

A New Home

Unable to find any suitable land near the Hawthorn campus, the Council was forced to look further and further out from Melbourne. Eventually they settled on 10 acres of rural land in Wantirna. The property, idyllically nestled at the foot of the Dandenongs, was a fair distance from Hawthorn; a distance that in a very short time would cause a rift within the school community.

When the School Council presented their plans to purchase and develop the Wantirna site, there was outspoken opposition from many within the school community. Israel Kipen reported back to the Executive after meeting with the parents, 'it appears that many parents viewed the move purely from a selfish point of view, as concerned with their own needs and had not thought of the future. The greatest objection was that of distance.'

Despite vehement opposition, the Council went ahead with their plans and the land in Wantirna was purchased in February 1973 at a cost of \$143,000. The new school would eventually comprise four two-storey buildings surrounding an inner courtyard. It would include an administrative block, gymnasium and assembly hall, and basketball and tennis courts, accommodating up to 800 pupils. It was planned to offer all of the modern facilities that had been lacking in Shakespeare Grove. In the words of Principal Yehezkiel Meiri, the move to Wantirna would provide 'the room to breathe, grow and develop'.

