again redirected and the Hurlstone Agricultural Continuation School came into being in 1907.

The school opened in April, 1907 at Summer Hill, with an enrolment of 7. This number reached 28 by the end of the year. In 1908 attendance was 56, 38 being residents. The school was much smaller than it is to-day(sic.), comprising 27 acres with buildings & classrooms. The dining hall provided seating for 50 and the dormitories accommodation for 38. In the early days of its existence, under the guidance of its first headmaster, F. McMullen, M.A., the school was mainly vocational; the lads were trained for work on the land. By 1911, a change in outlook took place with greater stress being placed on the cultural subjects and the Continuation School became an Agricultural High School.

The present school was established by transferring from the old site (now occupied by Trinity Grammar School) to Glenfield in 1926. The new site meant better planning and the school now stands in 250 acres of pleasantly undulating country.

During the years which have passed since Hurlstonian diggers went to war, the school has undergone many changes. Numerous building programs have added dormitories, a new dining hall and many new teaching amenities to the school’s environment.

However, perhaps the most momentous change came in 1978, when Hurlstone’s boys were joined by female counterparts. Hurlstone now finds itself in the unique situation of being a government run selective, co-educational, agricultural, boarding high school.

The school’s agricultural plots have changed with the addition of the Department of Agriculture’s land and buildings (only metres north of the foundation site) becoming Hurlstone’s in 1991. In exchange, the school’s southern paddocks were sold for redevelopment.

Agriculture is still an important impetus at the school and the subject is now compulsory until Year 12 (primary industries is an alternative in years 11 and 12). Indeed, many students still go on to veterinary, animal and agricultural based tertiary study and/or employment. The results the school achieves in the HSC, consistently rank it as one of the top government schools in NSW.
The Peter's inquiry (released Apr 2010) has underpinned many of the improvements this year. In its implementation, senior staff have demonstrated that they have the capacity to implement change and adapt strategic initiatives to address identified needs.

Our school improvement process is well established and based on an annual cycle of planning, development, reflection and evaluation. This process has enabled us to build the school's capacity to be a more effective learning environment.

School planning has focussed on ambitious learning outcomes for our students. Our vision has sought high aspirations and a relentless focus on achievement. The raising of standards, and concern for the welfare of all students, have inspired our sense of purpose. Huge improvements in technology, for example, have enriched teaching and supported learning across the curriculum.

Close, assured and confident working relationships inspire commitment at Hurlstone Agricultural High School. Extensive, targeted professional development has led to quality teaching strategies being embedded in our teaching and learning programs. Support from students and their parents contribute enormously to the success of our school.

To maximise the commercial and educational opportunities that exist on the farm and in the boarding facility; an Enterprise Development Manager (reporting to the Regional Director, South Western Sydney Region) was appointed at Hurlstone for an initial three year term with funding for this position coming from the DEC. This initial phase is to develop efficiency gains of more strategic management of the farm and boarding facilities. The intention to continue this position beyond the three year period will be determined upon the Inquiry findings being implemented and development of the Master plan to meet both educational and commercial goals.

To guide the work of the Enterprise Development Manager, an Advisory Board has been established to provide advice to the school concerning developments and trends in agriculture and agricultural education; and ensure a synergy exists between the day school, the residential and the farm. The Advisory Board has members appointed by the Director-General of Education and Training and reports to the Director-General via the Regional Director, South Western Sydney Region.

Hurlstone Agricultural High School has an exciting future as a regional education and training centre. However, to realise this future potential, significant capital investment and changes to the management and strategic direction of the school farm and boarding facilities will be required.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 2009</td>
<td>State Government announces sale of land at Hurlstone</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>State Government announces inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>State Government announces Inquiry findings incl Advisory Board member recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2010</td>
<td>Inaugural Advisory Board meeting</td>
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<td>September 2010</td>
<td>Enterprise Development Manager appointed</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2012</td>
<td>Lot 22 funds transfer to HAHS</td>
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<td>June 2012</td>
<td>Advisory Board Master Plan released</td>
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Peters Report – executive summary and recommendations

October 2009
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

George Bernard Shaw wrote “there is no love sincerer than the love of food” (Man and Superman (1903) Act 1) and in a busy world we sometimes forget that with no food we have no life.

According to the United Nations (General Assembly GA/EF/3242), world food production will face extraordinary challenges with an expected demand of current food consumption to be doubled by 2050. Australia currently produces enough food for our own domestic consumption and exports food to feed a further 40 million people. If we want to be part of the solution to the forecast 2050 world food shortage we will need highly educated people trained in vocations that focus on ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ to meet the demands of the future.

As a society, we are becoming more conscious of improving our health and the health of our environment. To this end, we acknowledge the importance of healthy food and have a greater expectation that this food should be produced sustainably with minimal impact on the environment – ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’.

