

Sandy Bay UTAS Redevelopment Submission

City of Hobart



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1.0 Purpose and Recommendations

This document represents the City of Hobart's formal submission into this stakeholder consultation process for the redevelopment of the UTAS Sandy Bay campus.

It puts forward several ideas and identifies aspects for the redevelopment which the city considers crucial to making the most of this opportunity. It includes the following recommendations:

1. Positioning the redevelopment as a world leading model of sustainable, walkable urban renewal, which works as part of the larger picture of CBD and other urban renewal areas to reinforce the city's reputation on the world stage and provide a vital building block into making Hobart one of the world's great small cities.
2. Ensuring redevelopment is responsive to the site's environmental and landscape values, and constraints such as bushfire and stormwater flooding.
3. Providing a significant contribution of new housing to help address both the current housing crisis and a focus on new models of "missing middle" housing offering real alternatives to traditional fringe greenfield housing in the city.
4. Leveraging the site as an economic and innovation engine complementing Hobart CBD, including ideas like a "global centre of excellence" in an iconic Tasmanian field and a start-up hub.
5. To focus on its walkability and integration with existing and emerging means of transport and other infrastructure.
6. Negotiations for the implementation of the redevelopment need to address developer funding commitments that ensure the success of such key attributes as the quality of the public realm being delivered and key external connections.

The following content provide further detail of this submission and these recommendations.

2.0 Background

The University of Tasmania (UTAS) has major plans for moving its activities onto various sites in Hobart CBD. This is underway and involves plans for new green spaces and modern buildings, and re-opening preserved historic university buildings. A 'Shared Vision' urban design framework and masterplan for this future city campus has been released.

The large UTAS campus at Sandy Bay in the City of Hobart will be made redundant over time as this move downtown takes place and it is proposed that this be redeveloped. It contains around 100ha of land, running from Mount Nelson in the south-west, through to Sandy Bay, with significant built form over the lower parts closer to Sandy Bay. Over half the site in the upper part has significant environmental and landscape value.

The draft masterplan for the city campus indicates the ambition to:

- Transform the Sandy Bay campus into an "inclusive micro-suburb" including mixed housing, education, aged care facilities and retail / commercial opportunities.
- Retain and enhance existing multi-purpose sports grounds and facilities for the benefit of the local community.
- Preserve the site's green spaces to protect environmentally important bushland.

In mid-July 2021, UTAS announced they had engaged Melbourne-based architecture and design firm Clarke Hopkins Clarke to lead the master planning process for the future of the Sandy Bay campus.

The initial public consultation process occurred between 21 July and 22 August 2021. Further consultation is currently ongoing including public workshops in October 2021.

2.1 City context

After many years of relatively stable population and low growth, Hobart is now entering a period of significant growth. Hobart is increasingly seeing an inward migration of people, attracted to a small city offering a tremendous lifestyle in a spectacular setting, and an alternative to Australia's large cities. This is a trend accelerated not only by COVID-19 but also by climate change.

The UTAS Sandy Bay redevelopment represents one of three major urban renewal opportunities around the CBD, including the Macquarie Point redevelopment and the urban renewal opportunities in and around the CBD already identified in the Central Hobart Precincts Plan being prepared by the City of Hobart under the City Deal. It needs to be considered as an integral part of a significant once in a generation

opportunity to advance the city. Urban renewal of the Sandy Bay campus is a rare opportunity to create a walkable, integrated 'complete community' model featuring high quality diverse housing, zero impact sustainability, a 'smart city' approach across all its infrastructure and operation, embedded into and facilitating the expanding local knowledge economy.

It is a unique chance to showcase Hobart as a world leader in urban renewal. This is not about 'business as usual'; it is the opportunity to advance Hobart's reputation as a sustainable, livable and successful city. It can help reinforce the city's reputation on the world stage and provide a vital building block into making Hobart one of the world's great small cities.

