

# LENT MEETING OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

2:00pm Wednesday 5 February 2020

Latimer Room, Old Court, Clare College

**Present:** Professor Phil Allmendinger (Chair); Dr Tamara Follini (Chair of the Conservation Committee, ex officio); Miss Deborah Hoy (Estates Director); Ms Ada Lee (MCR Representative); Mr Jason Randall (IT Manager); Ms Eloise Trimmingham (UCS Representative); and Mr Paul Warren (Bursar).

**In Attendance:** Dr Jo Costin (Secretary); and Miss Emma Easterbrook (Assistant Bursar).

1. **Apologies**

Professor Howard Griffiths (Chair of the Gardens Committee); Dr Phil Faulkner; Mr Brenan Morgan

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of 30 October 2019**

The minutes of 30 October 2019 were approved.

4. **Matters Arising**

a. ***Item 5:*** Parking Policy

The Parking Policy was approved at Council. The Head Porter is able to implement from April by issuing parking permits. If a gate is considered in future, then the consultation process will be followed.

5. **Old Court**

a. ***Progress Phase 1a***

i. ***Roofing Works:*** The roofing works are progressing well. A new strike programme has been issued, beginning in March, with all scaffolding removed by the last day of July. This programme has been agreed with the Senior Tutor with regards to scaffolding removal during the exam period. The works are within budget.

ii. ***Gas Pipe:*** An issue has arisen with the gas pipe laid 18 months ago, which has not been adopted by the utilities company. A revised solution has been found, and final approval for this is being sought from the utilities company. The timeline is tight as

the gas needs to be in place before the boiler room can be removed. Cadent, the gas operator, has a 120 working day turnaround period, but it is hoped to reduce this. Quotes have been received for the contractor's work and the costs for the utilities company. This should allow time for the pipe to be laid without programme impact.

- iii. *Legionella*: Low levels of legionella were reported in H Attic, where the bedrooms are not being used. Showers from Old Court have been taken out of use except where a biofilter is in place. The most recent results showed a minor detection level of 50. The tests will be retaken to check that this has further reduced. Since the last set of tests were taken, the system has been dosed with chemicals.

Legionella occurs naturally, and so water has to be kept at specific temperatures to avoid it forming. H Attic has been regularly flushed, but the water was taking 15 minutes to reach temperature, meaning that it was not circulating at the correct temperature.

It is unclear why the issue appeared only in December. Most of the water system works were carried out in August. Ad hoc works are being carried out to the water system to attempt to resolve this. The preference is to reduce the amount of flushing and resolve the issue of why water is not circulating properly, and further minor works are in hand.

- b. ***Progress Phase 1b***

- i. *Logistics*: Work to complete the logistics information has been taking place, including bore holes to assess the foundations for the road and bridges. Further meetings with the tree officer are planned.
- ii. *Cost Savings*: Having Barnes on board has allowed their input into Stage 4b of the design, leading to significant cost savings. This includes a potential saving of £85,000 on the bridge costs. Work to reduce costs further is ongoing, with investigation into the foundations along the boundary wall to reduce the amount of temporary works by incorporating the propping up works into the foundations for the new build. The Estates Director and Project Manager were thanked for their work on this.
- iii. *Cam Conservators*: A current cost risk is that the Cam Conservators have requested a fee for every day that the temporary bridge is across the river. Previous discussions suggested there would only be a fee for days the watercourse was interfered with, and so the bridge has been designed to be the same height from the river as the existing bridge. A cheaper option could be used if columns are put into the river. A meeting was scheduled for Friday with the Cam Conservators to discuss the issue.
- iv. *Programme*: The Logistics work begins in the Fellows' Garden on 29 June 2020, running to the end of September. The Temporary Kitchen erection begins on 28 August, and takes a 2-3 week period. The current kitchen in Old Court closes on 14 September for a 2 week period, meaning no catering in Old Court. This is when the gas changeover will also happen, so there will be no hot water in Old Court. The Temporary Kitchen opens on 28 September, and the contractor takes possession on 1 October to begin demolition.

Barnes have been alerted to the gas issue, and are considering alternative demolition programmes if the boiler room needs to continue running for a longer period.

The programme aims to return the catering kitchen, Great Hall, and Buttery for 6 June 2022, reopening in time for graduation. The new extension is planned to complete on 1 July 2022.

c. ***Old Court Matters Arising***

- i. *Item 7b: School Group Requirements for Toilets:* Unisex toilets within the Buttery have been reviewed. These will remain unisex. Temporary measures will be used if necessary during school visits. Individual disabled toilets could be made available to a particular sex if required.
- ii. *Item 7c: Catering Office Location:* This was discussed at the Fellows' Rooms Working Group. The H Attic location has two issues: access for students, and potential noise disruption to Fellows. A number of options have been proposed, including the use of the current photocopier room in F Staircase, which could be moved elsewhere. It was agreed that the current photocopier room in F Staircase would be a good location as it would allow convenient disabled access. A room is not required until towards the end of 2022, as the Catering Office will move temporarily to the portakabin.
- iii. *Item 7f: Disabled Access to Old Court (Phase 1b):* Considerable research has been carried out since the concerns raised at the last Estates Committee meeting about the external disabled access lift. No other manufacturer produces a lift which is invisible when not in use.
- The proposed lift is the same as that at the Scott Polar Intitute, but not the same as the one removed from the side of the same building. University Estates Management were not happy with the lift, but have refused the offer from the contractor to repair it and maintain it free of charge for a year.
- The company has been asked for information on breakdown rates and maintenance. The northern access does not meet building regulations requirements, but has a dispensation to allow for catering deliveries only. The area is not suitable for a disabled access ramp, though could be used for emergencies or in case of breakdown. Additional consultancy advice on lifts is being sought. The key issue is to make the mechanism watertight.

