Rhodes University Infrastructure Planning Sub-Committee Campus Plan

**PRINCIPLES AND CONSIDERATIONS**

Recommendations are based on the following principles:

* 1. Infrastructural development should be aligned with institutional goals and the University’s Spatial Development Framework.
	2. Broad consultation.
	3. The maintenance or enhancement of academic quality and of research productivity.
	4. The maintenance of a wide choice of academic combinations.
	5. Maximum effectiveness, given budget constraints.
	6. The maintenance of a high quality residence system which can accommodate as many first year students as possible.

The following factors are considered in formulating recommendations:

* 1. The current and alternative models of learning and teaching.
	2. The current timetable and the possibility of changes in this regard.
	3. The available infrastructure and the extent and intensity of its use.
	4. Current infrastructure projects already approved and either to be constructed or already under construction
	5. Current infrastructure not in use and that could be brought into use through renovations and/or refurbishment
	6. The infrastructure funding likely to be received from the Department of Higher Education and Training in future years.
* The need to maintain all current infrastructure in a good state of repair.

Projects are ranked taking the following factors into consideration:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project; detailed proposal available (yes/no) | Alignment with Institutional Goals (good, OK, poor) | Broad consultation(university level, faculty, department, individual) | Academic considerations

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Maintenance or enhancement of academic quality | Supports alternative models of learning | Maintenance of wide choice of academic combinations |

 | Maintenance or enhancement of research productivity and quality | Financial considerations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Effectiveness given budget constraints | Possible sources of funding |

 | Available infrastructure and its use | Contributes to quality residence system | Other considerations |

**SUMMARY OF PROJECTS (RANKING MAY CHANGE DEPENDING ON CURRENT REQUIREMENTS)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PROJECT** | **DEPT/****FACULTY** | **EST COST**  | **DEV GRADE** | **LEVEL** | **SOURCE OF FUNDS** | **ACTION/****COMMENTS** |
| **A: BACKBONE INFRASTRUCTURE** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Provision of a constant supply of drinkable Water | University |  | A | H |  | Engaging with Makana |
|  | Provision of an uninterrupted supply of electricity | University |  | A | H |  | Engaging with Makana |
|  | Security on campus | University |  | A | H |  | Head: CPU |
|  | Rehabilitation of Quarry | University | R 5,600,000 | B2 | L | External funder | Engaging with Makana |
|  | Water pipe from Milner/Jameson dams to campus for irrigation purposes |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Pedestrianisation | University |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Road linking Barratt parking with Prince Alfred Street | University |  |  | M | Internal |  |
| **B: ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURE** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Education building | Education | R 13,700,000 | B2 | H | DoHET Inf & Eff + Internal/Development | Dir: EstatesProject Manager |
|  | Life Sciences Building (Linked to Below, preferred) | Science | R 180,000,000 | A | H | DoHET Inf & Eff + Internal/Development | Concept drawings - architect |
|  | Linked Biosciences & Pharmacy/Chemistry (Linked to Above) | Science | R 80,000,000 | A | H | DoHET Inf & Eff + Internal/Development | Concept drawings - architect |
|  | Business School and development of a continuing education/short-course facility. | Commerce | R 16,000,000 | B1 | ? | Internal / Development | Change to original project assessed, more info required |
|  | Institute for Water Education & Research | Science | R 50,000,000 | A | M | DoHET Inf & Eff + Internal/Development | Building required in 5 years’ time |
|  | School of Languages | Humanities | R 80,000,000 | B2 | L/M | Chinese Govt | Awaiting news from Chinese GovtOpportunistic |
|  | Psychology Clinic | Humanities | Awaiting calculation | C | ? | Internal / Development | Engaging with Department |
|  | Computer Science / IS post graduate area | Science | R 4,500,000 | B2 | M | Development | Concept drawings - architect |
|  | Offices for Department of Politics | Humanities | R 300,000 | C | ? | Internal / Development (Small Capital work) | Under R 500K, recommended for approval |
|  | ILAM | Humanities |  |  | ? |  | Awaiting recommendation of review |
|  | Music Department | Humanities |  |  | ? |  | Awaiting recommendation of review |
|  | Consolidation of Fine Art | Humanities |  | C | ? | Internal / Development | Awaiting approach from Department |
|  | Large Lecture Theatre | University |  | A | L | Internal / Development | Initial investigation to be undertaken |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **C: STUDENT ACCOMMODATION** |  |  |  |  |
|  | Post Graduate residence | University | R 20,000,000 | B1 | H/M | DoHET Inf & Eff + Internal/Development | Concept drawings, questionnaire |
|  | Post-graduate researchers accommodation | University | R 2,000,000 | A | ? | Internal – Residential Ops | Concept drawings - architect |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **D: SPORT/CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE** |  |  |  |  |
|  | Learning Cafe | University | R 3,000,000 | A/B1 | ? | Students / Development | Concept changed, more info required, Task Team established |
|  | Post graduate Commons (Level Zero) | University | R 3,750,000 | B1 | H/M | Internal/Development | Approval to proceed |
|  | Indoor Sports Centre | University | R 100,000,000 | A/B1 | M/L | Lotto / Development | Concept drawings - architect |
|  | Reconfigure Biko Building, Student Centre | University | Awaiting calculation | A/B1 | ? | Development | Concept drawings – Draftsman |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **E: ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT OPERATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE** |  |  |  |  |
|  | Post-Graduate Centre  | University | Awaiting calculation | A | ? | DoHET Inf & Eff + Internal/Development | Task Team est to understand what is required |
|  | Support Services Hub | University | Awaiting calculation | B1 | ? | Development | Concept drawings - architect |
|  | CPU relocation | University | Awaiting calculation | A | ? | Internal |  |
|  | Community Engagement | University |  |  |  |  | Identify potential space |
|  | Renovate building currently storing rocks | University | Investigating |  | ? | Internal | Investigating – engage with Geology |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **F. MAINTENANCE** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 5 year building life cycle plan | University | Awaiting calculation |  | H | Internal | Dir: Estates |
|  | Chemistry/Pharmaceutical Sciences Generator | Science |  |  | M | Internal | Dir: Estates |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**SUMMARY OF PROJECTS – DETAIL**

