



Securing the Future of Higher Education for Tasmanians

UNIVERSITY of
TASMANIA 

Acknowledgment of Country

The University of Tasmania pays its respects to elders past and present and to the many Aboriginal people that did not make elder status and to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community that continues to care for Country. We acknowledge the profound effect of climate change on this Country and seek to work alongside Tasmanian Aboriginal communities, with their deep wisdom and knowledge, to address climate change and its impacts.

The palawa people belong to one of the world's oldest living cultures, continually resident on this Country for over 65,000 years. They have survived and adapted to significant climate changes over this time, such as sea-level rise and extreme rainfall variability, and as such embody thousands of generations of intimate place-based knowledge.

We acknowledge with deep respect that this knowledge represents a range of cultural practices, wisdom, traditions, and ways of knowing the world that provide accurate and useful climate change information, observations, and solutions.

The University of Tasmania likewise recognises a history of truth that acknowledges the impacts of invasion and colonisation upon Aboriginal people, resulting in forcible removal from their lands.

Our island is deeply unique, with cities and towns surrounded by spectacular landscapes of bushland, waterways, mountain ranges, and beaches.

The University of Tasmania stands for a future that profoundly respects and acknowledges Aboriginal perspectives, culture, language, and history, and a continued effort to fight for Aboriginal justice and rights paving the way for a strong future.

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There has been much discussion about the University's decision to consolidate its campus in the centre of Hobart. To help make that discussion as informed as possible, we thought it would be helpful to provide an overview of:

- The context for the choice between a distributed Hobart campus and consolidating in the City
- How and why the decision was made to consolidate in the City back in 2019
- The evidence that supported that decision and how that evidence has changed and evolved
- The consultation we have undertaken to ensure the University's move enhances Hobart's CBD and Sandy Bay.

The context for the choice between a distributed Hobart campus and consolidating in the City

How best to secure the future of higher education for Tasmanians in a world of constrained higher education funding provides important context for why the University needed to make a choice between the current mode of a distributed Hobart campus and consolidating in the City.

Our mission is to serve the future of the whole of Tasmania by providing the teaching and research the State needs

We are committed to serving Tasmania by providing the teaching and research it needs, and to making a positive difference to our society and to the wider world from here.

To serve our mission as the sole higher education provider, we need to deliver:

- Access to higher education in all regions, through physical campuses in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie
- A full range of courses that both provide broad learning opportunities and equip people for entry into professional careers
- Courses at all levels, from Certificates and Diplomas, through to Bachelors, Masters and PhDs
- Courses in a way that meets the needs of a very diverse student population that ranges from students who are full-time, on campus, school-leavers, to part-time, adult, distance learners
- Research capability to meet the needs of the State, to better understand our own history and environment and directly support sectors like agriculture and coastal ecosystem management, and nurture Tasmania's globally important research work
- Knowledge that supports the next generation of innovation on the Island and the development of new enterprises in Tasmania.

Delivering a mission of such breadth is vitally important for Tasmania, but it is inherently high cost.

Declining Commonwealth Funding has not enabled the University to deliver its teaching and research mission while also maintaining and renewing its infrastructure

Overall, Australian Government total higher education spending as a percentage of GDP has declined – from 0.88% in 1989 to 0.49% in 2019-20. Over the same period, domestic Bachelors degree students in Australia went from just under 300,000 in 1989, to over one million in 2019. This means that government funding for higher education has continually declined on a per student basis.

Not only has per student funding declined, but Commonwealth funding is not well designed to enable a medium-sized university like ours to deliver such a broad mission. Funding is based on national average costs of delivery, but the average university in Australia is not regional. They are large metropolitan universities which have advantages of scale, do not have to offer courses with small numbers of students and most do not need to support a network of regional campuses.

Faced with this funding challenge, the University of Tasmania prioritised the delivery of teaching and research, leaving very little for the renewal of infrastructure. In any one year, that trade-off made good sense. Over time, it becomes a difficult problem to solve. The result is that now we have a campus that is in one of the worst conditions of all Australian and New Zealand universities.

It is not just that our facilities on Sandy Bay are run down, but they are not fit for purpose anymore. In 2019 our utilisation of teaching spaces was at 14%, against national benchmarks of 56%. The heart of this utilisation issue is not the number of rooms but the fact they are the wrong size and configuration for teaching today, which is why 72% of the teaching spaces have utilisation of less than 25% and only 14% of rooms having at least 50% of the students for which they were designed.