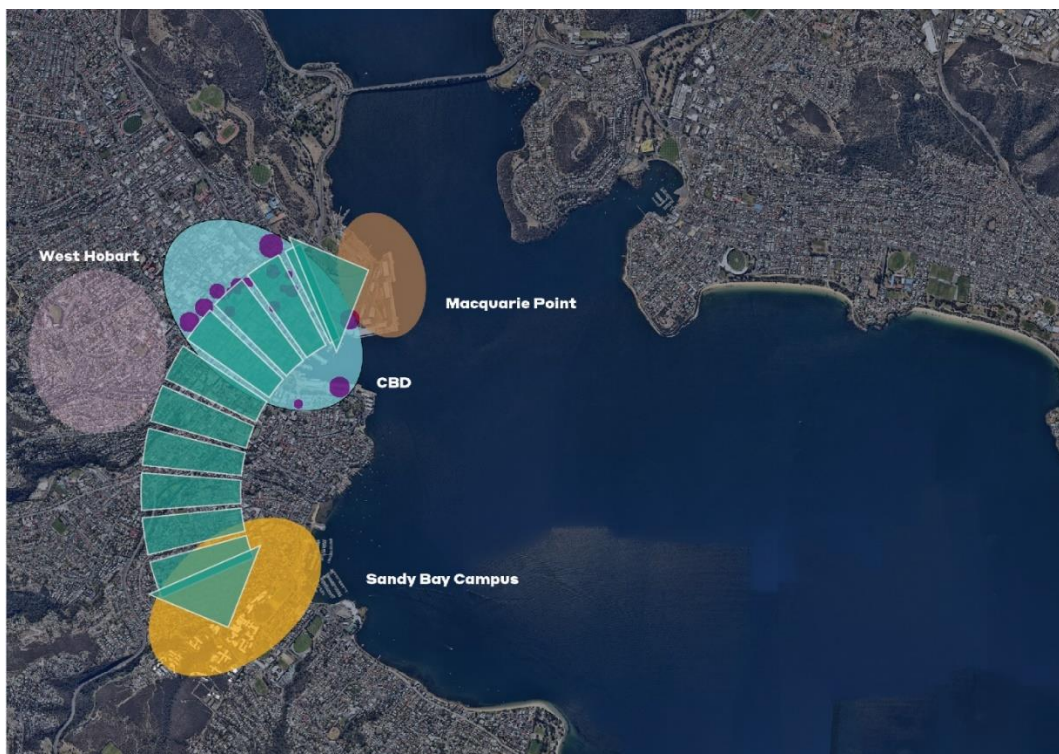


Figure 1 City Context

2.2 Site context

The UTAS Sandy Bay campus ('the site') is located directly south of Hobart CBD within a 3 kilometre radius. The northern portion of the site fronts Sandy Bay Road, a major thoroughfare connecting Hobart CBD along the bay and around the headland to Tarooma.

The Sandy Bay surrounds are largely residential. University buildings and playing fields are currently concentrated to the north-eastern portion of the

site. Where the rear of site slopes upwards to Mount Nelson it is mostly bushland, apart from playing fields on the highest part of the site.

Sandy Bay and Hobart CBD are spatially separated by the historic Battery Point, which is generally higher than both the CBD and lower Sandy Bay, including some University sporting facilities. Connection to the CBD is currently by a series of major road connections and bus services.

