

UPP Projects Ltd
And University of Reading
St Patrick's Hall Redevelopment Project
Statement of Community Involvement
June 2016

Contents

1. Introduction

2. Policy Framework

2.1 National Context

2.2 Local Context

3 Summary of Proposed Application

4 The Consultation Process

4.1 Pre-application discussion with Councillors

4.2 Pre-application discussion with individuals

4.3 Publicising the consultation process to the public

4.4 Publicising the consultation process to staff and student

4.5 Student focus group

4.6 Conducting a visible and accessible public exhibition

4.7 Using appropriate response channels

4.8 Quantitative and qualitative response mechanisms

4.9 Feeding-back to participants and the wider community

5. The Response to our Consultation and Focus

5.1 Quantitative response

5.2 Qualitative response

5.3 Summary of key points and responses

5.4 Ongoing stakeholder engagement

6. Continuing Consultation

Appendices

Appendix 1: Leaflet

Appendix 2: Invitation to stakeholders

Appendix 3: Exhibition boards

Appendix 4: Website

Appendix 5: Website FAQs

Appendix 6: Map displaying postcodes of attendees

Appendix 7: Notice in *Community* newsletter (October 2015)

Appendix 8: Local press coverage (October 2015)

Appendix 9: Notices on Staff Portal

Appendix 10: Facebook post publicising public exhibition to students

Appendix 11: Student focus group discussion report

Appendix 12: Comments sheets

Appendix 13: Comments received by email

Appendix 14: NARA's response to the public exhibition

Appendix 15: Meeting invitation sent to NARA

Appendix 16: NARA meeting agenda 12.11.15

Appendix 17: Notes from NARA meeting 12.11.15

Appendix 18: Letter received from NARA 3.03.16

Appendix 19: NARA meeting agenda 26.04.16

Appendix 20: Stakeholder update email (December 2015)

Appendix 21: Notice in Community newsletter (February 2016)

1. Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement has been compiled by specialist community consultation company Lodestone Communications, on behalf of the University of Reading and UPP Projects Ltd. The report supports the planning application concerning the redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall to enable the construction of 1,024 new student bedrooms and 6 dwellings with associated catering and social facilities.

This report details the public consultation UPP Projects Ltd (UPP) and the University of Reading have undertaken in order to inform the evolution of the proposals. Consultation has been carried out in accordance with national and regional policies and meets the requirements of Reading Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement (adopted March 2014). Lodestone Communications (specialist community engagement consultant) seeks to follow the best-practice principles for consultation.

The key aims of the pre-application stage of the public consultation strategy, which this report documents, were:

1. To inform local residents, businesses, councillors and other stakeholders about the regeneration aspirations for the site.
2. To gain a full understanding of local views of the proposals, engage with the local and wider community throughout the design development stage, to use these views to inform the final proposals and to identify concerns and opportunities where possible.
3. To demonstrate how UPP and the University of Reading have responded to the issues raised by the community and stakeholders and identify how changes have been made to the proposals.

In addition, this report demonstrates UPP and the University of Reading's continued commitment towards consultation and engagement throughout the statutory planning process.

2. Policy Framework

National Context

Consultation is an increasingly important requirement for all development projects, and is looked on positively by both local and national government. Indeed, the Government is seeking to put community consultation at the heart of new approaches to planning and redevelopment.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 was the first fundamental reform of the planning system in more than a decade. Its core objectives were to ensure greater involvement of local communities in the planning process and to speed up the planning system.

The previous Government's Localism Act (Given Royal Assent in November 2011) built on this approach and stresses a requirement for effective and meaningful pre-application consultation as part of its emphasis on involving local people in planning, including via the development of local neighbourhood plans (as outlined by paragraph 188-195 of the National Planning Policy Framework). The point of consultation now is much more to do with outcomes and informing practice, rather than simply giving the public an opportunity to have a say.

Pre-application consultation should:

- Set out how the person proposing to make an application may be contacted
- Give information about the proposed timetable for the consultation, allowing sufficient time for those wishing to comment to do so in good time
- Follow guidance of the local planning authority about local good practice and take account of responses to the consultation

Local Context

Reading Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement (adopted 2014).

The local policy context supports pre-application consultation. Reading Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement document (adopted 2014) supports the emphasis on applicants engaging with the local community prior to making a planning application. It lists the scale and type of development for which applicants are advised to follow the guidance, which suggests measures to be taken:

- The developer to discuss pre-application consultation with the case officer, who will provide assistance in identifying contact information for local representatives, groups and individuals;
- The developer's project plan should include details of the scope and timing of community involvement;
- Developers should provide circular information on the developer's intentions to make a planning application;
- Developers should arrange at least one interactive event to enable all consultees to attend, receive information, participate and feed back information;
- Developers should provide a website of relevant information;
- Developers will be expected to prepare a public report of community involvement for submission with significant or sensitive planning applications.

3. Summary of the proposed application

St Patrick's Hall Redevelopment Project - University of Reading.

The planning application involves the demolition of the existing St Patrick's Hall buildings and staff residences and the reception building / bar at Sherfield Drive, and the construction of 1,024 new student bedrooms and six three-bedroom flats, together with associated catering and social facilities.

The principal elements of the redevelopment are the creation of two residential courtyards, principally of four storeys, but rising to five and six storeys in the centre of the site away from Northcourt Avenue. A short terrace of two and a half storey 'townhouses' is proposed on the former car park close to Northcourt Avenue. In place of the existing staff houses on Sherfield Drive two buildings containing two flats for mature students, together with a CHP energy centre, are proposed. A further three-storey building comprising six flats is proposed adjoining Creighton Court.

In place of the bar/reception building it is proposed to build a four-storey complex made up of 'townhouses' with a new specialised social / catering building with a bar located at the heart of the site.

4. The consultation process

The consultation process for this scheme meets the requirements of the council's Statement of Community Involvement and other consultation guidelines.

Specifically, we have:

1. Conducted a planned exercise and front-loaded the consultation.
2. Conducted appropriate engagement that fits the community's needs.
3. Conducted an accessible and visible exhibition.
4. Included and engaged where possible the traditionally excluded groups.
5. Used plain English and adequate response mechanisms.
6. Managed expectations, making clear where there are constraints and what will happen to results.
7. Analysed the results from the consultation objectively.
8. Publicised individual and collective responses, with proper regard to the Data Protection Act.
9. Summarised how these responses have affected the proposals.
10. Ensured feed-back, analysis and our response is available to the public and consultation participants.

4.1 Pre-application discussions with councillors

During the pre-application phase, we contacted several local Councillors, including members of Reading Borough Council Cabinet, members of the Planning Committee and ward representatives from the Church and Redlands wards to inform them of the plans. These Councillors were invited to our public exhibitions. We were mindful of the Council's own protocols for Councillors when contacting these individuals.

We also had extensive pre-application meetings with officers – details of which are provided in the Planning Statement.

4.2 Pre-application discussions with individuals and groups

As a precursor to the main public consultation, we researched the groups and communities within the area to produce a stakeholder matrix. We contacted several individuals and community groups to offer further information and to make them aware that we were happy to meet with them.

The groups and individuals we contacted include:

- Reading University Student Union (RUSU)
- Northcourt Avenue Residents' Association (NARA)
- Redlands and University Neighbourhood Action Group

We will continue to maintain contact with many of these individuals and groups as the planning application progresses.

4.3 Publicising the consultation

4.3 (i) Leaflet

We publicised the consultation to a wide area surrounding the site by distributing a leaflet (see Appendix 1).

The objective of the leaflet was to invite the local community to the public exhibition, communicate information about the scheme and seek feedback from those not able to attend the public exhibition.

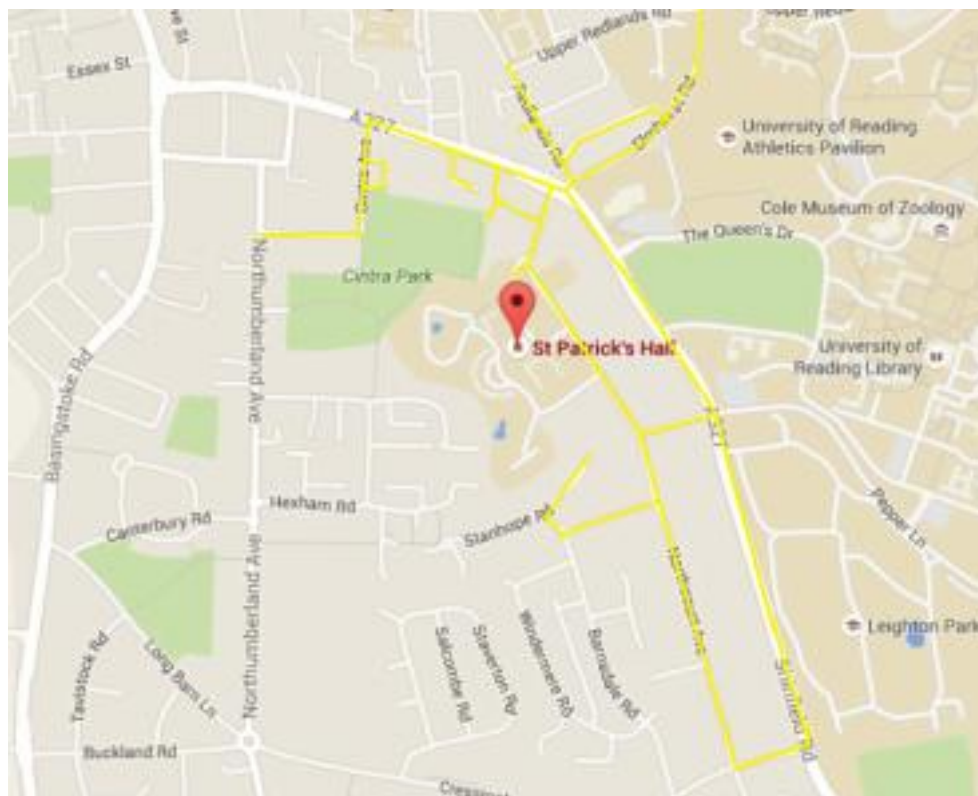
We sent out 500 copies of the leaflet on Thursday 8th October 2015. The leaflet was delivered to an area shown in Map 1 on page 10. The leaflet was delivered to roads including, but not limited to:

Northcourt Avenue
Cintra Close
Cintra Avenue
Warwick Road
Whitely Park Lane
Christchurch Road
Elmhurst Road

Shinfield Road
Wellington Avenue
Stanthorpe Road
Ennerdale Road
Cressingham Road

Redlands Road
Malborough Avenue

Map 1



The leaflets were delivered by our in-house team to ensure correct delivery.

