



31st March 2023

The Honourable Grace Grace MP  
Minister for Education  
[education@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:education@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

cc: Mr Michael De'Ath  
Director-General Department of Education  
[Correspondence.DETE@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:Correspondence.DETE@qed.qld.gov.au)

Dear Minister Grace,

**RE: Relocation of East Brisbane State School**

The Queensland Chapter of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) appreciates the chance to review and comment on the proposed relocation of the East Brisbane State School with the 'Have your say' survey that is currently being undertaken. We have taken this opportunity to provide additional comments and offer a different perspective in relation to the East Brisbane State School campus.

AILA supports the Queensland Government's plans to deliver a climate-positive summer Olympics and applauds the vision for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games to leave a legacy. We believe that leaving a legacy will unite communities and foster long-term benefits. But it is important to hold all impacts of the Olympic Games to account and ensure all actions are in keeping with these visions.

AILA is concerned that the proposal to relocate East Brisbane State School due to the Gabba Stadium reconstruction may have serious long-term consequences for the community, including negative implications for access to community facilities near Brisbane's CBD.

Children and young people, aged birth to 18, are a vulnerable and marginalised segment of the urban population, prone to having their needs and considerations overlooked by adult agendas and priorities. The way cities are planned and developed should prioritise the needs of this segment of the population and involve them in urban development planning and design processes whenever possible.

**AILA's position is that walkable communities must be supported at all levels of development within the urban landscape, therefore our objections to the proposal are centred on the following related principles:**

1. Our cities need to support children and young people's development, health, and wellbeing, provide enjoyment and learning within safe, comfortable environments to foster a love and care of built and natural environments. While parks, playgrounds, skate parks, and sporting facilities are often the first things that come to mind when planning for children and youth, the location of schools that serve nearby communities is critical. Walkable access to these educational facilities should be prioritised to encourage active transportation options rather than reliance on vehicles.
2. Taking a primary school out of a walkable catchment area does not provide an improved or even adequate community facility. It puts more strain on the car-based transportation network, reduces the effectiveness of healthy transportation options, and pushes families out of inner-city living/working areas.
3. We believe that none of the three options presented to the community for the relocation of East Brisbane State School are in the best interests of the community. This is a serious issue, and we believe that another solution should be sought that either keeps the school in its current location or find another location within the walkable catchment of Kangaroo Point, East Brisbane, and Woollongabba.

4. Australian cities are car dominated and low in density with close to the world's highest per capita carbon footprint. Cycling, walking and use of public transport will become increasingly important factors in moving towards greater sustainability and liveability of Australian towns and cities. The key to improved health and reducing car use in cities is to develop fully off-road cycle infrastructure, streets that encourage walking, and efficient public transport. The relocation of East Brisbane State School ignores the existing health benefits provided to residents in the catchment area, which have been in place since 1899, by providing a walkable and active transportation option to receive their education.
5. Re-use, not re-build. To be able to achieve a Climate Positive Olympics, it is critical to re-use as many facilities as possible. Rebuilding East Brisbane State School in another location (wherever that may be) goes against this prerogative. All levels of government have a responsibility towards lower carbon emissions and sustainability for future generations.
6. In a climate where people are struggling with the cost of living, and rising inflation rates, the cost of rebuilding a new school on top of the \$2.7 billion stadium cost, will have a lasting negative economic impact on Queenslanders. And on a micro-scale, local families will incur increased costs every single day to get their children to a non-local school.
7. East Brisbane State School was constructed in 1899 and is on the Queensland Heritage Register as one of the first state schools in Brisbane. The whole school site was listed by the Queensland Heritage Council in 1994, with some parts – the main red-brick rooms and halls and mature fig trees – considered highly significant. The context of this site being a school should not be lost if any other option is available.
8. The proposed use of Raymond Park as a warm-up facility also highlights the diminishment of available green spaces for this inner-city location. As density increases, the importance of green spaces increases dramatically. As private residences' lack larger spaces in their backyards, this increases the demand for high quality public and community spaces. These green spaces should not be given up so easily.

## Alternatives

As professional designers, we believe there is a fantastic opportunity to create an international design competition process for the stadium, with the option of looking at alternatives that can keep East Brisbane State School open, as well as alternative opportunities for creating a warmup facility in a better location.

While the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games provide a unique opportunity for Brisbane and an opportunity to create a legacy for our city and state, we believe that such a large project as the rebuilding of a stadium that will have long-term implications for our children's future requires careful consideration.

We recommend that the Department of Education reject the proposed options in favour of a more thorough and appropriate assessment of the long-term effects on the community, potentially with more considered precinct master planning of the newly extended PDA around the Gabba.

We would welcome any further opportunities to discuss this project with the Department of Education Team. Please contact Melanie West, AILA Queensland Chapter Manager on 0417 666 622 or [melanie.west@aila.org.au](mailto:melanie.west@aila.org.au)

Yours sincerely,



Tessa Leggo  
Queensland Chapter President  
Australian Institute of Landscape Architects