

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 4 March 2021 5:26 PM
To: Contact Us
Subject: Re: DA 0695/2020
Attachments: UTAS DA 0695-2020, Representation, J Koshin, 4 March 2021.docx

Whoops! Oh dear.

Good Afternoon,

Thank you. Sorry about that.
Here is the attachment now - I hope.

Kind regards,

Jill Koshin

On 2021-03-04 17:06, Contact Us wrote:

> Good Afternoon,
>
> Thank you for your email, however there was no attachment.
>
> Could you please re-send your email with the relevant documentation
> attached.
>
> Kind Regards,
>
>
> Information Officer, Organisational Services T 03 6323 3000 |
> www.launceston.tas.gov.au
>
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>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: [REDACTED]
> Sent: Thursday, 4 March 2021 5:02 PM
> To: Contact Us <contactus@launceston.tas.gov.au>
> Subject: DA 0695/2020
>

> Dear Council Staff, Please find attached representation to DA
> 0695/2020
>

> Kind regards,
> Jillian koshin
>

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> ications/it/twitter.png]<https://twitter.com/LtonCityCouncil>
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> e-mail or document.
>

3 March 2021

Michael Stretton, GM/CEO

Launceston City Council, St John St, Launceston

Dear Sir.

I refer to Development Application 0965/2020 – *Landscaping works, plantings and associated infrastructure including two outbuildings, a steel structure, water tanks; recreational area including playing courts and bleachers; removal of parking spaces and trees.*

Firstly, the land upon which this application is proposed, (the former Goods Railyard) is land inter alia transferred to the Ratepayers of the City of Launceston from ownership by the Commonwealth Government. It was not for the development or expansion of a university campus. This reason for the land being owned by the City of Launceston Council imposes certain responsibilities on City of Launceston Council (CoL) and its ratepayers. To date, the CoL has sidelined ratepayers and residents to their detriment, and to the distinct advantage of UTAs.

I wish to point out various aspects referred to in some of the documents accompanying the DA. These aspects are reasons for the DA to be rejected and for a whole new more considered design, without the airy fairy language favoured by some of the reports commissioned by UTAs. Examples of such language can be found throughout the main DA support document and is an insult to the intelligence of Launceston residents. That 31 mature significant trees are destined for destruction, the chop, as opposed to the euphemistic 'removal', is one example that is to be abhorred in this day and age of climate change and in light of the Council's own policy on Climate Emergency.

Ireneinc p. 50, on the Trees: "They represent the site's industrial past which is at odds with the urban realm principles of regenerative and connected endemic landscape. • Increased biodiversity by replacing with endemic species, • Road levels to be lifted to allow for a more accessible and sinuous plaza experience and DDA access to buildings. Clear sight-lines, increased site permeability and visual connection to Rivers-edge Building, The Library and Student Experience Building, Annexe Theatre and Traverse Lane.

p.16) Subservient is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as less important or subordinate, suggesting it is of secondary importance...

Notwithstanding that the grounds may be used by the wider population of Invermay due to the integrated approach to the Inveresk Site. However, proportionately the use by the wider population will likely be a very small percentage of the overall site users. Regardless this would still be subservient to the overall use of the campus for university purposes. The landscaping is directly associated with subservient to the overall use of the campus for education and occasional care

“The works are considered to improve the open space and emphasise the heritage values through the appropriate reinterpretation of historical elements and use of industrial materials”. The works do no such thing and the document uses weasel words and phrases to cover up the inconsistencies and contradictions contained throughout the Report.

Please refer to the arborist report. 10 trees require management during construction. Of the trees proposed for removal 14 are categorised as dead to fair in health and have a lower expected lifespan. Most of the trees were planted in the late 90s early 2000s and are anticipated to be a maximum age of 20-25 years. d) and e) The trees proposed for removal have not historic heritage significance and the trees are not within a garden listed as a local heritage place.(Ireneinc p.50)

They represent the site’s industrial past which is at odds with the urban realm principles of regenerative and connected endemic landscape. (p.51) It is ludicrous to suggest that anything that represents the site’s industrial past being at odds with a strange conglomeration of odd shapes, sizes and purposes, which are more likely to confuse the eye than to draw it to the heritage buildings. It is this conglomeration of elements that is at odds with the heritage and cultural characteristics of the site.

If it’s good enough for a few ugly tanks to be considered part of the “industrial vernacular”, then its good enough to retains the trees as part of the original industrial precinct and to recognise the significance of previous plantings to the community and to those who organised for thme to be there, for whatever reason – that is all part of the heritage, the vernacular etc of the site

Recalibration of the tree avenue into stands of native trees to create a destination place for people not a through route for cars, (p.51)

“ the vernacular of the site...Recalibration of the tree avenue into stands of native trees... REALLY? Utter weasel words! Leave the avenue of poplars as it is. It is of significance to Launceston (even if not to UTas) and to the overall history of the site.

Vistas to and from the heritage buildings were an important, clearly expressed part of the original heritage study, any talk of views etc now, given all the disturbances by UTas developpments, is spurious and misleading.

“The glass house is 3.7m in height and will be constructed from glass and a steel frame, or similar robust materials” (p.52) **Glass? Robust? REALLY?**

The addition of a GLASS house to the site is a questionable material for a subtidal flood inundation zone.

The design is compatibility (sic) and sympathetic to the heritage values and unique history of the site, as demonstrated in the above analysis. Furthermore, it resolves aspects of the early 2000s landscaping such as the circular carpark which in current day analysis is considered to confuse the understanding and evolution of the railway and workshop complex. (final paragraph p.57)

Other infrastructure such as the Tiger bus stop, parking, and lighting etc is proposed for removal to facilitate the works, not to serve the Launceston community. Where will the bus stop be?

HERITAGE ASPECTS: While the Paul Davies report is a high level quality report, the bulk of the DA (with the exception of Davies' work) does not pay due respect to the heritage aspects or to the **vistas** listed as important in previous heritage studies. The Davies study contains items that should result in a refusal of this DA.

From the August 2019 Paul Davies Heritage Study p.94: *The site overall has local heritage significance and State heritage significance. The workshops may have National significance as a now very rare complex of facilities, however that has not been considered in detail in this study.*

Alterations detract from significance. Difficult to interpret. An element that does not add to or enhance significance. New elements on the site that do not have heritage significance. Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing. Intrusive Damaging to the place's heritage significance. Elements that are out of place or context. (p95)

The site is large and provides a large and quite expansive setting that recognises: i The important elements of the place, and the relationship between these components. i The setting of the place in terms of its immediate and broader setting. The setting can be affected by other factors including: i Views to and from the heritage item ii The possible need for a buffer area between the place and adjoining land or development iii The visual and historical relationship between the item and its environs. The setting for the combined sites is the whole of the current site as bounded by the river and the roads. This is the historical setting that reflects the long history of the site. It also provides for the site to remain separated from the main urban grid of the city and to retain PLANNING EXHIBITED DOCUMENTS Planning Administration Ref. No: DA 0695/2020 Date advertised: 17/02/2021 This document is subject to copyright and is protected by law. In displaying this document on its website the Council grants website users a non-exclusive licence to reproduce the document in their web browser for the sole purpose of viewing the content. The Council reserves all other rights. Documents displayed on the Council's website are intended for public perusal only and should not be reproduced without the consent of the copyright owner. INVERESK PRECINCT PAUL DAVIES PTY LTD CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN ARCHITECTS HERITAGE CONSULTANTS FOR UTAS AND LCC 98 AUGUST 2019 its individual character. This complete setting is of local heritage significance, that is it is significant to Launceston. The site is also sufficiently large to allow for considered new development on parts of the site. It is noted that the site has been sub-divided in relation to current uses and that the subdivisions do not relate to historical use or parts of the site, they are not considered in setting out policy except to note that they exist. As the site as a whole has significance, it would be undesirable to further sub-divide the site without having clear controls and guidelines for the development and use of those lands to ensure that future development does not adversely impact on the overall heritage values of the place. The long-term integrated management

of the whole site will preserve the significant setting and can allow for future development. (97-98)

It is noted that the state heritage listing for the recreation grounds is very precise and defined in relation to built elements and not the site as a whole. In contrast, the State heritage listing for the railyards adopts a more comprehensive approach and includes most, but not all, of the site within the State heritage curtilage. Based on the assessment of relative significance the following site plan sets out an assessment of the key heritage features of the site. It is also noted that future development on the site will need to be carefully designed to respond to the guidelines set out in the policy of this CMP to ensure that new elements enhance and do not detract from the identified and important heritage values of the buildings, site and setting. The local heritage values for the site are however different as they also relate to the place as an entity within Launceston in addition to looking at the individual value of specific built elements. It is consequently recommended that the local heritage listing be more general to address the setting and landscape values of each part of the site. (98)

It is noted that the site has been sub-divided in relation to current uses and that the subdivisions do not relate to historical use or parts of the site, they are not considered in setting out policy except to note that they exist. As the site as a whole has significance, it would be undesirable to further sub-divide the site without having clear controls and guidelines for the development and use of those lands to ensure that future development does not adversely impact on the overall heritage values of the place. The long-term integrated management of the whole site will preserve the significant setting and can allow for future development. It will be desirable for the whole site, irrespective of specific use of parts of the site to have an overall management framework that ensures the homogeneity of approach to the place as a whole. (p 98)

The key aspects to consider with regard to any new site element that may be proposed are: i. New built forms must not dominate the heritage buildings in terms of their scale, design, materiality or location on the site. ii. Generally, new elements (buildings or site features) should be designed to not visually dominate the site and should not detract from the physical dominance of the existing workshop group of structures. iii. New buildings should demonstrate design excellence. iv. Buildings should be designed as elements within the former industrial landscape. v. Buildings should relate to the ground plane with active frontages, undercroft forms (potentially to address flooding) are not compatible with the character of the site. (108)

Future development should not take place within the former spine of trackwork where the current circular entry carpark is now situated. xiii. The railway site was traditionally a workshop site (noting that the station was a public facility but has now been removed) with simple robust forms in simple materials designed for their functionality. While some buildings demonstrate form, scale and detail, this was

secondary to their use. New built forms should similarly focus on the simplicity and robustness of form that characterises the site. This will assist in new forms sitting contextually in relation to the heritage structures and will ensure that the main group of workshop buildings are the dominant built elements of the place. (109)

Based on the Heritage Study and the contradictions etc in the DA document mentioned above this DA should be refused by Council. It is a messy, confused design of a low level use for the highly visible front area of 2 Invermay Road and should be rejected for a more appropriate use and design deserving of such an important site.

Jillian Koshin.

4 March 2021

Michael Stretton
General Manager
City of Launceston Council
P.O. Box 396
LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

By email to: contactus@Launceston.tas.gov.au

Dear Sir, Re: DA0695/2020 2 Invermay Road Launceston; Educational and Occasional Care – Landscaping works, plantings and associated infrastructure including two outbuildings, a steel structure, water tanks; recreational area including playing courts and bleachers; removal of parking spaces and trees.

We refer to the public notice dated 17 February 2021.

Our Group is continuing and determined, to keep the City of Launceston Councillors reminded of the folly of its support of the Utas campus relocation.

The land upon which this application is proposed, (the former Goods Railyard) is land *inter alia* transferred to the Ratepayers of the City of Launceston from ownership by the Commonwealth Government and was not for the development or expansion of a university campus. This reason for the land being owned by the City of Launceston Council imposes certain responsibilities on City of Launceston Council (CoL) and its ratepayers.

Nothing written has, nor can it, extinguish the principle of *implied trust*.

University of Tasmania, is not a public purpose.

