

**VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY**

**INVESTING IN
EDUCATION
IN THE WEST**

**INFORMATION
PREPARED FOR
VICTORIAN
PLANNING
AUTHORITY**

**JACKSONS
HILL MASTER
PLANNING**

SUNBURY PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS



**VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY**
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

THE HISTORY OF THE CALOOLA SITE



Top: An early photo of Caloola, thought to be during its time as an asylum. Above: Prime Minister Paul Keating opening the Sunbury Campus of VUT in May, 1995.

Victoria University has been in possession of Caloola on Jacksons Hill in Sunbury since 1994. In this time, substantial changes in the market for tertiary education have made the site unsuitable for modern, vibrant delivery of domestic tertiary education.

The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) is undertaking a Master Planning exercise to determine the most appropriate future use for Jacksons Hill. In February, the VPA will be engaging with the local community and key stakeholders to discuss the future of this important site.

This document has been prepared by Victoria University to outline its history on the site, and the future activities it plans to foster and support to advance tertiary education in Sunbury and the west of Melbourne.

The Caloola site in Sunbury consists of buildings set in extensive grounds with plantings of mature trees and remaining farmland. According to the Victorian Heritage Register, Caloola commenced in 1864 as an Industrial School, was redeveloped in 1879 as a lunatic asylum, was substantially enlarged between 1891 and 1914 and was maintained in use as a psychiatric hospital (1879-1968) and later a training centre for the intellectually disabled (1962-1992). Part of the site became a Victoria University campus from 1994-2011, and the remainder is in use by the Department of Education.

Premier Kennett announced in January 1994 that the Victorian Government would support a proposal for the Victoria University of Technology (VUT) to redevelop part of the Former Caloola Training Centre as a VUT campus. The site was redeveloped over 1994-97 to the tune of \$14.6m, including \$5.6m (Commonwealth), \$5m (State Government), and \$4m (Victoria University). The University subsequently contributed a further \$1m to the redevelopment, and in 1999 bought an additional parcel of land adjacent to the central site for \$1.54m.

VU'S STEWARDSHIP OF SUNBURY CAMPUS

Victoria University undertook substantial restoration and renovation of the site in an endeavour to make it attractive to students and suitable for modern tertiary education delivery. In addition to structural and OHS-related improvements (such as installing then-current teaching technologies in classrooms, installing appropriate ventilation/heating/cooling/lighting, building car parking and student facilities such as a library and cafeteria, and dealing with asbestos issues), it undertook two major new developments:

- the Sunbury Hall student accommodation block, to encourage residential students to study at the campus; and
- facilities to house the Melba Memorial Conservatorium of Music, offering vocational and undergraduate courses in classical and contemporary music performance, as well as related support courses.

Since 2001, Victoria University's non-salary operating costs for the Sunbury site have been in excess of \$11.6m, and capital works expenditure has been more than \$12.6m.

Despite these significant investments, student enrolments did not grow substantially, nor did they reach a level to make the campus financially viable. In the face of declining demand and enrolments, the University ceased offering courses from the Jacksons Hill site at the end of 2009.

Since ceasing to offer courses at the site, Victoria University has continued to spend more than \$400k a year on security services, essential building maintenance, grounds maintenance and utilities while searching for other potential parties to take over the site. Some of these costs were necessitated by the University's desire to allow community organisations such as the Boilerhouse Theatre and 99.3FM Sunbury Radio to continue to access the facilities, something we knew was important to the local community. In recent times, in response to community feedback about an increase in vandalism on the site, the University has reintroduced a 24-hour security presence, which will further increase ongoing maintenance costs.



The imposing façade of Caloola. Centre: The new Sunbury Hall student residence opened in 2005, built as part of Victoria University's efforts to encourage students to attend the campus. Bottom: Students using the then-state-of-the-art music production and rehearsal facilities built as part of the Melba Music development.

DEMAND CHANGES IN TERTIARY EDUCATION

IN THE EARLY 2000s, TERTIARY EDUCATION DELIVERY WAS BEGINNING TO CHANGE. STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES WERE PUSHING TOWARDS A FAR GREATER MARKET ORIENTATION FOR BOTH TAFE AND HIGHER EDUCATION. STUDENT EXPECTATION WAS GROWING RAPIDLY.