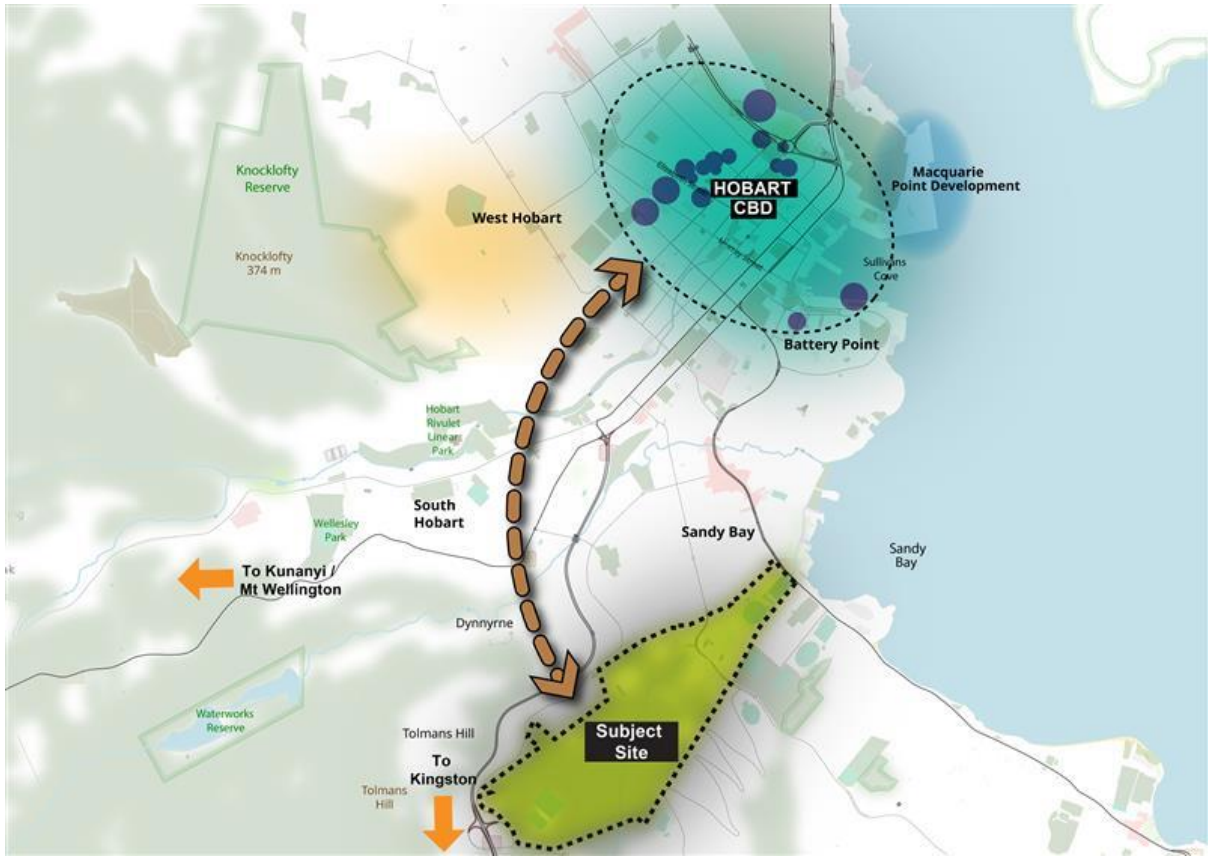


Figure 2 Site context

3.0 The Opportunity

2.1 World leading model of sustainable urban renewal

Hobart has positioned itself as a sustainable city and is on track to achieve its goal of being powered by 100 percent renewable energy by 2040¹¹.

The urban renewal of UTAS Sandy Bay is a crucial opportunity to demonstrate, consolidate and advance Hobart's reputation as a sustainable, liveable and successful city.

The City therefore advocates that this urban renewal be world-leading in its innovation and set new international standards as did other major urban renewal areas around the world, such as Portland's Pearl District, Brisbane's Inner North-East, Vancouver's South-East False Creek and Stockholm's Hammarby Sjostad.

The project should be used to demonstrate the city's aspiration to be one of the world's great small cities.



Figure 3 An urban renewal opportunity

2.2 Walkable, integrated 'complete community' model

The proposed 'micro-suburb' at Sandy Bay represents a once in a lifetime opportunity to deliver a fully contained, highly walkable community incorporating housing, economic activity and greenspace. Urban renewal at the Sandy Bay site should also demonstrate a 'net zero' energy emission development integrated in

an environmentally sensitive manner with the bushland and recreational open space areas.

It also provides the opportunity to build on the existing pedestrian and recreational pathways on site and to contribute new connections such as shared path from Sandy Bay to the city waterfront around Battery Point.

¹¹ City of Hobart (2020). *Sustainable Hobart Action Plan: Towards a zero emissions Hobart*. Report. City of Hobart.