**B: ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

**EDUCATION BUILDING**

It its submission to the Department, the Faculty of Education indicated that to grow its PGCE programme intake by 40 students, especially the primary programmes (PGCE FP & PGCE IP), the University would need to appoint new staff members, supplement, redesign and refurbish existing infrastructure, increase the student common room space, improve computer facilities, resource the departmental library with texts focusing on primary education, and develop a resource centre with equipment necessary for learning and teaching in primary schools.

The requirement would be 1 large lecture venue (120 plus students) for courses (e.g. Education Studies when all the PGCE students are together) and 2 medium-sized venues, each to accommodate 60 students for when the PGCE (IP & FP) students are combined for the Education Environment course. These venues would need to be designed with tables and chairs for group work as opposed to the formal lecturing arrangement. New academic staff would be accommodated in space released by a restructuring within the Department. One large office would be needed in the new premises for the administrative / technical assistant and the part-time staff members. Part of the preparation of primary school teachers involves the production of learning materials that can be utilised in the classroom. A designated room would be required for students to be able to view resource materials in the library in order to assist them to construct their own resources. This room would also need to hold all the resources, materials and equipment necessary for learning and teaching in the primary grades. A new computer venue, with 30 work stations, would be needed for teaching purposes and for individual student work due to high demands placed on existing facilities. All of these requirements would have to be accommodated within the new building, as well as by space freed up in the current building through the move of certain members of staff to the new Environmental Education Centre.

A site in the car-park adjacent to the Faculty of Education has been identified as suitable for the new building. The building will be designed in such a way as to allow for future construction should additional funds be made available for this purpose. As the Faculty of Education is located next to the Faculty of Law, all attempts will be made to take advantage of synergies between the two Faculties in the design of the building.

**Current Status:**

Funding for this project has been identified; Council has approved the appointment of Thembela as the official architects on the project. The process is commencing to identify and appoint the appropriate professionals. Appointed Hilary Saunders to perform a space audit to ensure that the brief given to the architect for the new building is optimal.