The area that is the subject of this application is principally a public carpark, and Landscaped forecourt areas to the School of Architecture, School of Creative Arts and Queen Victoria Museum.

The Urban Design Framework (UDF) to which the proponents allude, has not been disclosed publicly, and in any event, has been cobbled together without public consultation or input, and would not sustain “the pub test” nor gained a social license.

The Northern Transformation Masterplan was simply imposed on the community with virtually no community communication or interaction, and was firmly rebutted by our Group’s consultant Chris Penna’s *EVALUATIVE REVIEW of the University of Tasmania Inveresk Precinct Redevelopment Project*, report, peer reviewed and widely distributed and factual content and conclusions upheld.

The Ireneinc Planning report purporting to support and justify this application, includes what is termed the Urban Design Framework (UDF) dated 2020. The UDF is said to “deliver the balance of the Transformation Masterplan”. It doesn’t, and as

stated above, has never been made public nor has it been given any scrutiny or endorsement by the public.

The Davies 2019 CMP was **not** a public process in accordance with James Semple-Kerr's superior philosophies, was never **peer reviewed** and accordingly has had **no public endorsement**

The polar trees are signature trees defining the York Park Sports Ground. The removal of these skyline trees, visible from many other parts of the city, is not justified, and is attempted on some sort of anti-poplar tree bias, that drains are affected, the demarcation of the avenue being not desirable, and the species **originating in the Northern Hemisphere !!**

Heaven forbid, lets immediately clear-fell all of City Park, Princes Square, The Brickfields, and St Georges Square, let alone the Victorian Pleasure Gardens of Cataract Gorge Reserve !!!!

The loss of mater, healthy trees, that the proponent's arborist admits to not including any defects that is likely to result in failure, is a great embarrassment that does nothing but unnecessarily reduce carbon storage. Something like 48 trees are to be removed or will be further threatened by the unnecessary proximity of service pipes/concrete kerbs etc.

The land is on a tidal flood plain and is subject to certain seismic activity risks. Not only does the seismic risk endanger the safety of any infrastructure that may exist or is proposed to be constructed there, but it also endangers the stability and durability of the City Flood Levee system which allegedly is intended to make-safe the land area in question. This application continues to promote the fast-changing flood risk modelling stating. This is not low risk and only likely to occur at a time beyond the life cycle of the proposed University building structures and associated supporting infrastructure, to the contrary the expression 1:100 years DOES NOT mean that such a flood will only occur once in one hundred years, as has been publicly-stated by several Councillors.

Former State Treasury official, (Mr. Don Challen), was a strident opponent of any further building intensification within the Flood Inundation Zone. This was in part due to his concerns of an increase in government compensation liability, should the area be flooded. This significant financial liability will likely extend to City of Launceston Council acting as the Planning Authority, and to the Councillors who made the determination.

A **one-hundred-year flood** is a flood event that has a 1 in 100 chance (1% probability) of being equalled or exceeded in any given year.

The 100-year flood has also been referred to as the 1% flood, since its annual exceedence probability is 1%. For coastal or lake flooding, the 100-year flood is generally expressed as a flood elevation or depth, and may include wave effects. For river systems, the 100-year flood is generally expressed as a flow rate. Based on the expected 100-year flood flow rate, the flood water level can be mapped as an area of inundation. The resulting floodplain map is referred to as the 100-year floodplain.

The common misunderstanding is that a 100-year flood is likely to occur only once in a 100-year period is incorrect. In fact, there is approximately a 63.4% chance of one or more 100-year floods occurring in a 100-year period.

The objectives of the LUPA Act includes for sustainable development whereby in Part 1 *sustainable development* is defined as managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while-

2(c) avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

And in Part 2

(f) to promote the health and wellbeing of all Tasmanians and visitors to Tasmania by ensuring a pleasant, efficient and safe environment for working, living and recreation, and

(i) to provide a planning framework which fully considers land capability.

It is our general submission that CoL fails its ratepayers, citizens and visitors to Tasmania should it allow this unstable, flood prone and undesirable land to be further developed as a University Campus, when prudent and feasible alternatives are available, if not elsewhere within the Central Launceston area, then on the site that has already been established and contains substantial infrastructure and is surrounded by significant community resources, and does not suffer from an inability to be evacuated in the event of flooding, inundation by sea level rises or climate change or such dangers and risks being compounded by seismic activity.

As referred to above, details of subsequent changes are described in the widely circulated and peer-reviewed *EVALUATIVE REVIEW of the University of Tasmania Inveresk Precinct Redevelopment Project*, commissioned by Northern Tasmanian Network Partners and Associates, and authored by eminent researcher Chris Penna.

Precipitated by behind-the-scenes political activists and opportunists, with electoral cycles and pork barrelling, the ridiculous relocation of the Newnham campus to the flood plains of Inveresk and Willis Street sites has been imposed on our Launceston Community. Suggestions of a central Launceston university population of 10,000 students and supported by a staff numbering 500 people is a ludicrous dream. Covid 19 issues that have already devastated university populations worldwide, and in particular the overseas Chinese student market, will prevent any expansion of the small campus in Launceston from occurring, and at the very least for quite a number of years, if not decades. Already, UTas has pushed out their student population forecasts until 2032.

The present predictions of student and staff populations (and the 'numbers' used to determine facilities for students and staff, is 5400 FTE students and 491 FTE staff.

The combining of numbers to Full Time Equivalent (FTE) IS GROSSLY DECEPTIVE, AS PART TIME ATTENDANCES AND STAFFING WILL PUSH OUT THE NUMBERS OF ACTUAL PEOPLE ATTENDING AT ANY ONE TIME.

The actual numbers planned for and catered for with facilities is unknown, but clearly more than the FTE's admitted, and very much less than the number of students promised would be attracted, justifying the *Education-Driven Economic Revitalisation of Northern Tasmania*.

Substantive community support has never existed for this relocation project, and the ludicrous traffic congestion and lack of adequate parking for a relocated university campus continues to be the basis of a raging public discourse. The UTas Newnham campus has generous parking and land for expansion of the university precinct. It already sits in a residential area that has re-accommodated the student population, and the Mowbray Shopping district caters for a broad variety of cultural cuisines. That student population will not simply vacate Mowbray and move to the yet-to-be constructed accommodation facilities in central Launceston. The transport system pressures that will inevitably occur to connect from Newnham/Mowbray to an Inveresk/Willis St campus will place an unaffordable impost on our ratepayers.

We are confident that this present Development Application is not supported by Launceston ratepayers, and it is interesting that the even more dramatic campus relocation in Hobart from Sandy Bay to Hobart central city, has been abandoned by UTas, due to the unaffordable costs and realities of the situation, now revealed. Most recently, the Supreme Court upheld a decision of the Planning Commission who had refused an application by UTas to re-zone and subdivide the Sandy Bay Campus in order to place that property on the market.

The banner of RETREAT from building and retaining developments on flood plains that will be further impacted by climate change and rising sea levels and furthermore with seismic risks, could not be more solemn. The spectre of liability for allowing this development to occur will be forever a dark cloud over the heads of the present Councillors who are being lead along to sanction and approve it.

Seemingly oblivious to publicity and public opinion (see The Examiner Tuesday September 15, 2020) the Pitt and Sherry report is quoted *“Based on these changes for the 1 per cent event the Launceston Levee and Inveresk Levee are expected to top”*. And *“Any structure at either the Willis St or the Inveresk site is likely to have a life above 30 years. Therefor it would be prudent to consider flood scenarios at periods within that life. As no defined criteria are in place for development in flood-prone areas, developers should consider the risk associated with their development and plan appropriately”*.

The journalist goes on to report that at a 2 per cent increase, both the Willis Street and Inveresk sites would be severely impacted by floodwater for an extended period following the flood levee failure. The report said if a levee failure occurred the onset of the water would be rapid, and the flood behaviour would be unsafe for everyone. Not reported from the application, is the admission that in addition to the flooded situation would it be unsafe for people, but that there would be structural damage and the campus would be inoperable for multiple weeks...

Accordingly, we implore that this Development Application be refused, and political influence be instead engaged to redirect the allocated funding to either the present site

at Newnham or another central site that is not flood prone or at risk of collapsing flood levees.

Carparking for the School of Architecture and separate School of Creative Arts and Media has already been removed from the area and those spaces are being redeveloped for intensified Utas functions, WITHOUT CARPARKING being added in the immediate vicinity and with DDA compliant carparking, adequate bicycle parking, motor cycle parking and close access by Tiger Bus services. The present, almost glib reference to the portion of the Stone Building presently occupied by the School of Creative Arts and Media, to be taken over for Administration, is again without carparking facilities added. The *modus operandii* of Utas and its consultants, is to bombard the community with an evolving series of competing Development Applications, some consecutively as at present, with 4 applications utilising timetables overlapping and impossible to assess at any one time.

Just on the issue of carparking, the take over of the Launceston Showgrounds land for carparking (but this is to “share” usage for other major sports and public events uses in the precinct); the loss of the casual events parking on the Old Cycle Track area beside York Park Stadium, the loss of half the ‘Circular Carpark’ facility to landscaping and ceremonial forecourt spaces; loss of carparking for Utas developments at the Willis Street site; progressive loss of public carparking at the LCC’s Cimitiere St Carpark; intensification of major developments for Fragrance Hotels (with inadequate carparking); the Boland St Hotel, (proposal suspended, but with inadequate carparking); Albert Hall; Gasworks Gallery *et al* (with some carparking); other major expansions of Silos Hotel, Good Guys etc and more to come in that “commercial big box” quadrant of the area); the CoL’s Riverside Playground and sports development, (deficient carpark); and the yet-to-be detailed Student Accommodation developments (deficient carparking as usual); if one’s head spinning comprehension of developments and carparking/traffic congestion outcomes can be understood, all amount to a gross over-intensification of development:

- Located on a flood plain;
- Subject to seismic activity;
- Absent adequate carparking and Traffic Management to avoid severe traffic and pedestrian congestion;
- Presenting an undue risk of public liability and compensation level.

The present ‘circular carpark’ provides a valuable public car parking facility for 310 spaces. This proposal removes 151 spaces, and foreshadows that CoL Council intends to remove further spaces from the balance area, in part due to creating just 5 spaces for people with a disability. Disability car parks to service the QV Museum are presently located much nearer the entrance to the Museum than they serve. It is trite to suggest that allocating disability car parks in the adjacent staff car park area is closer than the left-over public carpark, is when they are actually further from the Museum entrance than the car parks presently provided. By neglecting to provide adequate bicycle racking/storage facilities and thereby discouraging bicycle and pedestrian (walking access to Utas as pledged, the proponents are avoiding the provision of showering/changeroom facilities for cyclists/pedestrians.

Insufficient focus is given to the abject lack of adequate bicycle, motor cycle parking/storage facilities (Utas has made much of how future student populations will choose to walk, travel by bicycle, motor cycle or public transport and thereby justify a massive reduction in the carparking facilities provided by comparison at the Newnham Campus).

Where will the present Tiger Bus Service be accommodated? How will this service not only the Utas facilities but also the QV Museum, let alone other on-site activities such as the Tramsheds Meeting and Convention Centre, The Tram Society Museum, Café Blue, and York Park Stadium, even without contemplating the extraordinary expansion plans for the capacity of the Stadium and additional sports stadium facilities on the remnant Old Cycle Track land?

The triangular area referred to as “University Square” whilst likely intended to be some form of aesthetic forecourt, is quite inadequate to perform as a necessary emergency evacuation space, and overlooks the responsibility with contemporary public-standard facilities, to be allocated on a vastly-superior scale. The previous loss of the important Rotary Rock Feature in the area should be reinstated, given its creation and community value that acknowledged the visitors and dignitaries who attended the site from the international community and those that will continue to follow.