Hurlstone Agricultural High School was established over 100 years ago to assist in the development of the agricultural resources in New South Wales. The original objective of the institution was to “enable more people to fit themselves for the agricultural life” (John D Spencer, Principals and Principles in Agricultural Education—2000). In 2009, this original intent appears to have been somewhat lost. The school now appears to focus more on high academic achievement from its selective student cohort than on delivering broadly based agricultural education. An academically selective cohort and a commitment to agricultural education are, however, not necessarily mutually exclusive. In the current climate it is more important than ever that we attract the best and brightest students to the agricultural sector to address the global issues of food security, climate change and their impact on environmental health.

In particular, there are four powerful issues that reinforce the need for an institution in the Sydney basin that increases student engagement and participation in agricultural pursuits:

- The need for world food production to double as per the United Nations prediction by 2050 when the world population is estimated to reach 9 billion. Australia has a major role to play, not only in domestic production and export, but in assisting other countries to optimise their own production.
- The annual shortfall of 800 undergraduate students entering agriculture related courses in the tertiary education sector as recognised by the Australian Council of Deans of Agriculture. This will impact on the very professions which develop the science, technology and management strategies to fulfil world food needs.
- The rapid onset of climate change which requires our brightest and best to find ways of increasing food production while protecting our environment.
- A fundamental rethink on how the industry encourages young Australians to choose agriculture as a vocation, ensuring the farm dependent economy remains one of Australia’s fundamental economic drivers. The three components of the farm dependent economy, namely farm supply, farm production and post farm gate activity contribute about $80 billion per annum to the Australian economy, approximately $20 billion more than the mining industry.
Australia needs to support a vibrant sustainable farm sector so we can continue to be self-sufficient, and discover new and innovative practices in our food and fibre production while maintaining rural centres.

Hurlstone has a very strong history and has been one of the finest institutions with a number of its former students reaching prominent positions in agriculture related fields. Unfortunately, the school cannot rest on its past achievements and must go through a process of renewal to ensure it maintains its relevance into the 21st century.

In undertaking this Inquiry, the Chair found himself having to consider and report on matters beyond the Terms of Reference, in order to provide a more complete picture of the current situation.

The Chair sought opinions from all major stakeholders. He was struck by the level of interest and difference of opinion expressed in meetings, discussions and submissions. Central to these deliberations was a commitment by all to achieving a positive outcome for the school. Opinion on how this could be achieved was, however, diverse.

The site on which Hurlstone sits is complex. Apart from Hurlstone Agricultural High School with its associated farm and boarding facilities, the site also houses three Schools for Specific Purposes, and administration offices for the NSW Department of Education and Training.

The current farm and hostel facilities at Hurlstone are tired and outdated. The school presents a picture of best practice 1940’s agriculture and clearly would inspire few to enter the industry. Hurlstone students are academically gifted and require exposure to the excitement of using world’s best high tech facilities if we are to engage them in the future of food production and associated industries.

The past few years have seen changes in the student catchment of Hurlstone Agricultural High School. The number of rural students seeking admission has been declining for a variety reasons. There has also been a decline in the number of students electing to study Agriculture for their HSC. Academic achievement remains high with the majority of students progressing to tertiary studies. University offers indicate a diverse range of post secondary interests amongst the student body with only a limited number choosing to pursue agriculture. Objective and reliable data that provides further insight on the educational and career outcomes of former Hurlstone students appears unavailable. As a consequence, it is difficult to quantify the extent to which the facilities alone equip Hurlstone’s students for their chosen educational and career paths.

Agriculture as an industry is undergoing rapid and constant change. Within this context, it is difficult to predict the exact future skills and knowledge demands that will be required by industry. Advances in technology are currently driving significant change and are an essential element in finding solutions for the future. The current Agriculture syllabus appears sufficiently broad, allowing it to address current and emerging issues.

The Inquiry was firmly of the view that industry must become a major player in agricultural education. Changes, in particular the adoption of new technologies within the sector, could prove difficult for schools to keep pace with, and in the absence of guidance from those in the field, educators may be left behind industry best practice.
The following indicators have been identified as being at the core of best practice in agricultural education:

- The agriculture program meets the needs of students, community and industry
- Resources/equipment are up to date and meet syllabus requirements
- Strong local, community and industry support
- Incorporation of industry based sustainability practices within the program
- Flexibility of the program to adapt to changing circumstances
- Student access to facilities and resources beyond the school gate
- Opportunities for working “hands on” with animals, plants and equipment
- Program relates to local industry contexts and work opportunities
- Students are able to clearly see a viable pathway from school to university and/or industry.

Hurlstone’s future places great significance on its history and heritage. The local community places great significance on the green space that the school currently provides. While elements of history and heritage are important, and community access to green space should be enhanced, these factors alone must not inhibit the changes that need to be made for the successful renewal of Hurlstone.

Apart from being a selective high school, Hurlstone is also a specialist high school in the delivery of agricultural education. However, the current process of selecting students to enrol in Year 7 does not appear to place sufficient emphasis on any demonstrated interest or ability on the part of the individual student in terms of agriculture.

A greater number of country students must also be encouraged to apply for enrolment at Hurlstone, utilising a more suitable entrance criteria than the current selective high school test results. Boarding students must be provided with upgraded accommodation and facilities that are more in line with community and parental expectations.