**LIFE SCIENCES BUILDING**

The departments of Biochemistry, Microbiology & Biotechnology, Chemistry, Botany, Ichthyology & Fisheries Science, Zoology & Entomology and the Faculty of Pharmacy have been identified as growth areas within the University. Four of these departments (Biochemistry, Microbiology & Biotechnology, Chemistry, Zoology & Entomology and the Faculty of Pharmacy) are located in two adjacent buildings neither of which has space for expansion. It is also the case that the same departments have been the most productive in terms of research outputs for many years and the expected growth will build on a very strong research foundation.

In order to allow the developments mentioned above to continue to on their current trajectory of increased research and teaching, it is now necessary to create additional space in both buildings. It is proposed that a new building be constructed in the open piece of land next to the Department of Ichthyology & Fisheries Science that would house Zoology & Entomology, Botany and create some additional space for DIFS (and could provide space for the MSc in Water Management). Moving Zoology & Entomology out of the Biological Sciences Building would free up 2500 m2 which could be refurbished for Biochemistry, Microbiology & Biotechnology, Chemistry and Pharmacy. The new building for the Life Sciences would not only provide much needed additional space and ultimately result in sharing of facilities, but, in some ways equally importantly, would bring together three cognate departments.

**Current Status:**

Consultations are taking place with the relevant professionals with regards to the suitability of the proposed site, preparation of draft concept drawings and the estimated costing of the project. Representatives of the Faculty and Operations have visited similar facilities at other institutions. Estimated cost at this stage is in excess of R 200 million.

**LINK BIOSCIENCES & CHEMISTRY/PHARMACY BUILDINGS**

The departments of Biochemistry, Microbiology & Biotechnology, Chemistry, Zoology & Entomology and the Faculty of Pharmacy are located in two adjacent buildings neither of which has space for expansion. They are also some of the most productive Departments in terms of research outputs for many years and the expected growth will build on a very strong research foundation.

In order to take advantage of the obvious synergies between the Departments mentioned above and to create additional space in both buildings, it is proposed to link the existing Chemistry/Pharmacy building with the Zoology building across the road. Preliminary drawings have been prepared for this and it would create an additional 1300 m2 per floor of office and laboratory space over two floors. This would form an ideal site for the Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Research Cluster, would provide the space needed for bioinformatics and biotechnology, and would provide space for shared research facilities such as the Molecular Resource Centre.

**Current Status:**

This project should be read in conjunction with the Life Sciences building above. Preference would be for both projects to be undertaken should finance allow. If not, the stand-alone Life Sciences building is the preferred option, failing which the link between the Biosciences and Chemistry/Pharmacy building will provide some of the additional space so desperately needed by the Departments.

Concept drawings have been received, and final costs are expected soon. Current estimate is R 80 million.

**NEW PREMISES FOR RHODES BUSINESS SCHOOL**

The vision of the Business School is to be the business school of choice for aspirant leaders and managers who are committed to applying sustainable business practice. With the growth in student numbers and increasing success in developing executive courses within its area of specialisation of leadership and sustainability, the Business School has outgrown its physical premises (400m2), which are currently above the Rhodes Theatre. Whilst these enjoy a prominent location in Grahamstown, the School simply cannot continue to operate in these limited (and limiting) facilities.

It is essential therefore to relocate the School to premises where the School is able to grow its vision of developing a physical infrastructure which is both conducive to learning and at the same time is sustainable and neutral in how it interacts with the environment. It has been mooted that the business school relocate to the Gavin Relly Post-Graduate Village which enjoys a prominent location adjacent to the N2 and is in close proximity to the 1820 Settlers Monument.

The following teaching and administrative space is required:

* Office space for 10 academics and 4 support staff
* Flat teaching room venue that can be converted to 4 break away rooms, otherwise can accommodate 50 people class room style
* Raked lecture theatre to accommodate 100 people

The business school would essentially require the teaching environment for 20 weeks in the year; the balance of the time it could be used as a boutique-type conference facility that would provide both a push and pull appeal for both the business school and other departments within campus to present short courses in a physical setting that has space to expand.

Two potential scenarios are envisaged.

