

## Co-Location Project Newsletter

June 2007

### An important step forward in bio-medical research and education

Things are moving forward on the University Co-Location Project. After a lengthy planning process the new facility, to be built on the corner of Liverpool and Campbell Streets in Hobart, has now passed a major development milestone with the approval of the Development Application by Hobart City Council on 23 April 2007.

Certain conditions have been applied to the Development approval (primarily in relation to the building façade) but the decision allows for the building 'footprint' and height to remain unchanged. The building will have five levels and be centred on the corner of the two streets.



## The importance of this new facility

This facility will have two key functions:

- a state of the art focal point for bio-medical RESEARCH in Tasmania
- a centre for TRAINING the health and medical professionals of the future (clinicians and researchers).

The new facility will help to enrich the quality of medical education in the State as well as to enhance the capacity for bio-medical research.

These functions are currently spread over a number of sites including the University campus in Sandy Bay, the Clinical School at the back of the Royal Hobart Hospital, and the six sites currently occupied by the Menzies Research Institute. Currently in Tasmania bio-medical research and the teaching of health and medical students do not take place in the same location.

What the new facility will do is bring these two types of activity (research and medical education) into the one building. This will enable greater levels of collaboration between professionals and help to foster career pathways for students between research and clinical practice. Many of those who teach our student clinicians are also researchers in their own right. The new facility recognises the interplay of these functions and will enhance it.

A great many changes are occurring alongside this building project and these are being taken into account during the planning process:

- a new medical degree course has commenced – the number of students is increasing and



the way the course is taught is also changing. More clinical education will be required at an earlier stage.

- the field of bio-medical research is expanding at a rapid rate. This means a need for increased capacity to conduct research. This will require appropriate facilities and a research workforce for the future.

The new facility will offer more opportunities for students to be engaged in research run by the Menzies Institute. It will also enable students beginning health and science degrees to be exposed to medical research as a potential career option, thus assisting with future recruitment. Medical students in the early years of their degrees will be educated in the new facility. Then, in their later years (i.e. years 4 and 5), students will participate in clinical education in a hospital setting.

The Co-location campus will be used by a range of groups including:

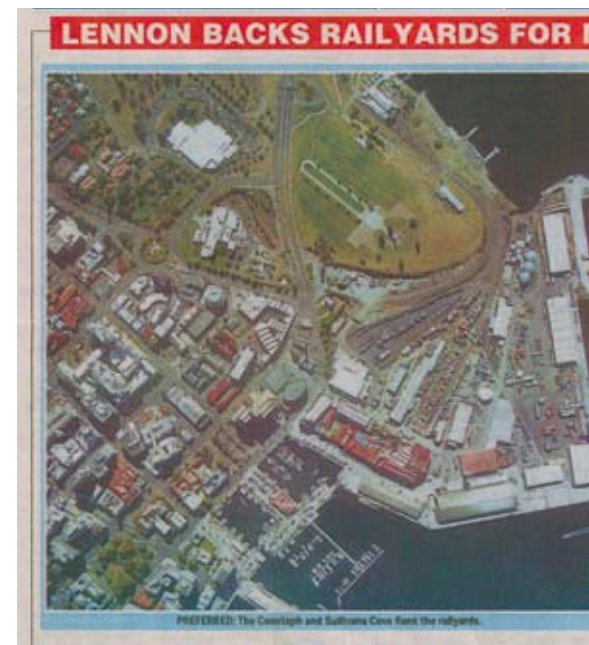
- staff (e.g. researchers, lecturers, administrative staff, technical staff)
- students
- the general public (e.g. to participate in health research projects, make donations, attend lectures on health issues).

It is anticipated that this central city University campus will provide a 'hub' of activity. The building design will facilitate movement through the campus.

## Announcement of a preferred site for a new Royal Hobart Hospital

There are very close links between the University (Faculty of Health Sciences School of Medicine and the Menzies Research Institute) and the Royal Hobart Hospital. The Royal is the major teaching hospital and the Clinical School is currently housed on the site of the Hospital. Students participating in clinical education in the last three years of the Medical course will continue to be educated in teaching hospital settings. However, there will be strong connections for staff and students between the hospital and the new Co-location facility (e.g. staff who teach at the Clinical School and RHH clinicians who are also researchers at Menzies, students accessing the Clinical School Library).

Thus, the recent announcement by the Premier of the railyards site as the preferred location for a new hospital is significant for the University project. The new hospital site is within easy walking distance of the Co-location facility and will be easily accessible to those who need to travel between them. The planning for the Co-location project has proceeded on the basis that an inner city site was likely to be selected for the new hospital. In the medium term a new building is required to meet expanding teaching and research requirements.