In addition, the leaflet, accompanied by an invitation (Appendix 2) was sent to all those on our stakeholder matrix on the 5-6 October 2015. This included, but was not limited to, those listed in 4.2 above and the following:

1. Local Ward Councillors – Church Ward
2. Neighbouring Ward Councillors – Redlands ward
3. Members of the Planning Application Committee
4. Members of NARA
5. Local MP Rob Wilson
6. Thames Valley Neighbourhood Police Inspector and Team
7. Northcourt Dental Practice and Health Centre

During the exhibition, leaflets were available for those who wished to comment on the proposals.

4.2 (ii) Website

A project website was set up to communicate information about the scheme to an audience familiar with using IT and to seek comments on the scheme. The website has a unique url at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project/> .

The website is also a facility for members of the public to access documents, such as the exhibition boards (Appendix 4). The website also includes a FAQs section (Appendix 5)

The website will continue to be updated and maintained throughout the planning application process.

4.3 (iii) Notice in Community newsletter

We placed a notice in the Friday 16 October edition of the '*Community*', the University of Reading community newsletter, which is hand-delivered to 14,000 local homes around the University. This provided information about the public exhibition as well directions to the website (Appendix 7).

4.3 (iv) Local Press Coverage

We engaged with the local press as another channel to communicate to local people about our consultation process. A piece publicising our proposals was published in the local press, Get Reading, on Wednesday 21 October 2015 (Appendix 8).

<http://www.getreading.co.uk/news/reading-berkshire-news/university-reading-outlines-proposals-redevelop-10300150>

4.5 Publicising the consultation to staff and students

An invitation to staff, with details of the lunchtime exhibition session for staff and students was posted on the University or Reading Staff Portal on the 15 October 2015 at: www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project/spp-faq.aspx and a reminder was posted on the 21 October 2015, www.reading.ac.uk/internal/staffportal/news/articles/spsn-648833.aspx (Appendix 9).

The University publicised the public exhibition and the proposals to students via the University of Reading Student Union and also on social media (Appendix 10).

4.5 Student Focus Group

As part of the design process we undertook three separate focus groups with students from the University of Reading, including representatives of Reading University Students Union (RUSU) and the Junior Common Room (JCR) (Appendix 11)

4.6 Conducting a visible and accessible public exhibition

The Public Exhibitions took place in the Old Senior Common Room, the Shamrock Café, University of Reading (off Northcourt Avenue, Reading, West Berkshire RG2 7H)

On Thursday 22 October 2015

We held 3 sessions:

- 12.00pm – 2.00pm Students and Staff
- 5.00pm – 6.00pm NARA members and Church Ward Councillors
- 6.00pm – 8.30pm Public

The times and dates of the exhibition were chosen to encourage the maximum number of people, including traditionally excluded groups, to attend the exhibition. We ensured the exhibition dates did not fall on any locally observed religious or other festivals. We kept the exhibition open beyond its advertised hours to allow for continued interaction with local people and their representatives.

The venue was accessible to people with mobility concerns.

Signage to the exhibition included directional posters at the entrance and the car park. Details of the proposed scheme were contained in 12 exhibition panels (Appendix 3).

1. Welcome to the Public Exhibition of the St Patrick's Hall Redevelopment Project
2. Our Campus
3. Location
4. Why Now?
5. Proposals
6. Design Principles
7. Layout and Massing
8. Look and Feel
9. A Sustainable Approach
10. Considerate Contractor
11. Operations
12. Comments and Next Steps

The leaflet was available at the exhibition. Comments sheets and pens were provided.

4.7 Using appropriate response channels

We provided, and continue to maintain, several response mechanisms for local community and stakeholders to give their feedback and comments about the scheme.

Specifically, the response mechanisms have included:

- Many members of the development team were on hand during the exhibitions to answer detailed questions. Team members wore badges to identify themselves.
- A bespoke email address: stpatsproject@reading.ac.uk
- A comments form for online submission via the project website
- Comments sheets written by hand were collected at the public exhibition
- Meetings with groups including NARA and Students [see section 5.4 for further information]

4.7 (i) Project Email

A bespoke project email was set up and checked regularly for comments and enquiries.

There was an automatic response informing consultees that their comments had been received. This read:

*Thank you for your email.
We hope you are able to attend the public exhibition on the: Thursday 22 October 2015 from 6pm - 8.30pm
In the: Old Senior Common Room, the Shamrock Café, University of Reading (off Nourthcourt Avenue, Reading, West Berkshire RG2 7H)
If you have a specific question about the exhibition someone will respond to you as soon as possible.
Exhibition boards will be posted on our website after the public exhibition, go to:
www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project
Or you can request them via email stpatsproject@reading.ac.uk
Comments
If you are emailing to submit comments on the proposals, someone from the team will respond to your email as soon as possible. Thank you for your input.
All comments that you wish to be considered in the consultation process should be submitted by the Thursday 29 October 2015.*

After the 29 October 2015, the end of consultation period following the public exhibition, this automatic response was changed to:

*Thank you for getting in touch.
The deadline for submitting comments following the Public Exhibition on Thursday 22 October has now passed.
We have recorded your interest and will keep you up to date with project.
With best wishes from the project team.*

4.7 (ii) Data Protection

The comments boxes on the leaflets, and comments sheets including online comments submission, contained a data protection line allowing respondents to opt-out of their details being publicised in this Statement of Community Involvement. In addition, the line also warns consultees that by giving us their email address, they are opting into receiving periodic updates by email. The data protection line was as follows:

This data will be held by Lodestone, the University of Reading, UPP and Reading Borough Council. You may be contacted about the development and your contact information shared as part of Statement of Community Involvement document submitted to the Council, if you would like to opt out of this, please put a cross in the box.



4.8 Quantitative and qualitative response mechanisms

The consultation utilised qualitative response mechanisms to ensure full detailed feedback could be ascertained.

The qualitative responses were gathered from listening to individuals and groups in meetings and at the public exhibition.

The leaflet asked for written comments about the scheme, and the email service also gave an opportunity for submitting written comments.

The quantitative and qualitative comments have been recorded and analysed objectively by team members from community engagement consultants, Lodestone. Decisions on how to respond to the comments have been taken through thorough discussions with the relevant members of the project team.

4.9 Feeding back to participants and the wider community and opportunities for continuing involvement

One of the prime objectives of this Statement of Community Involvement is to help record individual and collective responses to the proposals and to demonstrate how these responses have affected our proposals.

This report then allows us to help feedback this information in a more readily digestible form to the local community, respondents, other stakeholders and Councillors.

This Statement of Community Involvement will be available alongside other planning documents.

The means of contact will all be maintained until the planning application is decided at a Committee of the Council.

We remain committed to keeping in touch with local groups, individuals and all those that have participated throughout this consultation exercise. We will be available to meet consultees as appropriate.

5. The Response to our Consultation

5.1 Quantitative response

Over 75 people attended the exhibition. 27 completed the feedback form and handed them in at the public exhibition. 29 people submitted comments via email after the exhibition.

We also received a letter from NARA in response to the consultation, (Appendix 14)

Of the 56 responses submitted in total:

37 were neutral or had specific comments or suggestions

16 raised objections to the scheme

3 were positive about the proposals and supported the scheme

The comments made are outlined in further detail below.

These responses, both scanned comments sheets and emails, are shown in the Appendices (Appendix 12).

We have put together a map, using Google maps, to show the approximate locations of the addresses given by the attendees (Appendix 6)

The period of one week for receipt of comments was designed to enable sufficient time to consider responses. We have included comments that missed this deadline within this document and also fed them into the design evolution. The leaflet drop took place two weeks prior to the public exhibition (on Thursday 8th October 2015). Dialogue with local groups, staff, students, the Student Union, and representatives has continued and will remain on-going. This included regular updates on our proposals (See section 5.4 and appendices 17 and 19) and site visits. A site visit for local MP, Rob Wilson took place on 5th February 2015. We also offered a site visit to the Victorian Society.

We have evolved our plans to respond to comments wherever possible.

5.2 Qualitative response

As outlined above, attendees of the exhibition, recipients of the leaflet and other local residents have had the opportunity to provide qualitative responses to our consultation. These responses have been collected and collated and this will continue throughout the application process. The main concerns and questions raised are outlined below with a response from the project team.

5.3 Summary of key points and how we have responded to these comments

We have outlined general feedback below and summarised key points in sections 5.3 (i) – 5.3 (vii).

Overall the most common concerns expressed by respondents were focused on operational issues, notably parking and management of student behaviour. These were linked to the proposed increase in density of the site and the impact of having more students living at the St Patrick's Hall. In terms of comments on the design, the proposed 'look and feel' of the buildings generally received positive feedback. Design related concerns tended to be about building heights, density of the development and reduction of open space. We had specific concerns from some respondents about the proposed demolition of Pearson's Court.

Outlined below are the key concerns and questions that have arisen so far during the consultation process.

The response from the project team to the most common concerns and questions are set out below.

5.3 (i) PARKING AND TRAFFIC: current management does not work and concern that an increase in numbers will exacerbate an existing parking and traffic issues on Northcourt Avenue

Parking on Northcourt Avenue is mainly commuter parking during the day time, most likely to be related to the university. The university has provided a new car park near the entrance on Queen's Drive for short term visitors to the campus.