Despite many attempts over the years to retrofit these spaces so they are fit for purpose, the original 1950s-60s design and construction of them has made that very difficult. For example, sloping lecture theatres that are too large or no longer needed at all cannot be converted into smaller spaces for in-person group learning without fundamentally redesigning much or all of the building.

More broadly, our spaces are fundamentally misaligned with our values, in that they do not meet modern standards of accessibility and sustainability. On the accessibility front, at least two-thirds of our buildings would need complete rebuilding to meet standards required for ramps, appropriate gradients, width of doorways and internal corridors. When it comes to sustainability, our older buildings are using twice the energy and water of our newer buildings built in the last decade, let alone against current and emerging standards.

The deterioration of our facilities has had an impact on student experience, with only 56% of Sandy Bay students satisfied with the study spaces in 2018, well below the Australian average of 80%.

We needed to find a way to renew our infrastructure so our students have an outstanding learning environment and our staff have a great workplace and research facilities

When you look around the world at the best learning spaces, they are truly exciting places that enable levels of interaction, exploration and collaboration that enrich learning and make it so engaging. They are spaces where learning doesn't stop at the classroom door but where the whole environment is designed to facilitate and support learning in really interesting ways. They are spaces as engaging as a great museum or science gallery with the vibrancy of a great social gathering place, but they are also full of places for quiet conversations and silent study.

Similarly, today's best research facilities are designed to adapt and evolve so that researchers and their equipment can stay at the cutting edge. They are places where it is easy to collaborate with colleagues within and across disciplines, and with partners around the corner and around the world. But they also have the quiet spaces for deep thinking. And for those whose research facility is the library, they are beautiful places that still celebrate books while providing easy access to the vast world of digital resources.

Achieving that vision needs a lot more than just renovations. We recognised that we couldn't continue to fulfil our mission with facilities that did not meet contemporary standards or align with our values around student experience, accessibility and sustainability. We knew that student experience was declining, and our people were fragmented between Sandy Bay and the City.

We needed to think innovatively about how we work in the future, how to give our students a better experience, and how we can do this affordably.

Renewing our infrastructure was a challenge for campuses in the North as well as the South. Fortunately, in Launceston and Burnie, unique circumstances enabled us to attract very significant Commonwealth, State and local Council contributions to enable our facilities to be renewed. These campuses have a focus on increasing access to higher education, through moving to central locations, and setting benchmarks in sustainable building design. The Burnie project is complete and the first of the Launceston buildings is complete, with the rest to follow over the next two years.

How and why the decision to consolidate in the City was made back in 2019

The choice in Hobart was between a campus that continued to be distributed between Sandy Bay and the City, or a consolidated City Campus. What set up that choice was that well over 1/3rd of staff and students are already based in the City and for them those locations work very well. Having Menzies right next to the hospital providing important research for Tasmania means our future doctors, nurses and paramedics and the many clinicians who teach them are able to move seamlessly between the University and hospital, creating a better experience and outcomes for everyone.

Similarly, our musicians being near the TSO, our drama students right next door to the Theatre Royal and our arts students in the characterful Hunter Street building in the docks aren't moves that anyone wants to undo any more than moving IMAS from its great location next door to our collaborator at CSIRO.

In important ways like the other civic institutions - the public hospital, the courts, the parliament, and the state library - we were already embedded in the City, but we also have a significant and attractive campus at Sandy Bay. History has not presented us with an easy choice.

Practically, there was also no option to move what was in the City back to Sandy Bay, as we would never recover the money from the Medical Science, IMAS or Hedberg buildings to enable them to be rebuilt on Sandy Bay.

So to make the decision between continuing our distributed model or consolidating in the City, we established 8 criteria against which to assess each option. These criteria reflected the broader strategies of the University and our mission:

1. Access for students
2. Differentiated campus experience
3. Coherence of the University community
4. Ease of collaboration and access to shared resources
5. Connection with the broader community
6. Impact of the development on staff, students and university operations
7. Sustainability of transport options
8. Ongoing financial sustainability

Extensive consultation was undertaken and evidence to help evaluate the options against them was assembled. Staff, students and community members were consulted in relation to evidence around these criteria. We established an Exhibition Room at the Sandy Bay campus, where we explained the situation we were in and the benefits and drawbacks of the two models. We had over 1,000 visits to the room, established online forums for engagement, ran focus groups and 430 feedback surveys were completed by staff and students.