* Scenario one – would be to convert the current transit accommodation (executive flats) on the upper floor of the original main motel building into the academic and administration support offices, with the ground floor dining room converted into a multi-purpose flat (not raked) teaching venue with the necessary break-away rooms whilst still retaining the kitchen facility for dining functions, the lounge area for a communal collegial environment and the other ground floor room as a seminar room. This may be not be an appropriate solution if the GRPGV is utilized more fully for conference facilities and short courses.
* Scenario two – build a new stand-alone building located in the GRPGV comprising a 100-seater raked lecture theatre, a 50-seater flat seminar room convertible to four break away rooms, ten offices for academic staff and an open plan office for four support staff. Additional offices for Conference Centre staff could also be incorporated into the design.

The intention would be for the School to use alternative energy sources, recycled water, and manage the gardens according to organic practices, in other words to explore all possibilities to showcase and live the principles of sustainability wherever possible.

**Current Status:**

As the University plans to focus more on increasing its post-graduate trajectory, and on short courses and the income derived therefrom, Scenario Two above becomes the more logical option for consideration.

The architect has been requested to draft concept drawings for the QS to cost, so more information is required before further analysis of the project can be undertaken. For this reason the project has been removed from the priority ranking until more accurate information is available, and then it will be re-assessed by the Committee.

**INSTITUTE OF WATER EDUCATION & RESEARCH**

The potential exists to develop a UNESCO Category 1 Water Education and Research Institute in South Africa, hosted by and located at Rhodes University in association with a consortium of Eastern Cape institutions. This Institute will need to draw on the best available expertise in South Africa, SADC and more widely across the continent. The overall objective of the new Institute would be to provide post-graduate level training in priority areas of water science, policy and management, mainly for students from Africa. The Institute would aim to provide "Source to sea" courses, based on the principles of integrated water resource management (IWRM) which emphasize economic, social and environmental sustainability.

It is envisaged that the South African Institute would be developed over an initial 5 year phase to provide three 18 month Masters courses to about 60 students per annum (targeted completion of 160 Masters students in the first 5 years), and to undertake supervision of at least 10 PhD students during the first 5 years. Some of the master’s courses could also be hosted by other institutions in South Africa, or in the rest of Africa. A building, anticipated to cost around R 50 million, would be required after 5 years.

**Current Status:**

This project falls squarely in line with the strategic goals of post-graduate, SET and short course development, and is extremely relevant in terms of the water-related nature in the Grahamstown setting. The University is engaging with partners throughout the continent, and details surrounding the requirements of this project will be clarified as the project progresses.

**SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES**

The School of Languages concentrates on second and foreign language learning as well as the teaching of mother-tongue Afrikaans and isiXhosa. It has the potential to expand, but there is simply no space to do so within the present building. Within this School, situated within the Faculty of Humanities, are the following sections: African Language Studies, Afrikaans and Netherlandic Studies, Classical Studies, French Studies, German Studies and the Confucius Institute (Chinese Studies). The School is a microcosm reflecting global realities and would hope to promote this intercultural cooperation further in the context of a “language village”. Within this village there would be communal exhibition areas which would inform and illustrate the teaching and the cultures associated with the various languages. A communal space in the form of a staff room would also be important to promote synergy. Separate seminar rooms for each section, tutorial spaces, and shared spaces for visiting lecturers and post-doctoral fellows etc. would be vital. Shared spaces for students allowing for intercultural exchanges, for example between students of China and Germany would also be desirable.

**Current Status:**

The University was made aware that the Chinese government had funds available for infrastructure purposes. Concept drawings were prepared and a proposal was sent to the Chinese government for consideration. This proposal has the backing of the South African government. This was an opportunistic proposal at the time, as the development of a new School of Languages was not deemed an institutional priority at the time.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training has since indicated the importance of improving language skills, especially African languages, and this may be a category for which Universities can apply for Infrastructure& Efficiency funding. If this was to be the case, this project will need to be re-assessed in terms of priority.

