

# A fresh future for Newnham Campus

## *Creating a welcoming place for all*

**Newnham Development Strategy, Master Plan Summary  
as at November 2023**



UNIVERSITY of  
TASMANIA

**Hassell**

# Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge and pay respect to the Palawa people, the Traditional Owners of Lutruwita (Tasmania) Aboriginal land.

The Palawa people belong to the oldest continuing culture in the world. They cared for and protected Country for thousands of years. They knew this land, they lived on the land and they died on these lands.

For many years the Palawa people referred to this land as Palanwina Lurini Kanamaluka ('the town near river Tamar').

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and to the many Aboriginal people that did not make elder status and to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community that continue to care for Country.

Our island is deeply unique, with spectacular landscapes, with its cities and towns surrounded by bushland, wilderness, mountain ranges and remarkable coastlines.

We stand for a future that profoundly respects and acknowledges Aboriginal perspectives, culture, language and history.

The University of Tasmania and Hassell are committed to learning from Aboriginal people in order to embed the Newnham campus on Country.

Conversations with Aboriginal people so far have identified opportunities for projects that invest in the local community, enable people to live well on Country today and deepen relationships into the future.

Looking at the story of this site reveals a connection to agricultural practices and sharing knowledge that has continued in some form for thousands of years.

This represents a rich opportunity to highlight and develop intergenerational connection to place, involve multicultural communities and connect current communities with future communities.

Image: Maireener – black crow and rice shell necklace, Aunty Nola Hooper.  
Image supplied by UTAS. Photography: Osborne Images

## Acknowledgement

The Hassell project team would like to thank and acknowledge the assistance and input of the many people, stakeholders and organisations that have participated and contributed their time and energy during the consultation and engagement process for the Newnham Development Strategy.

## Authorisation

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## Glossary

Abbreviation	Terms
AFWI	Australian Forest and Wood Innovations
AMC	Australian Maritime College
CSAW	Centre for Sustainable Architecture with Wood
DMIDP	Defence and Maritime Innovation and Design Precinct
GLP	Greater Launceston Plan
NDS	Newnham Development Strategy
NTRLUS	Regional Land Use Strategy of Northern Tasmania
TAP	Tasmanian Agricultural Precinct
TIA	Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture
UPPL	UTAS Properties Pty Ltd
UTAS	The University of Tasmania

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## A fresh future for Newnham Campus

The University of Tasmania (UTAS) has led the Newnham Development Strategy (NDS) to revitalise the Newnham Campus. The project aims to rejuvenate a site with a rich history, making it a vibrant and welcoming place for residents, workers, and visitors.

**The strategy encompasses a diverse mix of uses, including a local village centre, community spaces, offices, housing, aged care facilities, and various health, medical, well-being, and recreational areas.**

At its core, the NDS focuses on creating an authentic, inclusive, and sustainable environment that adds long-term value to the northern suburbs of Launceston. The project seeks to consolidate the campus's various functions, fostering innovation, community growth, and collaboration with local industries.

On a metropolitan scale, the site's development will contribute to shaping Launceston's future by redefining the city's northern boundaries and increasing population density. It will also enhance access to public transport infrastructure and support the expansion of services in the Newnham and Mowbray areas.

At the local scale, the NDS aims to improve local amenities, introducing much-needed health and medical services, promote cultural activities, and establish a network of open spaces and community gardens. These enhancements will not only benefit the immediate community but also drive economic growth.

The NDS represents a comprehensive vision for the site, emphasising sustainability, environmental conservation, and integration with the natural landscape. It incorporates tree planting and green roofs to align with the city's Urban Greening Strategy, promoting physical activity and well-being.

Furthermore, the plan prioritises pedestrian, bicycle, and active transport use, improving pedestrian infrastructure and maintaining public bus services.

Parking demands will be met through

private garages, on-site parking, shared parking stations, and on-street parking to accommodate various functions and users.

The NDS envisions a phased development approach, allowing different groups, including UTAS, the Department of Defence, and Homes Tasmania, to deliver their projects while ensuring the ongoing operation of the campus. Numerous key buildings will be adapted and reused to maintain their historical significance and contribute to vibrant streetscapes.

The NDS recognises the site's cultural heritage, reflecting its importance to First Nations people, past students, and new community members. It seeks to create a place that embraces the diverse cultural backgrounds of its users, including Aboriginal communities from Lutruwita and beyond.

