

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS
ESTATE AND IT COMMITTEE/FINANCE COMMITTEE
10th February 2004**

PROPOSED EXTENSION TO FREWEN LIBRARY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Frewen Library was built in two phases; the original building in 1977 measured 3,900 m² and in 1988 an additional 2,000 m² were added. It houses the main print collections of the University on 18 linear kilometres of shelving, and has 660 study spaces, two teaching/meeting rooms, 72 bookable computers for general use, 45 library computers for access to online resources and catalogues, a coffee shop and toilet block. Weekly opening hours in term time total 112 [08.00 – midnight, 7 days per week]. Over the years the space has been reconfigured to meet the changing needs of the user population as well as adapting to changing technologies, new methods of publishing and new models of learning and teaching
- 1.2 The University Library is now under increasing pressure for space. Since the last expansion in 1988, student numbers have more than doubled. In addition, satellite libraries at Eldon, QA Hospital and Goldsmith have been closed and the collections transferred to the main Frewen Library. Whilst this policy has resulted in a more efficient centralised service, able to offer a comprehensive service to all users, it has also contributed to increased space pressures. In the case of the Goldsmith Library, the transfer of the Business School to the Guildhall Campus has meant the loss of its dedicated library space since no new library was included in the brief for the new Business School building. It is also proposed to transfer the book collection currently used by the School of Architecture in the Portland Building to create more teaching space, whilst adding further to the concept of a comprehensive collection available at a single site.

2 Library provision at the University of Portsmouth compared to other institutions

- 2.1 Data are collected annually by the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) relating to library provision and use in all UK universities. Whilst there is no model provision, it is possible to compare provision against that in similar institutions. For these purposes, it is necessary to compare the provision in Portsmouth alongside other post-92 universities, since the research intensive pre-92 universities obviously have a marked research bias to their library data. Table 1 shows the floor area per user and per student, and as well as the provision of seats per user.
- 2.2.1 Portsmouth falls well below the mean in terms of gross floor area and following adjustment in 2004 to take account of the loss of the satellite libraries, it is in the bottom quartile of provision for both space per FTE user (LQ 0.4) and space per student (LQ 0.5). Using the measure of user per seat,

and using the 2001/02 student data, the adjusted 26.5 users per seat indicated above, exceeds the maximum of 22.3 for all new universities in the survey.

Table 1 Library provision in post-92 universities - comparative data

	Gross Floor area per FTE user	Gross Floor area per FTE student	FTE users per seat
Bournemouth	0.4	0.4	12.4
Brighton	0.6	0.7	12.1
Hertfordshire	0.8	0.8	7.4
Oxford Brookes	0.5	0.6	12.5
Plymouth	0.3	0.4	22.3
Portsmouth	0.38	0.43	18.4
Portsmouth (adjusted to 2004)	0.34	0.38	26.5
UWE	0.6	0.7	10.7
Average all post-92s	0.6	0.7	11.2

Notes: 1 Portsmouth unadjusted includes Eldon, Goldsmith and QA

2 Portsmouth floor space data shown to two decimal places to pick up changes
- all other data rounded

Source: SCONUL (2003), Annual Library Statistics 2001/02

2.3 The conclusion of this comparative analysis is that the University is very short of library space for its student numbers, as least compared with its competitors. The provision of the proposed an additional 2,500 sq of space would improve the space per FTE student (assuming 18,000 FTE students) to 0.47, which would be much more in line with the data reported from elsewhere, although still short of the post-92 mean.

3 Growth pressures

3.1 The Strategic Plan proposes the target of 20,000 fte students in Portsmouth by 2010. In the shorter term, however, the current building is already faced with accommodating collections and usage patterns from Goldsmith, Eldon and Portland, which represent a loss of approximately 750 sq m of library space. At a time of growth therefore, the gross space available is in at least short term decline

3.2 While there is a growth in the use of electronic library resources from locations outside Frewen, both on- and off-campus, changes in teaching and learning methods foster an increase in independent learning leading to further pressures on learning spaces, particularly supported learning spaces. Informal computing areas across the university, in zones such as the Student Centre or the new Richmond Building have facilitated access for a limited number of individuals to the University electronic information resources, but the actual

capacity of these areas is relatively small, since the wireless bandwidth capacity sets limits on the number of concurrent users who can use system.

4 Key drivers for the project

The project is needed for a number of reasons, not including pressure on space, but in some key operational areas. They are summarised below:

- 4.1 A new extension, as well as providing expansion for all current activities, is an opportunity to correct some of the current problems faced by the Library service.
- 4.2 Each floor is effectively full and rigorous relegation to compact shelving and disposal have been a feature of staff activity for a number of years.
- 4.3 The pressure on space means that activities are poorly distributed with weak segregation between functional areas. Natural zoning of activities is required, with a variety of seating types, areas for quiet study, areas for learning support, areas for desktop IT and areas for group work.
- 4.4 Whilst the future of student computing and IT access is not entirely clear, a flexible approach is the key. There has been much discussion of student ownership of computers [laptops, tablets etc] and wireless access opens up a popular alternative to the “battery hen” provision of desktop PCs so far supplied in Frewen. Whatever the mode of future provision, however, enhanced IT access is needed to create an integration between the learning resources available to students in the library.
- 4.5 The “social computing” function will be complemented by more formal learning spaces, which are not currently available,. They will be supported by customer-focused front-line staff.

