

Education Victoria

Why primary students may be headed to the pub

Carlton's Dan O'Connell Hotel could be converted into a primary school to cater to a "boom" of families with young children in the inner city.

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Sunday Herald Sun 16 comments

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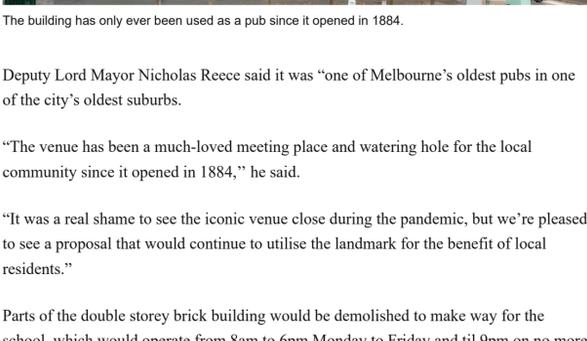
Students could soon be doing their classes at 'one of Melbourne's oldest pubs'.

A historic former Melbourne pub will be transformed into a school under a plan to be considered by the City of Melbourne.

Councillors will on Tuesday vote on a proposal to turn the Dan O'Connell Hotel in Carlton into a primary school.

The Edwardian building, constructed for Carlton Brewery Limited, is considered 'significant' under the Heritage Places Inventory 2020 and has only ever been used as a pub.

But town planners will recommend giving plans to turn it into a campus for Fitzroy Community School for 110 students and 12 teachers the thumbs up.



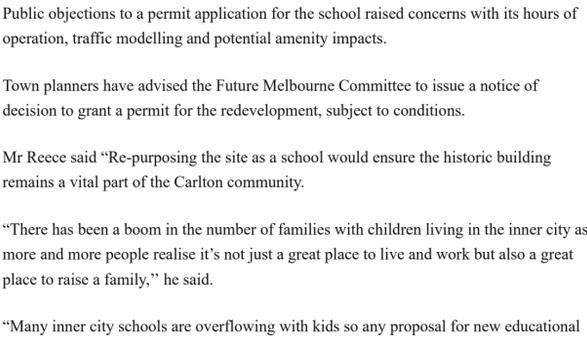
The building has only ever been used as a pub since it opened in 1884.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said it was "one of Melbourne's oldest pubs in one of the city's oldest suburbs.

"The venue has been a much-loved meeting place and watering hole for the local community since it opened in 1884," he said.

"It was a real shame to see the iconic venue close during the pandemic, but we're pleased to see a proposal that would continue to utilise the landmark for the benefit of local residents."

Parts of the double storey brick building would be demolished to make way for the school, which would operate from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and til 9pm on no more than two nights a week.



The City of Melbourne will consider the proposal to turn the pub into a school.

The school would also operate on Saturdays and Sundays between 9.30am and 10.30pm on up to four times during a school term.

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Public objections to a permit application for the school raised concerns with its hours of operation, traffic modelling and potential amenity impacts.

Town planners have advised the Future Melbourne Committee to issue a notice of decision to grant a permit for the redevelopment, subject to conditions.

Mr Reece said "Re-purposing the site as a school would ensure the historic building remains a vital part of the Carlton community.

"There has been a boom in the number of families with children living in the inner city as more and more people realise it's not just a great place to live and work but also a great place to raise a family," he said.

"Many inner city schools are overflowing with kids so any proposal for new educational facilities is very welcome.

"It will be very important for the application to respect the heritage and amenity of the building and the surrounding area."

The hotel closed in March last year as the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic hit and was sold for more than \$2.5 million last July.

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