

UTAS Newham Campus Relocation

Delivered by the Hon Peter Gutwein MP
at the UTAS Public Meeting, Albert Hall Launceston
on the 1st of October 2015

- Ladies and Gentlemen welcome and thank you very much for coming along to tonight's meeting. Acknowledge Deputy Mayor Rob Soward, Launceston Aldermen and women, and the Acting Vice Chancellor Mike Calford.
- In May of this year the State Government signed an MOU with UTAS, the Launceston City Council and Tas Tafe to investigate the potential for a move of the UTAS Campus closer to the heart of Launceston
- The MOU committed the signatories to discussing the possibility of a move to a new site that would enable it to embrace the CBD whilst keeping the Maritime College in place.
- Key considerations for the State Government were that UTAS would expand the existing programs that they currently offer as well as explore expanding into other courses that are more accessible and focussed on workplace outcomes as well as taking a collaborative approach to the delivery of post school education in the Northern region with TasTafe.
- The State Government was and is an enthusiastic partner in this MOU because we believe very strongly that the University is a critical partner in not only shaping this city's and this region's future but also the longer term future of the state.
- That was why in the State Budget I announced that we would support the discussion and the MOU via resources in the Coordinator Generals office specifically for this purpose as well as committing to a \$60M Northern Cities fund that would help

underpin the investment needed should a decision be made to proceed.

- We recognise that whilst Tasmania now has a growing economy, a lowering unemployment rate and in many surveys Tasmanians are some of the most confident people in the country; unfortunately we still have many challenges to overcome.
- It is no secret that we have around 40% of our households that rely on social welfare as their primary source of income, that more Tasmanians suffer from chronic disease or poor health outcomes and that unfortunately our life expectancy is below that of the majority of the rest of the country.
- When you consider these challenges in the context of the strong correlation between education and health and education and wealth it is clear that as a state we need to provide the strongest possible response that we can.
- In terms of education outcomes Tasmania has one of the lowest levels of post year 10 retention in this country and we lag the rest of the nation in respect of the number of adults who have achieved a tertiary qualification.
- This is not a present phenomenon.
- This has been the situation facing Tasmania for many decades, however now is the time to grasp the opportunity that has been presented and to do something about it.
- All of these things were front of mind when we signed the MOU to explore whether the opportunity existed to not only deliver the single largest social and economic investment this city has ever had before it - but also to ensure that education and learning become a key and significant driver for this city and this region.

- The first step was for a concept plan to be developed and for that to be shared with the community which is why we are here this evening.
- And whilst the concept plan outlines what I think would be a transformative development for our university it also outlines a transformative plan for this city and for this region.
- Launceston was built on an agrarian base with a strong manufacturing sector that served this community well in past decades. Growth will continue in these sectors; however, gone are the days of weaving mills or railway workshops that employed thousands of people. Technology and developing economies in other countries in many cases have overtaken the factories we had in the past.
- However we have an opportunity with the concept plan before us to change the face of this city for the better not just for tomorrow but for the next 100 years.
- Launceston can become a true university city that attracts young, innovative and engaged students and staff.
- A city that has education at its economic heart will be a city that can compete in a global economy and ensure that we have enduring and ongoing economic sustainability.
- In terms of the present the development of a \$220 M University campus near the centre of the city will generate hundreds of jobs during the construction phase at Inveresk but also unlock opportunities at the Newnham site that attract investment and jobs as well.
- As a result of developing a contemporary, attractive and vibrant campus the Government believes that student numbers - both domestic and international - will increase with obvious

direct flow on economic benefits leading to more employment and better social outcomes across our city and our region.

- Ladies and Gentlemen in conclusion I urge you all to keep an open mind to what is being proposed.
- Launceston can become a true University City where engagement with learning is front of mind and the economic benefits will be felt by generations of Tasmanians who will follow all of us in this room.
- The concept you will be introduced to this evening has the potential to change the face of this city and this region in the most profound way.
- This project has the capacity to lay the educational foundation for the future across this region leaving an enduring legacy for future generations.
- Ladies and Gentlemen there is no better legacy that we could pass from this generation to the next.
- Thank you.