For the broader community we ran open houses in the Studio Theatre in 2019, which were advertised through articles in the Mercury and ABC radio, as well as personal invitations. There was also extensive consultation with the City of Hobart, officials and other elected members. Those discussions had been ongoing for some years with many briefings and even study tours to similar cities, so much so that the Hobart City Council had voted 11 to 1 in favour back in 2017. We gathered both quantitative and qualitative feedback. The 430 detailed surveys by staff and students, most of whom who had visited the Exhibition Room and considered the material, provided an important quantitative lens. Because the decision involved multiple independent criteria, the surveys asked people which of the 8 criteria were particularly important to them and then how they assessed them. We asked both Sandy Bay and City-based staff and students. What was very interesting and important was how different their perspectives were.

For Sandy Bay-based staff and students, the most important issue was the impact of the development on University operations (i.e. disruption during building works) followed by the coherence of the University community and the sustainability of transport options. Across 7 criteria, Sandy Bay staff and students on average thought the distributed option was the stronger one, while they did think that rebuilding the Sandy Bay campus would be more disruptive. Although seeing the distributed model as otherwise stronger, they did see the merits in the City centric options - on a 4 point scale, the difference between how they rated the City centric vs the Distribution option was less than 1 point.

For City-based staff and students, the most important issue was the coherence of the University community, followed by sustainability of transport options and ease of collaboration and access to shared resources. City-based staff and students thought the City proposition was stronger on all but the differentiated campus criteria. City-based staff could also see that the distributed model had its merits with the range between how they rated the two options also less than a 1 point difference.

The survey and quantitative analysis showed that to seek to reduce the discussion to a simple preference of one option vs the other is to miss much of the richness and balance in staff and student perspectives. The fact that there are significant differences of perspective between City and Sandy Bay-based staff and students about the same evidence suggests people's current experience of the campus is particularly important in how they are evaluating the future.¹

Staff, students and members of the community also provided a very rich set of qualitative perspectives. The feedback highlighted qualities that people valued about our campuses. What stood out were the importance of having a campus heart, a coherent University community and green spaces.

Some could see clearly that a City campus could bring the whole University together and that a city location could increase vitality at the heart of the campus, which they thought had waned considerably at Sandy Bay over the years. While students debated the relative merits of the different locations, there was a strong attraction to being part of a vibrant city area because of all the other amenities and jobs to which it gave them easy access.

¹ There was an NTEU survey of their southern union members which asked people the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposition 'The City Centric Model is Preferred to the Distributed Model.' Of the approximately 100 union members who responded, 75% disagreed or strongly disagreed with that proposition. They noted that for union staff who were at Sandy Bay, 81% disagreed whereas for those who were City based 56% disagreed.

Others, both staff and students, couldn't see how the buildings in the City would cohere as a campus, questioned how you would have a campus heart or whether it would have a 'university feel'. They were also concerned about the loss of a connection to green spaces.

There were practical issues people provided important perspectives on. People familiar with city campuses in other states were often very positive about being able to have new science facilities clustered together and adjacent to the ones we already have in the City. Others were worried about whether the City was the right location for some specialist facilities and questioned whether it would provide space for future growth. Across the board, people were keen to make sure we kept our sporting facilities.

Understandably, parking and transport were important topics. Many Sandy Bay staff said a big positive of the campus was the ability to park easily so they could manage more easily their other commitments in life. They doubted people would change their transport habits if consolidation into the CBD occurred. City staff who make much more use of public and active transport saw things differently.

While opinions varied about the options, there was very little disagreement that serious attention to the buildings and future infrastructure was needed.

University Council determined that, on balance, across these criteria, the best decision was to consolidate into the City

Decisions of the complexity of consolidating the University in the City or remaining split between the City and Sandy Bay will always be 'on-balance' decisions. The process explicitly recognised that the decision involved a range of distinct qualitative and quantitative criteria. University Council weighed the various criteria and evidence to determine that the decision to consolidate in the City was the best one to advance the University's mission, and to meet its obligations to deliver high quality higher education and research.

The evidence that supported that decision and how that evidence has changed and evolved

It is worth pausing for a moment to reflect on how students today engage with campus and who they are, because they are, in important ways, different from the students of 30 or 40 years ago when the Sandy Bay campus was in its heyday.

Campus life today is characterised by the fact that students come primarily to study and spend only small additional amounts of time on campus. Indeed, two-thirds of our face-to-face students are not spending time on campus outside lectures or independent study and 80% of students are not participating in sports, clubs or societies. The average amounts of time on campus are relatively low – our face-to-face students are spending under 12 hours on average per week on campus in direct study, and just under 3.5 hours on average for other activities.