Shifting patterns of student demand and expectations started to emerge. With students paying relatively higher fees, they were choosing campuses that offered a rich tertiary experience – preferably closer to major activity centres such as the CBD or Footscray. Victoria University’s student load at Sunbury remained low during this time. Higher Education numbers were only maintained by offering a consistently lower ATAR entry point at Sunbury than other, more vibrant campuses where students wanted to study.

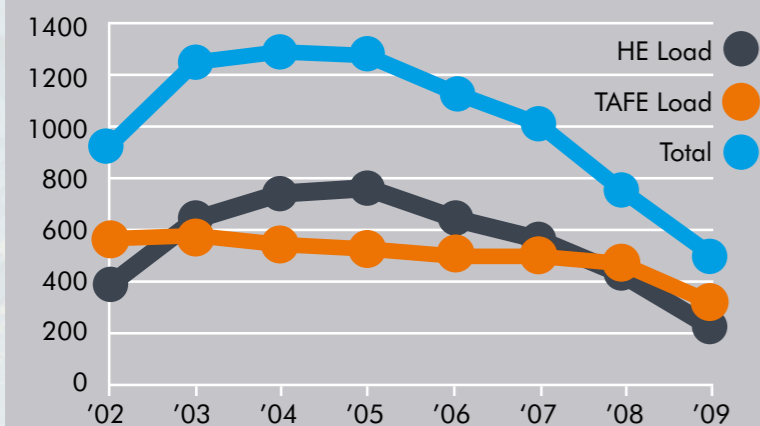
As student numbers languished at Sunbury, leading tertiary education analyst Professor Peter Noonan was commissioned to report (2007/08) on prospects for future growth of these satellite campuses. Professor Noonan found VU’s catchment campuses were unlikely to attract students from elsewhere in the western region or from outside of the region.

Even with upper demand projections, models showed that the Sunbury campus would remain an unviable tertiary education campus unless there was a significant increase in the level and breadth of provision. This, he cautioned, would be at the expense of Footscray Park and other campuses, and may not translate into increased demand.

Improved transport options also meant that even local Sunbury students were looking further out for their tertiary experiences. Analysis showed that, while Victoria University was an important institution for students in the Sunbury catchment, the Sunbury Campus was not.

While almost 30 per cent of VTAC applicants living in the local Sunbury catchment chose to study at Victoria University in 2006, less than seven per cent elected to study at the local Sunbury Campus.

VU Taught Load: Sunbury Campus 2002-2009*



* SOURCE: INFOVU. HE LOAD IN EFTSL; TAFE LOAD IN SCH/720

PROJECTIONS INDICATED THAT, EVEN WITH AN UNLIKELY INCREASE IN MARKET SHARE, THE SUNBURY CAMPUS WOULD HAVE NO MORE THAN 2000 TO 3000 STUDENTS BY 2031. ENROLMENTS AT THIS LEVEL WOULD NOT ALLOW THE RICH AND VIBRANT CAMPUS EXPERIENCE THAT WAS INCREASINGLY SOUGHT IN A HIGHLY-COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT.

These trends were state-wide, as highlighted in an independent report to the State Minister of Education. In this report (2009), Professor Kwong Lee Dow pointed to the ongoing challenges of maintaining outer-urban campuses. He acknowledged a range of problematic issues for communities when an established facility is effectively closed, but also recognised the University’s responsibility to carefully consider resource allocation issues and effective asset management and utilisation.

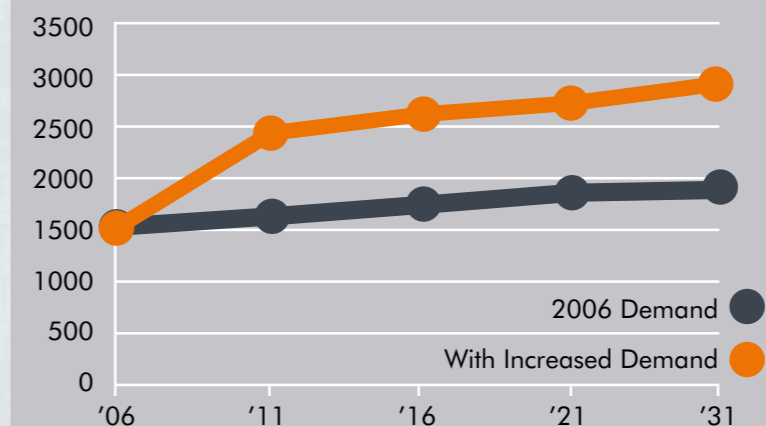
In summary, Victoria University faced:

- students wanting larger, more vibrant campuses for tertiary study — a trend that has intensified since 2006, with multiple outer urban or regional campuses since closing in Victoria;

- small student numbers on Sunbury Campus and the likelihood of an unviable campus size out to 2031 and beyond;
- the very high cost of maintaining and enhancing the attractive but aging heritage buildings across the Jacksons Hill site;
- the opportunity cost of using resources to maintain a financially unviable campus at Sunbury, at the expense of improving the student experience and facilities at other, more desirable campus locations in Melbourne’s west.

In the light of these factors, Victoria University made the difficult decision to stop offering courses at Sunbury after 2009.

Potential Sunbury Campus Demand 2006-2031*



* (HE + TAFE STUDENT ENROLMENTS)
SOURCE: NOONAN, PETER. 2008. DEMAND FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION IN OUTER WESTERN MELBOURNE: DATA ANALYSIS, P70
THE INCREASED DEMAND IS BASED ON AN ASSUMPTION OF LOCAL GROWTH PLUS AN INCREASE IN STATE-WIDE TERTIARY PARTICIPATION RATES.

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN THE WEST

VU HAS DEVELOPED A WEST OF MELBOURNE STRATEGY THAT IS DESIGNED TO ENSURE A STRONG AND VIBRANT UNIVERSITY THAT DRIVES ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND SERVES THE NEEDS OF THE REGION. AN IMPORTANT PART OF THIS STRATEGY IS THE CREATION, THROUGH AN INVESTMENT OF \$220M, OF THREE STRONG PRECINCTS DEEPLY INTEGRATED WITH INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY. THIS PLAN SUPPORTS THE UNIVERSITY'S TRADITIONAL BASE IN FOOTSCRAY, AS WELL AS THE VICTORIAN PLANNING AUTHORITY'S NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS IN SUNSHINE AND WERRIBEE.

SUNSHINE/ST ALBANS

With strong integration with the Sunshine Health, Wellbeing and Education Precinct, VU is proposing the following key exciting projects:

- A new Victoria Polytechnic Skills Development and Innovation Hub on Sunshine Campus (\$35m)
- A new College of Health and Biomedicine Building (\$30m) at Sunshine Hospital, for nursing/midwifery and other health students
- Further partnering with VU Secondary College
- Repurposing St. Albans campus for a school and an associated Teaching Academy.

FOOTSCRAY UNIVERSITY TOWN

Footscray University Town (FUT) is a joint initiative between Victoria University and Maribyrnong City Council to revitalise Footscray and deliver long lasting benefits to residents, businesses, workers and VU students and staff.

Recent investment has seen the construction of a high-quality 500-bed student accommodation building which is now being utilised. Future plans include a major new Health and Education building (\$155m) on Footscray Park Campus to enable expansion in our most popular West of Melbourne location. In partnership with the Victorian Government, the emerging Footscray Learning Precinct project could become an integral part of FUT.

WERRIBEE

Werribee is VU's major outer metropolitan presence with a focus on innovation, in collaboration with industry, in the fastest growing region in Australia. The Wyndham Tech School at VU Werribee has been approved and is under joint development by VU and the Victorian Government. VU has moved rapidly to expand our TAFE activities in Werribee and this expansion will continue to accelerate.

CBD PRESENCE

VU currently operates across three separate CBD locations, with activities widely dispersed across precincts at King, Queen and Flinders Streets. The teaching activity of Victoria Polytechnic (King St) and the College of Business (Flinders St) command the most space in the CBD. The College of Law and Justice (Queen St), College of Health and Biomedicine (Flinders Lane) and VU College (Flinders St) also have a major presence.