In response to concerns raised at the consultation, transport consultant, RPS, undertook surveys in November and December 2015, to review the impact of Northcourt campus students on local road parking. The results of the surveys are set out in the Transport Statement and demonstrate that students from Northcourt have little impact on parking on Northcourt Avenue and surrounding roads. The University is committed to monitoring resident student parking in future and taking action if necessary.

14 new car parking spaces will be provided on the new site, 10 reserved for accessibility needs. There will also be 2 taxi/delivery bays and 6 drop off bays.

As part of the proposals, we are considering how we might incorporate the allocation of a parking space for use by a car club scheme that would benefit both students and local residents. In addition the University increased their parking capacity on site with a new pay and display carpark, which opened in January 2016.

Action has been taken by the Council on Wellington Avenue to introduce further parking controls for safety reasons.

5.3 (ii) NOISE AND DISTURBANCE: Concern that noise and disturbance, particularly at night will increase due to the rise in student numbers

The University and its operational partner, UPP, are committed to ensuring that students behave as good neighbours. As part of the operational plans, detailed in the Student Management Plan, it is noted that the staff will increase with the increased student numbers. The University campus security will also continue to patrol the site. The University are responsible for student pastoral care and welfare, and where required, there will be Wardens, responsible for student discipline, on the Northcourt Group site, which includes St Patrick's Hall. The proposals have been updated to include a dedicated night route which will reduce noise and disturbance along Northcourt Avenue.

The social hub and study spaces have been placed at the centre of the site to form the heart of St Patrick's Halls and concentrate social activity to the middle of the site and away from the site boundaries.

The operational plan can be found within the Student Management Plan Document, Section 5.0.

Complaints by local residents are recorded by the University have been rare in recent years, however through the public consultation the University recognise that noise from students is often heightened on key nights when the students cross to the Campus bars and town centre. To reduce the impact of disturbance the University will ensure that there will be a security presence near to the northern exit of the site at key times during the beginning of each academic year. This is in addition to the welcome talks where new students will be encouraged to consider neighbours close to the accommodation.

We look forward to reviewing this with neighbours on an on-going basis.

5.3 (iii) CONSTRUCTION: concern about disruption and noise of construction traffic, notably HGVs

Our contractor is a member of the Considerate Construction Scheme and will ensure best practice is followed throughout the programme.

A Construction Management Plan will be prepared prior to the commencement of construction and will set out how we will mitigate the impact of construction on the local community. This will include reducing dust, noise and vibration by monitoring levels on site, ensuring that there is a dedicated point of contact for the construction site, and that the community is kept informed regularly throughout the progress of the project.

Engagement between the University and the community will occur prior to and during construction. The management of construction traffic will be addressed within the

Construction Management Plan and the Transport Statement establishes key principles to be adopted by the contractor.

5.3 (v) ACCESS: access unsuitable: new road at junction of Northcourt Avenue will be dangerous due to creation of blind corner on already problematic section of road

This has been investigated by the transport consultants in association with the local planning authority and there are no evident safety issues. However, the entrance has been moved so that vehicles turning right into the entrance will be more visible to traffic approaching from the south.

5.3 (vi) DENSITY: The scale of the development is excessive and not suitable for a residential area

National planning policy encourages making the most effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed. The redevelopment to a higher density is consistent with national and local policy to optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development.

The proposals seek to meet current and growing demand from students for affordable, high quality, on-campus accommodation. The proposals will also enable the University to manage its own growth and help to relieve pressure on the private rented sector in the local area.

Since the consultation a block of townhouses has been removed from the proposals, reducing the total number of bedspaces by 44 (4%) and the overall increase in bedspaces by 6%.

5.3 (vii) BUILDING HEIGHTS: The proposed development is not in keeping with the character of the area where there are mainly bungalows or one and two storey buildings. Concerns about issues of visibility and privacy.

The site is large and our proposals include a range of storey heights. Following comments from the public and the Council, we have reduced building heights near to the boundaries of the site where they have the most impact.

Specifically, we have removed a small terrace of townhouses near Northcourt Avenue. We have also reduced the height of terraced townhouses, to be located on the existing car park area, from three stories to two and a half storeys. The third storey accommodation is now located within the eaves of the roof. This was a suggestion recorded at the public exhibition.

The three-storey family accommodation has been relocated to an area of open space in the northern part of the site adjacent to Creighton Court, away from the site boundaries.

All of the four, five and six storey buildings are well away from the site boundaries, the Northcourt Road frontage and the Newcastle Road area.

In addition we have examined the impact of the five and six storey buildings on public views and found this to be minimal. The Visual Impact Survey is provided as part of the planning application.

5.3 (viii) OPEN SPACE: The redevelopment will result in the reduction of open space

As a response to comments, the plans have been altered so that open space is retained. The terrace of townhouse accommodation to the north of the current open space has been removed in order to maintain the open area at the front of the site closest to Northcourt Avenue.

5.3 (viii) TREES: The plans include the removal of trees. [also request for more trees to be planted in order to develop the avenue of trees along Northcourt Avenue]

We will be planting new additional trees along the front of the site to provide more natural screening. No boundary trees will be removed and with replacement planting the number of trees on the site will increase by 20%. The retention of trees on site will assist the establishment of a mature landscape throughout the redevelopment.

We will be offering a financial contribution to planting new trees to the eastern side of Northcourt Avenue to extend the existing avenue of trees, following the provision of costs for tree planting by the council..

5.3 (viii) HERITAGE: Historically significant buildings should not be demolished.

The potential for retaining and refurbishing the existing Pearson Court building has been investigated, however it is not feasible or viable for reasons set out in the Planning, Design and Access Statement.

Our heritage experts have advised that Pearson Court is of “medium heritage significance” and “not considered to be of national importance”. The heritage experts also noted that Pearson Court is of lesser architectural quality than Wantage Hall which was the main base for the Royal Flying Corps and is listed Grade 2.

The plans will retain the Edwardian Northcourt Houses – which are deemed to add architectural value to the street.

An application to list the buildings was made to Historic England and this led to a detailed review of the significance of the buildings.

The recent decision by Heritage England not to register Pearson Court as a listed building supports the conclusions of our independent heritage experts.

5.3 (ix) AFFORDABILITY: St Patrick’s Hall has always been affordable; the new accommodation must be affordable.

We have worked closely with Reading University Student Union (RUSU) to ensure that the new accommodation is affordable for students. The mix of accommodation has been agreed with RUSU: 60% of the new accommodation will be priced at £130/week or less, responding to the need for an increase of accommodation in the “budget” rent bracket as defined by RUSU. 240 of these rooms will be priced at £115/week as part of a catered package.

The current scheme proposes 1,040 rooms set at the following price points. All rents below are set out for academic year 2015/16.

Ensuite room 269 rooms priced at £159.60pw

Townhouse room 129 rooms priced at £146.51pw

Standard room with shared bathroom (1:2) 382 rooms priced at £130.62pw

Catered standard room with shared bathroom (1:2) 242 rooms priced at £115.00pw

Three bedroom flat five flats (fifteen rooms)

Three bedroom warden flat One flat (three rooms)

Total 1,022 rooms and 6 dwellings

5.3 (x) SOCIAL SPACE: The social space in the new accommodation should take into account the model of JCRs and open corridors.

We have invited input from RUSU, JCR representatives and student focus groups on these aspects of the designs. The designs include large flats with up to thirteen students sharing the same kitchen and social space. The mix of room types and the room layouts have been well received by the attendees of the focus groups and the design has developed in response to these discussions.

5.3 (xi) PUBLIC BENEFIT: How will the redevelopment benefit the local community?

As part of our consultation process, we have been seeking the views of local people and considering ideas that can be incorporated in our plans. This is part of the University’s commitment to playing a positive role in the local area and to maintaining an ongoing dialogue with the local community.

Following comments, we plan to offer local community groups the opportunity to use the open space near Northcourt Avenue, on a specified day, for community events. We will also be offering meeting space at St Patrick’s Hall to local residence groups to host community meetings.

Our plans will help the University to manage its own growth, guaranteeing accommodation to all first year students. Once the project is completed, the creation of further student rooms will relieve pressure on the local private rented sector. In the long term this will have a positive impact, freeing up housing stock for local people, supporting the Council’s draft Homeless Strategy (2016-2021). More information regarding the benefits to the local community are provided within section 4. of the Planning Design and Access Statement.

5.3 (xii) CONSULTATION: The consultation period was too short and there was an inadequate notice period.

The period of one week for receipt of comments was designed to enable sufficient time to consider responses. The leaflet drop took place two weeks prior to the public exhibition (on Thursday 22nd October 2015). See section 4 for further information.

Dialogue with local groups, staff, students, the Student Union, and representatives has continued and will remain on-going. This included regular updates on our proposals (See appendices 17 and 19) and site visits. We have evolved our plans to respond to comments wherever possible. Comments that were received after the deadline have been included in this document and were included as part of the design evolution.

5.4 Ongoing stakeholder engagement

Following the public exhibition held in October 2015 we issued a project update via email on 22 December 2015 to everyone who had responded to the consultation in December 2015 (Appendix 18) and a further notice in the February 2016 edition of the *Community* newsletter (Appendix 19).

We also added a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section to the project website in order to make further details publically available following the public exhibition (Appendix 5). The FAQs section was updated with further information as the design process progressed.

We have remained in dialogue with key stakeholders, including NARA, Rob Wilson MP and the Victorian Society. We regularly updated them about the project and the design evolution and offered to arrange site visits in order to provide a more in depth explanation of our proposals to address points that were raised. A number of meetings were arranged with the Northcourt Area Residents' Association (NARA) (see appendices 14, 15,16 and 17) and with the Reading University Students' Union (RUSU) to discuss specific concerns and possible updates to the project.

6. Continuing Consultation

UPP Projects Ltd and the University of Reading have undertaken extensive public consultation in advance of submission to ensure local stakeholders have had an opportunity to comment on the emerging proposals in advance of submission.

