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TASMANIA

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Planning changes sought for IMAS Taroona site

The University of Tasmania has applied to Kingborough Council for changes to the planning scheme that applies to the IMAS Taroona site.

By adding "Research and Development" and "Resource Development" to activities allowed in the area zoned Community Purpose, the proposed changes would address current anomalies in the planning scheme, recognise existing research activities, and facilitate the possible development of a tropical lobster hatchery on the Nubeena Crescent site.

The University has reached agreement, currently being finalised, with the State Government for the purchase of land adjacent to the existing IMAS Taroona site which was formerly used by DPIPWE for its endangered species programs.

Last year, the University announced that the Taroona-based ARC Research Hub for Commercial Development of Rock Lobster Culture Systems had achieved a world-first breakthrough in the production of tropical lobsters on a commercial scale.

The University has also entered into a partnership agreement with a Tasmanian company to commercialise the research and construct in Tasmania the world's first pilot scale tropical rock lobster hatchery.

While no proposal has yet been concluded to build the hatchery at Taroona, the proposed planning changes would facilitate the potential future use of the expanded site.

The University's Director of Corporate Affairs, Jason Purdie, said the site has considerable advantages as the possible site for a pilot scale facility as IMAS Taroona already houses a research lobster hatchery.

"Locating a small pilot scale hatchery alongside the existing research facility would allow the world class scientists based at Taroona to work alongside staff commercialising the technology, ensuring both can benefit from the ongoing research and development," Mr Purdie said.

“Licences with the State Government to pump water from the Derwent are already in place and construction of a high capacity pump and filtration system will be completed on the site by October this year.

“The science for this has not been demonstrated yet, so the pilot hatchery would predominantly be a research and development project on a similar scale to existing activities at IMAS Tarroona,” Mr Purdie said.

Mr Purdie said the proposed planning changes would also apply to Crown Land on the coastal edge, but no changes to the existing Tarroona Foreshore Trail or its use by the community were anticipated or required.

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