A New Model for a University Precinct

Doug Fraser
University Project Manager
AUHCF Conference 2014
Where is the Moreton Bay Region?
The Moreton Bay Region University Precinct is designed to be the major comprehensive higher education and research campus on the North side of Brisbane and bring significant economic growth to the region. It is envisaged that it will cater for 10,000 domestic and international students by 2033, and pending funding and partnership arrangements, will commence operations in semester one of 2018.

The result of these arrangements will be that the Moreton Bay Region University Precinct will be a major catalyst for change in the region, not only for its graduates; but also for its businesses, its economy, its profile, and its confidence.

(Vision statement still to be approved by MBRC Council)
The Problem is History

- UQ Ipswich
- QUT Carseldine
- Swinburne Lilydale
- USQ Springfield & Fraser Coast
- Monash Peninsula
- Monash Gippsland
- Etc. etc. etc.

No matter how much universities think that it is just a business or that their raison d’etre is climbing the ranking ladder, the staff, students, and communities at their satellite campuses have a very different opinion!
University partners will be selected based upon their commitment to the region. They will also be chosen on their ability to provide affordable, high quality teaching and learning outcomes in regionally relevant academic programs, and on their ability to provide superior educational and employment outcomes for students.

It is envisaged that a single domestic or international university will be selected as the Anchor Educational Partner, and that smaller niche providers may also operate within the precinct. University partners will need to operate their campuses under ongoing high-autonomy campus management models, designed to ensure significant levels of localised authority, accountability, business decision making, resource retention, and community engagement.

(Vision statement still to be approved by MBRC Council)
How it Could Work

MBRC retains control through ownership (essential)
1. Possibly precinct company structure: responsible for delivery of vision
2. Total precinct approach – Education, Health, Sporting, Commercial, Entertainment, Cultural, Environmental, & Student Accommodation
3. MBRC owns or has head lease to initial Education Precinct building
4. High level of community amenity
5. Central shared facilities and services

Academic providers incentivised to deliver on vision (essential)
1. Anchor Educational Partner has first right of program refusal
2. Discounted occupancy
3. Sale/lease of lots
4. Empowered, high autonomy campus

Academic providers accountable to community (essential)
1. Status and occupancy conditional on contribution to vision
2. Student evaluations, progression and retention rates of all providers to be provided to Precinct Company Board.
3. Students can raise issues direct with Precinct CEO
4. MBRC retains rights to establish new university
Campus Autonomy 101

Study Centre
No HOC.

Administrative
HOC. Limited control. Key decisions made centrally.

Business Unit
Matrix managed. Faculties accountable to HOC. Localised control of:
- portfolio
- teaching mode
- business decisions
- administration

Faculty
Control as for Business Unit but academic staff line managed by HOC.

Federal
As for Faculty but localised control of research.

High Autonomy

No Autonomy
So Who Would Be a Candidate?

- **Domestic Satellite (Anchor Educational Partner)**
  1. Comprehensive, but niche providers could be accommodated
  2. Commitment to accommodating low SES and aspirational students
  3. Decentralist (Business Unit, Faculty, or Federal models – Administrative need not apply)
  4. Affordable
  5. Committed to the Vision
  6. Not there to suppress competition or to provide second rate student experience to achieve affordability

- **International Satellite**
  1. As for domestic satellite
  2. Culturally aligned

- **Stand-alone**
Why would anyone want to be involved?

Northern Territory  232,000
Australian Capital Territory  373,000
Moreton Bay Region  400,000
Tasmania  512,000

Projected population for 2026 - 500,000