The proponents admit that *The site’s industrial past is at odds with the (newly contrived) Urban Realm Principles.*

This is furthermore conflicted by a statement stating that *The site is now to be adapted to enhance its grounds for University and cultural (First Nation Peoples’) use.*

The proponents employ that this proposal is *revealing* indigenous history, it does nothing to demonstrate in any credible, scientific or by actual proven research, what that indigenous history is/was on this site, and seems to be nothing but *tokenistic*, almost admitting that a *guilty secret* is being addressed or homage paid to address, and could have as much relevance as someone arguing (inappropriately) that a memorial garden be constructed to address the current disgrace of sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour related to vulnerable/aspiring female public servants/advisers in the political realm...

The proponents criticise what, with very significant public funds was previously created on the site saying that *The circular carpark confuses the understanding and evolution of the Railway and Workshop Complex....*

And so how is what is being proposed address these established principles and outcomes/facility use? It doesn’t.

Already, and with some embarrassment, the Pro-Vice Chancellor responsible for this project (now quietly re-assigned to other duties), admitted that UTas was working hard to create the evidence..... It still appears to be the case.

Presently, there is an overall public use, with few barriers or constraints, and this will not be provided for and will be significantly abandoned.

This proposal should not be approved, all of the healthy mature trees should be retained, and the present carparking facilities left as is.

Given that consultants Pitt and Sherry have prepared reports concerning flooding risk and more concerning this site, it ought not be undertaking planning assessments for this or other Utas projects here.

Yours faithfully,

Lionel J. Morrell

Architect

For Northern Tasmanian Network Partners and Associates

Copy to Ian J N Routley, Leigh Murrell, Jillian Koshin, & Chris Penna.

Enc. All part of this representation and integral to our submission:

ATTACHMENT Summation of Workshop June 2019
THE STANDING OF ETHICS IN RELATION TO
Utas INVERESK PRECINCT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

APPENDIX 1
TRUST, TRANSPARENCY AND SOCIAL LICENCE: PUBLIC INTEREST
AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FAILURE (EXTRACT).

ATTACHMENT

SUMMATION OF RESEARCH WORKSHOP attended by members of Northern Tasmanian Network Partners & Associates :

THE STANDING OF ETHICS IN RELATION TO UTas

INVERESK PRECINCT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT June 2019

Two articles by John Hewson published in the Launceston *Examiner*, (28 December 2018 and 25 January 2019) raised issues of considerable concern for many Australians. In his articles, one of which was head-lined “Australia’s in the midst of moral, ethical decline” Dr Hewson talked about “trust deficit” and “a longer term erosion of the moral and ethical standards across society, as well as their application and enforcement”.

He pointed out that the loss of public confidence is not only with our politicians, political processes but also with a broad range of institutions – “churches, banks (and more broadly in business) various sports, the RSL, and numerous authorities ranging from the police, judicial processes through to a host of regulatory authorities...ASIC/APRA and even the Reserve Bank””. Geoffrey Watson QC expressed similar concerns and a “falling trust in politicians” in a local ABC radio interview in November 2018 and in subsequent interviews. He described Tasmania’s Integrity Commission as a toothless tiger. He talked about transparency, hidden agendas, secrecy and the influence of lobbyists on politicians in Tasmania.¹

Dr Hewson and Geoffrey Watson didn’t include universities in the list of institutions, but in a recent ABC radio interview (5 July 2019) well-known journalist, Ray Martin did mention universities. He talked about the cult of secrecy with governments and public servants disliking “light being shone in dark corners”. He had addressed university students earlier in the day and explained how he had told them that “we can’t have the sort of open, free democracy that we have don’t have watch dogs, if people aren’t watching, not just governments, but public servants and parliament and universities etc...big organisations, all the institutions...all need to be scrutinised.”

In an ABC radio interview in Tasmania in 2018 about the Tamar Valley Peace Festival, VC Prof. Rufus Black also talked about integrity and “breach of trust” and “a kind of stain that’s been spreading across Australian society, in politics, then went into churches, businesses, as we’ve been seeing recently with the royal commission.” The Ethics Centre has written about social licence and how “big companies with controversial practice often give out community grants and investments” in an effort to buy “social licence’ and “community acceptance”, in an approach that the Ethics Centre refers to as “a calculated and cynical payoff”.²

In Tasmania, there are serious public concerns about the actions and culture around the University of Tasmania (UTas). UTas is a cossetted monopoly in Tasmania. Under the management of the past 6-7 years, a culture of misrepresentation, deception, real estate matters and staff intimidation has evolved. In Launceston, this has occurred as the result of combined Launceston City Council (LCC)-UTas’ management ambition and lobbying to secure millions of dollars in public funding, including \$300 million to relocate the Launceston and Burnie main campuses (consisting of \$150 m from the Federal government, \$150 m from the Tasmanian government, plus gifts of several parcels of public land from the Launceston and Burnie City Councils).

From the start, the plan for the relocation of the entire Launceston campus (concomitant with and mirroring the Burnie and Hobart plans) away from a safe, secure fully-operating campus to a site only 3-4 kilometres away - on an estuarine flood inundation zone that sits below high tide level, and with severe traffic and parking issues - has lacked any significant supporting evidence or academic rigour. The plan is full of obvious inherent

¹ See also ABC radio news transcript, 7 March 2019, comments by Geoffrey Watson.

² The Ethics Centre, “Ethics Explainer: Social license to operate”, ethics.org.au, 23 January 2018.

flaws, ongoing inconsistencies and planning ‘on the run’. In other words, it is/has been a shambles. These matters were recently the subject of a highly critical article by Richard Flanagan in the Hobart Mercury.³

Since 2012, the process has involved a lengthy, convoluted series of machinations and ad hoc reactionary actions and responses. Furthermore, it has involved a complete rejection of community opinion as well as serious **intimidation** of UTas staff who objected or criticised the plans. In the push to obtain funding promises in the lead up to the 2016 federal election, UTas, LCC and lobbyists operated, and continue to do so, outside ethical, integrity and academic standards. The lobbying and propaganda were thorough and highly successful. Outlandish claims used to support the Launceston campus move to Inveresk, such as the projected enrolment of an additional 12,500 students, (10,000 of whom would, they claimed, be from Tasmania – a statistical impossibility) combined with threats that the northern section of the university would close if it didn’t move to Inveresk, not only went unchallenged, but they were accepted by all levels of government, the major parties and most politicians.

After much assistance and ‘coaching’, UTas eventually submitted a ‘final’ business case to Infrastructure Australia (IA). This was right on the final deadline it had been given, 31 January 2019, potentially it seems, for routine and expedient approval post 2019 election. It appears that this UTas proposal by-passed Stages 1 and 2 of the IA assessment process, to go straight to Stage 3 where it was evaluated by IA.

The trust deficit, and the erosion of moral and ethical standards discussed by Dr Hewson, Geoffrey Watson QC and others are applicable to this situation in Tasmania. It might also be noteworthy that the three main instigators behind the Tasmanian plans, and the associated degeneration of ethics, integrity and honesty, and the sheer success of Illusory Truth Effect, - LCC GM Dobrzynski, VC Rathjen and Provost Calford - have all since left Tasmania for greener pastures. (Sep ’17, Oct ’17, Jan-Feb ’18 respectively)

Trying to condense the issue into as few pages as possible but it is not an easy task, given the nature and volume of material involved. The following four examples might be the easiest way to sum up the misrepresentation, deception and due diligence failure within UTas and LCC and the cosy relationship between them, that have been features of this matter. Sections marked in bold in are direct quotes.

Example 1. The plan was initiated around mid-2012 by the then LCC General Manager (GM), Robert Dobrzynski, when he started working behind the scenes to achieve his aim and to encourage UTas, to change the original intended location – the UTas Newnham campus – of its planned NRAS funded student accommodation. The GM’s enticement involved ‘giving’ a parcel of public land at Inveresk to UTas for the accommodation building. He ignored the existing high-level Master Plans for both Inveresk Precinct, the Mowbray Precinct sections of the Greater Launceston Plan and the major plans for the Mowbray-Newnham campus. He also ignored the legally constituted York Park Inveresk Precinct Authority, (YPIPA) its 4 community members and senior state public servant member (head of Events Tasmania) as well as several genuine full public consultations and community input into all those existing Master Plans.

Even before this accommodation relocation was formalised, it soon emerged that the GM’s ill-thought out plan, which he simplistically insisted was ‘good town-planning’, involved more than just student accommodation relocation. Behind the scenes he moved quickly to invite and encourage UTas to provide information to support his plans for a full campus move to Inveresk, a distance of 3-4 kilometres from the existing fully operating campus site of 180 acres and associated infrastructure. His intentions are revealed in items listed in an email from him to UTas in December 2012. An example of such items on the list is, **“LCC would wish to gain an indication of the future**

³ Richard Flanagan, *The Mercury*, 20 April 2019, pp. 7,

development proposed by UTAS at the Inveresk site, and to gain the collaboration of UTAS in developing the Inveresk precinct Plan which will guide development at Inveresk”.

UTas management was quick to take advantage of this encouragement and start its own push. In its December 2012 response to GM Dobrzynski’s email, UTas referred to previous discussions adding that, **“the University needs to finalise the matter.”** It referred to **“tight deadlines”** and warned that **“If in-principle agreement on Inveresk cannot be reached before Christmas the University will have to look at alternate sites to meet these deadlines.”** It must be pointed out here that until July that year the intention had been to build the accommodation at Newnham campus where UTas already ‘owned’/occupied the land, and for which the NRAS funding had been obtained.

Thus, the opportunity was seized by UTas, particularly by VC Peter Rathjen (now at Adelaide) and Provost, Mike Calford (now at ANU), with the latter doing much of the lobbying of politicians and candidates of all parties well in advance of the 2016 federal election. Meanwhile, in order to silence vocal opposition, the GM was able to sideline YPIPA community members by working directly and secretly with the LCC Mayor and the two aldermanic representatives on the Authority. In 2016, he succeeded in getting UTas to sponsor the York Park stadium for an undisclosed amount understood to be lower than the previous 5 year sponsorship by Aurora.

Example 2. i) In early 2016, a senior Commonwealth public servant (who shall be referred to as PB), but acting independently, approached northern UTas management to query the document that they had put forward as their ‘business plan’. This document was/is nothing more than a glossy marketing brochure. Initially the northern UTas representative argued that it was indeed the business case, but PB insisted it was not. After some discussion, and as PB was not to be fobbed off, it was suggested (or he may have requested to speak to someone, it is uncertain at this stage) that he speak with the University’s Hobart-based business manager. It is perhaps noteworthy that the business manager travelled from Hobart to Launceston to talk with PB. Again, when PB insisted that the glossy brochure was not a business plan he received the same response from the business manager that it was. However, as PB persisted on the existence or otherwise of a business plan, the business manager finally admitted, **“We don’t have one”.**

ii) Similarly, PB also sought the student statistics that UTas would have presumably used to support/underpin their arguments for public funding and land acquisitions. After much running around, PB was eventually told that **“there aren’t any”**. This accords the experience of another researcher. Not from want of trying, including a trip to Hobart, they were unable to find or obtain current or earlier statistics of student numbers, not even basic Full Time Equivalents (FTE), across the campuses.