As the application progresses through the planning process, UPP Projects Ltd and the University of Reading have expressed a commitment to continue with public consultation. It is important to the project team that this application offers a real improvement to the local

community and therefore we will continue to meet with local groups and individuals to further discuss these proposals.

This Statement of Community Involvement fully demonstrates UPP Projects Ltd and the University of Reading's commitment to thorough and meaningful public consultation.

The submission of the planning application does not mark the end of this consultation and the team will continue to meet with local groups and individuals as appropriate throughout this process.

In the next few weeks the team will produce and distribute a newsletter in the area as detailed in Map 1 as well as to the stakeholders it has met with, the public who attended the public exhibition, and those who filled out comment sheets. This newsletter will serve as an update to demonstrate how comments received during the consultation have been taken on board and incorporated into the planning application where possible.

Lodestone Communications

June 2016

Appendix 1: Leaflet

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR PLANS?

Please bring this letter with you to the exhibition to provide your comments. Your comments will be included in our statement of community involvement as part of our planning application to Reading Borough Council. If you are unable to attend the exhibition but have comments, please email us at stpatrick@reading.ac.uk by Thursday 22 October. You can also make the exhibition public exhibition after the exhibition at www.reading.ac.uk/stpatrick-project

Name _____

Email _____

Address _____

☐ This data will be used by the University of Reading, UPP and Reading Borough Council. You may be contacted about the development and your contact information will be used as part of statement of community involvement document submitted to the Council. If you would like to opt out of this, please put a cross in the box.

ST PATRICK'S HALL

PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Thursday 22 October 2015 | 6pm–8.30pm

We invite you to discuss with us our plans for the redevelopment of the St Patrick's Hall site.

Sharnock Café, St Patrick's Hall
just off Heymount Avenue

OUR PROPOSALS

The University of Reading is drawing up plans to redevelop our St Patrick's Hall site between autumn 2016 and the start of the 2016/2017 academic year. Our proposals aim to increase capacity by better utilising the existing grounds, to enhance the hall's architectural quality and environmental performance and to transform the facilities for our students.

Within the last 5 years an investment of £220m has been made across the University's 5,000 rooms, including the provision of more than 3,500 new rooms around the central Whiteknights location and at Bridges Hall. The proposals to develop St Patrick's Hall will meet growing demand for halls places from our students and secure the long-term future of our campus.

The University's plans are being supported through a long-term partnership with University Partnerships Programme (UPP), which operates and provides services to the whole of the University of Reading's student accommodation. UPP has a strong track record of operating student accommodation – running over 30,000 rooms in partnership with other universities across the country and bringing specialist expertise to the management of the halls.

WHY NOW?

The St Patrick's Halls are coming to the end of their design life and no longer meet the needs of our students. The proposed development will transform the quality of accommodation and facilities on the site. There is strong and growing demand from students for affordable, priced, campus located high quality accommodation and this is particularly true for our first year students who have never lived away from home.

The proposed development will ease pressure on the private rental sector in Reading and reduce the number of students travelling from outside the campus.



WHERE

The public exhibition will take place at:
Old Sharnock Courtyard Road,
The Sharnock Café,
University of Reading,
22 October | 6pm–8.30pm

Parking will be free on the St Patrick's Hall site on the day of the exhibition and spaces for the exhibition will be provided in the car park adjacent to the site.

The Sharnock Café is fully accessible. For any questions please contact stpatrick@reading.ac.uk



Appendix 2: Invitation to Stakeholders

Dear xxxxx

We are writing to invite you to the public exhibition of the proposals for the redevelopment of the University of Reading's St Patrick's Hall site. We are in the process of drawing up plans to redevelop the site between autumn 2016 and the start of the 2019/2020 academic year.

The St Patrick's Halls are coming to end of their design life and can no longer meet the needs of our students. There is a growing demand for affordably priced, high quality accommodation situated on the campus, particularly for first year students who are living away from home for the first time.

The proposals aim to:

- Increase capacity by better utilising the existing grounds
- Transform the facilities for students
- Enhance the architectural quality
- Improve the environmental performance

The proposed redevelopment will secure the future of the campus as well as respond to the University's need to provide more student accommodation. It will ease pressure on Reading's private rental sector and reduce the number of students travelling from outside the campus.

The University's proposals are being supported through a long-term partnership with University Partnerships Programme (UPP), which operates and provides services to the whole of the University of Reading's student accommodation. UPP has a strong track record of operating student accommodation and will bring specialist expertise to this project and the ongoing management of the halls.

The public exhibition will be held on the: **Thursday 22 October 2015 from 6pm - 8.30pm**
In the: **Old Senior Common Room, the Shamrock Café, University of Reading (off Nourthcourt Avenue, Reading, West Berkshire RG2 7H)**

[Information provided about the additional session times for specific stakeholders if relevant to recipients]

Please find the invitation leaflet for the exhibition attached.

We hope you will be able to join us and support our plans. Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any queries. Email us at: stpatsproject@reading.ac.uk

Kind regards,

Ann Westgarth
Community Relations Manager, UoR

Andrew Cockerell
Transaction Director, UPP

Appendix 3: Exhibition boards

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation



Welcome to the Public Exhibition of the St Patrick's Hall Redevelopment Project

The University of Reading and its specialist partner UPP are bringing forward proposals to redevelop the St Patrick's Hall site on campus.

We are pleased to involve students, staff and the local community in the planning process. Representatives from UPP and the University are on hand to discuss the proposals and answer any questions. Please take as much time as you need to look through the exhibition and discuss the proposals with members of our team. We welcome your comments, ideas and suggestions on our plans. Your comments will be recorded in our Statement of Community Involvement that will be submitted to the Borough Council as part of the future planning application. Thank you for taking the time to attend this exhibition.



Board 1/12

OUR CAMPUS

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation

The University is set across three key locations – the Whiteknights Campus, London Road Campus and Greenlands Campus.

Whiteknights Campus is the main site and is set in 150 hectares of parkland. It combines a beautiful setting with a thriving community and was voted 6 out of 1,500 green spaces eligible to be included in the 2014 Green Flag People's Choice Award.

Whiteknights Development Plan

Over the last 5 years the University has invested significantly in its student accommodation at the Whiteknights campus, including Bridges Hall which was completed in 2014. The accommodation set out in the Campus Development Plan is now complete and focus now extends to the older accommodation at St Patrick's Hall. The proposals for the redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall will meet the growing demand for university places.

The Development

The development will deliver high quality affordable accommodation with a mix of room types and rents to suit student needs. Facilities will be focused at the centre of the accommodation with catering, retail and extensive social space providing a campus environment in which to live and learn.

Accommodation

The proposals will create affordable accommodation in a variety of room types to suit a range of budgets and a range of student cohorts, including undergraduates, postgraduates and students with families. The redevelopment will better utilise the existing grounds, enhance the architectural quality of the halls and improve the facilities for students. We aim to take forward these plans between autumn 2016 and the start of the academic year 2019/20.

"When I first walked on to campus, it just felt like home. I knew straight away that this was the place for me and I would be happy here."

Bethan White

BA Classical Studies and English Literature

Operation of the University of Reading campus accommodation

Working in partnership with the University since 2001, UPP now operates all of the University accommodation on campus and take responsibility for the cleaning, maintenance, refuse and recycling on behalf of the University. Contact with students is essential to the smooth operation of halls accommodation and UPP provide dedicated receptions from which each site is operated. The University retain responsibility for all pastoral care and welfare of students. The University also retain services such as grounds maintenance and site security.

University Partnerships Programme

University Partnerships Programme (UPP) will manage the development and operation of the new accommodation as part of their long-term partnership with the University.

Established in 1998 UPP has a strong track record of operating student accommodation with over 50,000 rooms in partnership with 14 universities across the country. UPP bring specialist expertise to the management of on campus student accommodation.

UPP's partner universities

UPP's support, delivered in partnership, is helping 14 UK universities to upgrade their estates, make best use of their physical assets, and maximise their academic and student experience.



LOCATION

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation



The Northcourt Group of Halls

The Northcourt Group of Halls consists of St Patrick's Hall (comprising Pearson's Court and New Court), Sherfield Hall, Serjeon Hall and Cheignton Court along with 12, 14, 16 and 18 Northcourt Avenue.

The accommodation is supported by a hall reception, refectory, bar and junior common room. The buildings on the site have been constructed over a 100 year period and vary in quality provision and design with many no longer meeting the expectations of students. The design proposals offer an opportunity to rationalise the site and create a coherent residential campus with shared social and catering facilities at the heart of the site. The plans will increase the number of students able to live in university accommodation – relieving pressure on the private rented sector and reducing traffic traveling to campus.

Background to existing accommodation

Pearson's Court, was constructed as purpose designed accommodation in 1913, for those not able to get into Winton Hall – the University's first hall of residence. Named after the first warden, it received several additions and extensions between the Wars, eventually extended to accommodate 120 students.

Pearson's Court takes the form of a series of Houses of 12 bedrooms each. Designed as tailored accommodation they have been altered to provide a tiny kitchen and extended to provide a further shower and WC.

New Court and the single storey refectory building were added during the 1960s as part of an expansion of the University accommodation. New Court consists of three storey accommodation with pitched roofs providing a range of standard bedrooms forming a courtyard to the south of the site.



The Northcourt Group

WHY NOW?

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation

The current provision

The University's halls are ageing, the original design and internal layout also present a number of challenges to the operation of modern student accommodation. The accommodation no longer meets the needs or expectations of our students, or the standards expected of a world class institution.

- There is no social space within the accommodation for students to spend time in, which is particularly important for the welfare of first year students moving away from home for the first time.
- The halls do not meet modern standards of environmental performance, making the halls expensive to run and inefficient to operate.
- The number of bathrooms and size of kitchens would not meet current design standards.

Potential to retain the accommodation

Detailed studies have been undertaken to assess the feasibility of retaining and enhancing the current buildings. However, the lack of good quality and suitable social / kitchen spaces makes the buildings challenging to remodel. The structures are not adaptable or easy to extend, and cannot easily be upgraded to current standards for environmental performance.

