

Knowledge Masterplans: How La Trobe University's unique campus identities vary a shared ideation process.

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Many Australian university campuses are at a crucial turning point. Often designed and constructed in the mid-twentieth century, many buildings are ageing and no longer suited for contemporary learning and teaching, and the spaces between them are often neglected and dominated by car parking. This presents an opportunity to strategically rethink the campus as a welcoming knowledge neighbourhood: one that supports innovation, partnerships and contemporary pedagogy with all the services and vitality of a University Town.

This presentation looks at three recent case studies of La Trobe University campuses that MGS Architects have master planned to create ambitious frameworks for change. Each is aligned with the unique campus identity and capacity of the University.

La Trobe University, Melbourne Campus

When instituted, La Trobe University's Melbourne Campus was located in a field on the periphery of the city, a citadel campus accessed primarily by car. Now, almost 50 years on it is strategically positioned in the heart of Melbourne's suburban north, a rapidly growing region with demand for dynamic centers of education and employment. Consequently a key priority of the masterplan is to turn the campus 'inside out' to ensure meaningful connections with the surrounding community and transform the campus into a vibrant University Town..

La Trobe University, Bendigo Campus

Located in the regional city of Bendigo, Victoria, La Trobe University's Bendigo Campus has similar objectives to the Melbourne Campus: to reach out and embrace the city and welcome the community onto the campus, while regenerating key learning and teaching spaces and public realm. However the scale and context of this campus are very different to its Melbourne counterpart. The campus does not expect dramatic growth in student numbers, and is currently well-provisioned for teaching space. This requires a sensitive approach to interventions, ensuring that relatively small moves can have a larger cumulative effect.

La Trobe University, Albury-Wodonga

Significantly smaller than the main Melbourne campus and the regionally significant Bendigo Campus, the overarching goal of the Albury-Wodonga Masterplan is to create a vibrant knowledge campus, which places people at its heart. A key focus of the new and upgraded campus will be at the intersection of University Drive, and a new central pedestrian path 'Discovery Way'. Forming a gateway to the 'Knowledge Village', this intersection will also offer a meeting place for Wodonga TAFE and La Trobe University staff and students, as well as members of the local community.