Example 3. On Monday 2 October 2017, less than three weeks before VC Rathjen was due to finish up as VC and leave Tasmania, an ordinary meeting of Launceston City Council was attended by some members of the public and twelve well-prepared UTas representatives intending to address the meeting on the controversial Agenda item relating to a LCC-UTas campus relocation land deals. During the morning before the meeting, the aldermen received an email from the LCC Acting General Manager. The email read: **“A robust debate in council that does not result in the required absolute majority will significantly damage relations and our reputation, especially when the university has been organising speakers to attend the meeting supporting the proposal,”**

Apart from one alderman, Danny Gibson, the other aldermen and the Mayor were very keen to give more parcels of land to UTas, still without having carried out any due diligence (in breach of their code of conduct) on behalf of ratepayers. Alderman Gibson was incensed at such an instruction from a council official and asked what was the intent of the email. He also asked about the nature – a convoluted series of “exchanges” - of

what the Aldermen were being “asked” to approve. He stated that it “was ludicrous to have not questioned” the land deals further and “appalling that the council had not finished its parking study before the land decision was made.” He pointed to the haste, with which the deal was being voted on that day simply as a farewell favour for VC Rathjen. Referring to the land deals and an upcoming LCC send-off for the VC, Ald Gibson argued, “I believe if there wasn't a function to celebrate the achievements of the Vice Chancellor this Thursday in Launceston that we would have negotiated a better outcome”.

The Mayor tried several times to silence Ald Gibson on this, saying it was a confidential email. However, Alderman Gibson held his ground, until he finally got an answer regarding to the nature of what the aldermen were being asked to approve. The eventual answer from the Acting GM was, **“It has been a long process of working to address the issue of trying to achieve the outcome of the relocation of the university to the inner city site. I think that through that process, as aldermen have been advised, there was a point now of an expectation that we had reached an agreement. For us not to proceed would be something that is regrettable, given the effort that had gone into it.”**

That answer from the Acting GM was a clear indication of the failure by all levels of government to carry out any due diligence or requirement for UTAs to produce modelling, demonstrated need or a full evidence-based business case. By late 2017-early 2018 it had become the fall-back position of many politicians and proponents to suggest that the ‘plan’ is/was either too far advanced to halt, or that “it’s a done deal” or similar.

Example 4. On 28 May 2018 four members of a series of community networks that include businesses, academics, students, tradespeople, retailers, ratepayers, residents and others, requested a meeting with the new VC, Rufus Black. Black invited two UTAs representatives/lobbyists, Professor David Adams and James McKee, to the meeting. During the very polite discussions, Professor Adams had as much to say as the VC, Mr McKee said nothing. Well into the discussions and on the topic of the complete lack of any evidence, reason or need for the Launceston campus move, Adams, as he spoke, volunteered this shocking and revealing top level admission of six years of misrepresentation, academic disregard, negligence and ad hoc actions with the statement (information that the public was already well aware of) **“We are retrospectively trying to create the logic of this.”**

This, in 2018 - after 6 years of machinations and disbursement on associated resources (personnel, equipment, marketing, travel, office space, real estate etc) after millions of dollars of public funds had been promised, with some funds already handed over, land parcels gifted and some land titles granted, and planning scheme flood inundation codes altered - was the best they could come up with! Adams’ words were a full admission that they, UTAs and proponents, still had not established justification for relocation, that all their previous claims and actions have indeed been a scam. Furthermore, on 1 March 2019, a full month after their submission to IA, Adams was quoted in the local newspaper, *The Examiner*: ‘Pro-vice chancellor David Adams said the university had been **“working hard to get the evidence”** for its transformation project, but “unforeseen challenges had meant a delay to the existing timelines.”

The level of misrepresentation, deception, manipulation, demise of ethical standards, lack of accountability and transparency by UTAs and/or those in government responsible for organising and signing MOUs and granting funding has been mind-boggling and continues unabated. Not even the serious damage to the Sandy Bay campus caused by the

flood in June 2018, nor the public response to an Open Letter⁴ to VC Black was enough to bring about a rethink of the folly of relocating the whole Launceston campus to a flood prone tidal flat – an area that sits below high tide levels, albeit behind levees, but which has to be evacuated, at great expense and effort, every time there's a flood evacuation warning as there was in June 2016 at a cost to UTas of over \$40,000 to evacuate the small campus there.

Moreover, the cost of Launceston relocation is now rumoured to have blown out to well over \$400 million, (presumably in part due to the nature of the intended location), while the posited randomly selected number of 'additional' students has been reduced from the original figure of 12,500 quoted in 2015-6, to 7,000 in mid-2018 to 1,200 in late 2018.

This combination and size of altered projections alone should be enough to negate all MOUs and to force serious, open examination of LCC-UTas methods, funding and efficacy of the all campus relocation plans. However, it has made **no** difference to the funding promise by politicians and proponents.

No single politician, candidate or party carried out any due diligence or fact checking before supporting the funding promises. Because of the obvious flaws and absence of any need to relocate (quite the contrary, **the evidence for remaining at the current campus is overwhelming and fully understood by the public**), ad hoc decisions, policy and planning on the run, and absence of any coherent proposal have been ongoing characteristics of the process from the start, a feature also recognised by the public.

In this absence of any due diligence or fact checking by the political class or of any requirement for UTas to produce actual evidence or modelling or full business case, Launceston-based community networks assigned a full academic-level report.

Researchers have spoken to many people, politicians of all persuasions, business owners, professionals, tradespeople, academics, students, current and former UTas employees, UTas lobbyists, University Vice Chancellor, administration staff, media/radio hosts, and had numerous discussions and casual conversations with members of the public. The high level of opposition within the general public (80-85% opposed) and within UTas staff (75% opposed in Hobart, approx. 90% opposed in Launceston) and students, has remained high from the start. It has not diminished.

One of the difficulties for any member of the public in trying to deal with this issue, or to expose the misrepresentation and deception (in the legal sense, say as per Aust Consumer Law, or under 'wilful blindness' or 'public interest') is the constant stream of ad hoc responses, inconsistencies and the almost weekly contradictions that emerge from the UTas Northern Transformation (NTP) office. In addition to that is the secrecy and collusion by the Launceston City Council on matters such as Development Applications and discretionary Planning Scheme Amendments in assisting UTas actions.⁵ People who

⁴ See the published Open Letter including all the community social media comments.

⁵ The clearest example of this was the successful passing of Amendment 43 to the L'ton Planning Scheme to alter part of the Invermay Flood Inundation Code to allow a previously 'prohibited category' development on the tidal zone that sits below high tide level. When the Code was originally put in place, then State Treasury Secretary, Don Challen, was adamant that no further intensification of the area was to occur. In the past 3-4 years the City Council has succeed in weakening the Code to allow full-scale development there (with the associated growth in daily traffic movements, the highest in Tasmania, outside Hobart). The City Council failed to mention to the Planning Commission or to anyone else, that a Flood Modelling Report by BMT, that it, the Council, had commissioned and had already seen several interim versions, was close to final publication at the time of the Amendment 43 Planning Commission hearings. The BMT report is a serious document based on the latest climate change data and flood data, with serious projections (2050, 2090) for flooding in/around Launceston. *North and South Esk Rivers Flood Modelling and Mapping Update Vol1: Technical Report, and Vol 2 Flood mapping*, published in Nov 2018, but not released by LCC until 22 January 2019. Several Launceston experts (flooding, estuarine scientist, engineer, emergency personnel) expressed surprise

should be checking this issue, are not. Those who should be taking action or are in a position to bring about action are ignoring or dismissing the issue in a wilful abrogation of their responsibility. By not carrying out their own due diligence and/or fact checking, these “self-absorbed” politicians and councillors have rejected accountability and transparency, and most likely breached their Codes of Conduct. Meanwhile UTas misrepresentation, under the guise of ‘transformation’, continues unchecked and undeterred. Indeed, they have created several new positions over the time and appointed a new pro-vice chancellor to oversee the ‘northern transformation’.

Given this situation and the failure by anyone involved to apply and enforce standards, (as per your articles and Geoffrey Watson’s comments about the Tasmanian Integrity Commission being a paper tiger), how does the community go about using the research and the reports to bring honesty and common sense to the issue?⁶ A return to the earlier published common-sense UTas plans of refurbishing the current main Launceston campus in conjunction with the Mowbray Precinct Study, at a cost of between \$59m to \$72m, would release public funds for several important alternative projects needed in Launceston and fully supported by the public.

It is not possible in this letter to cover all the matters of public concern associated with the UTas relocation projects. A full academic-level, peer-reviewed evaluation of the planned campus relocation and UTas’ claims, *Evaluative Review of the University of Tasmania Inveresk Precinct Redevelopment Project*, by Chris Penna, has been published and sent to relevant people in the hope that they might read it and perhaps take notice of the content and of the misrepresentation and deception perpetuated by UTas and its lobbyists. A further independent academic-level report is in progress.

FURTHER REFERENCES –

1. SECTION ON TRUST, TRANSPARENCY AND SOCIAL LICENCE - EXTRACT FROM AN UPCOMING INDEPENDENT REPORT ON THE UTAS RELOCATION (The Report includes aspects from an ETHICS CENTRE publication)
2. OPEN LETTER TO THE VICE CHANCELLOR, AND SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS, JUNE 2018.
3. ARTICLE BY DR M POWELL ON THE NEED FOR “AN INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO UTAS?” 8 JUNE 2018

that the Council even released it publicly it at all, due to the seriousness of the report and the projections. In all its actions the City Council - and the State Government - has given preference to the UTas proposal over everything else.

⁶ A rethink and a possible reversal on the Hobart STEM centre relocation, which has been with Infrastructure Australia for some time and had reached the final stages, was announced in mid-January 2019.

APPENDIX 1.

TRUST, TRANSPARENCY AND SOCIAL LICENCE: PUBLIC INTEREST AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FAILURE (EXTRACT)

The UTas relocation proposal has almost no public support. Surveys consistently show that it is opposed by the overwhelming majority of the public and UTas staff and students across Tasmania.⁷

Neither the University of Tasmania nor the Launceston City Council (LCC/CoL) have social licence for the campus relocation plan. LCC/CoL seems to believe that while it gifts millions of dollars' worth of land or interest-free loans on the one hand, social licence for the campus relocation can be gained, on the other, by carrying out small, disjointed projects in the Mowbray-Newnham area, under the now severely truncated and weakened Northern Suburbs Strategy, misleadingly renamed "Northern Suburbs Revitalisation Plan". As the Ethics Centre notes, "*Too often, social licence is thought to be something that can be purchased, like an offset. Big companies with controversial practices often give out community grants and investments... a social licence... might be seen as a kind of transaction where community acceptance can be bought. Of course, such an approach will often fail precisely because it is conceived as a calculated and cynical pay-off.*"⁸

Social licence has never been earned or 'granted' for by UTas for its campus relocations. UTas has never required to provide an impact study or any modelling for the effects of its plans on either the intended location or on the current campuses and the local areas. Although originally intended for resource development projects, the Queensland Govt produced guidelines for preparing a local impact management plan (SIMP).⁹ A similar plan should have been a requirement for the UTas relocation plans in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie, where water-front public (local/state govt-owned) land has been given to UTas without any examination of local activities severely impacted/affected or at risk of serious negative impact, and an increase in infrastructure to cater for UTas desires.

The survey-report by the Australian Institute of Company Directors and KPMG on social licence, could well have been written specifically about aspects of the university sector in Australia, and could be seen as pointing the finger directly at the failures of UTas management "*Vulnerable stake holders are the ones we have difficulty hearing because their voices are filtered out by layers of management that are using a business-only lens to prioritise their biggest risks... A Social licence must be earned every day.*" KPMG p.7

*"Social licence is an important and powerful lens to frame trust. It acknowledges the active role that people and communities play in granting ongoing acceptance and approval of how companies – or entire industries – conduct their business.(p11)*¹⁰ *Aggrieved and cynical communities can*

⁷ Surveys and petitions of the general public, UTas staff and students conducted since 2016, and assessment of social media show up to 85% opposition. Staff at the Launceston campus believe the rate among all staff there is 90%. According to a recent NTEU survey, the rate among Hobart staff to relocations there is 75%.