This evolution of campus life has shaped the changing nature of students themselves and the pressures they face. To begin with, they are at a different age and stage of life. The average age of our commencing students in 2021 was 32, and school-leavers were only 18% of our commencing student cohort. Only ten years prior, in 2011, school leavers presented 32% of our cohort.

Many of these students are already working, have busy lives, or need to work to support their studies. Students feel the financial cost of attending university. We know that 54% of our commencing students support themselves with paid work, and many balance work experience opportunities and extracurricular activities so that they can compete for graduate opportunities by the time they graduate. Over the last decade in Australia, students who are in full-time work have gone from 32% to 42%, and part time work has been consistent at around 32%.

More students are studying part-time as a result of balancing these factors. 38% of our students now study part time and over half of these students choose to do so to balance work commitments.

It is not just in relation to the physical presence on the campus that patterns of student life have changed. Students interact with the University in fundamentally different ways because of the advent of the internet. We should remember that campus life of the 60s, 70s and 80s was all before the internet. It has untethered students from needing to be in particular places, completely changed the way they organise themselves socially and how they consume entertainment. That has all made them very much less dependent on campuses and changed how they use them. They aren't needed in the same way as meeting and socialising spaces. The task is to reinvent them around how students operate today.

Along with technology, social habits have changed, in some cases markedly. Notably has been the marked reduction in the consumption of alcohol amongst young people and the reduction in its centrality in a wide range of student social lives. That again changes how campuses are used.

None of these changes means campuses aren't important. In fact, quite the reverse. They are important more than ever because in-person small group social time has an even greater premium. But campuses that will attract and retain students need to respond to the very different student of today.

It is that student we need to keep in mind when considering the criteria that guided our campus choices.

Access for students through location

Of all new full-time jobs in Australia in the last 20 years, 47% required a degree and we are facing a future where tertiary education will be in demand for more jobs than ever before. With this as context, Tasmania faces unique challenges, as we have the highest proportion of adults in Australia without any further qualifications beyond Year 10. At the very core of our mission is ensuring that Tasmanians have enhanced access to higher education. Like other public and civic institutions, being publicly accessible both practically and symbolically is important to our identity as well as our mission. There are four components to access that are impacted by our campus location – distance, affordability, balancing study and other commitments and psychological barriers to study.

In terms of **distance and physical access**, bringing our campus back together in the City will make it easier for students to access learning opportunities close to better public transport connections. As the physical distance between a student's home or work and a university increases, the likelihood of enrolling decreases.

Travel is a real challenge. To begin with there are only five of greater Hobart's 21 suburbs with direct services to the Sandy Bay campus, and even these account for only 1/3rd of the travel options. The relatively thin distribution of students means it has never been economic or practical for more direct services to be run. The result is that the reality for most students is they have to take at least two buses each way, each day.

When you analyse all the travel options (direct and multiple connections) available for students to get to and from campus for morning and afternoon classes and leaving at the end of the day, there is a large advantage from a city location. From a number of suburbs including Moonah, Geilston Bay, Lenah Valley, Rosny Park and Acton Park, moving to the City will reduce travel time by half for staff and students. We also see material improvements in many more suburbs, with those in Rokeby, Old Beach, Howrah, Dodges Ferry, Sorell and Bridgewater having their travel time reduce by a third on average and up to 40%.

Physical access issues on Sandy Bay don't end at the bus stop. Our Sandy Bay site is ill-equipped to cope with the levels of ramps and pathways required by modern standards for accessibility. The distance between Sandy Bay Road bus stop and Morris Miller Library is 700m uphill, and from there access across to science facilities above Churchill Avenue is very difficult, let alone between many buildings. A central, less dispersed, city campus gives us an opportunity to provide a much easier footprint to navigate, with most facilities being within a 10-minute walk of our campus heart, allowing people to come together more effectively. Designing new buildings from the ground up also ensures that we can incorporate the best accessibility design principles.

Balancing study and other commitments is an important part of why distance and time matters and it is a major challenge for today's students. We see that in our surveys of students:

- 76% of our commencing Tasmanian students in Hobart said work/life/study balance was one of their main concerns about starting university;
- Part-time students are now 38% of our student cohort, and over half of these choose to do so to balance existing work commitments

Understandably, that challenge of balancing commitments tends to increase significantly amongst older students. The University's students are substantially older than the national average as we meet the challenge to provide greater access to education for all Tasmanians, including those who weren't able to access it when they left school. The average age of our students is 32, and school-leavers are only 18% of our cohort, compared to the Australian average of 42%.