The open space network proposed by the Master Plan will offer opportunities for active and passive recreation, community engagement, and cultural practices, reinforcing the site's role as a learning and cultural landscape. Additionally, the plan integrates ecological and cultural considerations, promoting environmental sustainability and improving the well-being of residents.

The NDS's consultation process involved discussions with First Nations people, the local community, businesses, stakeholders, UTAS staff, and the City of Launceston. Feedback and insights from these conversations shaped the Master Plan, resulting in six key themes:

- Designing for a Cultural Landscape.
- Deepening connections with the local community and addressing local needs.
- Establishing a place with a diverse mix of uses suitable for different lifestyles.
- Enhancing access and movement while managing traffic impacts.
- Identifying interim opportunities to activate spaces on the site.
- Integrating UTAS's learning, teaching, and research functions to create a vibrant core activity.

The Newnham Development Strategy represents a comprehensive vision to transform the Newnham Campus into a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable hub. It leverages the site's historical and cultural significance to create a place that benefits the local community, supports education and research, and contributes to Launceston's future.

### Master plan

The Master Plan as part of the Newnham Development Strategy explains the design response proposed for the site to guide its evolution. It is structured to describe:

- How the site can be better connected with the city and surrounding areas through a new structure and approach for access and movement.
- The land use arrangement across the site and how existing and new uses are positioned within precincts.
- The strategies, site wide services and site planning principles that have been developed to inform each of the design recommendations; and
- The open space network and how its landscape supports cultural practices, links ecological systems, improves site amenity and microclimates and creates multiple spaces located and scaled for a variety of different local community uses.

### Key Design Aims

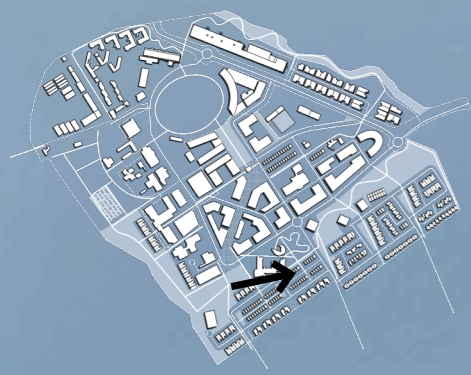
Four key design aims have been iteratively developed and refined through each phase of the NDS Project to underpin the Master Plan. They have been informed by the visioning workshop, analysis and conversations with UTAS, the City of Launceston, the community and stakeholders.

The four key design aims for the NDS project are to achieve:

- A cultural landscape
- A connected place
- A clear legible structure
- An integrated neighborhood.

The key design aims help provide the roadmap and decision-making tool to ensure the master plan aligns across all facets of the project. Each key aim is explained further in the following pages.





## PROJECT POSITIONING

### Guiding Principles

Five Guiding Principles were developed with input from a range of project stakeholders during Stage 2 of the NDS.

The Principles outline what the renewal and re-development can achieve through its design and planning process. They play an important role in ensuring that social and environmental factors are considered alongside the economic outcomes for the area.

The Principles and a number of supporting Goals are explained in this section of the Master Plan Report.

#### Grow and evolve

The redevelopment of the Newnham Campus will be a carefully managed process produced in stages to allow the community, UTAS and everyone involved to come together early in the process and discuss the plans for the area with opportunities to test new uses before building begins.



#### A sustainable place

Build Newnham as a valuable place that delivers sustainable, long-term environmental benefits and advantages to the local community, UTAS, Launceston and Tasmania.



#### Positive change

Build a reputation for the Newnham site as an inspiring place based on the natural and cultural values of the region, the Aboriginal people and the local communities.



#### Connected communities

Bring the new and existing parts of Newnham together as one place. Weave this place into the fabric of the local community, broader Launceston, and Northern Tasmania.