LEARNING LINKS

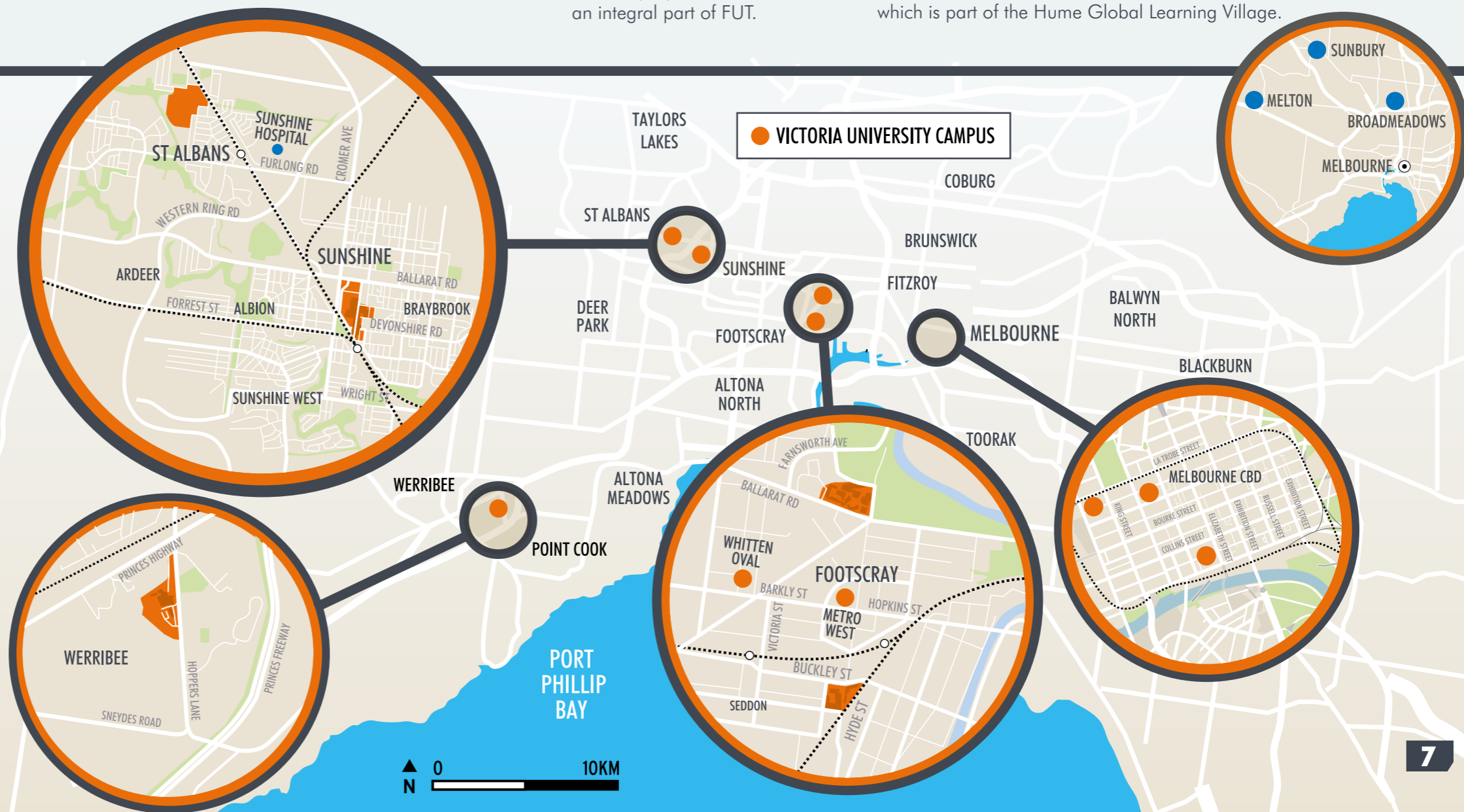
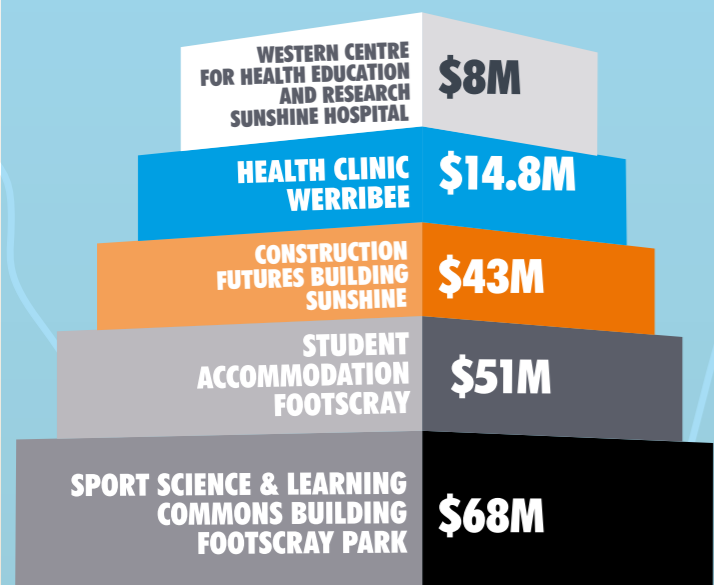
VU will continue to have a presence in a number of key communities through integrated Learning Links, with a focus on TAFE provision.