For these reasons the University and UPP have concluded that it is not viable to retain and adapt the existing properties.

Proposals for new accommodation

The expectation of contemporary student accommodation is for ensuite rooms or shared bathrooms (1 per 2). Fixed furniture with high quality finishes and contemporary styling is now standard.

All accommodation will have a shared kitchen / lounge / dining room. It is particularly important for first year undergraduates to have a shared social space, supporting their transition from home to university life.

Grouping the accommodation into distinct groups supports the creation of a coherent student community and a sense of pride in their home.



Board 4/12

PROPOSALS

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation

We are in the process of drawing up our plans to redevelop the St Patrick's Hall site. Our proposals will respond to student needs and an increasing demand for high quality on-campus accommodation.

The Accommodation

The proposals see the demolition of the student accommodation blocks at Pearson's Court, New Court, the warden's house, bungalows to Sheffield Drive and the reception and common room. The Northcourt Avenue Houses, Sheffield Hall and Benyon Hall will remain, a loss of 310 bedrooms.

The proposals seek to provide approximately 1060 new rooms (an increase of 750 bedrooms), arranged as cluster flats and townhouses, all with shared kitchens and lounges. The design of the buildings provides room types to meet a variety of budgets. The accommodation is supported with a range of services on the site: a canteen, a gym, cafe and common rooms are provided within the courtyards. The central hub will contain a refectory, reception and management offices.

Social Space

Shared social space, such as common rooms and a bar have been located in the centre of the site away from residential neighbours and close to reception and security offices.

Access

The current access to St Patrick's, Sheffield and Benyon is via the southern entrance from Northcourt Avenue. As part of the proposals an additional section of road will be created within the site and the north west access

will be upgraded. This will reduce pressure on the southern access, particularly during construction activities.

Night-time route

The improved access and new route will be promoted as a dedicated, safe, night-time route for students arriving from campus, buses or other transport. This will reduce the number of students using the southern section of Northcourt Avenue.



Buildings to be demolished

Key:
Buildings for demolition
Buildings to be retained



DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation



Aerial View: The green space, tree and hedge to Northcourt Avenue are retained in the proposals maintaining the filtered view through to the site.



Design Principles: Design principles and zoning

Design Approach

The accompanying design plan has been informed by a series of key principles. The principles ensure that the site will retain its essential character and that consideration is given to neighbouring users.

PRINCIPLE 1

Retain mature trees and the University's Northcourt Avenue houses

Mature trees will be retained to provide a visual framework for the new buildings. The University's Northcourt Avenue houses are retained as they contribute to the streetscene.

PRINCIPLE 2

Zone the development to bring activity into the centre of the site and create communities

The proposals bring undergraduate accommodation and social functions into the centre of the site. Postgraduate, family and returners accommodation is located to the perimeter of the development. Mature students are located around shared community facilities.

PRINCIPLE 3

Focus the development density at the centre of the site

The buildings are two and three storeys at the perimeter of the site rising to six storeys at the centre.

PRINCIPLE 4

Quality materials and design which references local character

The buildings will reference the local character in materials and style using brick as the dominant facing material. Windows will have a vertical emphasis. The larger buildings are sited in courtyard arrangements - referencing the original St Patrick's Hall.

PRINCIPLE 5

Create a social and management focus for the development

The hub will contain reception, catering hub and social functions for all the University accommodation in the Northcourt Group.

KEY

- A. Undergraduate activity focussed into two courtyards
- B. Mature students located at perimeter of site
- C. Major pedestrian routes
- D. Proposed new vehicular link
- E. Central social hub
- F. Extension of green corridor

Board 6/13

LAYOUT & MASSING

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation



View along Northcourt Avenue, looking south. Trees and hedges screen the proposals from residential neighbours. Buildings are orientated to avoid over-look to residential neighbours.



Site section existing. The key window to window distances are maintained at circa 65m.



Site section proposals. Building heights rise towards the centre of the site.



Layout and Massing

The layout responds to the sensitive boundaries to residential neighbours by reducing storey heights at the perimeter to a domestic scale of two and three storeys.

The Northcourt houses and existing trees and hedges provide excellent screening to the site from the residential neighbours.

The large green space in front of Pearson's Court is retained, and through the careful orientation of development the window to window distances remain at circa 65m.

Undergraduate development is focussed at the centre of the site where buildings rise to six storeys.

Board 7/12

LOOK & FEEL

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation



View along central boulevard: Looking from the site perimeter towards the hub.



Green spaces: The open space to Northcourt Avenue is retained.



"Village Centre": Active uses such as the gym and cafe will be located at the centre of the site.

The designers and developers are in pre-application discussions with the planning authority to consider technical and design aspects of the emerging application.

Scale and Massing

Buildings closest to the site boundary will be at two and three storeys. These buildings will contain smaller flats and houses, and will be of a domestic scale. Building heights rise up to six storeys at the centre of the site, signalling the communal uses at the heart of the residential campus (the Village Centre). The majority of the courtyard buildings are at four storeys.

Materials

The predominant building material for the new development will be brickwork, referencing the local vernacular. A complementary palette of metallic panels will be used as highlight accent materials.

Proportions

Windows will have a vertical proportion – again responding to the local vernacular. The buildings and roof forms will vary across the site to produce a complex silhouette. Townhouses adjacent to Northcourt Avenue reference the repeated gables facing onto the street.

A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation

Sustainability is at the heart of our approach to all our development. The site is sustainably located for public transport, the campus and local amenities. It also presents opportunities for ecological enhancement and will be designed and constructed according to sustainable principles.

BREEAM

BREEAM is a recognised assessment that sets the standard for best practice in sustainable building design, construction and operation, encouraging low carbon and low impact design, minimising the energy demands created by a building before considering energy efficiency and low carbon technologies.

BREEAM "Excellent"

We will put in place a number of measures to ensure we achieve a BREEAM "Excellent" rating for the redevelopment. These measures will include:

- A combined heat and power system (CHP) that will provide heating and electricity for the site.
- Photovoltaic panels will be installed on the roof to generate additional renewable power.
- Green materials with good environmental rating and high recycled content will be specified.
- High levels of insulation, exceeding Building Regulations, will be used throughout.
- The water usage of the building will be reduced significantly by using very efficient water fittings.
- A or A+ rated appliances and low energy light fittings will be used throughout.
- 90% of the waste generated on site will be recycled.
- A comprehensive recycling strategy will be put in place when the building is in operation.

Transport

The redevelopment is sustainably located for public transport and the site is sustainably located for public transport. The development will include one bicycle parking space per five students. Those students living in the new development will not be permitted to bring cars to the accommodation or the immediate area.

Ecology

- The site has been surveyed to understand the ecological constraints and opportunities.
- Existing landscape and lighting will be enhanced to improve ecological potential.

Drainage

The design will adopt the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS).

"The UPP Residences at Bridges Hall, University of Reading, were awarded a BREEAM Excellent rating"



Board 112

CONSIDERATE CONTRACTOR

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation

Managing Construction

UPP will employ a national contractor that has a demonstrable track record of working responsibly and collaboratively in residential locations.

We will manage the construction of the redevelopment project to minimise any impact on the local community. This will include:

- Ensuring best practice is followed by being a member of the Considerate Constructor Scheme.
- Keeping lorry movements to a minimum, ensuring contractor vehicles arrive just in time and do not park in the local area and keeping all roads to the site clean and clear.
- Limiting the hours of working – with no noise created outside of the agreed hours.
- Reducing dust, noise and vibration by monitoring levels on site and following best practice.
- Ensuring that there is a dedicated point of contact for the construction site and that the local community is kept informed regularly throughout the progress of the project.
- Engagement between the University and the community will continue prior to and during construction.
- The University will continue its involvement with the Northcourt Avenue Residents Association to ensure continuing good relations.

The Prince's Trust

UPP has been working with the Prince's Trust to provide work experience opportunities for local young people. This project will create employment opportunities for skilled labour and young people new to the job market.

UPP has been working with the Prince's Trust for five years to support unemployed young people gain the skills and experience they need to take their first steps onto the career path. Through the Get into Construction and Get into Facilities Management programmes UPP has enabled more than 120 unemployed young people to gain the skills they need to take their first steps in these industries as well as providing them with CV and interview advice and guidance.

Matthew Staman, 21, from Cleethorpe, had been unemployed for six months before taking part in the Get into Facilities Management programme at the University of Exeter run by UPP. Whilst there, he was able to work with contractors, including electricians and plumbers building new student accommodation, and been for an L1 Plumbing qualification. Following this, UPP offered him a 12 month contract and as Matthew progressed with his L2 Plumbing award while learning on the job, UPP has now given him a permanent job.

Sean O'Shea, UPP's CEO is a Board Member of the Built Environment Group at the Prince's Trust and a strong supporter of the work done by the charity to ensure that young people have the skills they need to forge long term careers and play a part in the UK economy. We are proud company Patrons to have helped over 700 young people and raised £1.3m last year.



CONTRACTORS HEALTH & SAFETY ASSESSMENT SCHEME
Accredited Contractor
www.chas.gov.uk

Pictures of contractors

Pictures of contractors

Pictures of contractors

OPERATIONS

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation

A Campus Approach

UPP will continue to manage the accommodation at St Patrick's Hall. UPP operate a dedicated reception as part of the accommodation on-site and manage the FM services, including cleaning and maintenance of the halls. Pastoral and welfare responsibilities are delivered by the University, maintaining their important connection with the students. Security and grounds maintenance are also delivered by the University providing a service consistent with the on-campus environment.

Pastoral Welfare and Wardens

Each Hall has a Warden, who is a full-time member of University staff with responsibility for pastoral support and discipline within the Hall. Each Group of Halls also has a number of senior students appointed as Wardens' Assistants to work alongside the Wardens in providing welfare support for student residents. The Warden structure provides a supportive environment within the accommodation and promotes the development of good relations with the wider community.