Affordability of higher education is a key concern for students, nationwide. Today's students face barriers to study including time, cost and other life commitments, and many students now need to work to support their time at university. For the University of Tasmania:

- Over half of school leavers with an offer who decided not to enrol with us cited worries about cost.
- Of those who did enrol, 55% of part-time students chose to study part-time rather than full-time because of cost.
- Of our own commencing students, 54% are supporting themselves with paid work.

For students meeting that affordability challenge, there are over 7 times as many total jobs in the City than there are in Sandy Bay and around 5 times as many part-time jobs. For those with work close to home, the shorter time and greater frequency of public transport to the City is a great help.

In terms of **psychological access**, a significant body of research suggests that young people and families from disadvantaged backgrounds regard higher education as remote and alien from their own experience. Therefore, an important part of creating access is to locate higher education in a place that is experienced by people of all backgrounds. It needs to be an inviting space that is part of their community and one designed to be inviting to all. While Sandy Bay has many attractive qualities, it is also a very affluent suburb whose location does not help tackle the perception of higher education as remote from the experience of people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Differentiated campus experience

By virtue of our location in Hobart and in Tasmania, we already have a compelling differentiated setting. We want to make sure our campus further strengthens the ability to offer a differentiated overall experience compared to mainland universities. That helps us retain Tasmanian students and attract mainland students here. We know that this can be effective from our experience of the way the Bachelor of Marine and Antarctic Studies delivered at IMAS in Salamanca has led the way in attracting interstate students.

With this input in mind, we assessed whether Sandy Bay or the City presented a more compelling opportunity for a differentiated campus experience by evaluating four key criteria in 2019, and the assessments hold true today:

1. The opportunity to **house facilities in historic University buildings**. Making the Domain a key part of the University experience presents a compelling case here, as our original home
2. A **unique experience of the natural environment**. Clearly, Sandy Bay offered a significant advantage especially in those buildings above Churchill Avenue
3. **Part of a distinctive urban setting**. Distinctiveness in this case is very much guided by what students value. However, it is clear that a high proportion of today's students value ready-access to the facilities and lifestyle offered by central city areas. An interesting illustration of this is that our student accommodation in the City is much more popular than our accommodation above Churchill Avenue, with nearly 70% of students opting for City accommodation as their first preference, despite only a third of students studying in the City.

4. **Integration with professional and clinical settings.** This was an important rationale for the move of previous parts of the University, from the Medical School to the Art School. There remain a range of areas, from Pharmacy and Business, to Social Work and Law, where the City offers significantly better options. Today, work integrated learning is a vital part of University study for many disciplines and is highly valued by students. In the College of Health and Medicine alone, we offer approximately 10,000 placements totalling over 800,000 hours per year, through relationships with 1,200 industry and community partners.

Following a rapid online shift throughout the pandemic, we want to attract people back to campus, as we believe being together in person is a critical part of a university experience. Indeed, we are interested in using technology to enable students to gain information online that is most easily sourced that way so they can devote more of their time to being on campus in small group settings with the other students and the people teaching them.

Coherence of the University community

Supporting a differentiated campus experience is the ability of students to mix and engage with the full breadth of other students in a true campus heart. Today, a third of students study in the City and rarely visit the Sandy Bay campus. With our students balancing work and life commitments, they have even less time available to spend on campus outside of class. It is therefore even more important to make it easy for our students to connect with each other. Bringing almost all southern students into close proximity – as is intended in the City campus – creates the opportunity to develop a vibrant campus heart for today's students. This sort of critical mass of students is needed to support contemporary versions of the experiences students once engaged in, in places like the Refectory (the "Ref").

What is true of students is also true of our staff, with a third of them also in the City. We have heard that our City-based staff and students often feel isolated except within their individual schools and feel a general lack of support services. The social fabric generated when people can easily meet and coincide in common spaces would be greatly enhanced if all staff were in much closer proximity to each other, and facilities like the Staff Club were equally accessible to all staff.

Compared to the current distance of 3.5km between the Sandy Bay campus and current city facilities, a city move would reduce the distance between facilities for our students to travel. We will have a central campus heart, within a 10 minute walk for over 90% of southern students. This will particularly ease the travel requirement for students studying across both sites, for whom it takes approximately half an hour by our own current dedicated bus service to get between the two locations. Being closer together will make it easier for our people to work together in a multidisciplinary way and for students to study multiple disciplines.

Ease of collaboration and access to shared resources

A well-connected university matters not just for the experience of community it creates but also to support collaboration. Collaboration is vital to contemporary research and, in a growing range of areas, to being competitive in grant funding schemes. It is critical in tackling many of the challenging issues we face, in terms of what we are trying to achieve – such as aiming to improve health outcomes or reducing inequalities – but also in how we are achieving it, such as innovative models of creating intellectual property to support the growth of new start-ups.