SUNBURY Existing Learning Link facility in local Neighbourhood House.

MELTON The Melton Learning Link opened in May 2016 as part of the Jobs and Skills Centre.

BROADMEADOWS Our longest established Learning Link site, which is part of the Hume Global Learning Village.

Over the past six years Victoria University has invested \$185m in major innovative infrastructure projects to transform education in the West of Melbourne.



INVESTING IN THE CHANGING FACE OF THE WEST

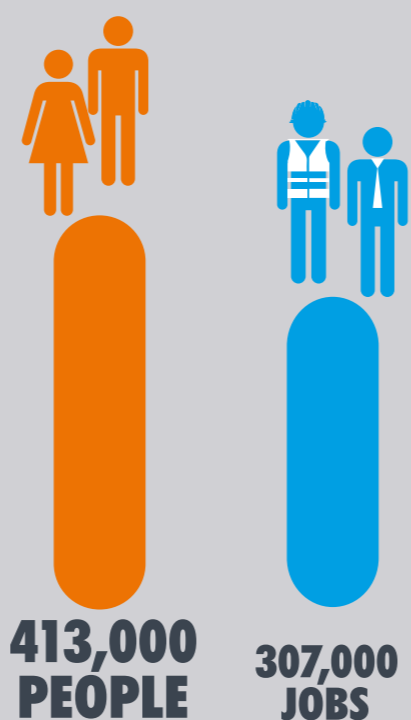


SINCE THE EARLY 1990s THE POPULATION OF MELBOURNE'S WEST HAS ALMOST DOUBLED. THIS GROWTH IS FORECAST TO CONTINUE: AREAS LIKE WYNDHAM AND MELTON ARE THE FASTEST GROWING AREAS IN THE STATE. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT WITHIN A DECADE THE REGION WILL BE HOME TO MORE THAN ONE MILLION PEOPLE. MELBOURNE'S WEST FACES A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES IN ADAPTING TO RAPID POPULATION GROWTH AND A TRANSITIONING ECONOMY.

The economy of the West is diversifying away from its traditional manufacturing base. Construction activities are growing strongly and the West is also the 'hub' of the State's freight and logistics industries.

The ABS has forecast that the region's economy will continue to transition, with health care, construction, retail trade, transport, warehousing, education and training predicted to experience the greatest growth.

However, a decline in manufacturing has resulted in areas of high unemployment, social dislocation and poor health outcomes. The West needs a workforce with the skills to ensure high levels of employment and to meet the social, economic and physical infrastructure needs of Australia's fastest-growing region. Now is the time to make this happen.



1/4 OF THE POPULATION ARE LEAVING THE WEST FOR WORK. WE NEED TO GROW JOBS SO PEOPLE LIVE, STUDY AND WORK IN THE WEST.

Source: Wesern Melbourne Regional Development Australia Committee: Regional Plan 2016-2019

THESE INVESTMENTS WILL CREATE ENDURING VALUE TO THE UNIVERSITY AND TO THE REGION.

Improved campus amenities will contribute to a vibrant campus-based experience and enhance VU's ability to attract and retain students from the region and around the world.