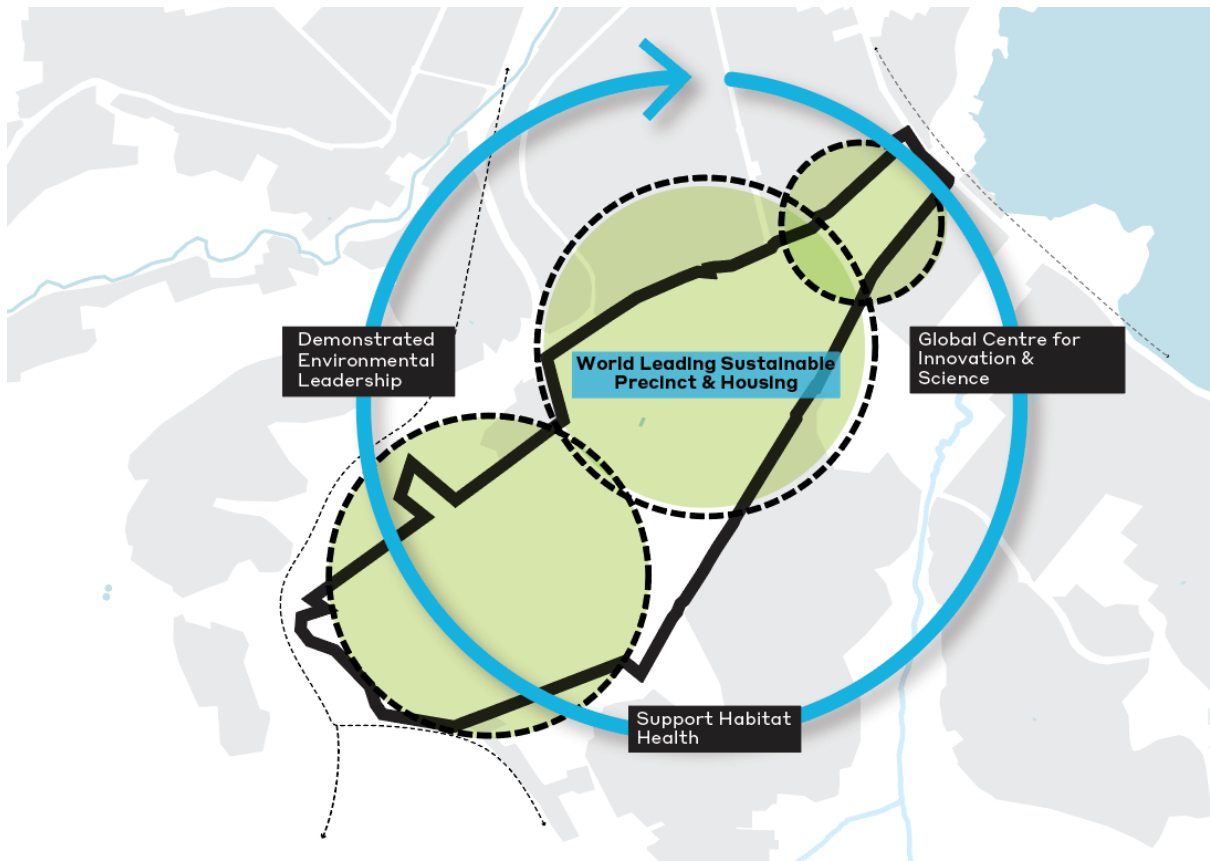


Figure 4 Ideas for a sustainable community

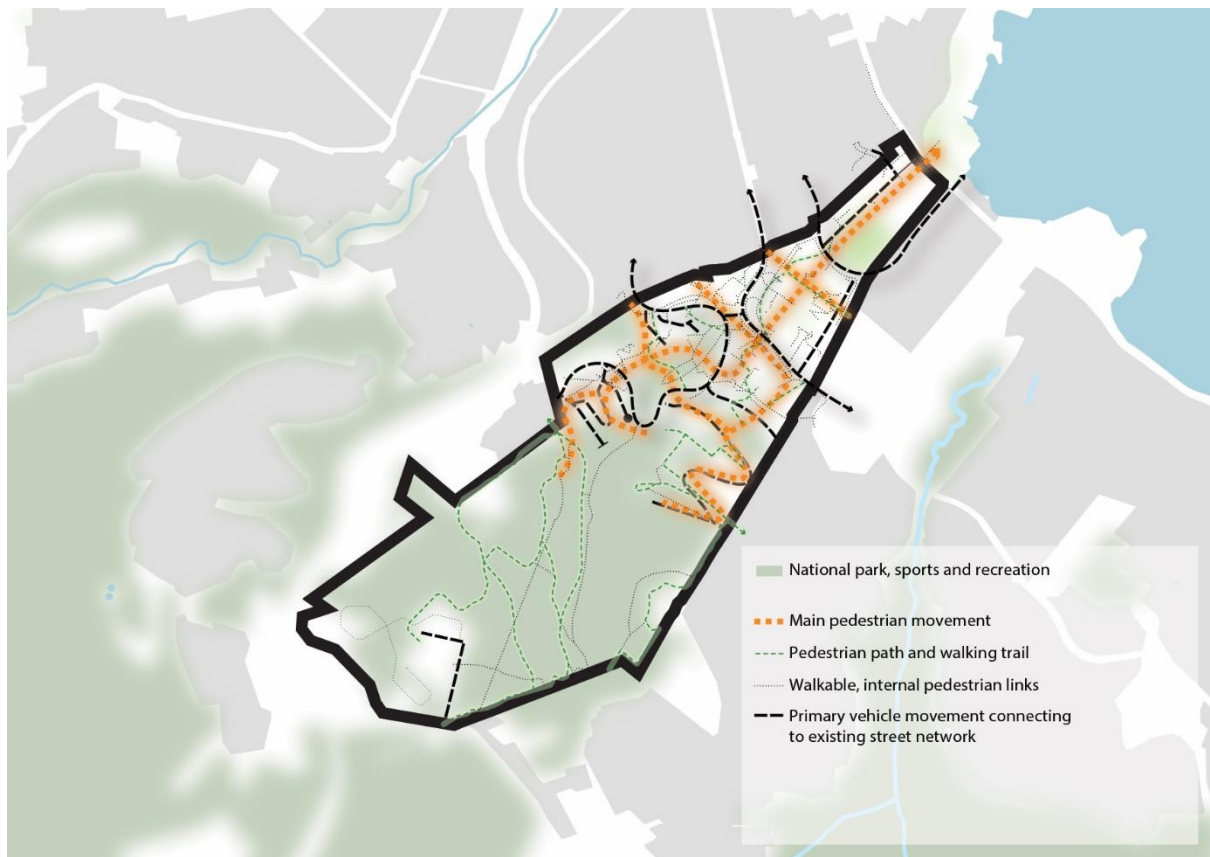


Figure 5 Ideas for a connected, pedestrianised community

4.0 Framing Renewal

3.1 Green space

The south-western portion of the site is predominantly made up of bushland sloping upwards to Mount Nelson in the site's rear with creeks traversing the site. A series of existing walking tracks cross through the site's bushland which should be preserved and promoted as a part of its sustainability and lifestyle brand. A central green spine and series of improved green spaces or parks will be an important component which provide a connected system of green space and

complement the bushland and encourage exploration and engagement with the natural environment.

The existing playing fields at either end of the site are significant community assets should be integrated into the redevelopment as they warrant retention given their high usage and lack of alternatives.



Figure 6 Wilderness to waterfront concept

3.2 Disaster risk management

Bushfire and flood are the two greatest natural risks to Hobart. As it is located at the base of Kunanyi/Mount Wellington, the mountain can act as a moderator or significant multiplier of flood or fire risks to the city. The mountain strongly influences the regional microclimate through collecting higher rainfall than the city itself. Flood and fire risks are moderated by retaining moisture at higher altitudes on the mountain.

The steep topography coupled with major gullies cascading through and near the site means

management of stormwater flooding is a significant consideration. Redevelopment will need a carefully designed stormwater management system to deal with these issues on the site.

As indicated in **Figure 7** below, the south-western portion of the site is identified in the bushfire overlay in the City Planning Scheme. This area is mostly open bushland and is at a higher altitude sloping up towards Mount Nelson. Future development on the site should be responsive to bushfire risks and concentrate development

outside of this identified area. Fire risk mitigation informed by an understanding of the local environmental conditions should be an essential process informing future design.