Physical proximity is important to collaboration. A study of the relationship between distance and collaboration at Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that physical proximity increases collaborative activity among academic scholars. Academics located in the same workspace were three times more likely to collaborate than those who were 400m apart. The frequency of collaboration dropped by half again among researchers whose offices were 800m apart.

The fact that we are distributed between the City and Sandy Bay means that we are losing out on opportunities for better proximity and better collaboration between all of our disciplines. And this is not just for staff. In moving to the City, our engineering students can be closer to medical sciences, in an era where medicine and technology are fusing. Our music students will be able to undertake arts or business electives and our medical students will have access to broader university amenities and spaces that they currently cannot engage with.

There are a wide range of important student support services, from counselling, learning access and career services, that are much better provided from a single central location, where a critical mass and breadth of staff can serve student needs. The solution for a distributed campus of either having small numbers of staff in two places or having students travel to one place or another is not ideal.

Connection with the broader community

Collaboration within the University is important but, to fulfil our mission to serve Tasmania, collaboration and connection with the community is also vital. Currently, our Sandy Bay campus is not particularly accessible or inviting to our broader community. Moving to the city provides an opportunity to increase our visibility to the people of Hobart, and to be a welcoming place for all Tasmanians. Our city presence already has fostered some greater connections to our wider community, for example:

- Our Hedberg Centre for Performing Arts is connected to the Theatre Royal and has been designed as a collaborative incubator space for place-based creatives – through performance, recording and rehearsing, through to research and events, through to partnerships and engagement. A new unit delivered in collaboration with NIDA is just one example of greater student learning opportunities through being connected physically with industry and having world-class facilities to offer
- Our IMAS building is not just a space for students – we host industry forums, open exhibitions, public art installations and school visits that invite community discussion and participation on key topics around marine science, such as salmon farming and climate change.

Central to increasing our connection to the community will be a modern, city-centric library that is accessible to everyone – a welcoming place where our community can come together and gather for events and workshops, and where we can showcase our collections to the people of Hobart. We can make some of the incredible research work we do visible to the public, inspiring next generations of students. We can undertake some exciting and important initiatives, such as a new allied health multidisciplinary clinic to help our students learn in real environments and help our city's health precinct thrive.

For industry and community engagement, having the full range of university disciplines at the hub of the City where government, business and community organisations are concentrated breaks down the barriers to collaboration. Again, as we saw with staff collaboration, physical proximity matters. It is not that collaboration doesn't happen if you are more distant, but given its importance, there is good reason to prioritise making it easier.

Impact of development on staff, students and university operations

We gave careful consideration to the impact of developments on staff and students through the construction period. Five different factors were considered:

1. **Noise impact on staff and students.** The City offered a significantly better proposition because developments will be on sites separate from the University's current operations, except for proximity to one student residence. On the other hand, Sandy Bay developments will occur throughout current student and staff spaces and during the hours when they are on campus
2. **Disability access throughout the development.** The City campus will only see continued improvements in access, whereas on Sandy Bay, the existing problems are only likely to be exacerbated as students need to navigate around building sites
3. **Access to parking throughout construction.** Parking will be reduced at Sandy Bay through the construction period because of the requirement to provide parking for the sizable building workforce. In the City, suitable parking solutions are integral to the developments and staff and students will have access to car spaces throughout the development
4. **Length of development.** The City development is quicker by as much as 5 years because there isn't a need to be moving people in and out of buildings
5. **Disruption from moving and decanting.** The City development will see staff make a single move. On Sandy Bay, a great many staff will need to be decanted into temporary spaces while buildings are redone or replaced. Students will spend extended periods in temporary spaces rather than moving straight into new facilities.

Overall, the impact of development on Sandy Bay will be far greater for staff and students than consolidating directly into new facilities in the City.

Sustainability of transport options

Transport and traffic really matter to people. While the University might seem to loom large when it comes to morning traffic, our staff and students constitute only 4% of the traffic that passes through Macquarie Street per day, or 2% of the traffic over the Tasman Bridge per day.

It might seem counterintuitive, but we discovered the move to the City would reduce the University's total traffic volume and improve flows in the City.

With 663 staff FTE now based in the city, and 3,777 students undertaking their primary course at city-based locations in 2021, we know a lot about the difference in their transport behaviour compared with Sandy Bay staff and students.