Student outcomes will improve by investment in modern, technology-enabled, purpose-built, flexible learning spaces to deliver a high-quality learning and teaching experience. The new facilities will promote stronger integration with industry and the community through co-location, with a particular focus on innovation.

Crucially, VU, along with significant industry partners such as Western Health and local schools, will continue to be at the forefront of the provision of high-quality, skilled professionals to meet the workforce needs of the region, particularly those addressing its significant health and education challenges.

DELIVERY TIMETABLE



SUNSHINE SKILLS HUB
MID 2019

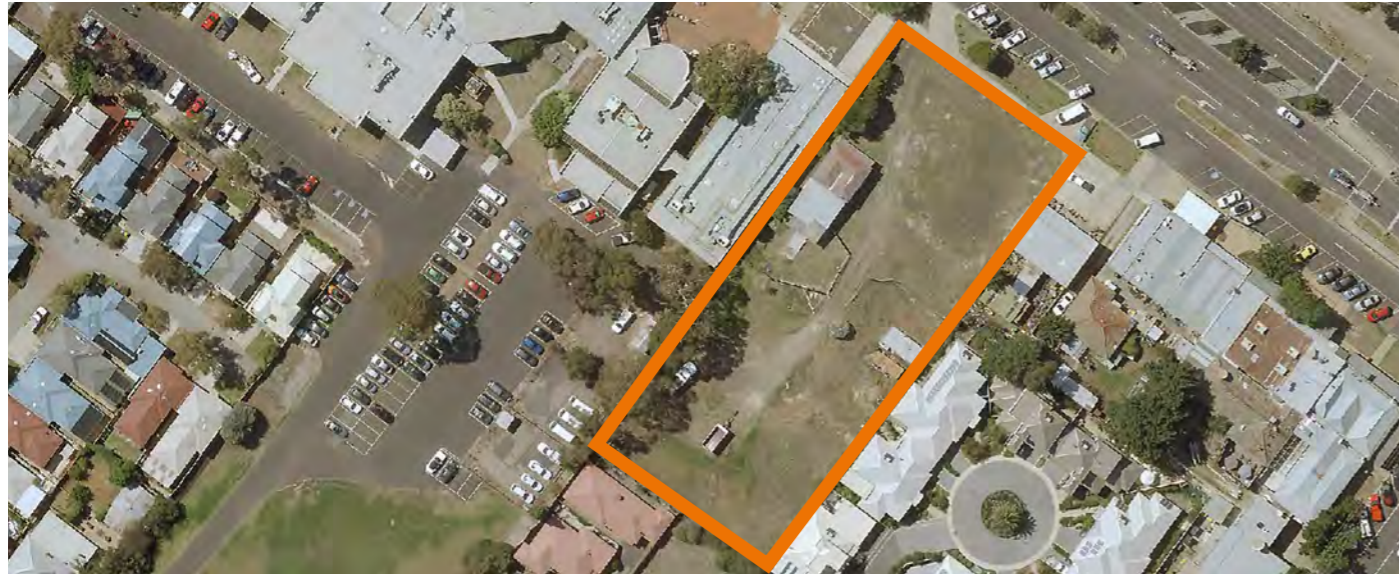


SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
LATE 2019



FOOTSCRAY PARK
2020

MOVING FORWARD WITH THE CALOOLA SITE



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY WAS ACUTLEY AWARE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY'S DISAPPOINTMENT AT ITS DECISION TO STOP OFFERING TERTIARY EDUCATION AT CALOOLA, AND HAS WORKED HARD TO FIND ALTERNATIVE OCCUPANTS FOR THE SITE.

However, the same challenges that drove the University's decision have also made it unattractive for other users – educational or otherwise.

Working closely with State Government and Hume City Council, Victoria University has tried tirelessly to find a solution for this heritage site. The site was used as a short-term home in 2010 by Hume Anglican Grammar School, but since then the University has been unable to find anyone else willing to take it on.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Hume City Council in 2013 to work towards a solution for future use of the Caloola site.