Student intake management

Student intake is a critical milestone on the student calendar and requires extensive organisation by the University and UPP to ensure the smooth transition of students into their residences at the beginning of the academic year. UPP have been managing intakes successfully at the University since 2012. Detailed management plans are produced to manage arrivals including traffic, parking and induction to the accommodation. The following principles outline the approach to a successful intake weekend and will continue to be implemented on the St Patrick's Hall intake.

- Students are given 30 minutes to drive on to site to unload their car near to their accommodation.
- A clearly signed one-way system is introduced on the day of intake, to reduce the impact of traffic on the surrounding roads and manage the flow of student arrival through the day.
- UPP staff assist the management of arrivals and ensure parking restrictions are adhered to.
- Temporary dedicated parking facilities outside will be provided for cars once initial drop-off has been completed.



- Leaflet drops to local residents are also completed before intake, advising residents of key dates and activities together with a 24-hour round the clock contact number.

On-going liaison with local residents

The University Community Relations Manager is responsible for promoting the University as a positive asset to the local community, dealing with complaints about student behaviour in the community and developing partnerships with other agencies and local residents.

The Community Relations Manager initiates a number of resources to provide students with information about living in the community, including behaving in a neighbourly and considerate manner.

Student Management Plan

As part of the planning submission, UPP will prepare a draft Student Management Plan (SMP) to set out the principles under which the student accommodation will be managed at St

Patrick's Hall. The SMP will detail responsibilities of both the University and UPP. The SMP will include the Student Residence Agreement, including terms of occupation, student conduct, waste management and security. The SMP has been developed successfully by UPP on a number of projects to provide reassurance to local residents that the accommodation will be managed effectively.

Parking

In line with the principles of the University Travel Plan, students are encouraged to use alternative forms of transport to attend the University. Under the Student Residence Agreement with the University, students are not permitted to bring motorised vehicles onto campus. Students are also prohibited to park their vehicles within one mile of the Whiteknights campus.

Board 11/12

COMMENTS & NEXT STEPS

The redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall student accommodation

Thank you for taking the time to view our plans. We hope you will support the St Patrick's Hall redevelopment proposals. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask a member of our team. We welcome the opportunity to hear what you think about our proposals.

Please return to the comments box before you leave the exhibition. If you leave your contact details, we will keep you up-to-date on how the project progresses. You can also leave comments via our website www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project or by emailing us at stpatproject@reading.ac.uk

All comments received during the consultation and will be collated and reviewed in detail by the development team. Please respond by the 29th of October. Feedback will be considered and will form part of on-going discussions with Reading Borough Council's planning team to inform further design and development of the proposals.

Your comments will be recorded in our Statement of Community Involvement that will be submitted to the Council as part of the future planning application.

We plan to submit a proposal to the Council next month. Once plans have been submitted, the Council will undertake statutory consultation on the proposal.

Contact us

If you have further comments or questions, please contact:

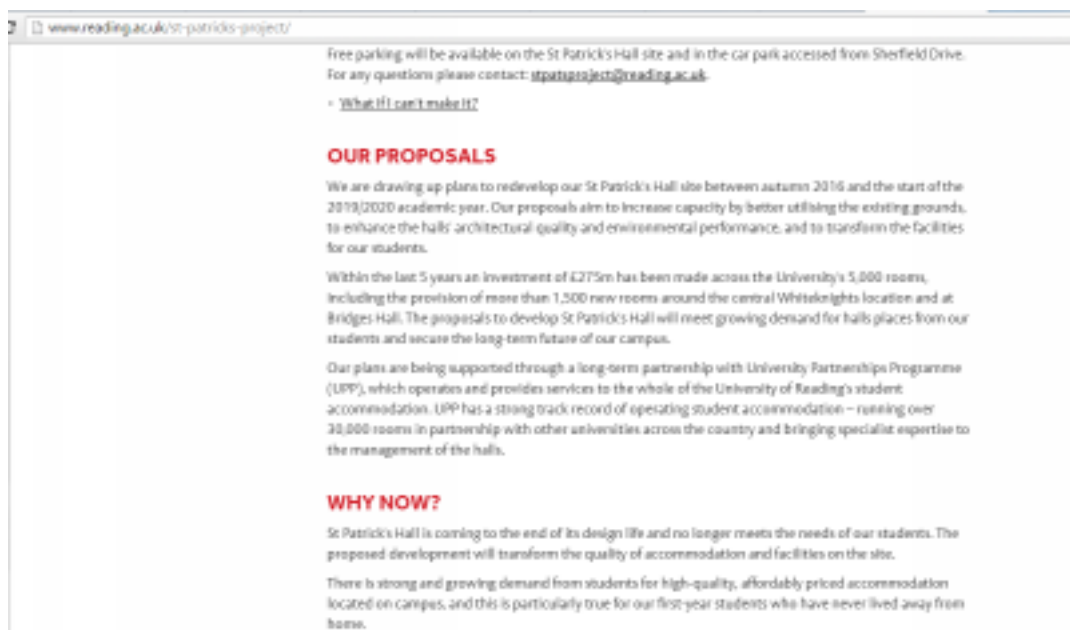
Martha Dalton

E: stpatproject@reading.ac.uk

M: 07977 138 459

Appendix 4: Website

Appendix 4: Website



www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project/

Can't make it?

* Indicates required information

After the exhibition, we will make the exhibition boards available on this website.

Please leave any comments you may have by 29th October*

Name*

Email address*

Address (including postcode):*

www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project/

Address (including postcode):*

This data will be held by Udestone, the University of Reading, URF and Reading Borough Council. You may be contacted about the development and your contact information shared as part of Statement of Community Involvement document submitted to the Council. If you would like to opt out of this, please tick the box below.

Opt out?

☐

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Appendix 5: Website FAQs

Available to view at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project/spp-faq.aspx>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- [Why are we redeveloping St Patrick Hall's?](#)
- [Will the new St Patrick's Halls have affordable accommodation?](#)
- [Have the plans evolved since the public exhibition in October?](#)
- [Why is the University planning to demolish Pearson's Court?](#)
- [When will the plans be submitted to the council?](#)

WHY ARE WE REDEVELOPING ST PATRICK'S HALLS?

There has been a £275m investment in student halls accommodation, through the University's partnership with UPP, which has increased overall capacity by 1,500 rooms to 5000. This is in response to the increased demand for high-quality, affordably-priced accommodation to enable more students to live on campus, rather than renting privately within Reading.

St Patrick's Halls is the next site to be redeveloped, expanded and upgraded. It is coming to the end of its operational life and we want to bring the facilities up to the standard of the rest of our other halls.

WILL THE NEW ST PATRICK'S HALLS HAVE AFFORDABLE ACCOMMODATION?

The proposed scheme will increase capacity, improve quality and provide a greater choice of accommodation for undergraduates, postgraduates, and families. The new buildings will provide a good balance of affordable and premium accommodation. We are working very closely with Reading University Students' Union to get these plans right and ensure they meet the expectations of our student community.

HAVE THE PLANS EVOLVED SINCE THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION IN OCTOBER?

We outlined our proposals in a public exhibition in October and held an early public consultation ahead of the formal planning application being submitted to Reading Borough Council. Since then, our project team has been discussing the developing plans with local groups, the Council's planning department and stakeholders. We have listened carefully to feedback and we have updated the proposals in a number of areas – reducing density of the redevelopment, lowering proposed building heights and retaining more open space. We are also looking into options around areas such as parking, access routes and tree planting.

In more detail, the changes to the designs include:

Retain more open space

- The terrace of townhouse accommodation to the north of the current open space has been removed in order to maintain the open area at the front of the site closest to Northcourt Avenue.
- We have reduced the footprint of the two-storey accommodation to the south of Sherfield Drive, easing the buildings away from the boundary.

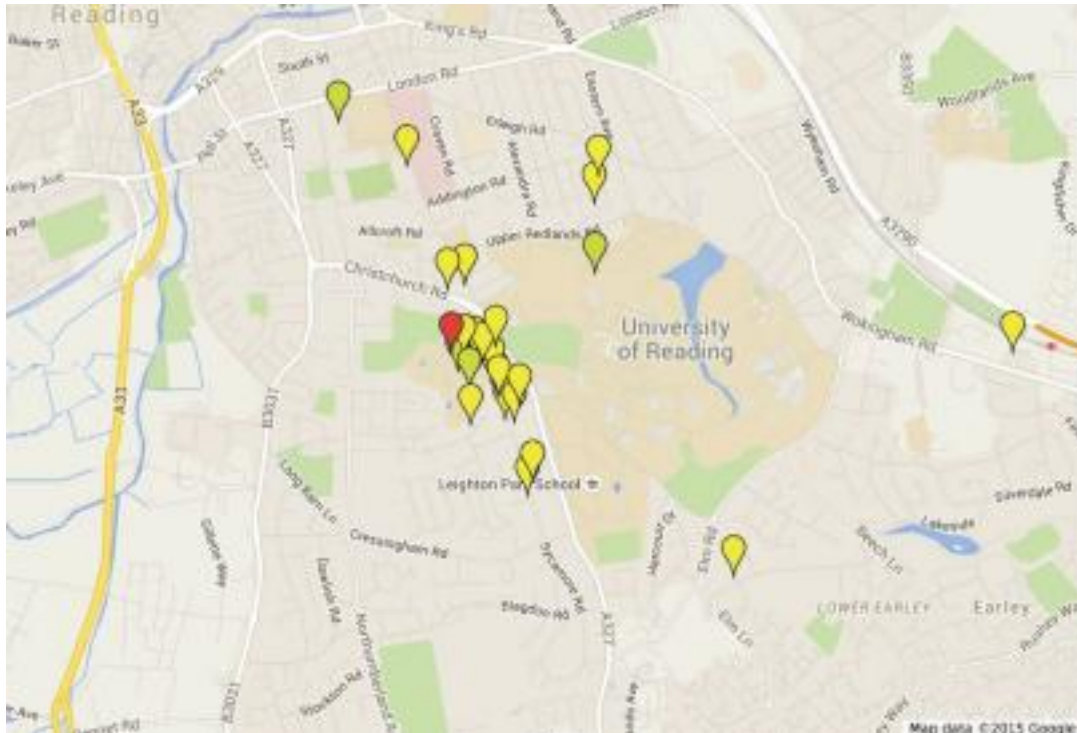
Reduce the originally proposed building heights

- The roof height of the terraced townhouses, to be located on the existing car park area, has been reduced, with the third storey accommodation located within the eaves of the roofs.
- The three-storey family accommodation has been relocated to an area of open space in the northern part of the site adjacent to Creighton Court, away from the site boundaries.