#### Diversity and choice

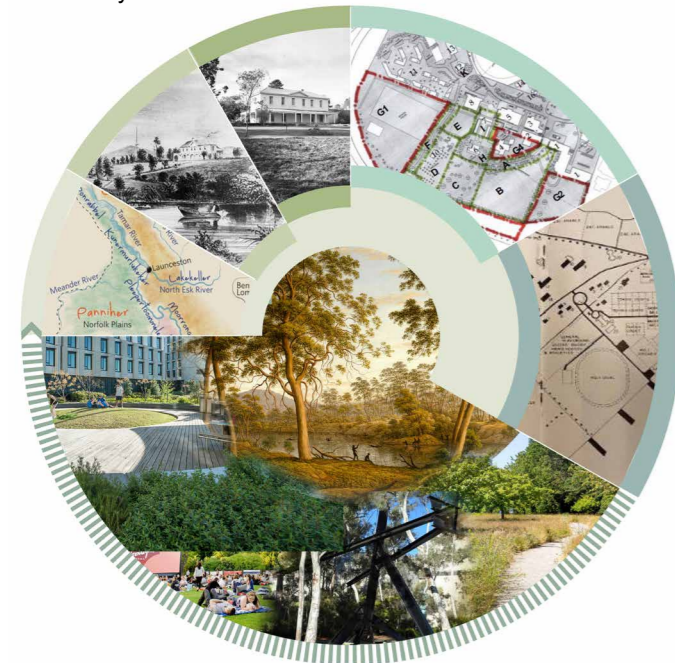
Encourage and inspire a variety of different people to actively talk about, visit and experience Newnham as part of their daily lives.



View over neighbourhood veggie patches into the southern living precinct

## An evolving place

Aboriginal people have lived on and cared for this Country around kanamaluka / Tamar River for thousands of generations before invasion and colonisation. They lived on the eastern side of kanamaluka, and co-existed with this landscape over thousands of years to support their families and culture, as well as engaging in trade and relationships with neighbouring nations. The site has a strong legacy as a homeland, a productive cultural landscape that has always supported a diverse community.



The evolution of the site has been through many periods of change. Each layer has left its mark and informed the next stage. A summary of some of the key periods is noted here.

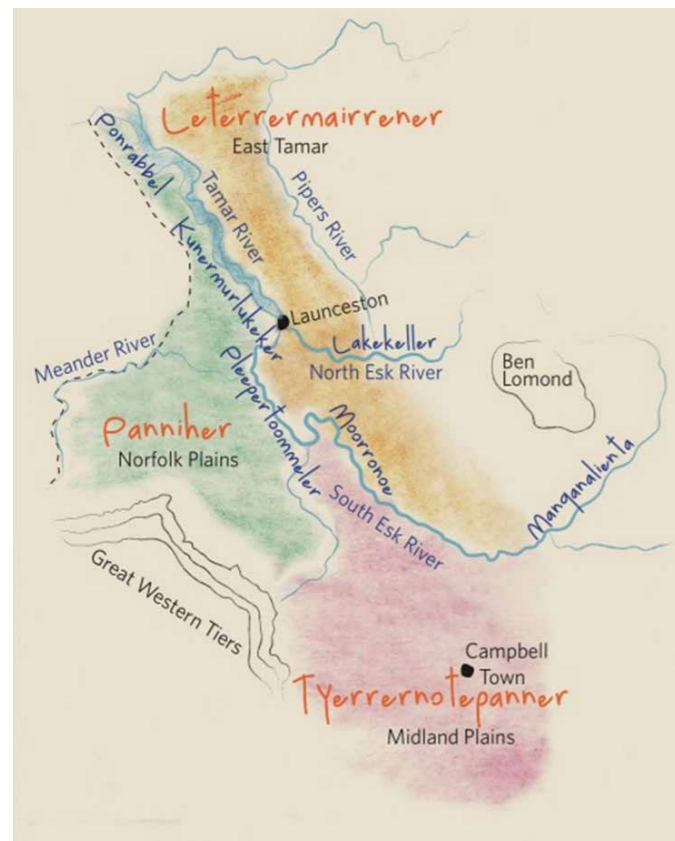
**Pre-European:** The Tamar began filling around 17,000 years ago as sea levels rose with the end of the last Ice Age. The vast wetlands were rich in waterfowl and swans, eggs, mussels, oysters and shellfish, a variety of edible plants, as well as plentiful grass and game in the grassland of the hinterland. Aboriginal people cultivated grasslands for hunting with cultural practices such as burning and a deep knowledge of Country, attracting marsupials such as wallaby and kangaroo. The higher plains offered open grasslands and open woodlands, teeming with life providing further food sources in the form of roots, seeds and fruits that were seasonally harvested, as well as year-round populations of possum, wombat and other game.

Following colonisation and the dispossession of aboriginal land Martin Mowbray Stephenson took up a grant of 500 acres. By 1855, the Newnham Estate was one of the grandest estates in the north of Tasmania.

By mid 1970s the Brooks Community High school, the Tasmanian College of Advanced Education (1973) and Australian Maritime College (c.1975-78) were co-located on the Newnham site.