If Hurlstone is truly committed to making a valuable contribution to the future of agriculture in NSW, it should give serious consideration to mandating agriculture or primary industries to the Higher School Certificate for all students.

Best practice in the delivery of agricultural education at Hurlstone in the 21st Century requires access to state of the art technology and purpose built facilities for its farm enterprises.

The Inquiry recommends a number of new facilities be built to support a range of enterprises allowing for the production, manufacture and sale of some products on site.

Best practice also requires that Hurlstone establish formal partnerships with industry and the tertiary sector to ensure student involvement in research and adoption of current industry standards.

To move into the future, a different governance model needs to implemented to develop and manage the Hurlstone farm and boarding facility so that it provides a resource for use by other students and community members.

The Inquiry recommends the appointment of a Commercial Manager to focus on refurbishing the boarding facilities, instigating new enterprises on the Hurlstone farm and establishing greater opportunities for access by the community and other Sydney students.
to the available resources. This position should report to the Regional Director, South Western Sydney Region.

The Inquiry also recommends the establishment of a high level advisory board, supported by the Commercial Manager. An important strategic role of the advisory board will be to identify opportunities for additional revenue raising, and for other students in the Sydney basin to enjoy the facilities at Hurlstone. Another important task will be to promote pathways for students entering Year 7 so that they can see a clear way to enter a vocation related to ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’. This will require strong networks with tertiary institutions and industry.

The advisory board must have representation from the university sector, tertiary training bodies, Department of Education and Training, Department of Industry and Infrastructure, and, importantly, industry. The advisory board must also identify opportunities for bolstering the knowledge base of networks for careers advisors, ensuring they are aware of vocational opportunities in relation to the delivery of ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’. The advisory board should provide industry spokespersons to address students highlighting career prospects.

One of the biggest challenges faced by Hurlstone is overcoming the negative perceptions regarding agriculture itself. As stated earlier, the current perception of agricultural production is poor in the eyes of the wider community. The taking of water to grow food and fibre and the use of fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides is seen as impacting negatively on the production of healthy food while sustaining a healthy environment. The farming community seems unable to change this perception, and has failed to convince the community that sustainable food production is possible while protecting the environment. This is becoming an increasingly important issue nationally and internationally and institutions such as Hurlstone Agricultural High School are integral to securing a more positive future.

Rather than thinking of “agriculture” we need people thinking in terms of ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ as a positive way of looking at food and fibre production in the 21st century. Educational delivery in the context of ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ is a way of overcoming this challenge and provides an opportunity for the school to refocus on its core business of enabling more of our people to “fit themselves for the agricultural life”. The amount of public capital invested in land at Hurlstone should require an expectation that at least 50% of students will enter professions related to ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’.

To achieve the funds required for investment in the future of Hurlstone, the Chair recommends the sale of a small parcel of land from the current holding which should raise an estimated $15million of the capital that is required for reinvestment. This will reconfigure Hurlstone Agricultural High School as Sydney’s ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ Education and Training Centre.

The Inquiry Chair is confident that with a capital injection and consequent changes, Hurlstone will deliver on the Government’s strategies as spelled out in the State Plan, and meet the important challenges of food production into the 21st century.
7.1 INQUIRY FINDINGS

The Inquiry Chair believes that Hurlstone Agricultural High School has an exciting future as Sydney’s ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ Education and Training Centre. However, to realise this future potential, significant capital investment and changes to the management and strategic direction of the school farm and boarding facilities will be required.

If Hurlstone continues on its current trajectory with diminishing numbers of regional students and decreasing numbers of students studying Agriculture and/or Primary Industries to the HSC, retaining the current land holding will become more difficult to justify and in the future could lead to the sale of all land.

Hurlstone needs to create a more vibrant relationship with contemporary thinking. A change in strategic focus to one which centers on ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ should engender a greater connection with students who live in the metropolitan area and hopefully excite them to choose a career in an agriculture related industry. The flow-on effects of this new dynamic have the potential to provide increased interest in sponsorship by industry, a greater participation by tertiary institutions and a greater involvement of the community of South Western Sydney.

The majority (89%) of students who study agriculture related subjects in NSW schools do so on less than 10 hectares of land, albeit those in country locations can often access nearby farms. Hurlstone educates approximately 730 students annually in agricultural subjects. The sheer volume of classes alone requires access to a greater amount of land than is currently available to the majority of schools.

The report prepared by Mr Guest confirms that the delivery of Agriculture and Primary Industries subjects can be achieved successfully at schools with access to only small parcels of land. Without evidence to the contrary, the Chair is persuaded that sufficient information exists to prove that access to a relatively large amount of land such as that available at Hurlstone, advantages the Hurlstone students and aids in their academic and personal development.

Holistic development is an attribute the tertiary and industry sectors have indicated as being integral in securing the successful future of agriculture. The “advantage” that Hurlstone provides – i.e. access to a relatively large amount of land on the urban fringe, and an academically gifted student body - should be exploited to a far greater degree than has been the case to date. This should ensure the school is able to justify retention of such a high value (and highly valued) land resource into the future.