Because of better public transport and active transport networks like bike paths, University staff and students located in the city are driving less compared with those based at Sandy Bay – 22% less for students, and 28% less for staff.

In the first few weeks of Semester in 2022, we have, on average, 1,970 people travelling to the Sandy Bay campus per day. In line with the assumptions from our Travel Behaviour Survey in 2021, this amounts to approximately 1,176 cars. If we extrapolate the behaviour of current City staff and students for a city-centric model, in a city-centric model we could expect only 722 of these cars to drive into the City each day. This is a net reduction of around 475 cars on our roads every day.

This has been a consistent picture for some time. Back in 2018, GHD Pty Ltd and RED Sustainability Consultants completed a Preliminary Traffic Impact Assessment for Central Hobart which modelled our move, our travel behaviour and potential scenarios. It found in all scenarios a likely reduction in trips made by car to a University in the City.

What they also found was that a move to the City would improve traffic flow. This is largely because staff and students live across greater Hobart and engage in significant cross-town travel to get to Sandy Bay and travel across the main radial flows of the City. The modelling revealed that, for Sandy Bay itself, the improvement in traffic would be considerable, with a reduction of 10 cars per minute during peak hour. In Sandy Bay there will be substantially less cars in the suburb overall for more than a decade after the University moves, because of the length of time it will take for the new housing to be built. Even when the number of cars grows, only a portion of them will ever be used for commuting to the City and, if we are all successful in working to see better public and active transport in Hobart so we are more like European cities of similar scale, we may never see an increase in cars in Sandy Bay.

More broadly, we are committed to making further positive contributions to ease traffic congestion into the future and help our people get to and from work and study. We will be analysing and adjusting our class timetabling around peak times, investing in safe pedestrian and cycle ways across the city, and working closely with our partners around public transport to support more sustainable and available options. For those who do need to come to the City campus by car parking will be integrated into our projects as that we don't reduce the City's existing parking. We have an opportunity to be the critical mass that is needed as the catalyst for improving Hobart's public transport infrastructure, which will be a benefit for all people of Hobart, not just the staff and students of the University.

Financial sustainability

Our 2019 business case explored the financial implications of the two options and found that it would be \$120 million more costly to redevelop the Sandy Bay site than to consolidate and build a new campus in a smaller city footprint and divest from Sandy Bay. The core elements of that analysis were:

- The capital required for a new City campus would be \$677m, and the costs to refurbish Sandy Bay would be slightly less (3%) at \$657m due to the ability to refurbish some buildings. However, rebuilding on Sandy Bay would need to be done over a longer timeframe (12-15 years compared to 10 years) to minimise disruption and movement of our people;
- We could save an estimated \$1.3 million per year in operating costs by consolidating into the City, through having a more energy efficient footprint, and being able to maintain a tighter campus through reducing the total footprint of the campus by 14%;
- Most critically, the city-centric model allowed the Sandy Bay campus to partially fund the move, through potential redevelopment. The assumption here was that we could realise \$200 million through conservatively repurposing parts of the site, generating upfront cash and longer-term income streams into the future. This ability to generate diverse, long term revenue streams presented a stronger financial proposition, particularly in the environment of constrained government funding;
- On a net cost basis and considering land costs already incurred, the city option represented a \$120 million cost saving compared to redeveloping the Sandy Bay campus. If this was debt-funded, this translates to an interest expense of around \$5 million per year, which we know could be better spent on continuing to enhance our student offerings and experience.

Since 2019, a great deal further work has occurred, so we know a lot more about the relative *net* costs of the two options. The relative cost of buildings in the two locations has not fundamentally changed. What has changed is the income that would be generated from the sale of our City properties compared to the long-term redevelopment of Sandy Bay. Based on the valuations done this year:

- If we were to sell the City properties that we are yet to develop at a 40% premium to the price we purchased them for and continue a distributed campus model (i.e. retain the existing Medical Science Precinct, the Hedberg, student accommodation and Hunter St), we would receive approximately \$100m;
- In the alternative case, by consolidating into the city, Deloitte Access Economics has estimated that, across the life of the Sandy Bay development, we would stand to gain approximately \$770 million.

The financial implications of these two options for our sustainability is now even more stark:

- The distributed campus option would require the University to find \$450m from operations to upgrade our campus in a constrained Commonwealth funding environment, which is an unprecedented level of expenditure for the University that has typically been able to allocate a maximum of \$10-15m annually for building infrastructure spending;
- The consolidated city campus option would cover the cost of the redevelopment and provide the University with, over time, \$200m more. This will provide an ongoing income stream to support the delivery of education and research in Tasmania, enhance access through more scholarships and, in some measure, address declining Commonwealth funding.