In 1946, Newnham Hall opened as Newnham Hall Hostel, housing girls from rural areas of Northern lutruwita / Tasmania including from tayaritja (the Furneaux Islands in Bass Strait) who were attending Launceston High School. In 1948 Dr Dick Whitford, responsible for the introduction of comprehensive high school systems within lutruwita / Tasmania, established the experimental Newnham Community School.

In the 1990's the University of Tasmania amalgamated with the Tasmanian State Institute of Technology (TSIT). The TSIT's Centre for Aboriginal Research and Education became the Riawunna Centre for Aboriginal Education. Riawunna's Murina program saw many Aboriginal students come through the University system, and maintain connection to this site as a place of learning and sharing culture and knowledge.



Map source: <https://aboriginallaunceston.com.au//the-origins-of-the-term-stoney-creek-tribe/>



Above: John Glover "Natives on the Ouse River", w Van Diemen's Land, 1838. Art Gallery NSW

## Country\*

Country, as it is understood by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, has a different meaning to the western understanding of the word country. Country (capital C) speaks to a complex and interconnected system of all things related to, and that exist within, Country. This includes the land, waters and seas, and the systems and life they support; it includes people, spirituality and ancient knowledges, cultural practice, lore and language, both tangible and intangible.

Country relates to the nation or cultural group and land they / we belong to, are born of, and will return to. Aboriginal people understand that Country must be nurtured and cared for and know that in healing and taking care of Country, Country will care for us.

Culture and Country are increasingly finding space as an essential way of considering and interpreting new developments, redevelopments, and

places and spaces across Australia.

Through engaging with principles of designing with Country, there is the opportunity to embed connection to Country, Aboriginal knowledge, cultural practice and the histories of people and place into the community, visitor, student and staff experience at the University of Tasmania.

This allows people to engage with the stories and histories of Country in a real and meaningful way, and provides opportunities for shared, cross-cultural learning and continuation of cultural practice. The benefits of this include substantial contribution to truth-telling, and ensuring nobody is excluded from the wide-reaching opportunities provided by cultural spaces.

Visitors and staff can deepen their sense of belonging to Country as they understand and learn these

stories. These places need to be safe places for Aboriginal and other First Nations people, including visitors from elsewhere. People often feel a deeper sense of belonging when they are provided an opportunity to understand the story of place.

The stories of Country are our roots, and our inheritance, and are the foundation of all developments and places across Lutruwita / Tasmania. Many of these stories are being told to the wider community for the first time, but there is an opportunity to fill places with them, telling them often and generously until all Australians understand the depth of our cultural inheritance.

*\*Referenced from the supporting work of Ochre Rain*

## A cultural landscape

A rich and multi-layered cultural landscape has been a key foundation for the Master Plan response.

The cultural landscape is founded on tens of thousands of years of connection and use of the site by hundreds of generations of First Nations people. The cultural landscape also draws from the memories and connections to this place by people who attended school and university here as well as the use of the site for farming and pastoral uses and more recently by newcomers to the area who bring with them further cultural diversity, new energy and fresh perspectives.

An opportunity to rethink the way the site can be understood and experienced by all cultures has been identified through the consultation and engagement process during Stage 3 of the project. The planning and design of this revitalised part of Launceston presents an opportunity to enrich an existing place that can support the surrounding community, including Aboriginal people from Lutruwita and beyond, and the diverse communities that form part of the Newnham area.

The site has always been a place of learning. Through this renewal program it can amplify this role through sharing knowledge in broader and deeper ways including a naturally managed landscape.

As noted in the work by First Nations engagement consultants Ochre Rain through discussions with the local Aboriginal community, the place where the Newnham Campus sits is part of Kanamaluka Country, cared for by generations of the Litarimirina (Leterremairrener) people.

The Litarimirina were part of what is called the Stoney Creek Nation, one of nine nations or language groups that lived throughout Lutruwita / Tasmania prior to invasion / colonisation. Each nation had a mutually distinct language and culture, with complex governance systems and relationships with neighbouring nations.

The Litarimirina cared deeply for this Country, including the land, sea, sky, water, flora and fauna, for thousands of

years and had a deep understanding of, and connection with this Cultural Landscape.

The Litarimirina people never ceded their Country and didn't survive the devastating impact of invasion and colonisation.

The Palawa and Pakana people are the current custodians of all the lands throughout Lutruwita, honouring the loss of traditional owners and their ancestors by caring for Country.

This opportunity to develop on unceded land is gained from devastating loss. Consideration of Aboriginal perspectives and the stories of the traditional custodians of Country in new developments signals a commitment to working to heal these wounds.