TERM OF REFERENCE 7

By 16 October 2009, report the Inquiry’s findings on the above matters and make recommendations to the Minister as to:

a) what new facilities should be constructed at Hurlstone Agricultural High School, having regard to the source of funds for this work (see part (b) below).

b) which part or parts, if any, of the current site of Hurlstone Agricultural High School should be sold, having regard to the uses to which the proceeds of any sale will be put (see part (a) above).
The school must reinvent itself and make ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ the focus of the whole school curriculum using the farm to assist with educational delivery across all subject areas. To this end, the Inquiry has determined that Agriculture and/or Primary Industries should be made mandatory subjects to the HSC at Hurlstone.

The Chair believes the school is not currently delivering “best practice” due to its outdated facilities, its lack of a clear direction for the future and its involvement in farming methods and/or enterprises that are no longer relevant in the 21st century. Exciting highly talented students into agricultural related tertiary study and vocations requires that much more thought be given to the way in which the school opens itself up to change and innovation, and how it can become more accessible to its surrounding community as well as the broader school community.

The Inquiry also recognises the school’s strong attachment to its heritage, history and proud traditions. While these are certainly important, it is equally important to ensure these emotional connections, dear to many of the Alumni’s hearts, do not restrict Hurlstone’s capacity to be innovative and progressive and increase its ability to become more self sustaining.

The Inquiry acknowledges that the issue of “green space” is a major concern to the school’s surrounding community. This is somewhat understandable considering the amount of urban development that has encroached on the area between Liverpool and Campbelltown Local Government Areas. To avoid the disruption of further attempts by Government to sell land at Hurlstone, the Inquiry believes it is important to support the heritage listing of the school following implementation of the Inquiry’s recommendations, should such listing be supported by the relevant agencies.

The need for capital injection to revitalise and reinvigorate one of Sydney’s key learning centres for the benefit of current and future students at Hurlstone and the agribusiness sector did, however, weigh heavily on the Chair’s mind in considering options to generate the income required to drive such change.

If successful, the current campaign to stop the sale of land at Hurlstone may well deliver an eventual sale of all the land at some point, particularly if agricultural studies become completely irrelevant to metropolitan students.

7.1.1 Policy Statement

In 2000 John D Spencer opined in his book *Principals and Principles in Agricultural Education* that there was a deficiency of clear policy within the Department of Education and Training regarding the operation and management of the agriculture high schools, and in particular those that operate a farm and provide boarding facilities.

Spencer wrote

“Of all the environmental pressures that operated against the principals’ effective administration, the bureaucracy accounted for most. This is not to suggest, as some interviewees intimated, that the Department’s attitude to the agricultural high school was in any way malevolent. Rather, it had great difficulty in accommodating them, no matter how unique, within the parameters of its overall school’s administration. Nevertheless, the evidence is clear that the Department never seriously attempted to
understand what made those institutions unique. It failed to appreciate that their effective operation required a special relationship, distinct from that extended to the comprehensive day high schools – a matter of negligence rather than malevolence. Its attention to them was perceived, at the work-face, as being detached and mechanical, decision being based upon precedent and associated cumulative regulation formulated for the day high schools. Only crisis (and sometimes political influence) in individual institutions elicited anything more than routine attention.”

Spencer goes on to say

“There is no extant evidence of any Departmental process of either planned development or crisis prevention in the total history of the three institutions…..

Consequently, in the absence of any officially stated Departmental policy, the bureaucracy dealt with each institution individually (never as a group) on an ad hoc basis through its inspectors, few of whom could claim personal knowledge of, or experience in the internal administration of those institutions. Even the eventual appointment of ex-principals to the inspectorate made no observable gains towards formalising Departmental policy specific to the agricultural high schools.

It is not surprising therefore that the total data relative to the bureaucracy’s administration of those institutions were dissipated throughout a large number of its departments and divisions, with no mechanism to provide a concentrated information base to which Principals or any other officer could directly refer, or from which responsible decisions could be made and expedited. Nor was there any provision by which the interests of the agricultural high schools and their clientele (actual and potential) could be legitimately and forcefully represented at the policy-making level of the Department.”

The Chair has formed the view that this situation has changed little over the past decade and the Department of Education and Training does not currently have sufficient structures in place to provide clear guidance to the three residential agricultural high schools in relation to their farms and boarding facilities.

This has been an issue at Hurlstone which has been through many departmental “reviews” over recent years. A new governance model should be piloted to manage the Hurlstone site, guided by a high level advisory group.