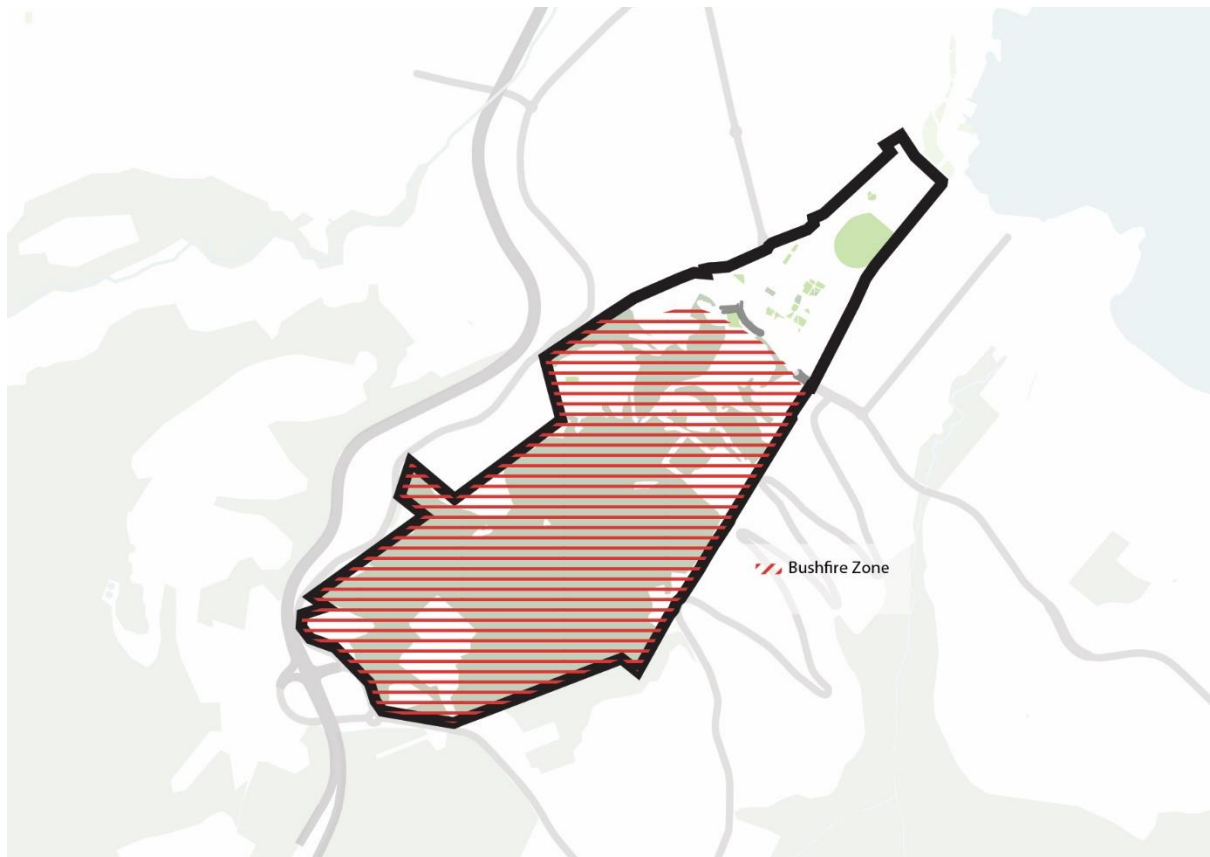


Figure 7 Bushfire overlay, Hobart Interim Planning Scheme 2015

5.0 High Quality and Diverse Housing

4.1 'Attainable housing' response to Hobart's housing crisis

Hobart's housing market has experienced dramatic growth in recent years, driven by a surge in Australians from the mainland seeking comparatively lower property prices. This growth has been accelerated by the COVID-19 impact on property markets across Australia, encouraged by record-low interest rates². This boom is having major implications for smaller cities like Hobart.

In the most recent year to August 2021 Hobart's property prices rose by 24.54 percent, representing the steepest rise in any Australian capital city³. In 2019, Hobart had the tightest rental market in the country with a vacancy rate of

only 1.4 percent⁴. Housing stress in Hobart has contributed to marked increase in homelessness, with 64 percent of people accessing housing support services citing unaffordable housing as their issue⁵.

These conditions have created a crisis in our access to housing, and a key focus of this urban renewal should be on attainable housing. The housing crisis in Hobart indicates a mis-match between housing being delivered and housing needed by residents. This redevelopment should help deliver attainable housing to the city through affordable and diverse housing typologies.

4.2 Missing middle focus

Tasmania's housing market is very limited in terms of its product with detached greenfield dwellings making up much of the market compared to other major cities. There is a marked absence of so called 'missing middle' housing (see figure below) in Tasmania and especially in Hobart.

This contributes to the housing attainability problem. Because 'missing middle' housing supply is so limited, it is often unaffordable for many

buyers and renters including first home buyers, low income earners, or people who want to live close to the urban core and promotes an unsustainable urban form. As the state's population continues to grow and the population ages, housing pressure will only increase. The infill housing typologies referred as 'missing middle' (as in the figure below) is an ideal response to delivering better housing supply, variety and location.



Figure 8 Missing middle housing¹

² ABC News (2021). 'Hobart's housing market has been growing 'dramatically' for five years, with no cooling down in sight', 2 March, Retrieved from: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-02/no-signs-of-hobart-housing-market-cooling-down-experts-say/13205560>

³ Core Logic (2021). *Core Logic Home Property Value Index – Monthly Indices*. Accessed 29 September 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.corelogic.com.au/research/monthly-indices>

⁴ Place Design Group (2019). *Toward Infill Housing Development*. Report. Tasmanian Department of State Growth.

⁵ City of Hobart (2021). *Housing and Homelessness*. Accessed 30 September 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.hobartcity.com.au/Community/Action-on-homelessness>

Infill housing should be a core component of the Sandy Bay draft masterplan. Infill housing at middle densities can pay dividends including demonstration of scarce and new models of housing, creation of a more compact urban form, efficient use of urban infrastructure, and better access to employment and education clusters⁶. These positive impacts will be accessible to more people if housing is provided at an attainable price point.

Providing a significant quantity of infill housing at UTAS Sandy Bay would facilitate market demand for more diverse housing forms. While detailed studies are required to assess this fully, the City believes that the site if developed as this submission envisages, could readily accommodate

at least 2500 dwellings across these typologies. This would help facilitate ambitions for a complete community and new models of living in Hobart.