⁸ The Ethics Centre, "Ethics Explainer: Social license to operate", ethics.org.au, 23 January 2018.

⁹ Lacey, Justine, "Can you legislate a social licence to operate?" *The Conversation*, 27 February 2013.

¹⁰ Australian Institute of Company Directors & KPMG, *Maintaining the social licence to operate. 2018 KPMG – AICD Trust Survey*, 2018, pp. 11, 12.

withdraw the social licence of organisations that lose or exploit their trust – with potentially devastating financial, legal and regulatory impacts. Organisations can no longer view trust as an asset that they can buy or rebuild after a crisis, but one that must be earned and maintained on an ongoing basis. Boards of all sectors are increasingly aware that fundamentally, trust is about relationships, not solely reputation... (p.11) ” We no longer place unquestioning trust in systems and institutions. Instead, trust is more likely to flow between local networks, individuals and peers...” (p. 12)

UTas has nothing concrete to offer or give the local Northern Suburbs community in the way of ‘bribes’ or ‘sweeteners’ to win community support, but it has a great deal – in the form of a fully functioning campus and all that it entails - to take away, so gaining social licence is difficult, if not impossible. UTas management has made, and continues to make, endless wild promises to its staff and the public of a rosy transformed future. While limited sections of the public (strikingly and unashamedly closely associated with each other) have accepted the UTas spin and propaganda, the wider community recognises the absence of any modelling or supporting evidence, and it recognises that the main part of the UTas ‘spin’ or ‘case’ is framed in verbose general education/pedagogy unrelated to location. That is, UTas’s case is largely location-neutral, a fact well-understood by the public.

The proponents of the relocation plan have given no consideration to the destruction of local amenity and/or liveability. They have ignored all previous extensive community consultations around Inveresk Precinct land use. Museum Search Conference, genuine community input and listening by YPIPA, to community and tenants.....Folder with letters and submissions, From the time UTas management arrived on the scene, the community (as represented by YPIPA community members, Inveresk precinct tenants) began to lose any say, and worse, were push aside. UTas and other proponents of the relocation plan continue to ignore/disregard the intent of the GHD 2006 Flood Study, the Deed and the Flood Inundation Code, and even the latest BMT Flood study, 2018. Regrettably, on all aspects of the relocation issue, the public is justified in its suspicions and mistrust of UTas and CoL, The wider community is fully aware of the deficiencies and problems associated with Inveresk. The community also recognises the quality and value of the current Mowbray-Newnham campus/location combined with the long-term sustainability and cost effectiveness of remaining there. The vast majority of the population has not been seduced by the endless stream of media releases, media photo opportunities, marketing presentations and false gestures posturing as ‘consultation’ by UTas in its effort to gain or claim social licence. In this UTas has failed spectacularly.

Moreover, in their wilful determination and enthusiasm for their relocation project, UTas and CoL have also failed to abide by good governance principles. Governance is “the process and culture that guide the activities of an organisation beyond its basic legal obligations”. Good governance includes, but is not limited to, “*acting with the highest ethical standards...fostering trusting and respectful relationships, showing a commitment to risk management...following a transparent and accountable decision-making process...*”¹¹ In their ongoing planning chaos, their failure to

¹¹ Tasmanian DPAC, Good Governance Guide

abide by the highest standards of risk management, and the absence of transparency and accountability, both UTas management and CoL have sacrificed the principles of good governance.

[REDACTED]

From: Basil Fitch [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 4 March 2021 4:16 PM
To: Contact Us; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: DA 0965/2020 representation.
Attachments: Representation Launceston Concerned Citizens & Fitch, DA 0695-2020
4.3.2021.docx

To the Council Officer concerned

please find a representation that I am submitting on behalf of concerned citizens of Launceston, whose names must remain confidential for fear of retaliation, due to the public nature of DA matters and the publication of names in council agendas.

Kind regards,

Basil Fitch
[REDACTED]

TO: The Mayor Albert van Zetten, Mr Michael Stretton, Councillors

Launceston City Council

RE: Development Application 0695/2020

DA0695/2020	
Application Description	Education and Occasional Care – Landscaping works, plantings and associated infrastructure including two outbuildings, a steel structure, water tanks; recreational area including playing courts and bleachers; removal of parking spaces and trees
Group	Planning Development
Category	Discretionary Applications
Applicant Name(s)	Ireneinc Planning
Status	Current
Closing Date	04/03/2021

Property Details

Property Address	2 Invermay Road INVERMAY TAS 7248
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Discretionary Development Application	
Council Minute	
Use Class	Educational and Occasional Care
Development Use Description	Partial Demolition

This Representation is on behalf of Launceston Concerned Citizens who have opposed these UTas moves from the beginning, and the content of this DA, DA 0695/2020, confirms their worst fears – the ad hoc and inappropriate nature of the numerous UTas DAs for no public benefit, but instead to considerable loss to the community of citizens of Launceston and Northern Tasmania.

Part 1.

In particular the huge area of public land and open space was handed over gratis to this UTas organisation, a gift that is not bringing anything new to Launceston or Northern Tasmania, a gift that went ahead regardless of the high level of community opposition. There is no shred of evidence in this DA that indicates that UTas has given any thought to the fact that the land belonged to the Citizens of Launceston, the residents and ratepayers.

This DA is a clear demonstration of the contempt that UTas has for the ratepayers and residents. We have lost the Show, the Magic Millions Thoroughbred sales, the Esk Market, the Chopping arena, various smaller animal shows such as the Goat Breeders show (which is now gone away from Launceston to Longford), and the Don River Railway is now trapped in a very small area.

The Council should stop and ask itself, what additional activity has UTas actually brought to Launceston, that wasn't already here? The Council should make a list of what has been lost to Launceston because of the gifting of land UTas. And has the Council been keeping an eye on the number of units and courses that have gradually been moved to Hobart since 2015-16?

The concerned Citizens also ask does the Council know the value of the mature trees that are to be **destroyed** in this DA. How can the Council vote to approve this DA at the same time as it, (the Council) claims to have declared a 'Climate Emergency'. The DA plays with words, such as 'realm' 'removing' the trees, or 'transitioning' to a different type of vegetation, 'green credentials', 'additional' trees etc etc, when in actual fact the intent is to chop down 31 mature trees, that hold significance for the Citizens of Launceston.

The trees are a valued **feature** of the precinct, they must not be vandalised by UTas. This application to vandalise 31 beautiful mature trees is the best example of the contempt that UTas has for the Launceston community and for the historic value of the site and of all previous work and design, that went into the precinct. The Council must also take into account the actual dollar value of these trees. That isn't mentioned in the DA. It is a serious concern to the ratepayers, that a university could so easily dismiss not only the environmental, visual and historic value of 31 mature trees, but also ignore the dollar value of this asset to Launceston. The trees are in fact irreplaceable.

It will take at least 20-25 years for any new trees (not just shrubs or native grasses) to reach a reasonable size, In the meantime more carbon will go into the atmosphere because of the loss of those 31 mature trees.

On behalf of the Concerned Citizens, I would like to repeat some of the reasons behind their concerns: The DA dismisses the importance of the 31 existing mature trees, with no mention of how long it would take for any new trees to grow to reach the same height, biomass and maturity of the existing

trees. No consideration has been given to, the **Carbon value**, the **Oxygen value**, calculate how much **CO2** the tree converts to **O2**, then apply a price to buy oxygen from say BOC; the **real estate value**, and **Storm Water (runoff) value**,

Part 2.

Ratepayers and residents of Launceston, and especially the people of Inveresk and Invermay who live in the vicinity of the Inveresk Precinct, are very concerned at the state of the combined stormwater and sewerage system of Launceston. The combined system and the problems it causes are another reason that this DA 0695/2020 should not be approved. Any Councillor, who votes in favour of it, shows contempt for the local amenity and is not a friend of Invermay-Inveresk residents.

Sections on sewerage and stormwater in the report done for the DA show what some of the problems are, and how this DA will make them worse. We have included the sections of the Wardle report that show that the existing situation will get worse if this DA goes ahead. Whether such small things as the addition of drinking fountains is described as 'deemed negligible' or not, **all** aspects of this DA in relation to sewerage, stormwater, runoff and drainage, **add to the existing problems**.

Sewerage and Stormwater report: 4. "Given that there may be times where the irrigation tanks are filled and overflowing, the only net change in runoff delivered to the LCC stormwater infrastructure from this part of the site is the area of the channel itself, proposed to be 500m² equating to a flow reduction of approximately 4.9 L/s. Rainwater reuse will also likely see less shock loading placed on the stormwater system under rainfall event" p.9 (Wardle Development servicing report)

4.1 Site Sewer and Water Connections As part of the proposed Urban Realm development, no new large-scale water or sewer services are provided. A number of drinking fountains are proposed for installation throughout the site, these to be sourced from existing metered water services adjacent to them. Drinking Fountains will be connected to nearby sewer connection points. The increase in loading provided by these fixtures has been deemed negligible when compared to whole site demand. 4.2 Site Stormwater Connections This development sees a focus on providing stormwater reuse where possible and reducing the impact on downstream stormwater services. Directing runoff to vegetated raingardens where possible and collecting roof runoff for irrigation are the main manners in

which this is proposed to be achieved. 4.2.1 University Square The proposed University Square sees an existing landscaped zone and access road (McGrath Way) of approximately 2400m² remodelled to provide more congregation space. This sees a net increase in hardstand of approx. 800m², providing a likely increase in flow of 8.5 L/s when considering the Rational Method in accordance with AS3500.3:2018. Flows from this development zone are proposed to be split and directed to two existing LCC owned stormwater outfalls. Approximately 3.6 L/s of additional flow will be directed to the Victoria Bridge outfall pipe and stormwater pumping station via existing pipework already installed and being installed as part of the Library Development currently under construction. The remaining additional flows (4.9 L/s) will be directed to the existing outfall to the east of the Architecture Building. Upgrades to this outfall are proposed with a future offline pumping station to be proposed to help overcome existing ponding issues around this part of the Inveresk site. Figures 2 and 3 show the existing site and proposed works. (p.6)

4.2.3 Esk Activity Space The Esk Activity Space sees an existing undeveloped grassed area adjacent to Victoria Bridge and the North Esk River developed into two recreational court spaces. This development sees an increase in runoff of 32.8 L/s when considering a rational method runoff calculation in accordance with AS3500.3:2018. All hardstand runoff is proposed to be delivered to raingardens located around the perimeter of the courts. Within the raingardens, stormwater pits will deliver high flow to the LCC stormwater network adjacent. Figures 6 and 7 show the existing site and proposed works." (p.10)

If this DA is approved it will further disadvantage the citizens of Invermay and Inveresk and be of no added value to the wider community. Therefore it must be rejected.