It was agreed that Victoria University would:

- allow local community organisations to continue to use parts of the site, which VU has continued to facilitate over the years

- ensure significant open space remained available for the community in any future use
- make a sizeable financial contribution from any sale to the future Global Learning Centre (GLC) in Sunbury, similar to the GLCs in Broadmeadows and Craigieburn
- offer tertiary education and other community services as part of the 'multiversity' fostered by Hume Council at the new GLC, and through the Sunbury Learning Link.

Victoria University has continued to work collaboratively with Hume Council, which has now purchased a site for the Sunbury Global Learning Centre on Macedon Street.

THE CURRENT PROCESS

IN 2016, THE STATE PLANNING MINISTER ANNOUNCED THAT THE VICTORIAN PLANNING AUTHORITY (VPA) WOULD TAKE OVER PLANNING RESPONSIBILITY AND UNDERTAKE A MASTER PLANNING EXERCISE FOR THE JACKSONS HILL SITE.

Victoria University has welcomed this development. It will allow Government oversight and community consultation to find the most suitable future use of the Caloola site.

Victoria University, with the strong support of the State Government, has substantial growth plans for reinvesting in the revitalisation of TAFE education in the west of Melbourne.

The University can best fulfil its mission to provide opportunity and success to students from its region by investing in campuses where students want to study.

Any future planning, and any proceeds from an eventual sale of the Sunbury Campus, will be used to improve tertiary outcomes in Sunbury and the west of Melbourne. There are many ways in which this will continue to occur.

- The University wants the community activities that it has fostered on the existing site (such as the Boilerhouse Theatre and the Sunbury 99.3 Community Radio station) to continue as part of the future use of the site, perhaps by excising part of the site specifically for this use.
- Future community uses will be enhanced and expanded by the planning undertaken by Hume City Council for an Arts and Cultural Precinct at Jacksons Hill, to strengthen arts and cultural endeavours in Sunbury.
- Victoria University has committed to support a stronger platform of local tertiary opportunities in Sunbury, currently through the Learning Link facility in the Neighbourhood Community Centre in Elizabeth Drive. We also sponsor an art therapy course at Sunbury Neighbourhood House to help young adults deal with anxiety and depression.
- This will be enhanced in future through the University's support of the Hume Global Learning Centre (GLC) Sunbury, including through a substantial financial contribution enabled by proceeds from the former Sunbury Campus. This supports VU's existing presence at the Broadmeadows GLC.
- At the Sunbury GLC, VU plans to offer training tailored to local community need. For example, it will use its Sunbury Youth Network connections to offer Tertiary Preparation courses; work with local businesses to offer short Master Classes to upskill employees; and connect with local business associations to offer English language courses.
- The University will ensure that all further proceeds of an eventual sale will be used to develop the Sunshine TAFE Campus, with a major new building to support training of new workers in areas such as Health, Nursing and Aged Care; Business and IT; Early Childhood and Education Support; Community Services; and Creative Arts. This Sunshine project, supported by the State Government and substantial philanthropic donations, will proceed with re-purposed funds from the Sunbury site to develop Sunshine.
- The broader development of the VU investments in the west will be in locations easily accessible to Sunbury residents, such as Sunshine, Footscray and the CBD. This is in addition to the continuing support of activities more broadly in Hume.

THE VU VISION

AS THE UNIVERSITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS, WE WILL BE OPEN AND EXCELLENT, CREATING EXCEPTIONAL VALUE FOR ANY STUDENT FROM ANY BACKGROUND AND UPLIFTING THE COMMUNITIES IN THE WEST OF MELBOURNE. WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS VISION BY:

EDUCATION

Providing high-quality, engaging, career-based tertiary education at all levels of vocational and higher education with flexible entry and exit points, appropriate pathways, an engaging and rigorous curriculum and contemporary delivery; while maintaining rigorous standards and ensuring that all students are supported to meet those standards.

RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT

Undertaking high quality and innovative applied and translational research which results in healthier, smarter and sustainable communities in the West of Melbourne and beyond, and connecting deeply with industry and the community, in turn enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

CONTACT

This document has been produced by Victoria University, to assist with the Victorian Planning Authority Jacksons Hill Masterplanning Public Consultation process.

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For more information, or to sign up for regular email updates, visit
<https://vpa.vic.gov.au/project/jacksons-hill-masterplan/>



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