7.2 INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS (a):

7.2.1 Primary Recommendations

With regard to recommendations, the Inquiry’s response to part (a) of this Term of Reference is as follows:

A major rebuilding program is required to provide purpose built state of the art facilities to support enterprise production and educational delivery. To this end, it is recommended
that the following facilities, equipment, resources and services be developed to
reinvigorate and refocus the Hurlstone farm (costs are indicative estimates only):

- Hydroponics/aquaponics glasshouse facility– 4000square metre
temperature controlled, closed water. $1,800,000
- Aquaculture – capacity for 75 kilo’s fish per week $1,000,000
- Sub surface irrigation – area of 20 hectares $100,000
- Two new bores $100,000
- Netted orchard/vineyard/vegetables- 4 hectares $240,000
- Voluntary dairy $500,000
- Dairy processing facility - pasteuriser, cheese vats, yoghurt $300,000
- Precision livestock management system $200,000
- State of the art machinery (eg satellite guided tractor, computer
regulated spray equipment) $600,000
- Purpose built piggery $300,000
- Purpose built poultry shed $200,000
- Effluent management system $200,000
- Silo and fodder storage $250,000
- Maintenance workshop and repair equipment $300,000
- Calf Shed and show ring $200,000
- Pasture renovation and fertiliser $100,000
- Two machinery storage sheds $300,000
- Fences $20,000
- Environmental Education Centre $400,000
- Site preparation and design etc $200,000
- Farm classroom $300,000
- Farm Office $200,000
- Native animal centre $100,000
- Turf farm $50,000
- Native plant centre $150,000
- GIS and GPS map technology $50,000
- Electronic weather station $20,000
- Veris crop yield mapping system $80,000
- Farm software packages $20,000
- Soil sampling and analyses $20,000
- Plant tissue analyses $20,000
- Renewable energy project $100,000
- Solar energy projects $50,000
- Landscape farm environs $100,000
- Consultancy advice Aquaculture/dairy etc $100,000

To maximise the potential of the boarding facilities through improved functionality and
amenity, it is recommended:

- Dormitory Block A no longer be used as a dormitory and is converted
into recreation and study facilities $1,100,000
- Dormitory Block B be renovated to improve amenity and reconfigured
to house a maximum of 60 students in single or, at most, twin rooms $910,000
- Dormitory Block C be renovated to improve amenity and reconfigured
to house a maximum of 60 students in single or, at most, twin rooms $685,000
- Dormitory block E be reconfigured to house a maximum of 50 students
to improve amenity and overcome what appears to be a less than optimal arrangement of rooms brought about by successive extensions to the original structure $1,566,000
- Dormitory Block N be renovated to improve amenity $167,000
- Dormitory Block Z be renovated to improve amenity $52,000
- Kitchen and dining facilities be upgraded $600,000

The total investment in the facilities and resources at Hurlstone Agricultural High School is approximately $13,750,000.

At the conclusion of the rebuilding program, it is recommended that current facilities that are not purpose built, not state of the art or no longer required for the enterprises operating on the farm, be removed.

To enhance water security and use on the farm, it is recommended that the Mirvac proposal concerning storm water detention from surrounding developments be accepted and finalised and the proceeds used for:

- Development of a wetlands area on the site
- Rain water harvesting from buildings and paved surfaces across the site to enhance water security.

7.2.2 Further Recommendations

Investing in new farm and refurbished boarding facilities at Hurlstone is just part of the solution to the problems at Hurlstone. To maximise the benefits of any reinvestment, the school will need to undergo a number of fundamental changes.

To ensure the school’s focus is on ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ it is recommended that:

- An entrance interview be part of the selection process for admission to Hurlstone in order to identify students who demonstrate a passion for a career related to the delivery of ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’
- A more liberal academic entrance score be set for regional students
- Agriculture and/or Primary Industries be made mandatory to the HSC
- Educational delivery in all Key Learning Areas have a focus on ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’
- The school develop strong relationships with tertiary and research institutions
- The school develop strong relationships with industries relevant to its chosen enterprises.

To drive change in educational delivery that supports the school’s focus on ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’, it is recommended that management of the farm and boarding facilities no longer remain the responsibility of the school, but are considered resources and facilities of the South Western Sydney Region. This will allow the Principal to concentrate his efforts on the operation of the day school and such matters as

- Implementation of the mandatory study of Agriculture and/or Primary Industries to the HSC
- Acceleration of students who wish to undertake more than the minimum number of units towards their HSC
• Implementation of a ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ focus to all aspects of the curriculum delivered at Hurlstone
• Developing more flexible delivery methods that maximise the potential for students to access on and off site facilities
• Development of a whole of school strategic plan focused on delivering excellence in agricultural education that aligns with best practice models
• Development of a long term program of professional learning for all staff delivering Agriculture and Primary Industries that is of the highest quality and supports them in achieving best practice in delivery.
• Implementation of a career education program for parents and students that promotes the potentiality and benefits of agriculture related career opportunities
• Contributing to the application process for the establishment of a Trade Training Centre.