B. Fitch on behalf of Launceston Concerned Citizens and ratepayers and residents of Inveresk and Invermay.



[REDACTED]

From: Basil Fitch [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 4 March 2021 2:35 PM
To: Contact Us; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Representation to DA 0695/2020
Attachments: Representation DA 0695-2020 B. Fitch 4 March 2021.docx

To the Council Officer concerned,
please find attached my representation to DA 0695/2020

Thank you,

Basil Fitch
[REDACTED]

TO: The Mayor Albert van Zetten, Mr Michael Stretton, Councillors,
Launceston City Council

RE: Development Application 0695/2020

DA0695/2020	
Application Description	Education and Occasional Care – Landscaping works, plantings and associated infrastructure including two outbuildings, a steel structure, water tanks; recreational area including playing courts and bleachers; removal of parking spaces and trees
Group	Planning Development
Category	Discretionary Applications
Applicant Name(s)	Ireneinc Planning
Status	Current
Closing Date	04/03/2021

Property Details

Property Address	2 Invermay Road INVERMAY TAS 7248
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Discretionary Development Application	
Council Minute	
Use Class	Educational and Occasional Care
Development Use Description	Partial Demolition

Because this is another Discretionary Development, the Council and Councillors should think of the ratepayers for a change – and keep in mind at all times that UTas is **not** a ratepayer, and that to date, UTas has not met any of its 2015-2016 big promises, and was never going to be able to, even without the pandemic.

All Councillors should reject the DA and send it back to the drawing board. So much land and so many community activities have been taken away from the community with no actual financial return and at a huge cost and at a loss of public facilities. Launceston people do not need to be subjected to any more wasteful UTas expense.

The Examiner reported on 3 March that it was to create an ‘urban area’ for the entire community to enjoy. That is NOT what is written in the main report for the DA. In that report is stated many times that it is for the

university and its “subservient” uses, and that it is not intended to be for the wider community use. So which is it? In typical fashion, the UTas’ Dom Geraighty talks up the community aspect, no doubt in order to get the councillors’ approval. So again, which is correct the Examiner’s report of Geraighty’s words or the main report attached to the DA? Due this obvious contradiction, Councillors should not approve this DA.

This is on land that belonged to the community that was taken away and given to UTas without any guarantees. Now UTas wants to destroy numerous trees, claiming that they are not heritage trees. The poplars are part of the heritage of the old bike track area as well as an avenue to the railway industrial area. Thousands of railway workers trod that road, thousands of cyclists and spectators trod that road to attend bike races.

The idea of the “Esk Activity Space” is a sorry little turnout. It is no substitute for all wonderful sporting facilities at the Newnham campus. The claims to being some sort of green urban wonderland for students to enjoy is also fantasy. Students like the Newnham campus, Unlike the design and plans in this DA, Newnham campus is a fine example of an Australian campus with large mature native species trees, open space, lawns and gardens. Riawunna at Newnham with its significant rock features, is far superior to anything that can be built at Inveresk or Willis St. All the things that make up this DA could all be installed at Newnham without any need to chop down trees or take away parking or public land.

Esk Activity Space – sounds more like a kindergarten space. None of this comes up to the standard of landscaping and open space and the gyms and sporting facilities at the Newnham “Activity Space.”

The “Esk Activity Space” is not suitable for an area that should be regarded as the front yard, the first impression of the whole site, the first view and introduction to the whole of the Precinct, a protected VISTA as it used to be under heritage protection.

The Council must save Launceston residents and ratepayers from this strange use of this particular location and reject this DA.

Basil Fitch,



[REDACTED]

From: Leigh Murrell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 4 March 2021 2:19 PM
To: Council
Subject: DA 0695/2020
Attachments: DA 0695 2020.pdf

Hello,
Please find attached my submission to DA 0695/2020. Please forward to the GM and all Councillors.
Yours Sincerely
Leigh Murrell

To: The General Manager,
Michael Stretton,
Launceston City Council
Thursday 4th March 2021

DA0695/2020

I wish to register my strong opposition to DA0695/2020 - Education and Occasional Care – Landscaping works, plantings and associated infrastructure including two outbuildings, a steel structure, water tanks; recreational area including playing courts and bleachers; removal of parking spaces and trees. This is but another part of the highly flawed plan by the University of Tasmania to relocate from the perfectly viable and safe Newnham Campus to the Inveresk Tidal Flood Zone (as verified by the BMT Report) It is also an area that is unquestionably contaminated from past uses and this will once again become a serious problem when it next floods despite the fact that this DA seems prepared to conveniently ignore this.

It is without question that UTAS has continually altered their “plans” to relocate from the totally viable and safe Newnham Campus to the Tidal Flood Zone of Inveresk to the point where it no longer even vaguely resembles the extravagant images blithely swallowed by Council. The total lack of concern by either UTAS or the Council for the community in general, and in particular for those sorry residents who will be living close by and whose lifestyles will be disrupted and altered forever is appalling.

There are major, ongoing and unsolvable traffic issues impacting the whole Inveresk area, with the latest Veolia debacle adding to the mix, and this development will only compound these existing and growing, traffic congestion problems. The removal or further distancing of Public Parking from the CBD, the notion that all the parking from Newnham can be simply dumped into the Inveresk environment is surely a joke. There is at least as much parking by both staff and students in the streets surrounding the Newnham Campus as there is in the UTAS grounds apparently because of the cost of parking there. Where do you think all of this traffic will go? There is no “locked in concrete” agreement that UTAS will provide any future parking and if their “estimated” numbers of students increases as they suggest, then the already abysmal congestion through Inveresk will be horrendous by 2032 and this is despite Councils “Traffic Management Plan” which will not and cannot resolve this issue that will only worsen over future years.

The so-called “solutions” provided in this DA do nothing to provide real and workable answers to all the problems this development will create for the general community and for that reason I urge you to dismiss DA0695/2020.

Yours Sincerely

Leigh Murrell



[REDACTED]

From: Ray Norman [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 4 March 2021 12:34 PM
To: Contact Us
Cc: Mayor; Councillor Danny Gibson; Rufus Black; Minister Jaensch for Planning; Minister for Local Govt; Premier Gutwein; Archer, Bridget (MP); Courtney Griesbach [EXAMINER]
Subject: FW: REPRESENTATION FOR Development Application DA0695/2020

For Council's Consideration

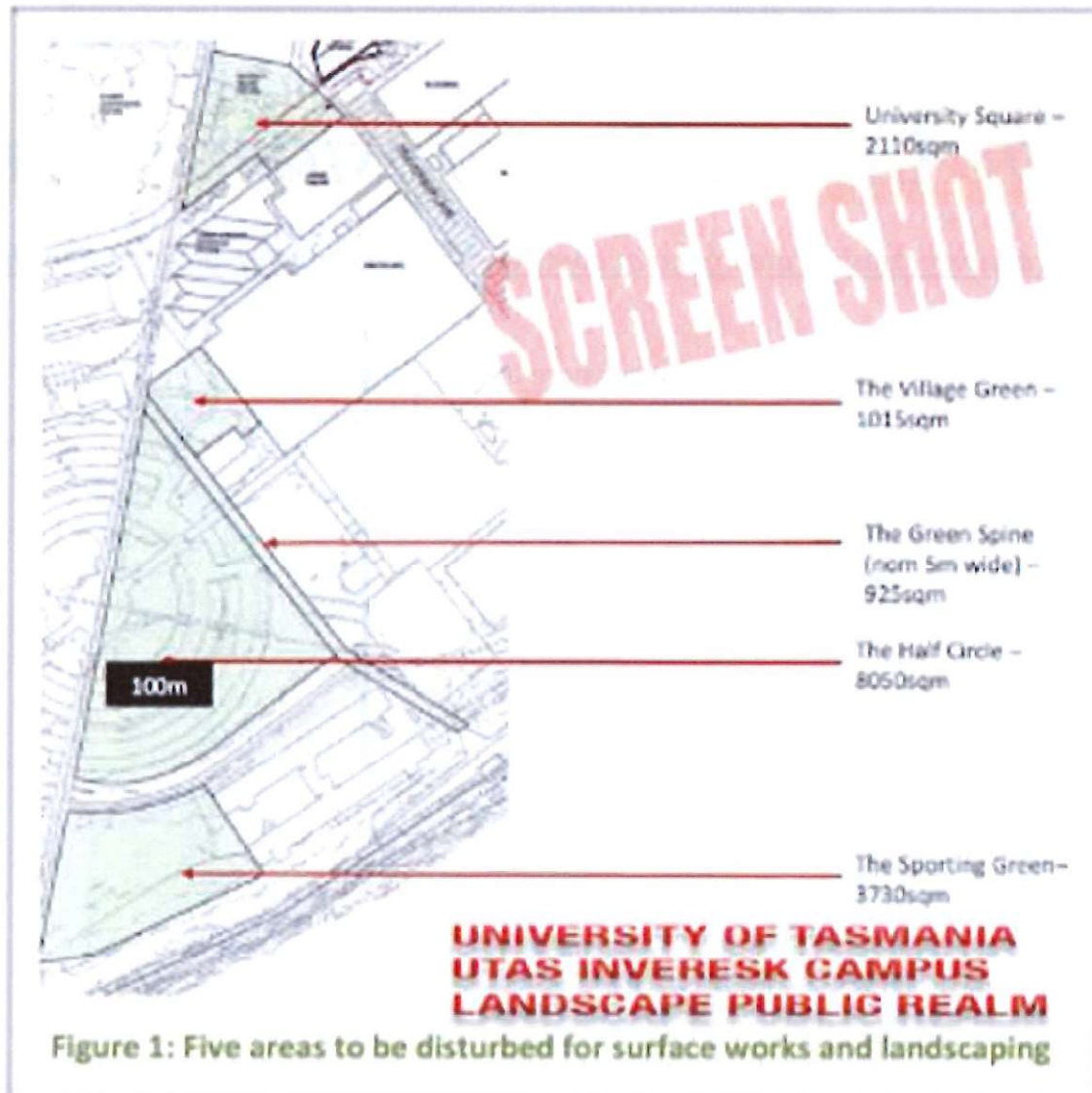


From: Ray Norman [REDACTED]
Date: Thursday, 4 March 2021 at 11:57 am
Subject: REPRESENTATION FOR Development Application DA0695/2020

REPRESENTATION

Development Application DA0695/2020

OVERVIEW



[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS KEY DOCUMENTS](#)

The *'placedness'* of this development's *'site'* comes with layer upon layer of histories and *'cultural landscaping'* that reach back millennia. Consequently, the *'place'* has an enormous [Community of Ownership and Interest \(COI\)](#) and this development, on the evidence to hand, is by-and-large careless of its depth and extent. Rather, it is totally focused upon the proponent's aspirations and expectations as if the *'place'* is not a component of a diverse *'cultural landscape'* with a multiple layered set of communities with cognitive ownerships and cultural interests invested in *'the place'*. It is a *'public place'* and it needs to be understood as such.

Against this backgrounding, the discretionary status of this *'development application'* is concerning given that it is fundamentally ticking a bureaucratic box in the expectation of winning community approval – *as if there is nothing to be contested*. That implies that a community, that on the available evidence has not received meaningful consideration could or would have anything to say. Nor might *'the community'* expect to have anything

resembling *'engagement'* beyond the comfort of the proponent's aegis and zone of interest and influence – *such as it might be*. Yes, there has been engagement with *'council'* but not with the wider community in any wider sense.

Essentially, the *DA* process here is intended to be *'the consultation process'* and it is clear that the proponents are not in any way interested in regarding the place's *COI* in any way that resembles *'unconditional positive regard'* – *rather it sees them in an adversarial and antagonistic light and something to be overwhelmed and beaten*.

Moreover, the proponent's using a double page spread in the *'local press'* to tell readers that they can comment by the end of the close of business *'the next day'* puts on display the proponent's disregard for anyone who might have a concern.

On the evidence, the consultation process that is in play here is to provide an adequately detailed plan to Council and stand back to await whatever Council or community approval, or disapproval, that may come the proposal's way – *and then patch up any unanticipated flaws if all that is compelling in any way*.

The research into the *'place's histories and cultural realities'* is not there and characterising the *'plan'* as being both underdone and superficial is quite sustainable. It needs to be said however that the consultants here are meeting the expectations of the proponents – *their clients*.