We are also looking at options around the following areas:

Appendix

6: Maps displaying postcodes of attendees



The second map is a zoomed in version on the first, which more clearly displays the postcodes of attendees neighbouring the St Patrick's Hall site.



Appendix 7: Notice in *Community Newsletter* (October 2015)

St Patrick's Hall public exhibition

The University of Reading and its halls management partner, UPR, are drawing up plans to redevelop St Patrick's Hall site between autumn 2016 and the start of the 2018/19 academic year.



The St Patrick's Halls are coming to the end of their design life and no longer meet the needs of our students. These proposals will increase capacity on the site and provide new modern facilities for students.

There is strong and growing demand from students for affordably-priced, campus-located, high-quality accommodation and this is particularly true for our first-year students who have never lived away from home. The proposed development will transform the quality of accommodation and facilities on the site and will ease pressure on the private rental sector in Reading.

There is strong and growing demand from students for affordably-priced, campus-located, high quality accommodation

Please come to an exhibition of the plans on **Thurs 22 October 2015 | 6pm – 8.30pm** Shamrock Café at St Patrick's Hall, Northcourt Avenue.

There will be the opportunity for you to comment on the proposals prior to a planning application being submitted to Reading Borough Council in the late autumn.

www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project

ity



Appendix 8: Local press coverage (October 2015)

Wednesday 22 October 2015 in *Get Reading*

<http://www.getreading.co.uk/news/reading-berkshire-news/university-reading-outlines-proposals-redevelop-10300150>

University of Reading outlines proposals to redevelop St Patrick's Hall

08:50, 21 OCT 2015 BY JENNIFER LLOYD

People who live nearby are being encouraged to go and view the proposals on Thursday, October 22



Enter your e-mail for our daily newsletter

Subscribe



St Patrick's Hall entrance

Plans have been drawn up by the [University of Reading](#) to redevelop the site of one of its accommodation halls.

A public exhibition is being held on Thursday, October 22 for people who live in the surrounding area, as well as students and staff, to view the proposals.

The redevelopment, which is scheduled to take place between autumn 2016 and the start of the 2019/20 academic year, aims to increase capacity for students and transform the existing facilities.

The proposals also look to enhance the hall's architectural quality and environmental performance.

The university says the current accommodation on the site is nearing the end of its design life and no longer meets the needs of current students.

It is also hoped the redevelopment will ease pressure on the private rental sector in Reading and reduce the number of students who travel from outside campus.

"Considerable benefits"

A university spokesman said: "We believe the proposed redevelopment of St Patrick's Hall will bring considerable benefits to our students and to the local community.

"We would like to encourage interested members of the public to come to the open exhibition on Thursday, where we will be talking about the plans in more detail and listening to ideas and feedback."

The meeting is taking place in the Old Senior common room in the Shamrock Cafe on the site, which is off Northcourt Avenue, between 6pm and 8.30pm.

Free parking will be available on the St Patrick's Hall site and in the car park accessed from Sheffield Drive. For further information email: stpatproject@reading.ac.uk.

FutureFest GreenP

Tomorrow
Reading

Saturday 7 May 2016
Green Park Conference C
Book now at [readingarts](#)

Most Read in News



Appendix 9: Notices on Staff Portal

Invitation to public exhibition on the redevelopment of St Patrick's Halls

Thursday, 15 October 2015

Staff and students are invited to attend a public exhibition on the [redevelopment of St Patrick's Halls](#) on Thursday 22 October. The site is due to be redeveloped between autumn 2016 and the start of the 2019/20 academic year. The exhibition is being held at the Old Senior Common Room in the Shamrock Café, University of Reading. Staff and students are welcome to visit the exhibition between 12:00 and 14:00.

The redevelopment plans aim to increase capacity by better utilising the existing grounds, to enhance the halls' architectural quality and environmental performance, and to transform the facilities for our students. Redevelopment will help secure the future of the campus as well as respond to the University's need to provide more student accommodation.

The plans are being supported by the University Partnerships Programme (UPP), which operates and provides services to the whole of the University's student accommodation. UPP has a strong track record of operating student accommodation and will bring specialist expertise to this project and the ongoing management of the halls.

The exhibition will also be available online for those who can't attend in person. Comments on the proposals must be submitted by 29 October. For further details, please contact stpatproject@reading.ac.uk.



Reminder: invitation to public exhibition on the redevelopment of St Patrick's Halls

Wednesday, 21 October 2015

A public exhibition on the [redevelopment of St Patrick's Halls](#) is taking place on Thursday 22 October at the Old Senior Common Room in the Shamrock Café, University of Reading. Staff and students are welcome to attend the exhibition between 12:00 and 14:00.

Proposals are being discussed for the site to be redeveloped between autumn 2016 and the start of the 2019/20 academic year. The plans are being supported by the University Partnerships Programme (UPP), which operates and provides services to the whole of the University's student accommodation.

The proposals aim to:

- Increase capacity by better utilising the existing grounds
- Transform the facilities for students
- Enhance the architectural quality
- Improve the environmental performance

The exhibition will be available online for those who can't attend the event. Staff and students are encouraged to provide feedback on the proposals, with comments submitted by 29 October. For further details, please contact stpatproject@reading.ac.uk.



Appendix 10: Facebook post publicising public exhibition to students



University of Reading

20 October 2015 · Reading, United Kingdom · 🌐

Good news for future Reading students – we are proposing plans to redevelop our St Patrick's Hall. Further information will be available later this week but in the meantime, we would like to invite staff, students and members of the local community to a public exhibition this Thursday 22nd October (in the Old Senior Common Room, The Shamrock Café, on the St Pat's site) to view and comment on the plans.

Staff and students are invited to attend between 12pm and 2pm.

Local residents are invited to attend between 6pm and 8.30pm.

Comments can be submitted until 29th October.

Further information can be found here: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/st-patricks-project/>



Appendix 11: Student focus group findings

STANDARD BEDROOM



Students

Improvements to the design:

- Wardrobe is too small, they would like to have a bigger wardrobe but to keep the vertical pigeon holes.
- Internal wardrobe configuration is preferred to have a mix of hanging space and shelves.
- A shoe rack was suggested by a number of students
- Suggestions for the scattered shelves to be two full rows to maximise storage space.
- Liked the full length mirror and length of desk
- To be supplied with more drawers in the room
- Feedback was positive on the window grills.
- Head board storage was received well, females within the group mentioned that the pigeon holes would be handy to use to store make up, hair products.
- A suggestion was made to have a sliding section on the face of the head board to create more storage space.
- 2 way light switch at bed head, students who currently live in Bridges love it.
- Integrated reading lamp at bed head
- Mixed reaction to the floor covering, half prefer carpet tiles as more homely the other half prefer vinyl as easier to clean
- A number of students mentioned that they would rather the coat hooks were not above the radiator
- Liked the plug sockets above the desk
- There were concerns over the size of the rooms, limited floor space. Adequate floor space was more important than a bigger bed.
- Concerns over the desk light with the scattered shelves, where would the light to be positioned, one side or both?
- Curved desks were mentioned in all the groups as a preference
- Would like a noticeboard that they can write on, suggested a magnetic writing board
- Colour scheme was received well.

Site Team

There were a number of suggestions, which include:

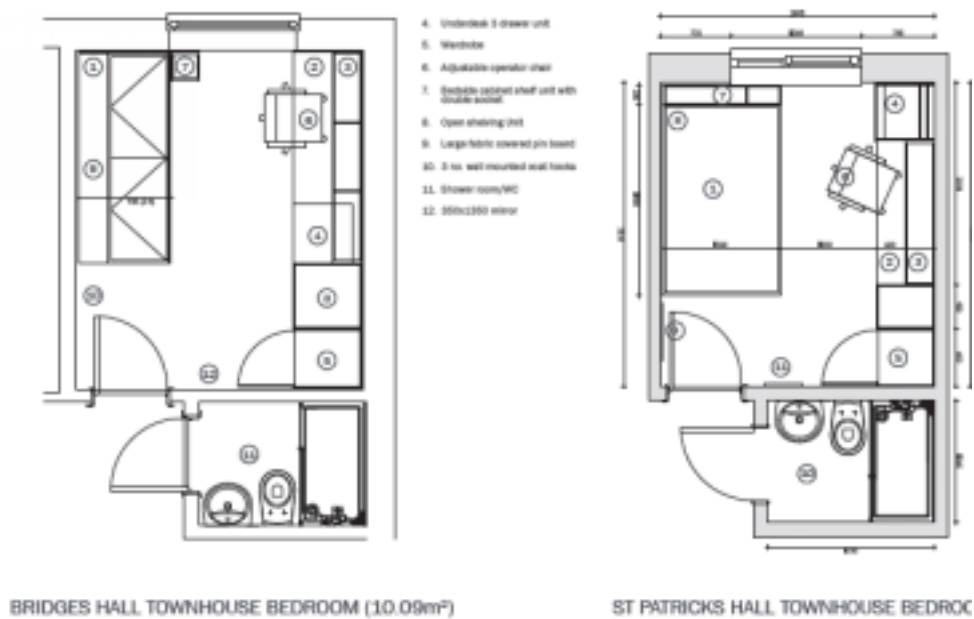
- A suggestion was made to have the integrated blinds within the fixed window pane, if this cannot be done then the preference would be a blind on a track.
- Reducing the length of desk and extend the wardrobe size keeping the vertical pigeon holes
- Potential to have sliding wardrobe doors as this might work better in its current location
- Swap mirror for an acrylic mirror on the wall as it's shatterproof
- Have USB points by the bed head for charging phones
- Changing the compartment at the top of the wardrobe to the bottom for easy access.
- To move the hairdryer holder to the side so that the mirror can be extended to the floor.
- Desk light to have LED strip instead of bulbs, easier to maintain and have the light switch in the same place as the plug sockets
- Reducing the length of the bed to a standard size as students find it hard to get bedding that will fit.