The Master Plan proposes a range of design initiatives covered in this report that consider how knowledge systems, values and beliefs can be expressed and experienced in the site's renewal and especially through the landscape strategies.

## The precincts

The Master Plan comprises a range of precincts that collocate and amplify existing uses with those proposed to come to the site. The precincts are outlined below. Each precinct is discussed further on the following pages.

The street and open space network has been structured to enable each precinct to be implemented in phases whilst providing a coordinating framework to align supporting services, infrastructure, access and movement into and through the site.



## Overview of design responses

The Master Plan has been refined and updated in response to the feedback from the consultation and engagement process.

Six areas of design and planning were identified to refine the master plan. A summary on how and where the Master Plan has been refined and updated is discussed in this section of the report.

The updates are further to the initial planning and design proposed for the site illustrated in the draft Master Plan.

The consultation and engagement process undertaken during the draft Master Plan phase of the NDS project included a range of different discussions with First Nations people and organisations, the local community, businesses, and stakeholders as well as staff from the University of Tasmania and the City of Launceston.

Many people generously contributed their time and energy to the process and shared their views on what they thought was working well in the draft design, what was missing as well as contributing ideas for what should be considered further. Some concerns and further questions were also raised by different people and organisations through the discussions.

The discussions regarding the draft Master Plan covered the proposed mix of uses, the configuration of the site including the open space and landscape network as well as the connections, and the approach to accessing and moving through the site.

### Designing for a Cultural Landscape

Enable First Nation's knowledge and cultural systems to shape the expression and experience of the site along with its heritage as a place of teaching and learning.  
Invite active use, learning and living by the diverse and multicultural communities that form part of the Newnham and Mowbray area.



### Plan for a diverse mix of accommodation and uses that suit different lifestyles

Design for North Launceston's needs that includes housing choices and local services.  
Adapt existing buildings, where possible, for reuse.  
Respect and work with the scale of the existing neighbourhoods and design with this in mind.



### Deepen the connections with the local community and support local needs

Plan for a multicultural approach to housing and lifestyle.  
Actively invite the enthusiasm and drive of the local community to grow their investment of time and energy in the Site's future now and ongoing.  
Accommodate uses that are needed by the local community including health and wellbeing services, communal and recreation spaces.



### Improve access and movement opportunities and manage the impact of traffic

Focus on existing access points and limit new vehicular connections to the site.  
Create a clear pedestrian and bicycle network that is intuitive to navigate and that connects with and extends the existing and planned open space system and its trails.



### Meanwhile at Newnham...

Recognise and amplify what works well now and leverage this to bring more activity to the site early.  
Invite new local businesses and community activities to site now and support them to grow and evolve.



### Integrate UTAS learning, teaching and research functions (TIA, AMC, CSAW, AFWI) on the site as vibrant and core activity

Plan and design for all new uses to complement and enhance the UTAS presence on site and locate supporting services, accommodation for UTAS needs in an integrated design response.



## Previous Draft Master Plan (May 2023) for engagement

This plan was used during the consultation and engagement process in stage 3 ahead of the final changes been undertaken to reflect the feedback from the community, stakeholders, UTAs and the City of Launceston. A summary of the key changes to the design are illustrated on the next page.

