



City of **HOBART**

Enquiries to:



Our Ref:

PJ:KD

Your Ref:

1 March 2022

Mr Ben Lohberger



Via Email: [mail:](mailto:)



Dear Mr Lohberger

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

I refer to your public question in respect of provision of information regarding UTAS on 31 January 2022, which was taken on notice. The following is provided in response:

QUESTIONS:

Can the Hobart City Council please release the confidential two-page briefing note about UTAS that it has sent to all Aldermen and Councillors, which reveals the Council is "keen to collaborate" with UTAS on its proposal to redevelop the Sandy Bay campus?

Can the Council please explain how it can secretly collaborate with a property developer while also operating as the planning authority that will shortly be considering planning applications from the same property developer?

A number of HCC Aldermen/Councillors have a current financial association with UTAS, or a historical financial association during the past decade. Can those elected members please reveal their current and/or historical financial links to UTAS, and clarify whether they will exclude themselves from deliberations on UTAS proposals?

RESPONSE (From the Lord Mayor):


The two-page briefing note that was given to the elected members was provided as a 'starting point' to help guide the City of Hobart's approach to the impending redevelopment of the UTas Sandy Bay campus. The briefing note identified the issues and opportunities of a significant urban renewal project. Furthermore, the Council resolved to adopt to provide a submission to UTas in response to the redevelopment of their Sandy Bay campus; a copy of the submission is attached.

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It is incumbent on the Council to work with property owners on any planning scheme amendment that is being formulated, more so when significant land holdings are involved. To suggest this is somehow secretive ignores the role of the Council as planning authority.

Council officers provide planning advice on a regular basis, both before proposals are finalised and naturally after, when applications are formally lodged for consideration by the elected members.

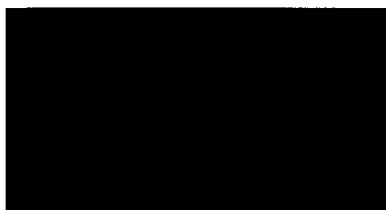
Ultimately, any application when finalised and the qualified advice from Council officers on the merits or otherwise of an application, is provided on the public record. Furthermore the determination of the application by elected members is conducted in open Council. There is also opportunity for members of the public to provide a representation on the merits or otherwise of the proposal when amendments are publicly notified.

Finally, it is important to understand that the ultimate decision to approve or refuse a planning scheme amendment that has been publically notified, is not made by the Council but rather by the Tasmanian Planning Commission which also affords hearings for representors and proponents to expand on their written submissions and application before finalising its decision.

It is a matter for each individual elected member to determine whether they have an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest in a matter when it comes before the Council.

I wish to thank you for your question and your attendance at the meeting. Should you have any queries in relation to this matter please contact Paul Jackson, Manager Legal and Governance on the details provided.

Yours sincerely



(Kelly Grigsby)
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Some context talking points

- a. The Council understands the potential for UTas "moving downtown" in terms of adding momentum, vitality and knowledge economy productivity drivers to the CBD.
- b. The Council also sees the urban renewal of the UTas Sandy Bay campus as a significant city shaping opportunity in our ongoing transition to one of the world's great small cities. We're keen to collaborate as the planning for it advances.
- c. Making the most of these opportunities for both the university and the city will be facilitated by building a strong working relationship based on trust and good, honest communication. The Council is keen to advance this.
- d. What is the current and likely status of land titling e.g. UTas power to divest, leasehold or freehold etc.

Issues and opportunities talking points

- e. **ECONOMIC ROLE:** Potential for mixed use to include some commercial activities that complement the CBD and work together with it to enhance productivity and employment opportunities – e.g. private R&D, centres of excellence?
- f. **HOUSING:** Keen to understand UTas' thoughts around housing in the redevelopment, given the city has a housing crisis on its hands and there is a strong need for more housing diversity.
- g. **GREEN SPACE:** Site has extensive environmental and scenic values and ovals etc. with potential for community use. What value thoughts they have around that.
- h. **HERITAGE:** The campus has a prominent role in the city's history. Do they see this being reflected in the redevelopment?
- i. **EXISTING BUILDINGS:** Does the stock of buildings on the site have potential for adaptive reuse?
- j. **CONNECTIONS:** How do they see future transport connections with the surrounding areas and overall networks, including walking, cycling etc?
- k. **SMART CITY:** Is any thought being given to the contribution to our digital networks; and the sustainability of the city – e.g. for infrastructure, power, etc?