6. **St Regis Project Update**

a. ***Programme***

The contractor is reporting that they are slightly behind programme on the Chesterton and Hamilton Road blocks, and slightly ahead of programme on the Central Block. They report that overall they are on programme, and expect to make up the time. The roof formation is progressing well.

b. ***102 Chesterton Road***

The house has been refurbished and will be offered to gradaute students.

Consideration needs to be given to the future of the outlying houses, particularly 120 and 190 Chesterton Road, which have been used as overflow accommodation during the St Regis project. 33 and 102 Chesterton Road have also been acquired, so the College now has sufficient accommodation. There is a possibility of selling one or two of the outlying houses and using the money to redevelop the Queen Edith's and Netherfield sites.

108 Chesterton Road is physically attached and powered and heated from St Regis.

102 Chesterton Road is a separate building, but there will be openings between the gardens.

## 7. **Queen Edith's / Netherfield Redevelopment**

Initial investment appraisals have been carried out, but they do not give a quick pay back due to the ten unit restriction on the larger north site, which would be an underdevelopment. A development of over ten houses would require putting in some form of social housing. Feedback from the NHS suggested the possibility of using the site for key worker housing, which may remove the need for social housing, but this has not been confirmed.

A further review is ongoing, including the possibility of selling the northern site and using the money to develop the southern site with twenty student units and five one bedroom flats which could be rented to the NHS or used for market rental. Having only twenty student units would be an underdevelopment of the site. The architect has been approached to look at this option. At present there is low student demand for the site, with rooms often let to students from other Colleges.

The northern site would have a low investment return if eight to ten small houses were built, but could be sold to fund the scheme with potential to reinvest some of that money elsewhere.

The University Staff Housing Group and Biomedical Group have both identified the need for key worker housing, and the University is considering redeveloping one of their properties.

The Chair to put the Estates Director in touch with the relevant contact in Estates Management.

## 8. **Memorial Court Boiler Replacement**

An additional paper was tabled at the meeting.

The College is investigating the replacement of the boilers in Memorial Court, now twenty-three years old and reaching the end of their end of life. The initial schemes investigated were more sustainable, through using two boiler rooms instead of six.

However, this meant a significant upgrade work to the gas pipe at the same time as the country is trying to move away from gas. The consultants were asked for options that used less gas, and returned the paper previously posted which concluded that the College should use ground source heat pumps with the temperature topped up by water source heat pumps (electric pumps). However, this did not give any costs, and completely removing the gas was not what the College requested.

Following a recent meeting, the executive summary tabled at the Estates Committee meeting was produced. A complete move away from gas would put the likely cost of the boiler replacement in excess of £3 million. A discussion about moving to smaller schemes was held, but these would have to be done in a fairly rapid period of time owing to the age of the boilers.

The key problem with low carbon technology is the radiators. Low carbon technologies generally work at a lower temperature, and therefore require large heat exchangers. The historic radiators in Memorial Court are designed to work at a high temperature. There is also an issue with doing any work in Memorial Court, as the site has very limited (two weeks) downtime during the course of the year.

The Bursar and Estates Director to meet with low carbon specialists who have been working on North West Cambridge, and continue to review Thirkill Court.

Decisions / updates may need to be by circulation.

9. **Sportsground Waste Water**

The Committee previously agreed to investigate a connection to the mains drainage. However, the costs received (£142,000 + VAT) mean that the College is unlikely to get payback. A solution involving a septic tank will be below the amount requested for the mains connection. This means that the College will have to continue tankering out the waste, but the high capital cost for mains drainage means the mains drainage is uneconomic.

The sportsground is used by Cambridge United – although most Colleges share with other Colleges, Clare effectively shares with Cambridge United. Developing sportsgrounds is very difficult, but it is part of the College's landbank, and the College's planning consultant has suggested the site be put forward in the current call for sites to see what the feedback is.

10. **Carbon Reduction at Clare**

Professor Phil Allmendinger has been speaking with fellows and students over the past three months in regard to setting up a Carbon Reduction Committee. The MCR and UCS support this initiative. The working group would need approval from Governing Body, and a determination of membership. The College's green initiatives, while commendable and leading, currently tend to be piecemeal, with many of the simpler actions already completed. The aim would be to create a strategy to reduce carbon emissions. The strategy would be driven by data, to identify the most effective areas for prioritisation. The Bursar is in discussion with the Finance Committee about green investments, and the Estates Director and Assistant Bursar have recently attended University-wide meetings on carbon reduction. King's College have developed a passif haus building, but Clare has generally steered away from 'tick box' exercises. However, embedded carbon was investigated when St Regis was designed, and the specification of some parts changed as a result of these investigations. The technology is becoming more affordable and more well known. Travel was identified as a big issue for the College, particularly travel for interviews. The working group needs involvement from all parts of the College to achieve success.