**PSYCHOLOGY CLINIC**

The Psychology Clinic is the training site for Masters courses in Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology. Students in these categories of professional training spend their first year of professional training (referred to as the M1 year) at the Psychology Clinic. There are two main components to the education and training of professional psychologists: 1) an academic programme inclusive of a seminar programme and research dissertation, and 2) a practice and casework component. The demands of this course therefore not only require students to spend time at the Psychology Clinic as academic students (through participation in seminars) but also as practitioners in training.

Over the years the training programme has seen a steady increase in student numbers. Owing to the high demand for the Master’s course (with about 120 applicants last year (2010)), a decision was made to increase the number of students we accept to 12 from 2011. It should be noted that the Master’s course in Clinical Psychology and the Master’s course in Counselling Psychology have a remarkable record regarding through-put.

**Motivation for new building or expansion of current building**

With this as background, we wish to motivate for one of two possibilities:

(1) The expansion of the current building;

(2) The location of the Psychology Clinic at a new site.

This motivation is based on:

(1) The need to ensure the confidentiality of client material;

(2) Current overcrowding; and

(3) The potential for growth of the programme.

In the following we speak to each of these and outline the space requirements of the clinic. We then motivate for the second option on the basis of accessibility of the building to clients and proximity to the Psychology Department. We speak to the fact that the current Psychology Clinic could be utilised as post-graduate accommodation, as was envisaged by Dr Johnson (previous Vice Principal) when the proposal for moving the Psychology Clinic to the Botanical Gardens was first mooted.

1. Confidentiality of client material

As pointed out above, the Professional Board expressed its concern regarding the fact that three of the consulting offices were located in the Psychology Department, some distance away from the Psychology Clinic. This means the client files travel between the two locations, increasing the possibility of material being compromised in terms of confidentiality. Should this occur this would have severe consequences not only for the student, but also for the supervisor, the department and the university. So far, no such incident has occurred and we are very careful to stress the importance of careful management of client files and information. Nevertheless, the risk that this separation poses must be taken seriously.

As such, the current arrangement of having three consulting rooms in the Psychology Department is not optimal and some solution in which the entire programme can be consolidated to one site should be sought.

1. Current overcrowding

As indicated above, the current Psychology Clinic was originally designed for seven trainee psychologists, an administrative staff member and two academic staff members. The number of trainee psychologists (M1 students and Intern) has doubled since moving to the current premises. We have outlined in this document a number of challenges and solutions the Psychology Department has implemented in the past to overcome this situation and accommodate increased numbers. These include, but are not restricted to, office space in the Psychology *Department*, moving away from dedicated individual offices to a shared consulting room and shared administration office model. The request from the Psychology Department for expansion of the Psychology Clinic also has a long institutional history.

1. Potential for growth

The delinking of the internship has opened up the possibility of an increase in numbers and the selected group for training in 2011 has increased to 12 trainees. Aligned with recent policy developments at Rhodes University to increase post graduate numbers (see the Vice Chancellor’s document: *The Further Development of Postgraduate Studies at Rhodes: Creating an Agenda*, 10 May 2011),this number is now open to further increase. In initial discussions in the department we have indicated that we could potentially increase numbers by two each year up to a maximum of 18 or 20 trainees, subject to such a motivation being approved by the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC). In addition, we have, at a recent curriculum planning meeting (27 May 2011), tasked a small committee with investigating the feasibility of introducing a Master’s degree in Educational Psychology. This proposal is at the beginning stages of planning and needs considerable development. Nevertheless the possibility exists of either expanding the current programme to 20 students or alternatively introducing a new professional Master’s degree. Either way, a proposal for such expansion will serve at the IPC.

**Space requirements for the Psychology Clinic**

Permanent (Admin):

* Offices for two academic staff members, one secretary, and one intern psychologist: Total 4
* Test library: Secure store room
* Play therapy room
* Seminar room for up to 20 students plus lecturer (if not in Psychology Department)
* Observation room one way mirror linked to play therapy (observation room to accommodate up to 20 people)
* Observation room with one way mirror linked to larger consulting room (observation room to accommodate up to 20 people)
* Administration office for photocopier, printer, etc.
* Waiting room
* Secure filing room for client files (kept for seven years by legal requirement)
* Kitchen area

Trainees:

* Consulting rooms (shared) on a booking system:
	+ The ratio of consulting rooms per student is approximately 2:1; i.e. for every two students, one consulting room is required
	+ Currently (2010) 6 shared consulting rooms for 12 students
	+ Anticipated increase to 20 students requires 10 consulting rooms
* Communal admin office(s) accommodating work stations for 12 or 20 students. (This could be one large office; or 2 or 3 smaller offices for the different courses/registration categories)

**Proposed solutions**

Some of the following alternatives were investigated and discussed in the past:

* Extend the existing Psychology Clinic. Space towards the back of the Clinic was previously identified.
* Incorporate Oriel Annex and connect to the Psychology Clinic

**Current Status:**

The property located in the Botanical Gardens was earmarked for investigation as a possible solution, but investigations have proved this to be a challenge, as it is unlikely that permission will be granted for the building to be renovated, and extensive renovations would be required in this instance. The matter is being discussed with the department.

**COMPUTER SCIENCE / INFORMATION SYSTEMS EXTENSION**

The Departments of Computer Science (CS) and Information Systems (IS) are flagship departments at Rhodes University actively contributing towards undergraduate and post-graduate studies in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Presently, the two departments share space and infrastructure (the Hamilton Building) as well as personnel and for some years have been pursuing a joint trajectory to grow post-graduate numbers and research activities.

The Hamilton Building was made possible through a generous donation by Old Rhodian and Honorary Doctorate recipient, Dr. Robin Hamilton. This facility has without doubt been a critical success factor in the achievements of these two departments. Interest in these disciplines ensured that the building quickly reached its full capacity and there is now no further available space to accommodate the growing demands of CS/IS Departments. The only option which remains is to extend the existing building or to build an additional structure.

**Current Status:**

An appropriate site for expansion has been identified and the architect is preparing concept drawings for approval. The Development Office is in discussions with Dr Robin Hamilton who has pledged an additional amount for this expansion project. A further donation has been received that could be deemed suitable for this project. There would remain a shortfall to be raised by the Development Office.

**C: STUDENT ACCOMMODATION AND SPORT/CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

**POST-GRADUATE COMMONS (LEVEL ZERO)**

The new library at Rhodes was conceptualised taking into account the needs of a new generation of students who will eventually work in a digital environment and theories of learning that emphasize the social nature of learning. The value of open-plan, informal learning areas that provide individualised learning environments, but which also support collaborative learning lies in the way they encourage learning through dialogue, problem-solving and information sharing. The Library is the most frequented building on campus by students from all faculties, at undergraduate and postgraduate level and most students visit the Library or Library area at least once a day.

The research commons dedicated for use by Masters and Doctoral students within the main part of the Library has proved to be extremely successful, and it is envisaged that the area beneath the Library known as Level Zero be equipped as a Post-Graduate Commons, available for all post-graduate students on campus. Approximately 25% of the 7200 students studying at the University are post-graduates.

The facility is planned to be a quiet, studious space providing a number of individual and group study options, no paper library resources but computer stations for students to work on university PC’s and their own laptops. Assistance with technical problems and with information sources will be provided by student assistants who will also refer students to the librarian on duty.

Students should be able to take time out from working at desks to read, talk quietly to fellow students or drink water or a beverage - which they will prepare themselves.

This Commons is planned to provide the following facilities: office for a librarian (rotating from staff in the main library), a station for a student assistant, study carrels (6), group study rooms (12 and 6 seats), individual study stations, carousels (as in the new library), lockers for 30 – 35 students, refreshment facilities (as in the Research Commons) and “chill” space. The standard of furniture and finish will be between the new main library and the Research Commons. The facility will be access controlled using the Rhodes University proximity card issued to staff and students and will be open during the same times as the Main Library. A student assistant will be present while the facility is open. A group of trained senior post-graduate students will be employed on a roster basis.

**Current Status:**

This space was previously identified as being a possible site for a Learning Café for all students, but efforts to raise the funds necessary to make the project a reality were not forthcoming. Instead of the site remaining vacant for the foreseeable solution, it was decided to use the area in a way that is in line with the strategic trajectory of the University. It is recognised that there is a need for space for all students, not just post-graduates - to meet, relax, and possibly interact in a way that enhances their academic experience at Rhodes University. This issue is being taken very seriously, and possible solutions to meet this need are being explored by two Task Teams.