While the Sandy Bay masterplan vision indicates an intention to provide housing for all people “from first home buyers to downsizers”⁷, care should be taken to ensure its approach to housing is truly inclusive. An inclusive housing approach should also include families. Family-friendly ‘missing middle’ housing should include options of larger dwellings (over two bedrooms), access to private outdoor spaces, spaces accessible for people of all ages and abilities, and child-friendly public spaces.

Design of this housing is also a key piece in ensuring the “net zero” aspirations for the site.

⁶ Place Design Group (2019). *Toward Infill Housing Development*. Report. Tasmanian Department of State Growth.

⁷ University of Tasmania (2021). *A Shared Vision – Published September 2021*. Report.

5.0 Economic Engine

5.1 Complementing Hobart CBD

The site can function as a key part of the economic engine of the wider city, by providing complementary and exciting new additions to the city economy. Land uses proposed for the Sandy Bay redevelopment should serve to complement the immediate surrounds and CBD and not compete with Hobart's downtown.

Rather than focus on competing land uses such as large scale commercial and retail uses, this urban renewal should focus on complementary uses. This may include small to mid-scale mixed-use, residential, educational and recreational development. By embedding itself within the existing knowledge economy of Hobart's inner city, both centres can supplement one another.

5.2 Business nursery / start-up hub

A business nursery / start-up hub would serve to complement Hobart's knowledge economy and be well suited to the 'micro-suburb' that will aim to be world leading in urban renewal and sustainability. This would serve as a place for co-working and start-up businesses to function in a small ecosystem. Start-ups thrive off

connectedness, talent, market reach and talent attraction. Creation of Hobart's own centre for innovation, new business and technology will attract knowledge workers to the city and leverage off the reputation being carved for Sandy Bay through this development.

5.3 Possible "global centre of excellence" in an iconic Tasmanian field

Potential inclusions on the site include a "global centre of excellence" in an iconic, very Tasmanian field. This would match the precinct's vision of being a sustainable community and knowledge

hub and pay homage to its' setting on a former higher education site. Such a facility would draw visitors to the site and encourage economic activity in the Sandy Bay vicinity.



Figure 9 Ideas for a community of hubs

6.0 Transport and Infrastructure

6.1 Integration with existing transport infrastructure

The site's proximity to Hobart CBD represents an opportunity to encourage a sustainable residential community that relies upon the existing transport infrastructure. The Sandy Bay campus is already serviced by frequent bus services which can be utilised by future residents / workers at the site.

The site is also likely to grow in its city connection into the future. The City has had a long term ambition to provide a Sandy Bay to waterfront coastal walkway to improve amenity and

connection between the site and the CBD. This links with a desire to provide a larger ferry network, with a potential stop to be located on Council-owned land at Marieville Esplanade.

High connectivity, proximity to the city centre and delivery of essential community services within the community hub can encourage a sustainable 'car-lite' community with low reliance on private vehicle ownership.

6.2 Emerging technologies in transport and infrastructure

Planning for this community means an opportunity to forward plan for the infrastructure of tomorrow. Infrastructure can be planned for facilities such as electric vehicle charging within car parks and autonomous vehicles. District energy provision through solar power can be forward planned at this early stage. Other emerging technologies such as vacuum waste may be investigated during the masterplan stage.

The City of Hobart is actively engaged in responding to emerging technology through the

Smart City Action Plan⁸. Several current and future projects may directly align with the Sandy Bay redevelopment. Examples are the current automated vehicle trials, which may find a home within this controlled "micro-suburb". Future projects of interest include Connected Start-Ups and Connected and Actively Managed Transport Network. Through further investigation and development of these ideas, positive and innovative outcomes can be delivered for both the site and city.



Figure 10 Alternative public transport

⁸ City of Hobart (2021). *Connected Hobart: Smart City Action Plan*. Report. City of Hobart.

<https://www.hobartcity.com.au/Community/Connected-Hobart>

7.0 Implementation

The path of implementation will involve various processes, in which the City will seek to be closely involved. These present opportunities as a checkpoint for the inclusion of the ideas and recommendations of this submission.

The success of models of world class urban renewal elsewhere are notable for the use of funding from those developing the areas towards the necessary infrastructure and connections and quality of public assets delivered within the development site and connections externally.

