

What impact will Wannon Water upgrade have on Lady Bay?

A retired marine scientist raises questions about the planned \$40m Wannon Water plant upgrade.

Hot off the presses: Deakin plan

[box]This is the media release in full just issued by Deakin University:[/box]



Warrnambool Deakin Campus: Image, Deakin University.

DEAKIN WARRNAMBOOL HERE TO STAY

Monday, 3 October 2016

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"]D[/dropcap]eakin University has today announced a proposed ongoing, long-term and more sustainable model for its Warrnambool Campus that will see it continue its role as the region's higher education provider.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Jane den Hollander said it was not possible for Deakin to remain in Warrnambool on a business as usual basis, in the face of declining enrolments and increasing annual losses.

"If something does not change these losses are predicted to rise and the campus is increasingly unsustainable," Professor den Hollander said.

Professor den Hollander today met with Warrnambool Campus staff and students to confirm the University's commitment to the region and discuss proposed key changes to the current Campus model which will:

- ensure a student experience at Warrnambool consistent with Deakin's LIVE the future strategy and equivalent in quality to student learning outcomes at other Deakin campuses;
- fulfil Deakin's public purpose; and
- address the financial losses of the Campus.

Deakin will continue to explore opportunities to grow and sustain the campus into the future, including the consideration of a new Bachelor of Agribusiness unique to the Warrnambool Campus.

Professor den Hollander said Agribusiness could be an exciting new course that plays to the region's agricultural strengths.

"We will work with the community to explore whether there is sufficient demand to get this new Bachelor of Agribusiness up and running," she said.



Deakin Pro Vice Chancellor Jane Den Hollander.
Image: Deakin University.

Deakin will continue to identify other opportunities and create strategies for new and expanded offerings at the Warrnambool Campus, including increased work integrated learning and internships, expanded use of Trimester 3, exploring the international markets, both for in-bound students and on campus international programs, potential expansion of Associate Degrees, maximisation of pathways with South-West TAFE, VCE extension studies and potential opportunities for development of Deakin's Institute of Koorie Education programs.

"Deakin will further consult with the Victorian Government, SW TAFE and regional schools to ensure community and industry support for higher education and Deakin University in South West Victoria," Professor den Hollander said.

"We will focus on the courses for which there is demonstrated demand and strong graduate employment outcomes," Professor den Hollander said.

Under the proposal, Deakin will continue to offer Nursing, Midwifery, Health Sciences, Psychological Sciences, Education

(Primary), Commerce, Environmental Science (Marine Biology), Law and Commerce/Law at the Warrnambool Campus. Deakin will also continue to offer the Associate Degree of Education and several PhD courses.

Professor den Hollander emphasised that all students currently enrolled in non-ongoing courses at the Warrnambool Campus will be able to complete their studies at the Campus.

"A reduction in staff numbers as a result of the proposed decreased course offering would be necessary, but this will be worked through compassionately and via a period of consultation with staff, beginning today, Professor den Hollander said.

The consultation process will help to determine how the reduction in staff numbers will occur, including the option for a voluntary separation process.

Other aspects of the proposed model include closure of the Warrnambool Corporate Centre and rezoning of parts of the Campus that the University does not require. Professor den Hollander said Deakin acknowledged the State Government for its support of the proposed rezoning.

In addition to its Warrnambool Campus, Deakin's strong presence in the South West region will continue, including through the School of Medicine's Clinical School at South West Healthcare, Deakin Rural Health's integrated program of research, education, the Centre for Farmer Health and the Centre for Rural Emergency Medicine.

Professor den Hollander acknowledged the financial support promised by the Federal Government to support Deakin's transition to the proposed new Campus model.

"Deakin appreciates the work of the Member for Wannon, the Hon Dan Tehan, who has facilitated this support," she said.

“We look forward to the active support of local industry, education institutions and the community in general to help ensure the success of the proposed new Campus model. Support will hopefully include provision of student work placements, internships and scholarships.

We look forward to working with the community to grow a new model that better suits the current era and the growing knowledge economy. This model will include both face to face and digital learning experiences so that those who study at Warrnambool receive an education that enables them for the jobs of the future. That is our focus.”

Deakin's pay-to-park farce



A sold-out footy match? No, it is the free parking around the oval at Deakin, Warrnambool, where students would rather park and walk to avoid a \$6 a day fee. It

is only open in dry weather.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #8F9F59;"] R
[dropcap]egional universities are vital to the small communities they serve, in terms of providing quality education, but especially for the continued economic development of those regions.

They educate *local* people, mostly young people (and in so doing help keep them in the towns they know) and provide many jobs.

Students have to work hard (there is a huge drop off rate in the first year) and most try to balance study with part-time paid work, often difficult to secure in regional areas. Indeed, trying to encourage young people to stay and study in Warrnambool was a key topic in the recent election for Wannon.

Most students struggle financially during this time, so it seems unbelievable that a regional university would choose to make going to university any harder.

Deakin University's Warrnambool campus, despite being on the outskirts of town, charges students the same fee to park their cars (\$6 a day or by the hour rates) as students at its Melbourne and Geelong-based campuses. To make matters worse, it provides a solitary ticket machine at the Warrnambool campus which leads to long snaking queues of cars (backing up to the railway station 500m away) at peak times.

[box] There is little argument in city campuses charging for parking, as there is limited space and the public transport system is usually close at hand: there are viable and cheap options for students who do not want to pay.[/box]



Could this be South-West Victoria's hardest working parking ticket machine?

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #8F9F59;"] T
[/dropcap]he Warrnambool campus offers free parking of a sort (when it is not raining)! It allows students and staff to park for free around the edge of its football field. It is currently closed because of wet grounds, causing another spike of complaints and a return to long lineups for the single ticket machine.

You might ask, why don't students just use the train service? After all, it is cheaper and better for the environment.

The \$1.15m train station, built in 2006, is only useful if you want to turn up to the campus at 5.35am or 5.20pm (from west to east). Practically useless. A bus service is scheduled to arrive at the campus from its W'bool rounds at 8.45am, but our contacts say it is often late and therefore students are reluctant to take the risk.

[box] It's important to know that not all regional universities charge their students for the 'privilege' of

parking a car to attend lectures or study.[/box]

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #8F9F59;"] M
[/dropcap]onash University in Gippsland, where I recently worked, did not charge students a cent to park at its regional campus in Churchill, despite there also being a bus service to the campus. Staff and students at that regional campus were provided with free and plentiful parking.

Parking has been an ongoing issue at the Deakin campus for two years. There have been protests since 2011 about the university's money grab.

In 2011 the Vice Chancellor Professor Jane den Hollander said in an email to staff that she knew the pay to park arrangements would "upset some students and staff but subsidising car parks was costing the university's core business".

"I trust that you will take some time to consider these new arrangements in the light of the need to reduce Deakin's carbon footprint, to release more funds for Deakin's teaching and research activities, and to keep pace with other institutions who are also working hard to reduce the demand for on-site car parking," she wrote.

[box] She said the changes also aimed to reduce demand for parking on campuses and encourage staff and students to adopt "sustainable transport alternatives" like public transport.[/box]

Clearly, that position has not changed, even though the VC would now know of the poor public transport options for the Warrnambool campus. We are not the first to call for the university to act and support its regional staff and students, and do away with its pay-to-park farce.