

2.2 The 2012 Campus Master Plan: **Priorities**

The strategic priorities stated in the University of the Sunshine Coast Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015 provide a conceptual structure for the 2012 Campus Master Plan. The strategic priorities are further developed in the University of the Sunshine Coast Top Level Plans 2011 – 2015, and suggest how the planning agenda for the five year period 2012 – 2016 can form a complement to the University's broader academic aspirations. The University of the Sunshine Coast has identified four Strategic Priorities.

1. ENABLE ACCESS TO THE USC EXPERIENCE

The University of the Sunshine Coast seeks to become a focus of the regional community through enabling a broad spectrum of the population to access its programs, activities, facilities, and places of interest, extending a positive educational, cultural and economic influence beyond its immediate academic community.

Prioritising access to the University has a number of planning implications. These range from long term, large scale considerations regarding the institution's contribution to regional transportation management, to more immediate priorities regarding the development of planning guidelines which encourage opportunities for formal and informal staff and student interaction. Supporting access to USC will entail co-ordinating community utilisation of University facilities such as the art gallery, library and sports venues, and developing partnerships with other educational institutions in the region. More fundamentally, it requires embedding equity and social justice principles in the reputation and recruitment practices of the University.

The planning and development of campus infrastructure will remain cognisant of the diversity of the population accessing its facilities, sometimes from remote locations, and of how the campus can accommodate their variety of needs in such a way as to further develop the University's role in the intellectual, cultural and social life of the region.

2. DELIVER HIGH QUALITY TEACHING, LEARNING & GRADUATE OUTCOMES

Success in delivering high quality teaching, learning and graduate outcomes is partly dependent on the University's capacity to provide high quality facilities where such aspirations may be realised. While USC has already developed an enviable range of buildings and facilities which have achieved wide recognition for their provision of high quality learning resources, ranging from sophisticated undergraduate science, computing and nursing laboratories with state-of-the-art equipment to an international standard athletics track, national standard indoor sports stadium and technologically advanced sports laboratories, continuing to develop innovative, high quality teaching environments will be of critical importance to the ongoing success of the institution. The 2012 Campus Master Plan acknowledges the importance of encouraging high quality teaching and learning spaces, whether lecture theatres equipped with advanced technology, tutorial rooms for interdisciplinary learning, specialist research laboratories or small, outdoor classrooms set within the campus' natural environment.

Learning outcomes will at the University will benefit from the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives within the University's curricula, which will find reflection in the 2012 Campus Master Plan's goal of appropriately acknowledging and accommodating local indigenous culture in the teaching and learning facilities still to be established on the campus.

3. BUILD RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY & OUTPUT SIGNIFICANTLY

Increasing research productivity and output will remain crucial to the ongoing success of the University of the Sunshine Coast and its capacity to provide both educational programs and research services to its region, while strengthening its international research profile. Developing cross disciplinary research capabilities will be addressed in planning for institutional infrastructure able to accommodate the needs of the University research community, providing key research

infrastructure such as equipment, facilities, services and accommodation. The traditional connection between teaching and research will remain essential to the future of USC; purpose-built and adaptable facilities appropriately positioned throughout the campus will therefore be critical in continuing to realise the educational benefits of maintaining the teaching - research nexus.

4. DEVELOP USC FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The University of the Sunshine Coast will continue its commitment to developing as an environmentally sensitive exemplar through leading by example in the areas of campus planning and development, sub-tropical architecture and all aspects of operations that have an environmental impact.

Since its inception in the mid-1990s there has been a commitment on the behalf of the University to develop an institution of a unique environmental character, where there is not just maintenance, but an enhancement of the native flora and fauna, and local natural systems. This has leant the campus a distinct 'sense of place', and established a natural environment which remains in concert with the needs of the wider regional ecosystem, as well as with the requirements of the staff, students and wider community using the University.

The 2012 Campus Master Plan establishes a broad range of environmental priorities in relationship to the design and operation of its own facilities, as well as in regards to neighbouring ecosystems, and especially the Mooloolah River National Park. These responsibilities include large scale landscape and water management programs, and the extension of the natural local habitat for native flora and fauna. Buildings are sited away from that portion of the site liable to be impacted by flooding, as well as being designed for climatic sensitivity, with the intention of minimising their long term energy usage.

Environmental strategies need to respond to both short and long term considerations. The retention of green corridors to facilitate native fauna movement through the campus remains a significant, immediate priority of the 2012 Campus Master Plan. A longer term strategy involves the continued implementation of native landscape rehabilitation programs. The translocation of a substantial area of native flora, including sub-soil habitat, to the low-lying south-east corner of the campus demonstrates ambitious achievements are possible when sustainability programs are supported, implemented and receive ongoing management and care. The 2012 Campus Master Plan intends to draw on such experience in its recommendations for both the designed landscaped spaces around campus, and for areas where the rehabilitation of local plant species and naturalised landscapes are more appropriate.