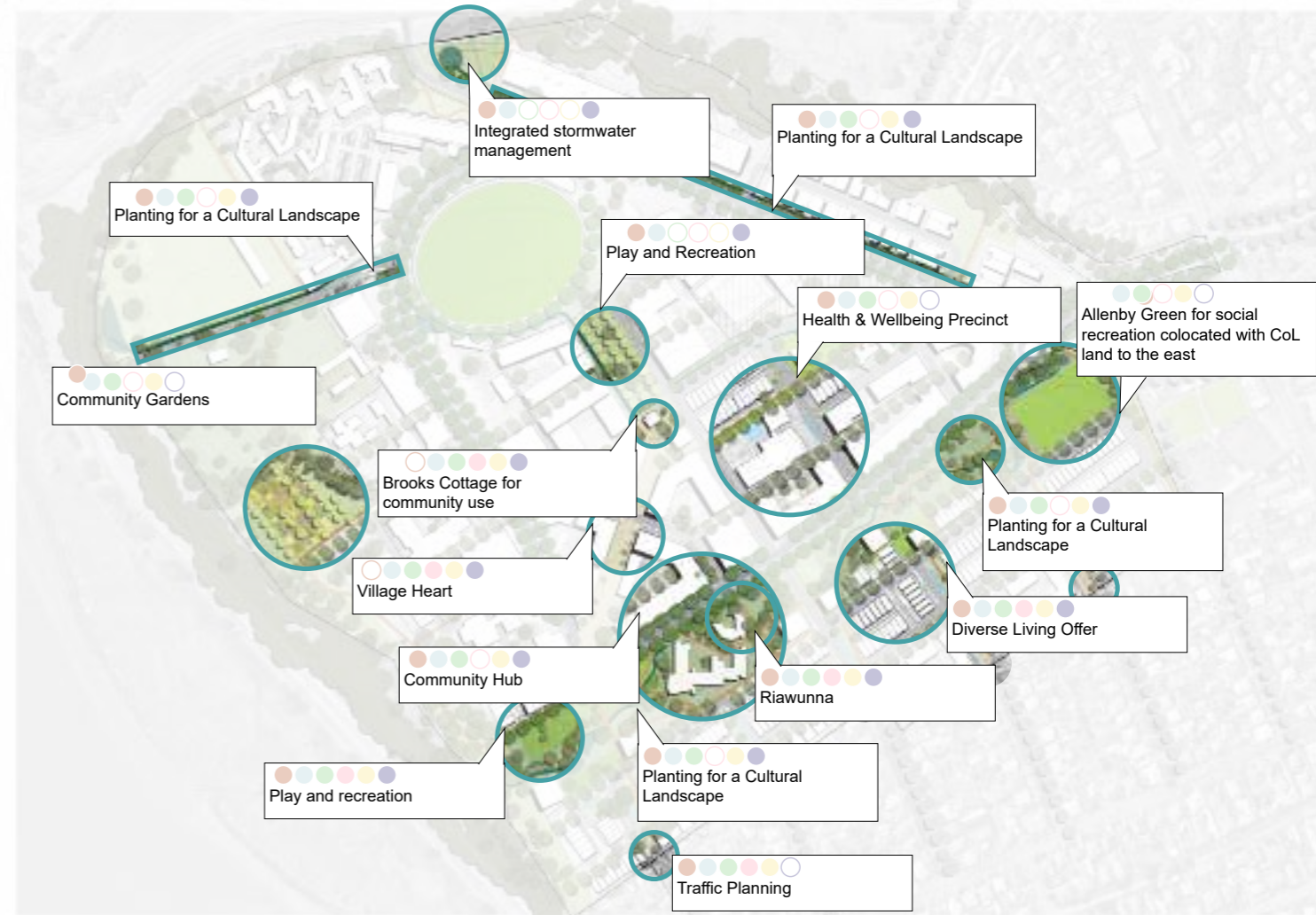


Land Zoning Overview for Engagement consultation and engagement in Stage 3 of the NDS.



## Master Plan refinements

Master Plan areas of response to community engagement



**Key:**

**Positive contribution to:**

- Designing for a Cultural Landscape
- Deepen the connections with the local community and support local needs
- Plan for a diverse mix of accommodation and uses that suit different lifestyles.
- Improve access and movement opportunities and manage the impact of traffic
- Meanwhile at Newnham...
- Integrate UTAS learning, teaching and research functions on the site as vibrant and core activity and connect this with other services.

# A New Community Neighbourhood Emerges



- |    |   |    |                                       |
|----|---|----|---------------------------------------|
| 1  | Allenby's Green                         | 13 | Brooks Urban Orchard                  |
| 2  | Native Parkland                         | 14 | Oval with Outdoor Fitness track       |
| 3  | Constructed Wetland                     | 15 | Brooks College Heritage Park          |
| 4  | Central Park Shared Trail               | 16 | Newnham Creek Nature Trail            |
| 5  | Riawunna Centre Gardens                 | 17 | Brooks Road Entry Garden              |
| 6  | Community Hub Courts                    | 18 | Newnham Heritage Gardens and Orchards |
| 7  | Kinder and Child Care                   | 19 | Communal Productive Gardens           |
| 8  | Communal event lawn with stage pavilion | 20 | Food Forrest                          |
| 9  | Queen Elizabeth Plaza                   | 21 | Neighbourhood Veggie Patches          |
| 10 | Queen Elizabeth Walk                    | 22 | Public Outdoor sports                 |
| 11 | Village Square with playground          | 23 | Play parklets on road reserve         |
| 12 | Brooks Cafe                             |    |                                       |





Site aerial view from north



View towards Newnham Hall from the productive Community Gardens.

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