Clearly, any meaningful consideration of community aspirations and expectations has not been given any priority, on the evidence to hand, and there is no evidence that such considerations are even on the proponent's agenda at any level.

By way of backgrounding, *'the site'* exists within a cultural landscape that prior to *'colonisation'* was arguably the most fecund place on *lutruwita* – *the island State of Tasmania now*. In a millennial *NANOsecond*, the people and their cultural reality were displaced, decimated. They were expelled under the guise of *Terra Nullius* and likewise their cultural landscape was extinguished – *in a word trashed ... an exemplar of colonial ethnocide*.

To date Peter Cox has presented the most authoritative *'picture'* of *kanamaluka* Tamar thus far. He did not identify, or reference, *"ponrabbel"* as a *PLACENAME* for the *'country'* at the confluence of *kanamalika* Tamar and the two Esk river systems [*laykila?*] that was [John Reynolds](#) in 1969 in his book ['LAUNCESTON: History of a Australian City'](#). It turns out that Reynolds and Cox provide very useful references in developing a better and more expansive understandings of *'the place'* as a *'cultural landscape'* precolonisation, albeit before *palawa-kani* and *DUAL* naming protocols commenced in *lutruwita* Tasmania.

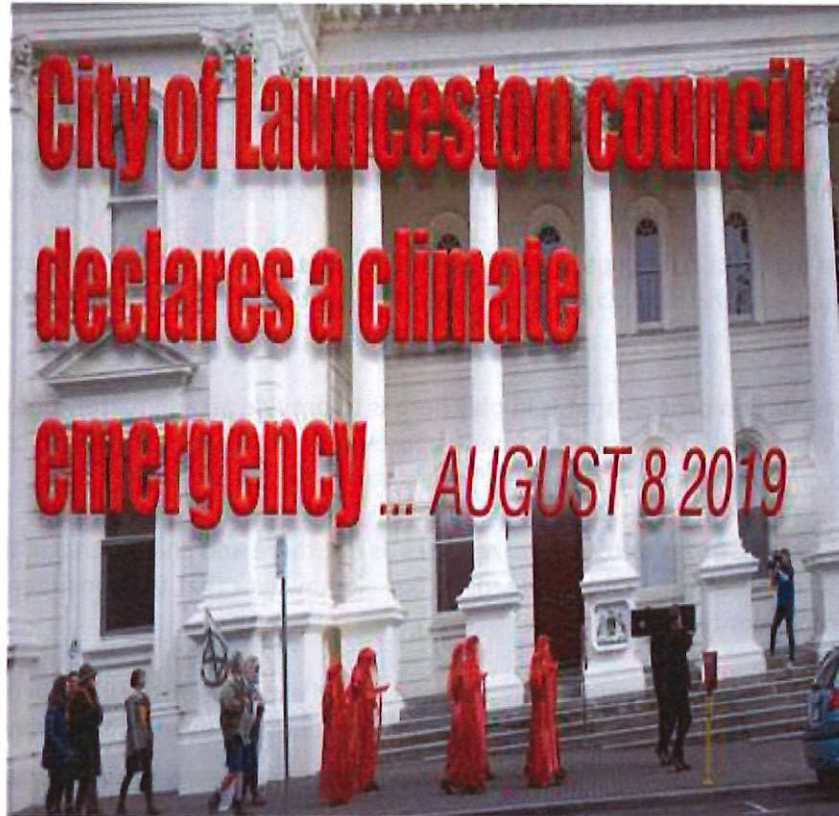
Incrementally, the *'placedness'* of this place was transformed into an industrial site, then a wasteland and currently the proposed *'somewhat tokenistic placescaping'* will not – *and should not even attempt to* – wash away or obliterate these histories and narratives. The landscaping cum enculturing project in hand might well address, contextualise and interoperate the site's *'placedness'* more fulsomely.

There are components of the proposal that go a little way towards this end but there are enormous possibilities yet to be explored and exploited. The case for doing so is compelling in an ethical cum moral context if the project is to embrace *21st C cultural sensibilities and sensitives* in a *'public place'* that has an enormous Community of Ownership and Interest.

Notably, the site has been *'gifted'* to the proponent here by the residents and ratepayers of Launceston. There is no evidence whatsoever that the project's proponent is in any way mindful of this *'significant gift'* and is seemingly holding *'Launcestonians'* virtually in contempt.

ARBORIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The value of a tree has been under constant debate since about 1975. As yet no Australian Standard exists. However, there are a couple of accepted methods that might be applied.



[CLICK HERE TO GO TO SOURCE](#)

In the context of Launceston Council's declared policy of '[Climate Emergency](#)' – *the 3rd city to do so* – every Development Application (*DA*) should evaluate the value of trees impacted upon by '*the development*'. Sadly, no such evaluation is evident in this *DA* and there is a real need for such an evaluation. Media Releases talking about a project's '*GREEN CREDENTIALS*' are too clever by half and they, '*in the most sinister of ways*' duck the issue.

Trees, especially so in civic circumstances, have real assessable value invested in them. While most '*public assets*' depreciate over time, most trees' values '*appreciate*'. Thus bureaucratic accountability needs to be revised to accommodate this in the light of '*Climate Change*' and the need to reassess '*cultural landscaping, placescaping and placemaking*' in a 21st C context.

MODELS # 1

The 1992 Australian/New Zealand Draft Standard Revised

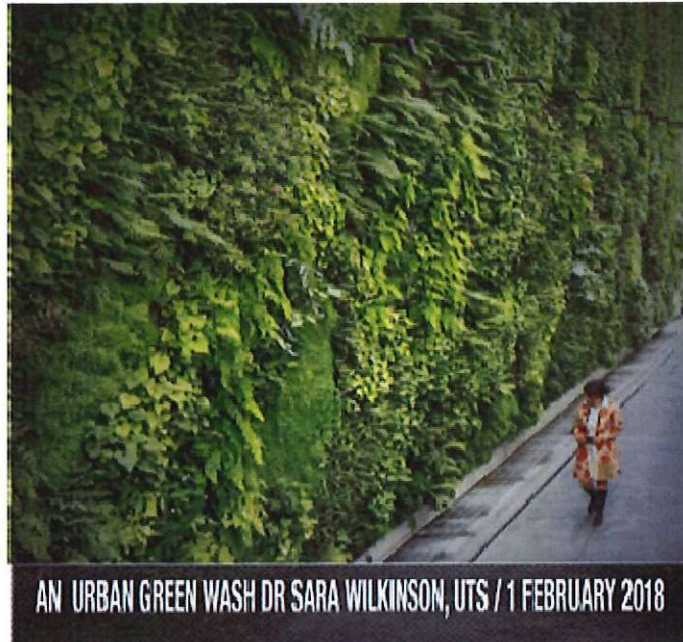
Value = $P(I * L * C * F * Y * S * V)$	Value = Tree Value in \$AUD
	P = unit value factor
	I = visual impact value (1,5-15)
	L = site suitability value (1,5-15)
	C = cultural significance value (1,5-15)
	F = frequency of occurrence value (1,5-15)
	Y = life expectancy value (1,5-15)
	S = live crown size value (1,5-15)
	V = form and vigour value (1,5-15)

MODELS # 2 & 3

The Revised Burnley Method (2006)	
$F = V * B * E * FV * L$	F = Final Tree Value in \$AUD
	V = Volume of Cone
	B = Base Tree Value \$/m ³
	E = Useful Life Expectancy (0.8-1.0)
	FV = Form and Vigour (0.00-1.00)
	L = Location Modifier (0.4-1.0)
The <u>Thyer</u> Tree Evaluation Method (2006)	
$TV = S * A * Q * P$ Where: $Q = H + Eb + L + R + Rt + Sb + F + Se$	TV = Tree Value in \$AUD
	S = Size Factor
	A = Age Factor
	Q = Physical and Social
	P = Planting Cost in \$
	H = Health (0-8)
	<u>Eb</u> = Environmental Benefit (0-8)
	L = Life Expectancy (0-8)
	R = Re-establishment Potential of Species (0-8)
	<u>Rt</u> = Rate of Growth (0-8)
	<u>Sb</u> = Social Benefit (0-16)
	F = Form and Features (0-16)
	<u>Se</u> = Social Significance (0-16)

The real and underlying problem here is that there are some somewhat subjective assessments to be made on some of the parameters with no parameters to guide. However none of these methods really consider the total value of the individual tree to/within the green infrastructure. **For instance:**

- The **Carbon value**, just calculate the Bio-Mass and multiply by a carbon \$X.00;
- The **Oxygen value**, calculate how much CO₂ the tree converts to O₂, then apply a price to buy oxygen from say BOC.;
- The **real estate value**, Look at the percentage increase in real estate in the last ten years in Invermay Road;
- **Storm Water value**, Each tree has a storm mitigating effect by delaying the Rainfall that falls onto it and before it reaches the traditional SW system, this greatly reduces the peak storm effect, but how you calculate that is an open question;
- **Building Assets value**, these trees are shading the buildings and reducing the 'weather' effects on that infrastructure, nominally **10% reduction** in ongoing maintenance costs.

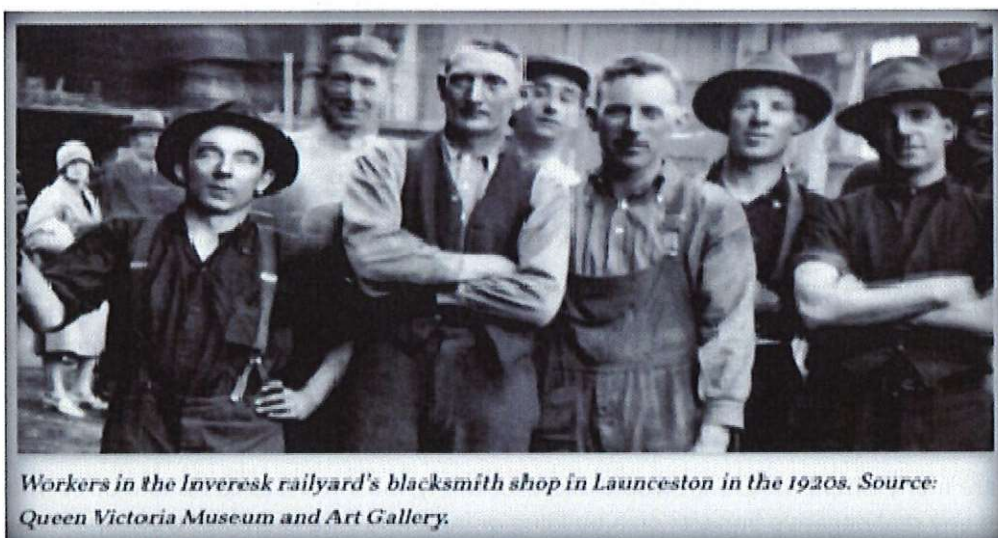


[CLICK HERE TO GO TO SOURCE](#)

In addition to above, the trees are ameliorating the environment and reducing the cooling costs in summer and the heating costs in winter. There is also an **engineering value**, as the water table is very close to the surface, the trees on this site provide a stabilising effect and amelioration of this water table on the built infrastructure. To dismiss these factors for *'aesthetic reasons'* or even some reason to do with the *'purity of design'* would be one dimensional.

By way of background, the current variety of species chosen where to reflect some of the cultural landscape of the developed site and the urban development in which it sits. As a public place it was also a *'civic planning and design decision'* to offer an *'arboretum effect'* to supplement *"The Botanical Garden"* that is City Park, and provide an interpretive experience for the public of species not readily planted in greater Launceston. So, the current *'collection of trees'* are a component of *'cultural landscaping'* that is apparently being seen as dismissible – *and without meaningful community consultation.*

Scant if any attention is evident to *'the value of urban trees'* in the context of this DA.