The team really liked:

- the driftwood and white finish
- the wood effect vinyl
- the under bed storage was easy to access by leaving the side open to allow suitcases, boxes, sports bags, etc.

The main outcome that came from these groups was the need for ample amounts of shelving space, wardrobe, floor space and large desk. We asked the question what was more important desk v wardrobe most of the students could not decide, said equally as important.

TOWNHOUSE BEDROOM



The site team preferred the layout of Bridges to the proposed St Patricks townhouse shared toilet. There was concern with the way the doors opened to the shared facilities, blocking entrance to the bedroom. The location of the sink toilet and shower was also preferred in the Bridges hall as it is easy to access the back of the shower.

Currently site receive complaints on noise from the shower and asked for there to be increased acoustic between walls.



Students

Same comments applied to this room, i.e. shelving units, drawers, desk lighting, full size wardrobe.

Concern over the grill opening knocking bits off the bed head shelf.

Liked the large window to allow natural light in



Site Team

Same likes and dislikes as in the Standard bedroom.

Main comment was to have a bigger wardrobe as it was felt that it was too small.



6-BED TOWNHOUSE: INNOVATION BEDROOM

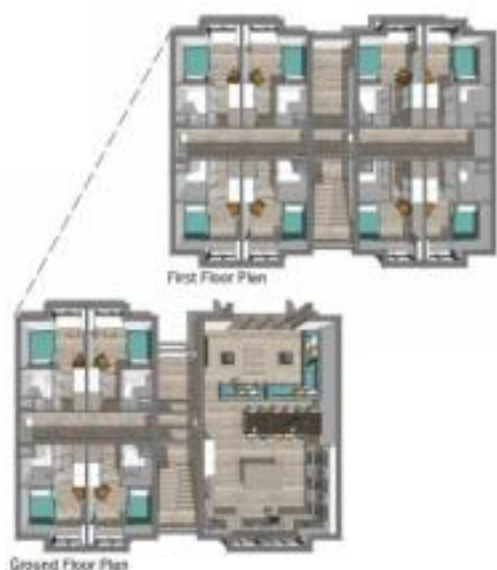


This visual was not shown to the recent focus groups but was shown to the site team for their feedback.

The innovation room was received well with the storage being behind the door as you walk into the room, however there was a mixed response to the position of the desk being in front of the window. Suggestions were made for the desk and chair to be swapped so that the chair sat in front of the window, and the desk faced the wall so that a large noticeboard and shelving units could go above.



12-BED DUPLEX FLAT (ENSUITE)



Students

There was a mixed response to the en-suite townhouses it was felt that St Patricks offering is affordable and therefore there were concerns that taking away the cheaper rooms and providing expensive options would limit those with smaller budgets to have accommodation on campus. *(it was mentioned by a number of students that their maintenance loans aren't fully cover the accommodation fees, due to the prices of accommodation in London matching the accommodation fees, however they felt the Reading accommodation was overpriced with London but the loan doesn't match)* Many of the students felt that the better social life in cheaper halls.

The students liked the large kitchen, lounge and dining area and felt that the small empty space on the ground floor could be used for coats, suitcases, or a study space.

There were reservations of the rooms being en-suite as it was felt that the beauty about the townhouses is that it has shared facilities which allows for it to feel more like a traditional house and differentiates a townhouse.

The students liked that postgraduates and undergraduates would be separated.

A question was raised whether there are going to be too many options and choices of accommodation, which may separate the freshers from having a student experience.

St Patrick's Hall Redevelopment Project – Statement of Community Involvement

Site Team

The team liked the layout and thought it was a good offering and suggested that the empty space on the ground floor was used for a cleaners cupboard, coat stand, shared storage room for the 12 students.

DUAL ACCESS KITCHEN - SHARED BETWEEN TWO FLAT



Students

The student liked the layout and the amount appliances within the kitchen. There were concerns with 14 people sharing the space as it might get quite congested within the kitchen area. Both groups felt that the study area was not necessary because they would use the table to study. It was felt that a separate study room within the block would be preferred. Suggestions were made to increase the kitchen and extend the lounge where the study area currently is.

A suggestion was made for there to be smaller kitchen dining areas with seating and shared lounge areas per floor/block.

Suggestion to increase the pan rail space.



Site Team

The site team echoed the student feedback regarding the study area and suggested that a study room was provided instead. It was felt that the large kitchen, living area was more suited towards catered students.



KITCHEN SHARED BETWEEN TEN



Students

The feedback from the focus groups liked the layout, they particularly liked the way that the lounge area was in the window reveal to create a snug area. Another key feature that they liked was the stone wall, they suggested that the cupboards were numbered to stop confusion when first moving into the halls.

The number of different seating areas went down well with both groups, particularly the banquet seating, loose chairs and breakfast bar.

Another suggestion was to have a large kitchen dining area with a bit of soft seating and then a lounge which can be shared between a number of flats.

The wooden effect vinyl and TV was well received.

Would like blinds for the windows when watching the TV

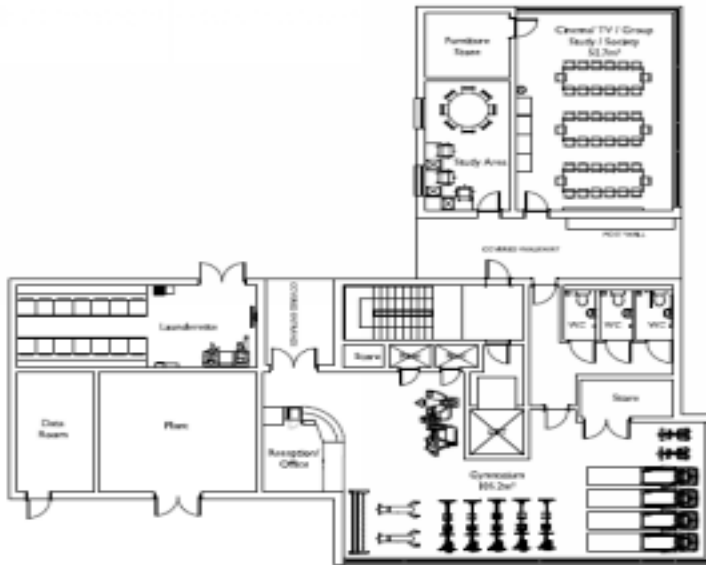
Suggestion to make the pendant lights high enough so that people don't hit their heads on.

Preferene to split the hobs up so that people aren't cooking in one area of the kitchen.

Suggestions to get better quality extractor fan as their current fan is really loud and turns on automatically when turning the kettle on which can be frustrating when a group are watching films/tv programmes on their laptop.



A1 Common Room



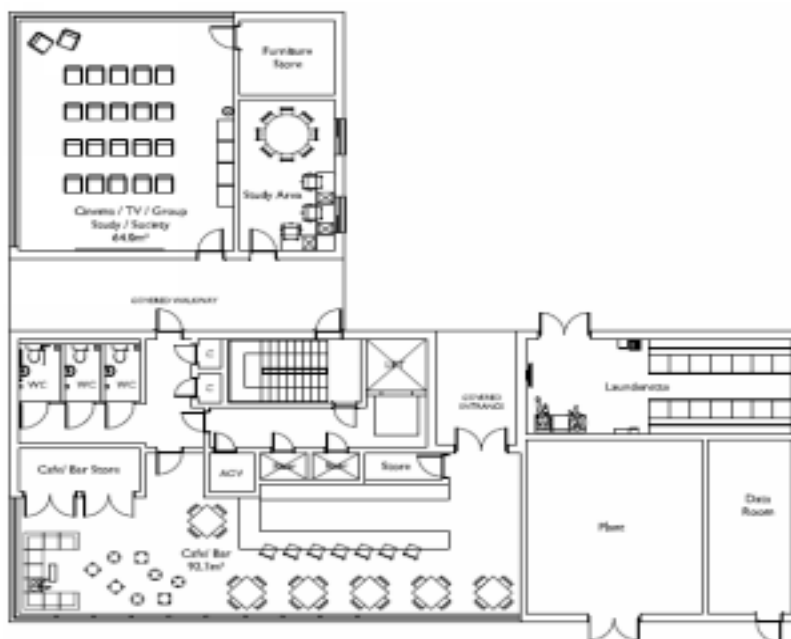
Students

There was mixed feedback on this layout, many students felt that there is no need for a gym as there is a sports facility located in close proximity to St Patricks. The concern was that many students would prefer to use the sports facility over a small gym, and some mentioned that they wouldn't want to work out in front of people within their block.

Students felt that there is no need for two cinema rooms in both blocks as only one would get used. Having one 'fun' and one 'study' block was preferred. Block A to be the study option which has different layout options to accommodate various types of studying i.e. group work with tvs to present work and individual desks. Having bookable rooms for meetings and studying was also suggested. Printers and University computers were also mentioned.

Both groups were happy to see a laundrette with a large number of machines.

B1 Common Room



Students

The café/bar was received very well by both groups and suggested that it should replicate some of the elements that Park café/bar has but have its own identity. Having a bar was particularly important to the groups and felt that the bar would need to show sporting events as this would attract students.

The cinema room was received well by both groups and felt that they would use it regularly, particularly if film nights were planned a couple nights a week.

The student didn't feel that the small room which currently shows it as a study room would be used as that, perhaps it could be a music or gaming room.