To maximise the commercial and educational opportunities that exist on the farm and in the boarding facility, it is recommended that by the end of 2009, or as soon as practicable, a Commercial Manager (reporting to the Regional Director, South Western Sydney Region) be appointed at Hurlstone for an initial three year term. Funding for this position should come from the efficiency gains of more strategic management of the farm and boarding facilities. Responsibilities for the appointee should include but not be limited to:

• Management of all activities on the farm and in the boarding facilities on behalf of the South Western Sydney Region
• Development of a three year Business Plan for the commercial operation of the Hurlstone farm and boarding facilities
• Development and implementation of a program of change and innovation that maximises the use of the land and boarding resources
• Development of the farm as a ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’ Education and Training Centre that provides an educational resource accessible to, and accessed by, schools from across the Sydney Basin
• Development of farm enterprises that support educational delivery, demonstrate best practice and have a value add component
• Development of a wetlands area on the site linked to the Mirvac proposal for storm water detention (includes finalisation of agreement with Mirvac)
• Establishment of an annexe of the Camden Park Environmental Centre and a possible Trade Training Centre on the site
• Development of commercial activities and arrangements that could generate income for the school
• Development and implementation of a range of activities that enhance community engagement with the school and the farm (eg monthly market days, provision of land for a community garden and the development of show gardens etc.)

To guide the work of the Commercial Manager, provide advice to the school concerning developments and trends in agriculture and agricultural education, and ensure a synergy exists between the day school, the hostel and the farm, it is recommended that by the end of 2009, or as soon as practicable, an Advisory Board be established. The Advisory Board should have members appointed by the Director-General of Education and Training and report to the Director-General via the Regional Director, South Western Sydney Region. Membership of the Advisory Board should include people of the highest calibre such as:

• Dr Richard Sheldrake, Director-General of Industry and Investment
• Professor James Pratley representing the Australian Council of Deans of Agriculture
Dr Cameron Archer, Principal of Tocal College
Mr Peter Corish, past President of the National Farmers Federation
Mr Charles Armstrong, President of NSW Farmers Association
Mr John Corbett, President of the Hurlstone Agricultural High School Council
Mr Ray Palmer, School Education Director
Mr John Norris, Principal of Hurlstone Agricultural High School

The role of the Advisory Board would be to provide strategic advice and direction on:

- appropriate farm enterprises for the future and improving their relative commercial opportunities based on activity in the Sydney basin
- increasing the number of boarding students
- scholarship opportunities for students
- greater connection with industry for sponsorship
- greater connection with the tertiary sector on research opportunities and possible bonds for students to go into agricultural related university degrees
- marketing and promotion
- generating sufficient interest in the use of the facility outside of normal school activity (e.g. agricultural camps or professional development courses delivered during the school vacations) on at least a cost recovery basis.

It is the opinion of the Chair that the Advisory Board should meet at least once per term and that the Commercial Manager undertake the role of Executive Officer on the Board.

To facilitate and strengthen the development of agricultural education in New South Wales, it is recommended that the role, membership and status of the State Agricultural Advisory Group be expanded to include

- Principals of the four agricultural high schools
- A senior Departmental representative
- A representative of the Australian Council of Deans of Agriculture
- A representative from the TAFE sector
- The Commercial Manager (Hurlstone)
- Industry representation
- A representative of the NSW Association of Agriculture Teachers

One of the key objectives of the State Agricultural Advisory Group should be to work with the Department of Education and Training to develop policies and procedures that define the purpose of the agricultural high schools and guide the operation of those with farms and boarding facilities.

7.3 INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS (b):

The proposed renewal of Hurlstone cannot occur without the injection of a significant amount of capital. There is no question in the Chair’s mind that the expenditure is justified to ensure there is an increase in students with an interest related to the school’s focus on ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’.

From its inception at Glenfield in 1927 until 1993 (67 Years), the school’s average land area has been approximately 135 hectares. Although 76 hectares were added from the
agricultural research station in 1993, a further 52.9 hectares were transferred to the Department of Planning leaving the current site at approximately 159 hectares.

The Hurlstone site has, for most of its life, only been approximately 135 hectares in area. Its current area of 159 hectares makes it now 25 hectares larger.

As the terms of reference only make available the option of generating funds by selling part of the Hurlstone site, the Inquiry recommends that:

- the Department of Education and Training secure a lease on Lot 4 DP845870 until such time as the construction of the planned rail line is commenced and negotiate a further long term lease on 30 hectares expected to be surplus to the Department of Planning’s requirements following completion of the rail line.

- once the above lease has been secured, the Department of Education and Training release for sale Lot 5 DP808118 (10.6 hectares currently valued at approximately $15 million) to generate sufficient capital to invest in the infrastructure and resources recommended by the Inquiry. This part of the current land holding is recommended for release as it contains limited encumbrances, will not interrupt the contiguous nature of the school site or affect the capacity of the school in delivering an education program focused on ‘Healthy Foods in Healthy Environments’. The importance of improving the current facility on this peri-urban site has, in the Chair’s view, outweighed the arguments presented for maintaining all the current green space.

- 100% of the capital raised by the sale of 10.6 hectares should be available for the development of facilities on the Hurlstone site for access by all South Western Sydney students.

- upon acceptance and implementation of its recommendations, the Inquiry strongly advocates that the State Government declare the Hurlstone site an area of state heritage significance to provide a level of comfort to the surrounding community that the remaining green space will be left in perpetuity.