At the time of the sites conversion from a railyard – ***nationally heritage listed as only 1 of 3 intact industrial Heritage sites in Australia*** – there was only a very limited landscape palette to draw upon. The dot/dash planting of Cedrus and Lombardys around York Park is now all but removed to allow for AFL to flourish.

In regard to the row of Lombardys defining a main entrance point into the site. Their removal cuts quite a slash thru the landscape heritage and no account seems to be taken of this. Moreover, additional Lombardy trees were planted to respect this and to provide a **'way finding element'** from afar for such a significant site.

Additionally, there was a single Magnolia Grandiflora planted by an ex station master's wife, a grape vine – *a cutting taken from a vine presumably planted by a railyard worker* – and other plantings that payed respect to an element of the site's histories were a part of the enculturation of place when Council took ownership of the historic industrial site. So, the plantings were attempting to reflect some of the social cultural dynamics of the place all of which now seems to have been overlooked or downplayed.

So, why no **"native trees"** in that cultural landscaping? The appropriate endemic natives species are very few. Being a swamp as it was and given that only **'Tea-Trees and Black Wattles'** would have grown on the site pre-colonisation. Any eucalypts related to the site would have been found out of the flood zone cum tidal flat.

It is notably that the arborists report mentions nine **'Australian Natives'**, but finding them mentioned elsewhere in the report is beyond any readers reach.

So, clearly the value of the trees is quite significant! Because of the combined benefits that green infrastructure provides and the other factors. If a tree is to **'removed'** and not **'repositioned'** clearly this incurs a **'loss'** – *an assessable loss at that*. Given this, when a tree is **'lost'** there is a need reimburse the loss, in money terms, and use those funds to plant **'trees'** elsewhere. In regard to this site the **'cash loss'** is not likely to be anything less than **AU\$1,000**.

However, landscaping cum placescaping in this context can be seen as a **'fashionable green washing strategy'** and likewise community gardens are a fashionable and a trendy way to be **'sustainable'** by providing a bit of food for **'the public'**. One could be so blunt to say that all too often this strategy is employed at the expense of the environment.

Support for community gardens is a very much like congratulating motherhood albeit that in both instances **'the good'** is not always automatic or is it always all that evident.



But ripping out elements of a maturing urban forest for a few **'veggies'** is quite simply classic architectural **'territory marking cum corporate branding'**. Surely proposing a similar **'style solution'** for a heritage listed building would bring on cries of **"heresy"** and **"how dare you"** – *anyway what would I know, I'm just a cultural producer and cultural geographer and only 'architects' can design*. In any event, there are a great many **'great building'** built by **'builders'** who are not architects – *buildings in the vernacular that architects tend to reference/plagiarise in their grand schemes*.

Whatever, there are many simple ways that would allow for many/most of trees to remain or even be transplanted. If there are indeed any real negative impacts on a building or infrastructure there are ways and means to deal with that – *ways that were once out of reach but are no longer*. And yes, there are countless opportunities on this site to provide a realistic functional productive landscape layer that pays due respect to current cultural sensibilities and sensitivities too.



Joseph Beuys – 7000 oaks – Urban forest instead of city administration (*7000 Eichen – Stadtverwaltung statt Stadtverwaltung*), planted in 1986, started in 1982 at documenta 7 in Kassel, Germany, social sculpture, Ochsenallee, Kassel, Germany

However, achieving all that might need someone who'll be willing to comply with a client's somewhat questionable colonising aspiration and someone who is not a cultural producer cum cultural geographer and the many of the other things that one does in the course of living a life.

If we were to truly search for an exemplar of '*enculturing place*' we might profitably take a look at the city of [Kassel](#) in Germany. On [Joseph Beuys](#)' initiative in 1982 the city established a forest of [7,000 Oaks](#) that not only thrives but stands today as an exemplar of '*urban cultural greening*'. Moreover, it is an exemplar of community participation that in various ways in Australia that found its way into '*greening projects*' – *Landcare being one albeit not always acknowledged*.

It must be a condition of approval that the University of Tasmania adequately compensate the Launceston community for the loss of every single '*maturing tree*' that it removes in its '*placemaking*' on this site.

INTERPRETATION

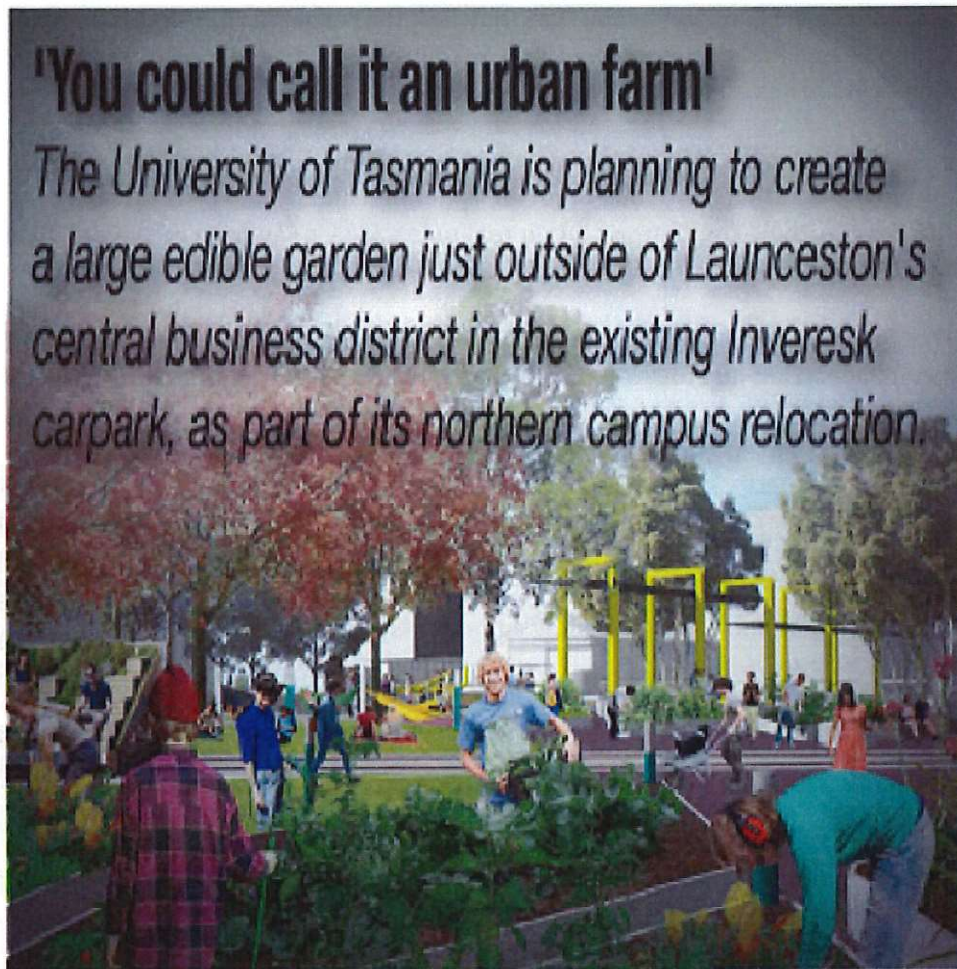


Given the scope and the relative complexity of this example of *'cultural landscaping'*, until [March 3 in The Examiner](#) there has been a dearth of information flowing to *'the public'* and the [Community of Ownership and Interest \(COI\)](#) to gauge a response. Given the fact that the *'place'* comes to UTas as a *'gift'* from the people of Launceston, one might reasonably expect that the university, as an institution, might be disposed to engage with that community at least and not leave that to Town Hall given that Council is notoriously disinclined to engage with meaningful consultation processes.

Aside from any of that, there is already a great deal to absorb and looking ahead there is bound to be more yet. Yes, there are references in the proposal to *'touch stones'* but the layers of complexity, and the diversity of the site's COI, a mechanism of contextual interpretation is needed. Indeed, it must be a condition of approval and especially so given that in the 21st C there are options available that does not have *'visual pollution'* as an outcome.

The provision of appropriate interpretation mechanisms, along with appropriate way finding mechanisms, must be a condition of approval in regard to this development application.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE



It is to be expected that the University of Tasmania will fulsomely maintain this cultural landscaping but there is no apparent reference to the institution making any kind of commitment to do so.

As a university, the proponent does not pay rates and consequently it relies upon *'the council'* to provide all manner of *'civic services'* but in this case there must be no ambiguity whatsoever.

Community gardens, the successful ones, require careful management and curation and leaving maintenance, planning and upkeep to the *'the community'* would be naive in the extreme. Yet it is an issue that the proponent must take full and unambiguous responsibility for given the subliminal *'marketing'* that it is projecting via this *'placemaking project'*.

Again, a formal commitment to appropriately maintain all the cultural landscaping is a must given the apparent *'marketing value'* the institution has clearly invested in the project.

In regard to the overall development the city's ratepayers and residents will be carrying, indeed are already carrying, a significant fiscal burden that must be contained. Thus, all relevant *'costs'* need to be born by the University of Tasmania without question – *no ifs, no buts.*

IN CONCLUSION

Firstly, it must be said that this development offers many positive things and in many ways it makes some significant steps forward in a 21st C context. That said, it is something of a disappointment that there are so many *'environmentally sustainable'* technologies and strategies that are not in evidence – *in this project and related infrastructure in this location.*

Presumably the proponents will claim, yet again, that they lack the resources but that is an assertion that wears increasingly thin as time passes and as it is realised that 'resources' can be diverted from one faltering strategic outcome towards others – *and sensibly*.

Notably, with the impacts of 'climate change' already upon us, the employment of renewable energy does not figure in any obvious way, albeit that the 'cloak of green' is donned and paraded so, so overtly. Here again we have a 'corporate citizen' mouthing the rhetoric but in reality, backing away from inconvenient truths. Put another way, the talk is not all that often being matched by the walk. It is a sad state of affairs.

Moreover, when UTas made its initial promises to Launcestonians back in 2016 to justify their gifting the land to the university to shift its operation just four kilometres onto a flood plain cum tidal flat, largely those promises have not been delivered upon.

Moreover, the city's CBD's prosperity is faltering as it was ever likely to in the wake of global digital disruption. Likewise international students are not coming to Australia in the numbers the University of Tasmania asserted that they would.

On top of that, the COVID-19 pandemic is dampening community wellbeing in ways that have, and will yet deliver, an unforeseeable future.

The histories are what they are, nevertheless they do impose new layers of accountability upon the university and in ways that will mean that, as a corporate citizen, the institution will need to pay much closer attention to its accountability. There is already a great deal to account for.

The university's 'March 3 strategy' where 'the public' is offered but two days to comment upon their development application as if there would be nothing to say demonstrates an arrogance that is hard to fathom. An important question arises. Has the University of Tasmania in fact lost, or jettisoned, its moral compass?

Rather than yet again giving the University of Tasmania the benefit of the doubt, council must on this occasion carefully scrutinise the application and unambiguously place appropriate conditions upon the proponent.

The Examiner
NEWS
Wednesday, March 03, 2021

UTAS to go green at Inveresk campus

UTAS have spent the past few years... The university's 'March 3 strategy'...

Ray Norman

The lifestyle design enterprise and research network



"A body of men holding themselves accountable to nobody ought not to be trusted by anybody." Thomas Paine

"The standard you walk past is the standard you accept" David Morrison

RAY NORMAN *Local Governance Advocate*
Helping you to help yourself