What is a heads of agreement?
A heads of agreement represents the first step on the path to a legally binding agreement or contract, and serves as a guideline for the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in a potential partnership before any binding documents are drawn up.

Why was the heads of agreement done confidentially?
UTAS is a public university, but is also part of a globally competitive market. It is not uncommon to make such negotiations in private when dealing with legal and financial matters.

To date, a heads of agreement document has been negotiated. Further contracts will be finalised once UTAS has obtained the necessary development permits following the normal regulatory process.

What is the next step in the process?
As part of the heads of agreement, UTAS has agreed to develop, in consultation with BCC, a site master plan for use and development of the land at West Park.

The master plan has to be finalised within two years after the date of the transfer of land. The master plan will take into account existing plans that the community have contributed extensively to, including the Making Burnie 2030 Strategic Plan and the West Park Strategic Guidelines.

What land is included in the transfer?
The heads of agreement allows for a staged transfer of land. The title that contains the Makers’ Workshop and Domestic Arts building will be the first title to transfer, with others to follow subject to planning and title transfer issues.

The West Park oval facilities and land near the Burnie skate park are not included in the transfer.

Will UTAS develop a new campus?
The heads of agreement states that UTAS must substantially commence development of the land for educational purposes, other than the 40 units, within 10 years. If this does not happen there is provision for this portion of land to be subdivided with Council receiving first offer to purchase the units. The Makers’ Workshop building and the land it sits on would be transferred back to BCC.

Could UTAS use the land near the Mooreville Road site to build the accommodation?
The land that is available behind the current university site is not owned by the BCC or UTAS and does not offer the full potential for delivering the long-term vision UTAS is developing for the North West.

Will UTAS maintain services and programs at the existing campus?
Yes. UTAS is committed to the Cradle Coast Campus and intends to continue to grow the number of students and support the range of courses offered in the North West. Any development will be an expansion of the existing services, not a replacement.

What other sites were considered?
UTAS investigated the Tas Paper site, Cooee Point, land near the current site on Mooreville Road and West Park.

What will happen to the Makers’ Workshop?
The heads of agreement states that the Makers’ Workshop building will be transferred to UTAS. It also states that UTAS acknowledges the current purpose and function of the Makers’ Workshop and that the Makers’ Workshop will continue to operate “as is” while a transition plan is developed and agreed on by Council and UTAS. The transition plan will be developed within six months. Any changes will aim to enhance community outcomes through a partnership with Burnie City Council and UTAS.
Will the Visitor Information Centre remain open?
Yes. The Visitor Information Centre will remain open and continue to be run by BCC in the Makers’ Workshop. The heads of agreement states that BCC can occupy the current site of the Visitor Information Centre for a minimum of 10 years at peppercorn rent. All outgoings and maintenance costs from the Visitor Information Centre are to remain with BCC.

Will cruise ship passengers still visit the Makers’ Workshop?
Yes. The Makers’ Workshop is still home to the Visitor Information Centre and cruise ship passengers and all visitors will be encouraged to visit. BCC will continue to promote the Visitor Information Centre service.

Will the papermaking studio, gift shop and Makers still operate out of the Makers’ Workshop?
Both BCC and UTAS recognise the significance of the papermaking studio, the Makers’ studios and gift shop and their current usage will be considered during the development of the transition plan. All these areas will continue to operate as normal during the six-month transition period.

As part of any development at West Park, UTAS would operate educational facilities from the Makers’ Workshop building, with space requirements yet to be determined.

Will the café remain open?
Yes. The café will remain open and continue to be available to the public. It will also serve as the catering provider for students living on site, an option that should help make the café a sustainable venture. Discussions on the management of the café will be negotiated during the development of the transition plan.

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Will the Little Penguin Observation Centre remain open?
Yes. The heads of agreement states the northern part of the site will continue to be used as an area of environmental management for penguin habitat. It also states that UTAS will grant BCC the right to continue to occupy the building used as the Little Penguin Observation Centre, and for it to be used for the same purpose for a minimum of 10 years at peppercorn rent. All outgoings and maintenance costs are to remain with BCC.

What rates will UTAS pay?
UTAS will pay service rates, and general and service rates on any commercial activity on the site. Like other educational institutions across Australia, UTAS is exempt from paying the general rate under the Local Government Act.

Can community groups still use the band rooms?
Yes. The heads of agreement states that UTAS will grant BCC the right to continue to occupy the band rooms for a minimum of 10 years at peppercorn rent. All outgoings and maintenance costs are to remain with BCC.

The heads of agreement states that UTAS is entitled to makes changes to the building as it sees fit, within the constraints of the planning regime. UTAS could determine to demolish the band rooms, but if this were to happen within the 10-year period, UTAS must consult with BCC with a view to relocate community groups and room users to another building on the West Park site. This means their occupation rights are secured. Under the agreement, UTAS would pay any costs of relocation and re-establishment of the band rooms.

Does this transfer include the brick Home Arts Building?
Yes. If the development proceeds, the Home Arts Building will transfer to UTAS. This building is heritage listed so any work done to this building must be in consultation with the Heritage Council and any planning constraints.

Will I still be able to park at West Park?
Yes, free parking will remain at West Park and is likely to be repositioned closer to the skate park.

The heads of agreement states that part of the site will be developed for car parking available for both university and public car parking. It is also agreed that the public will have the right to use the car parking space when events are on at West Park Oval and the Burnie Park.

Will any access works be needed?
Under the heads of agreement, BCC and UTAS will share the cost of constructing a road from the Bass Highway to the northern part of the site. BCC owns and manages this area. The BCC will negotiate with the Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources (DIER) to enable BCC to construct a safe pedestrian and vehicle crossing over the railway line to the south of the northern end of the site, which will be paid for by UTAS.

Can Burnie still be branded as the ‘City of Makers’?
The ‘City of Makers’ branding was implemented long before the Makers’ Workshop development. While the Makers’ Workshop certainly strengthens this branding, it is only one of the features highlighting Burnie as a city of makers.

The BCC has no plans to change the ‘City of Makers’ branding and any university development on this site will contribute and strengthen the core values behind this branding. Securing educational outcomes for the community of the West and North West region is critical to supporting the future of the region.

The BCC’s Marketing and Events department has driven the ‘City of Makers’ branding from its implementation and will continue to do so.