With the sale of 10 hectares and access to an additional 30 hectares through a leasing arrangement with the Department of Planning, Hurlstone will increase the total land available for its use to 180 hectares – a net increase of 20 hectares.
Draft
Hurlstone Agricultural High School is unique as the only selective co-educational boarding high school in NSW. It is the state's oldest agricultural high school and combines traditional academic studies with the opportunity for students to relate their work to the key primary sector of agriculture. Of the total enrolment of 982 students, 52% are female with 12% representing boarding students. The 79.1% NESB students represent 53 language groups of which the largest are Vietnamese, Cantonese and Mandarin.

Students are selected for academic and agricultural excellence and are nurtured by quality teachers in a day and boarding school with a working farm. Experienced, dedicated and caring staff, maintain high standards of education through ongoing professional learning. They deliver award winning agricultural and multi disciplinary programs, partnering with local business and industry. Advanced teaching programs are designed for students selected with strong academic potential. Students also undertake studies through the Open High School and TAFE. The school is set in a stimulating agricultural environment, incorporating the latest technology. Developing partnerships with universities provide a broad range of resources and opportunities for students and teachers. The overwhelming majority of our students undertake university studies post HSC.

Well being programs foster community responsibility, build resilience and promote social inclusion through extra-curricular activities which enhance student development and leadership. Regular and open communication between school and home are an imperative link in building community.

### SCHOOL IDENTIFIED PRIORITY AREA/S

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<th>Intended Outcome/S</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Curriculum and assessment</td>
<td>1.1 Implementation of the Australian Curriculum to maintain a broad, relevant and inclusive curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student engagement &amp; attainment</td>
<td>1.2 Rich, valid assessment practices are embedded in all teaching and learning programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leadership and management</td>
<td>2.1 HAHS is the preferred choice for students in SW Sydney seeking selective school enrolment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 Improved communication between primary feeders, parents and the school</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2.3 Improved learning outcomes for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Increased leadership capacity of teachers and students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TARGET/S

1. At least 60% of teachers undertake professional learning to improve the quality of assessment and feedback practice.
2. At least 12 students engaged in negotiated independent learning plans per term per year.
3. 100% of staff trained in the Leadership Capabilities Framework.
4. 100% of SRC trained in meeting procedures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>Reform</th>
<th>FUNDING SOURCE/BUDGET</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review current curriculum (in terms of breadth &amp; relevance) in Years 7-10 &amp; 11-12 through survey of all staff, 50% students and 20% parents of each year.</td>
<td>Review completed and results analysed; stakeholders informed. The curriculum and assessment structure meets the needs of the school.</td>
<td>2012 x</td>
<td>2013 (9-12) x</td>
<td>2014 (7-8) x</td>
<td>Curriculum Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Investigate curriculum structures and assessment practices in other schools (selective and comprehensive).</td>
<td>Decisions made within school about what type of data/information is required. Data utilised to inform curriculum change.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Review report structure Years 7-12 through survey of all staff, 50% students and 20% parents of each year.</td>
<td>The reporting structure meets the needs of the school.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provide professional learning opportunities for KLAs to develop quality assessment tasks.</td>
<td>At least 60% of teachers undertake professional learning that focuses on developing rigorous, valid assessment instruments.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Professional Learning Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teachers trained in providing quality feedback to improve student outcomes.</td>
<td>Evidence through peer review and BOS review, and comparison with other schools of quality, valid assessment tasks to assess student learning. Faculty assessment guidelines include principles of quality, valid assessment tasks. Evidence of quality assessment tasks developed that allow for a range of marks to be attained. Evidence of innovation and feedback practices shared amongst staff.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>HTs KLAs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide professional learning opportunities through SDD and targeted faculty learning sessions, faculty-based school networks and in-services to explore effective application of data analysis.</td>
<td>100% of staff analyse relevant data (RAP, Smart Data, NAPLAN results) and school survey results to inform teaching and learning practices. At least 5% decrease shown in Bands 1-4 in Stage 4 and 5 results.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Professional Learning Committee and HTs KLAs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SCHOOL IDENTIFIED PRIORITY - Student Engagement and Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>TARGETS</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. HAHS is the preferred choice for students in SW Sydney seeking selective school enrolment. 2. Improved communication between parents and school. 3. Improved learning outcomes for student.</td>
<td>To improve student learning outcomes through targeted transition, communication and independent learning strategies: 1. Build and expand deeper links with 100% of OC’s in primary feeders including rural areas. 2. 10% increase in parents accessing school website as a key tool of communication annually. 3. At least 12 students engaged in negotiated independent learning plans per term per year. 4. 100% of KLA programs contain explicit skills-based teaching strategies by 2014.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Develop teacher knowledge of Stage 3 &amp; 4 students.</td>
<td>Evidence of shared learning and knowledge between HAHS staff and feeder primary schools including a “Chalkie Change” and HAHS farm visits.</td>
<td>2012 x 2013 x 2014 x</td>
<td>Transition Coordinator</td>
<td>Transition Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Enhance communication with parents.</td>
<td>At least 70% of parents surveyed rate satisfaction with Year 7 transition program. At least 10% increase: in numbers of parents attending PT nights and orientation day; P&amp;C involvement each year. 10% annual increase in parents accessing school web site to register for school newsletter and as a tool of communication. Key documents translated and available on web site. Increased use of translator service. Mothers’ Club created.</td>
<td>2012 x 2013 x 2014 x</td>
<td>Transition Coordinator, HTA, P&amp;C Executive Website Coordinator</td>
<td>Transition Budget</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Develop Individual Learning Plans to support targeted students.</td>
<td>Each Assistant Year Adviser negotiates a minimum of 2 Independent Learning Plans (ILPs) per term for targeted students. ILPs negotiated with 100% of Aboriginal students.</td>
<td>2012 x 2013 x 2014 x</td>
<td>Ass Year Advisers, Supervisor of Girls, ALO</td>
<td>Welfare Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. An Independent Learning Centre created to support extension projects for gifted students.</td>
<td>The Independent Learning Centre supports extension of gifted students undertaking individual/group research projects for all Stage 4 and 5 courses.</td>
<td>2012 x 2013 x 2014 x</td>
<td>HT T&amp;L, HT Secondary Studies, HTs KLAs</td>
<td>Welfare Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Develop student mentoring and collaborative learning programs.</td>
<td>Existence of mentoring programs for Years 7-12. 100% of KLAS include a teaching and learning program developed by students.</td>
<td>2012 x 2013 x 2014 x</td>
<td>All HTs, Teachers Students</td>
<td>Welfare Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Develop learning programs negotiated with students.</td>
<td>Collate student evaluation of teaching and learning programs through moderated groups.</td>
<td>2012 x 2013 x 2014 x</td>
<td>All HTs, Students</td>
<td>Welfare Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Develop whole school mapping of curriculum across KLAs with reference to skills and content taught.</td>
<td>100% of KLA programs contain explicit skills based teaching strategies. Students evaluate teaching and learning programs in all KLAs and feedback informs programs.</td>
<td>2012 x 2013 x 2014 x</td>
<td>HTs KLAs, Teachers Students, HTs KLAs</td>
<td>Welfare Budget</td>
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</tbody>
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### SCHOOL IDENTIFIED PRIORITY – Leadership and Management