The University has always been aware that, like the public land grant universities of the United States, we were endowed with land to secure our future. Like many other public universities whose endowment has come that way, we recognise that whatever value is created from that land, it is there to further the University's civic mission to provide the learning, research and community support that Tasmania needs.

The consultation we have undertaken to ensure the University's move enhances Hobart's CBD and Sandy Bay

Once the Council made its decision in 2019, we set out to work closely with stakeholders from across the City to make sure the campus would be one that was not just *in* the City but very much *for* and *of* the City.

In November 2019, we held an Appreciative Inquiry Summit, inviting over 400 stakeholders from across Greater Hobart. They came from state government, local government, local businesses, local community organisations across education, transport, health and community services, as well as some of our staff and students who wanted to contribute.

The process started with people identifying what they value about Hobart and what they would like to see any University move enhance. The qualities people identified were:

- A sustainable campus characterized by bringing nature and green spaces into the city
- A campus that is welcoming to all and that builds community
- A campus that enables us to work better together with our many partners
- Reimagined traffic and transport options
- A campus which preserves the Domain as a special space
- Architecture that enhances the city.

There was then careful deliberation about how this could occur. What emerged was a series of values, principles and aspirations for a city campus that would make Hobart a better place to be. Those values, principles and aspirations have continued to guide our designs and processes.

From here, we kicked off a masterplanning exercise and we spent 2020 and 2021 consulting with a wide range of stakeholders to refine this vision and develop a series of Urban Design Principles that would guide all our work and an initial masterplan.

Since 2019, we have conducted hundreds of briefings, information sessions and presentations for students, staff, community members and businesses throughout the development of the masterplan. We held a series of forums through our ongoing Community and Expert Reference groups, enabled online feedback through our website, and had a month-long staffed exhibition space in Melville St and the Sandy Bay campus where we shared our plans and invited feedback from the community. We shared findings and tested feedback around initial plans with key stakeholders along the way – including city neighbours, elected members from state, federal and local government, and industry partners around traffic, transport and local business.

This process helped to refine our overarching principles that our community had for the campus, and we went about developing supporting strategies to implement them:

1. **The Place Principle:** Enhance the distinctive natural and human qualities of nipaluna/Hobart
2. **The Sustainability Principle:** Bring nature into the City as an integral part of a sustainable campus
3. **The Accessibility Principle:** Create a highly accessible campus that enhances connections across the City and from the Southern Region
4. **The Community Principle:** Create an inviting heart to a connected series of University and City communities.

All this work and feedback culminated in the release of our Preliminary Urban Design Framework (UDF) in 2021, which details our initial masterplan for the city campus. Upon release, the UDF received 4,300 views from our internal and external community, and feedback was encouraged.

Around this time at the beginning of 2021, we started a four-stage engagement process around creating a community vision for the Sandy Bay campus. We heard about the things that people love about the Sandy Bay campus, and the values that need to be nurtured for its future purpose.

Our engagement included 101 face-to-face and focus groups, 11 online workshops, 350+ exhibition participants, 136,000+ emails delivered to staff and students, and 21,000+ flyers through letterbox drops to residents of Sandy Bay, Mt Nelson, Dynnyrne and Tolmans Hill, and an interactive website with over 3,500+ views where visitors were encouraged to leave feedback for each stage of the process. The result of all these consultations was the development of the draft Sandy Bay Masterplan, which was integral to our submission to Hobart City Council to remove the educational overlay over the site, which would enable a vision such as this be pursued.

We are committed to continued engagement to get the best outcomes for the City and Sandy Bay and their communities

We are committed to and have faith in public processes and forums that enable systematic and public reviews of our proposals. The Planning Scheme Amendment process that governs Sandy Bay's future provides extensive opportunity for public review and input. We are very open to evolving the proposal in light of that feedback.

Any City developments, like our current proposal in relation to the Forestry Building, need to go through a Development Application process, which again provides extensive opportunity for public input and expert review to ensure that the development meets the needs of the City.

As we develop the next buildings, we will engage in the sort of extensive consultation with future users, both internal and external, and other stakeholders with an interest, as we have done with our new buildings in Burnie and Launceston.

The next of those developments will be the buildings associated with our Campus Heart. Our staff, students, City neighbours and future users from across Greater Hobart will have significant opportunities to shape the design and function of this precinct.

We look forward to working together to see the University evolve in the City in a way that enhances Hobart and its communities, while securing the future of higher education for Tasmanians.