While the Tasmanian planning system does not incorporate an explicit development contributions process, it will be important to the best possible outcome consistent with the ideas and recommendations contained herein that negotiations with the developer/s involved include securing direct funding commitments that ensure the success of such key attributes as the quality of the public realm being delivered and key external connections.

The City looks forward to working with UTAS and its consulting team towards achieving the best possible outcomes throughout this process.

8.0 Conclusion

This submission has put forward the City of Hobart’s vision and ideas for the University of Tasmania’s Sandy Bay campus redevelopment masterplan. The site is over 100 hectares of land in a prime urban community located within three kilometres of Hobart’s city centre. Redevelopment of the site represents a remarkable city shaping opportunity to increase the city’s economic resilience and demonstrate a world leading example of sustainable urban renewal for which Hobart can be globally renowned.

The City has sought to highlight several core principles and ideas for the site’s redevelopment to realise this potential, which include the following recommendations:

7. Positioning the redevelopment as a world leading model of sustainable, walkable urban renewal, which works as part of the larger picture of CBD and other urban renewal areas to reinforce the city’s reputation on the world stage and provide a vital building block into making Hobart one of the world’s great small cities.
8. Ensuring redevelopment is responsive to the site’s environmental and landscape

values, and constraints such as bushfire and stormwater flooding.

9. Providing a significant contribution of new housing to help address both the current housing crisis and a focus on new models of “missing middle” housing offering real alternatives to traditional fringe greenfield housing in the city.
10. Leveraging the site as an economic and innovation engine complementing Hobart CBD, including ideas like a “global centre of excellence” in an iconic, very Tasmanian field and a business nursery / start-up hub.
11. To focus on its walkability and integration with existing and emerging means of transport and other infrastructure.
12. Negotiations for the implementation of the redevelopment need to address developer funding commitments that ensure the success of such key attributes as the quality of the public realm being delivered and key external connections.

A summary of these ideas is spatially represented in **Figure 11**.

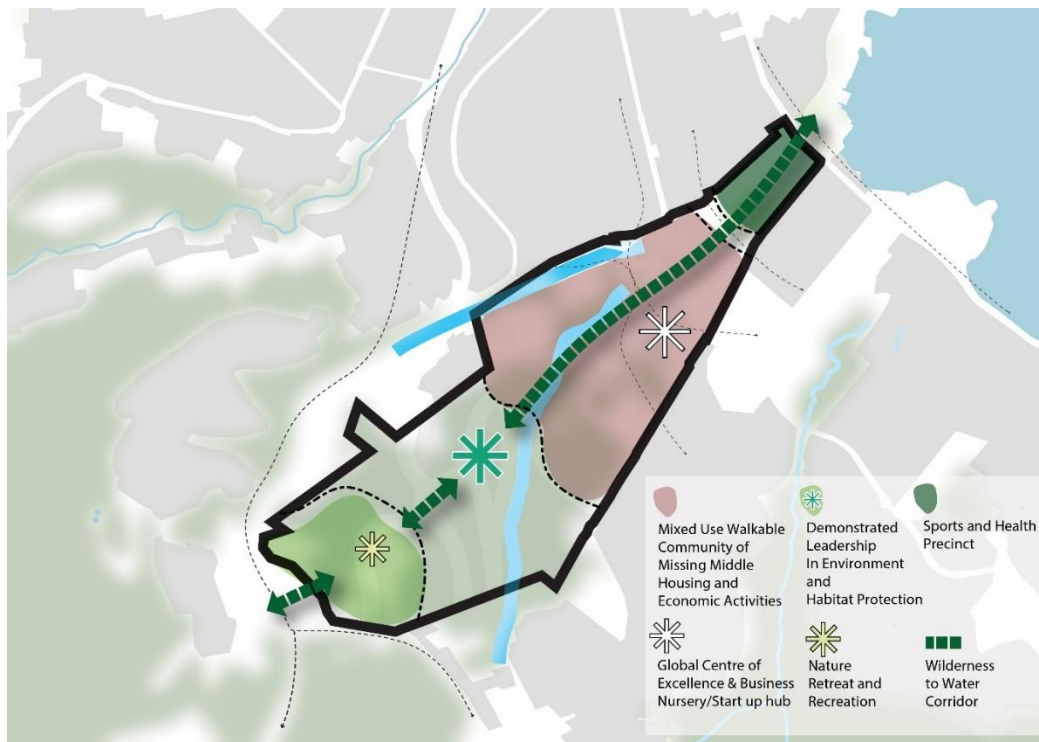


Figure 11 Ideas for the future redevelopment of UTAS Sandy Bay