## First tangible signs of development

The first real signs of action on the University Co-location site will be the demolition of some non heritage-listed buildings to make way for the new building (starting with 13 Liverpool Street). Demolition is likely to begin in late May 2007 as part of the early works. The University also now has vacant possession of 15 Liverpool Street, consolidating the whole site.

## Funding for the project

As noted earlier due to the rapid expansion of both bio-medical research and medical education since planning commenced for this project, the capacity of the new facility must be increased (e.g. additional laboratory seats, staff workstations). A Business Case with a recommendation for an additional \$4.9 million in funding for the Stage One Project was presented to the UTAS Finance Committee in early May 2007 and approved.

There is a recognised need for additional student facilities on the new campus and this is to be addressed through future planning for the Stage Two Project. One option being considered is the future use of Hollydene House for student amenities.

## Heritage issues

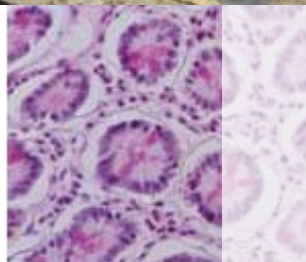
The site is being developed with sensitivity to its role in early European history in Hobart. Artefacts recovered from archaeological excavations will be analysed and catalogued as part of the site works. Part of the project will involve consideration of how best to display heritage items as well as future interpretation opportunities.

Some buildings on the site have heritage value (e.g. Hollydene and Advocate Houses). Appropriate planning will be undertaken to protect and conserve these heritage values. There are a number of heritage issues concerning the site that are being progressed. An appeal has been lodged in relation to some of the conditions applied by the Tasmanian Heritage Council.

## Ongoing refining of the project brief and confirming functional arrangements

During March and April 2007 a series of workshops were held with staff and student representatives to review the functions and future operation of the building. These workshops have provided valuable insights into how the facilities will be used on a day to day basis and have highlighted areas where further clarification is required.

Some issues requiring a policy decision have gone to the Project Steering Committee and other matters are being progressed through small working groups.



Article courtesy of *The Mercury*

## Master planning and detailed floor plans

Now that the Development Application has been approved, work has resumed on the Masterplan for the overall site.

The importance of future stages to cater for expansion has been noted at the highest level within the University. In particular, it has been noted that Stage 2 – the Hollydene House refurbishment – may be crucial in providing the much needed student amenity areas such as a student commons, cafe and student society room that are not able to be included in the current development.

Proposed floor plans are being refined in response to the issues raised at the recent Client Briefing Workshops. Some of the main changes to the brief that will be implemented as a result of the briefing sessions are: to increase the Integrated Learning Laboratory and Anatomy Laboratory capacities from 60 to 65, and reassess the ground floor design to provide improved access and a more focussed Satellite Learning Hub.

The latest draft of floor plans for the facility will be posted on the website as soon as they become available.

## Time lines for completion and occupancy

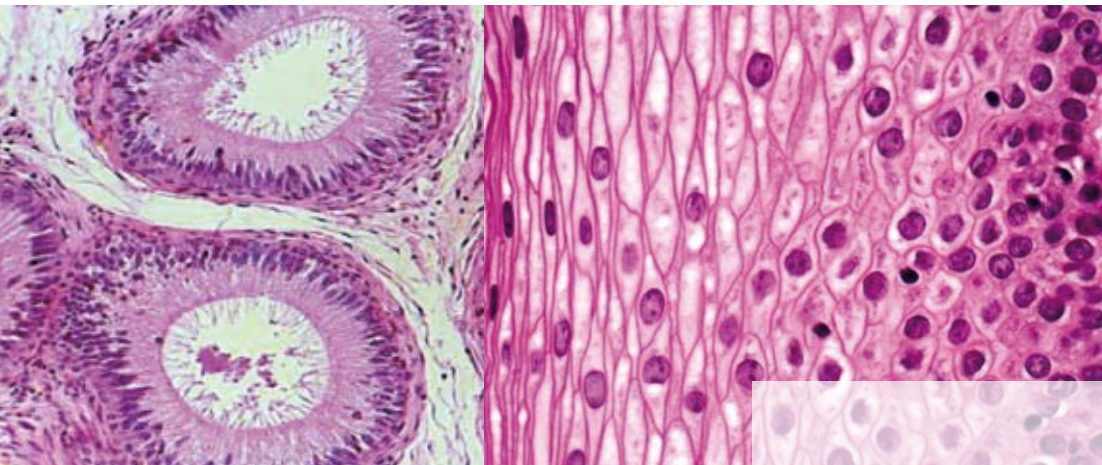
Some delays will be experienced in the project due to the need to re-design the façade and make adjustments to the scope. However, work is proceeding with the goal of the new centre being available in semester two of 2009. Further advice on time lines will be provided in the next newsletter.

For further information please contact

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