11. **Maintenance Strategy (Draft)**

The Maintenance Strategy was previously circulated. No comments were noted.

12. **Bids for Special Capital Expenditure 2020-21**

All of the proposals for Special Capital Expenditure 2020-21 were important. The list of projects came in approximately £18,000 over budget, so some items were removed or placed in other budgets. With the exception of the F Photocopiers, which will be leased rather than rented, these are on the list of projects circulated, but with a zero budget.

The Six Year Programme will be presented at the next Estates Committee. A number of projects were pushed back for a further year.

Papers for each bid are available on Moodle. The bids were:

1. St Andrews and St Giles – St Giles boiler was completed in Summer 2019. Costs were received at the same time for St Andrews, and this is to be completed in Summer 2020. This will bring both boiler rooms up to the same level. For the next boiler replacement project, Air Source Heat Pumps will be investigated as an alternative to gas.
2. Memorial Internal Decorations – Christmas two week shut down period allows for painting as many rooms as possible. Every room in the undergraduate estate has been assessed and the worst rooms selected for redecoration.
3. Ashby and Memorial Court boiler project – See Item 8. The £400,000 in the budget assumes a start on site in Easter 2021.
4. New Intakes Memorial Court – The internal team will carry out the electrical upgrade works to the ring main supported by an external contractor. This is the final part of the work, and it will require boring a new duct between I&J and S&T to get the conduit in, as the cables cannot be pulled through the existing routes.
5. Forbes Mellon Library Security Gate – the issuing system was renewed over Christmas 2019, this is the gate to go with the new issuing system as the current gate is at the end of its life and no spares are available.
6. Sportsground Sewage Plant – See Item 9. It is not expected that the full £40,000 will be required to install a septic tank. Confirmation will be given at the next Estates Committee.
7. Queen Edith's / Netherfield Site Redevelopment – See Item 7. This is for consultant fees to continue investigations.
8. Porters' Lodge Roof – no compliant tenders were received, so the tender is being re-run. It will be tendered to a main contractor, meaning a higher overhead and prelims.
9. IT Network Switches – final stage of a three phase programme to give a ten year lifespan to the IT network.

The following projects were in the Buildings Department's Small Planned Works Budget:

1. Etheldreda – additional works to bathrooms and double glazing, to be carried out by the in house team
2. Clare Court Phase 1 Ventilation – plant to be replaced to resolve significant ventilation issues

3. Forbes Mellon M&E – works identified on the condition survey, to be done by the in house team.

The Conservation Committee and other interested fellows have been working on a proposal for the Fellows' Library. This was to install heating mats and to do other works (largely decorative) to improve the functionality of the space. The Conservation Committee agreed that bearing in mind the current financial situation of the College and the fact that the Fellows' Library was out of use until 2022, the bid would wait until the following year.

The Estates Committee approved the recommended projects.

13. **Update on Special Expenditure 2019-20**

- a. ***Emergency Special Expenditure Update 2019-20 & Expenditure approved under delegated authority since last meeting.***

One additional project was approved during the period. This was for emergency repairs to the south side of the roof in Old Court. This area will be done properly in Phase II, but had become unsafe. Work has been carried out to the worst parts, and they will be redecorated. The work has been done for a five year life span.

- b. ***Update on approved special expenditure 2019-20***

The progress update was circulated on the spreadsheet prior to the meeting. The yellow lines indicate ongoing projects. There have been some overspends, but these have been approved by the Chair of the Estates Committee and the Bursar, and the money has come from other areas of the Special Capital Expenditure budget.

14. **\* Conservation Committee:** Standing Item

15. **\* Environment Committee:** Standing Item

16. **Any Other Business**

17. **Date of Next Meeting**

22 May 2019 2pm Thirkill Room

**Distribution:** Professor Phil Allmendinger (Chair); Professor Andrew Balmford (Chair of the Environment Committee, ex officio); Dr Jo Costin (Secretary); Miss Emma Easterbrook (Assistant Bursar); Dr Nick Evans; Dr Phil Faulkner; Dr Tamara Follini (Chair of the Conservation Committee, ex officio); Professor Howard Griffiths (Chair of the Gardens Committee, ex officio); Miss Deborah Hoy (Estates Director); Ms Ada Lee (MCR Representative); Mr Brenan Morgan (Head Porter); Mr Jason Randall (IT Manager); Dr Jacqueline Tasioulas (Senior Tutor); Ms Eloise Trimmingham (UCS Representative); Mr Paul Warren (Bursar)

**For information:** Mr Jonathan Townson (MCR President); Mr Dan Wright (JCR President)

**All papers for the Estates Committee can be viewed on Moodle please follow link <https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/login/index.php> and use your normal Raven login to view.**