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1. Increased leadership capacity of teachers and students</td>
<td>To develop the leadership capacity of teachers and students:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | 1. 100% of staff trained in the *Leadership Capabilities Framework*.  
2. 50% of staff accepting new roles of responsibility.  
3. 100% of SRC trained in meeting procedures. |

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| 1. Teachers trained in the understanding and implementation of the *Leadership Capabilities Framework*. | 20% of staff participating in leadership-based professional learning.  
Executive members participating in at least one leadership-based professional learning course.  
100% of staff trained in the *Leadership Capabilities Framework*.  
Staff trained in meeting procedures. | 2012: x  2013: x  2014: x | Professional Learning Committee  
All KLAS  
Teachers | End of each year | Professional Learning Budget |
| 2. Teachers develop Professional Learning Plans (PLPs) that support career development. | 50% of staff accepting new roles of responsibility.  
Participative collaborative decision-making modelled in all committees and teams.  
100% of staff have one leadership role in the school with a mentor.  
10% of teachers participate in the Hoxton SEG Instructional Rounds program each year. | 2012: x  2013: x  2014: x | Professional Learning Committee  
All Committees | End of each year | Professional Learning Budget |
| 3. Support and assist experienced staff to gain professional accomplishment accreditation. | Increase in staff attending professional development courses.  
Provide relevant teacher identified professional development activities. | 2012: x  2013: x  2014: x | Professional Learning Committee  
All KLAS  
Teachers | End of each year | Professional Learning Budget |
| 4. A variety of relevant data is used for effective decision making. | Analysis and application of academic, welfare, financial and co-curricular data in school planning.  
Data provided to staff for analysis and use in decision-making. | 2012: x  2013: x  2014: x | All Committees  
All KLAS  
Teachers | End of each year | Professional Learning Budget |
| 5. Incorporation of alumni, parents and community representatives as leadership resources. | Evidence of alumni, parents and community involved in both staff and student leadership initiatives. | 2012: x  2013: x  2014: x | All Committees  
All KLAS | End of each year | P&C Budget |
| 6. Provide a range of student leadership initiatives and opportunities in extra-curricular programs. | Increased numbers of students participating in leadership opportunities.  
Diverse opportunities for student leadership training and forums including SRC, prefects and volunteering initiatives.  
SRC representatives included in school committees and trained in meeting procedures. | 2012: x  2013: x | Welfare Committee  
SRC  
Prefects  
Year Advisors  
Senior Executive  
HT Secondary Studies  
SRC Supervisor  
Prefect Supervisor | End of each year | Professional Learning Budget |
Feedback sheet
Please record your feedback on this page or by email or other means and return by Friday 10 August to:
Hurlstone Enterprise Advisory Board C/- Ms Danielle Krix, HAHS, Glenfield NSW 2167.
Email: Danielle.Krix@det.nsw.edu.au

Name: ..........................................................................................
Address: ......................................................................................
Contact details: ...........................................................................

Your comments on the draft Master Plan

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