5 Space needs for printed collections in the modern library

- 5.1 Although the electronic journal has made a huge impact on the way libraries allocate budgets and manage services, forecasts of how print will decline in the future have been notoriously wrong. Many back-runs of journals are not available digitally and even where more recent years are available, there is still not sufficient confidence in the availability of archives from publishers for libraries to discard long runs. The presence of the British Library for inter-library loans still has more influence on such decisions.
- 5.2 However, it can be assumed that the growth in space needed for journals will decline, while that for books will continue in much the same way as before. It is generally anticipated that growth in the numbers and penetration of electronic books will be slow and only in marginal areas, and will therefore have little or no impact on future accommodation needs.
- 5.3 All floors in Frewen have been configured to maximise space for stock and all floors are over-packed with shelves, giving narrow aisles and high stacks.

Although it is not a realistic ambition to put all stock within reach of someone in a wheelchair, a considerable improvement in the overall appearance and accessibility could be achieved by widening aisles to 900 mm as a minimum.

6 Other needs

- 6.1 The current entrance area, with common facilities such as foyer, toilets, coffee shop, reception desk, self-service photocopiers and Issue Desk, is seriously dated in terms of design. The toilets are a constant source of complaint, in spite of a twice-daily cleaning regime.
- 6.2 Acknowledging the conflict between providing a welcoming open feel to the entrance and security considerations, it is opportune to build on the provision of campus cards by proposing a turnstile controlled entrance with combined reception area. These common areas should also be designed to facilitate the implementation of more self-service facilities, e.g the potential for a “walk-in Short Loan Collection” and an enclosed self-service reprographics area. The combined new area required is c. 800 m² [With c. 480 m² recovered for other uses, giving a net new area requirement of 320 m²].
- 6.3 A second public lift [doubling with library staff use for moving book stock] is imperative. Disabled access to other floors currently depends on one lift and Library services which depend on getting books back on shelves in rapid time are vulnerable to breakdown.
- 6.4 All new areas should be cabled for power, data, CCTV, smoke detectors, fire alarms and wireless access to computer networks. Well ventilated and well lit working conditions for users and Library staff are crucial, at the same time following best practice in energy efficiency.
- 6.5 Students’ reflections on induction often report unfavourably when the Library induction does not include a visit and tour of the Library. Subject Librarians are hampered in achieving this by the limits of only 2 rooms [1 x 40 seats and 1 x 12 seats] and with limited IT to provide the hands-on training that modern information skills teaching demands. A third room with additional IT to support hands-on teaching and training is proposed. [40 seats, 20 provided with IT, 90 m²]
- 6.6 72 general computers provide office software, e-mail and internet access and are networked to GPAS printing. In spite of operating a booking system, queues of students are common, particularly outside core hours. A proposal to scale this up to 200 would accord with the “Framework for an Estates and IT Strategy”, where increased utilisation of the currently installed PCs is envisaged, by bringing together smaller facilities and benefiting from the economies of scale.
- 6.7 Additionally it would be prudent to plan for a potential move from the 16/7 access currently provided, to 24/7, by providing an area accessible by swipe card, which could be partitioned off from the main Library area. [Currently 240 m², expanding to 720 m², net new area required c. 480 m²].

- 6.8 Small group work rooms – bookable – with PC and projector, well sound-proofed, are much in demand, particularly outside office hours and although this would create a new administrative task, 6 rooms of c. 25 m² would meet much of this need. [Total new space requirement c. 150 m²]
- 6.9 The remaining space within the proposed library allowance 2,500 m², will allow some 480 m² per floor for general easing of stacks to create wider aisles, additional reader seats of various types, general growth in stock, additional space for pressured staff areas and new configurations for staffed enquiry points.

Table 2 Summary of Library needs based on 2,500 m² allocation

Facility/Feature	Total Space Requirement m ²	Released m ²
Common entrance facilities	800	480
Teaching room	90	
IT	720	240
Group rooms	150	
TOTAL	1,760	720
Net new space	1,040	
Remaining	1,460 [Distributed 3 x 487]	

7 Overall scale of the building

- 7.1 Whilst the above analysis demonstrates the library's potential use of a further 2,500 m², the scale of the building which will be permitted on this site has been established to be approximately 3,600 m². This was the scale of the building proposed in the Ravelin Park development plan which was negotiated with the City Council in 1997 as the development framework for the park. The University is extremely short of development space and it is therefore necessary to maximise the development potential of this site.

8 Meeting wider University needs

- 8.1 The University requires additional teaching accommodation, especially in the small to medium seminar range (20-60 space rooms). The St Georges Building is under particular pressure given the recent expansion of activities housed within the building, whilst the Business School also requires more access to seminar spaces.
- 8.1 It is therefore proposed that the balance of the space, approximately 1,100 m² be allocated to general purpose seminar rooms. This would provide for a mixture of room sizes. As an illustration this would provide eighteen 40 seater rooms or alternatively, approximately fifteen 20 seat rooms with eight 60 seat

rooms. With design flexibility these spaces could be incorporated into the library for library use at a future date without the need to expand the building still further to meet future demand.

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28 January 2004