

Tasmanian Greens UTAS Position Statement

The University of Tasmania (UTAS) must stop its planned relocation to the Hobart CBD and confirm an ongoing commitment to the maintenance of the Sandy Bay campus for educational purposes, including respecting the built heritage, public open space and natural environment of the site.

Context:

- While the Parliament and State Government have a statutory role in the oversight of UTAS, they are not in control of commercial and operational decisions of UTAS.
- The provision of public land for the Sandy Bay campus and a \$30m annual taxpayer contribution does however, provide significant responsibility for Government to ensure UTAS makes transparent decisions in the public good.
- The October 2022 Elector poll of Hobart City Council electors must be respected. 74.38% of electors opposed the wholesale move into the city (and by extension the sale of the Sandy Bay campus).
- The Greens share concerns of numerous stakeholders, including local residents, staff and students, about decision-making by UTAS, including broader staffing, management and curriculum delivery decisions.
- This includes significant public and stakeholder concern about the apparent shift in UTAS emphasis and priority from educational excellence to property development.

The Tasmanian Greens believe:

- The University of Tasmania, as Tasmania's only university, must be a leader in tertiary education, community standing and transparent decision making.
- The *University of Tasmania Act 1992* needs to be reviewed and amended to improve governance, accountability, decision making and academic outcomes, following the finalisation of the current Legislative Council inquiry.
- The State government should use available opportunities to ensure UTAS halts the relocation into the CBD and confirms an ongoing commitment to the maintenance of the Sandy Bay campus for educational purposes.
- This commitment must respect the built heritage, public open space and natural environment of the site.
- Concerns of academic staff, students and the broader community must be genuinely considered and addressed by the University Council.
- All UTAS decisions must be based on credible public engagement and accountable decision making processes and any statutory planning approvals provide for third party right of appeal.