Council has made an in-principle decision that this project should proceed and bridging finance be provided by the University. The architect has now re-designed the layout and the new format has been supported by the IPC. Final, accurate costs are awaited from the Project Manager.

**LEARNING CAFE**

A Learning Café is a new and exciting part of campus that speaks to students of the digital age. It is understood this this will be the only facility of its kind currently in construction in Higher Education in South Africa; although the concept is popular in Europe and America. It combines aspects of learning, socialising and technology to create a space that is both free and productive. A learning café is a deliberate mix and careful balance of social space, refreshments and access to technology which regards conversation and social interaction as essential to learning. Different configurations of furniture cater for both individual study and group work, with the arrangement of most furniture easily reconfigurable to match the size and purpose of the group. These flexible furniture configurations are supplemented with different kinds of access to computers: “standing” kiosks for quick access to email (“shortstay terminals”), “medium stay computers” and “sit-down” workstations for extended work and easy access to power and data points (wired and wireless) for students who own mobile computers. Mobile and mounted conventional and interactive whiteboards and moveable pods provide spaces for students to engage in group discussions without disturbing others. Zoned audio outputs are used so that music can be heard in some parts, for example at the entrance. As a way of integrating learning into everyday social activities (which research has shown to be beneficial for learning), and has the potential to become the social heart of the campus, a place where students meet and converse, as well as study.

The value of open-plan, informal learning areas that provide individualised learning environments, but which also support collaborative learning lies in the way they encourage learning through dialogue, problem-solving and information sharing. The notion of a Learning Café is premised on the need to transform learning so as to equip students not only to function successfully in the modern world of work that values social interaction, collaboration and team work, but to be leaders in this new world of work. Open flexible space that allows reconfiguration to be undertaken relatively easily. The furniture should be used to create the desired relaxed social atmosphere. In addition, seating arrangements (together with floor plans, lighting and other pointers) are used to signify the intended use. The furniture in the UK Learning Cafés is custom-designed for this specific purpose. One example of such customization is the way in which electrical outlets and network points are built into the arm rests of couches.

As part of the Learning Café project, the University will explore the possibility of allowing an external party to operate a small coffee-shop in the space provided. This will allow students and staff members to purchase either espresso-based coffee prepared by a trained barista, or standard coffee, possibly dispensed from a machine. A condition in awarding the tender would be that the operator would agree to employ and train students to run the facility.

A number of possible sites for this project are being explored.

**Current Status:**

This project has been removed from the original list of priorities in order for the concept to be re-evaluated and clarified. The original idea of a Learning Café was always going to be associated with the Library, and with the decision being taken to convert Level Zero into a Research Commons, the Learning Café project changes fundamentally. A Task Team has been established to determine the exact nature of what is required, and once this has been established, the project will be reassessed by the Committee.

**POST-GRADUATE STUDENT RESIDENCES**

Due to its geographical location, Rhodes University is largely residential in nature, and any growth in student numbers is heavily dependent on the availability of student residences and beds. The residential nature of the University plays an important role in the quality of graduates that are produced, as well as the graduate success rate. Such residential accommodation is important as the University strives to improve the participation of black South African students, ensure equity with quality, and produce high quality graduates, especially those from indigent families.

Rhodes University has taken the decision to focus on growth in post-graduate numbers, whilst maintain the number of undergraduate students relatively constant over the period 2011 to 2013. In order to increase the overall number of post-graduate students, the University would need to provide additional accommodation on campus that would specifically cater for the needs of the post-graduate students. Traditionally post-graduate students find digs-style student accommodation within Grahamstown, but this accommodation is at a premium and the housing market is not able to absorb increased student numbers. Currently the postgraduate housing capacity provided by the University is 150 beds (excluding the units used to house post-docs and postgraduate students with life partners and families).

A postgraduate residence configuration task team has been convened, and currently an on-line opinion survey is being conducted to obtain and measure postgraduate student opinion about the development of further postgraduate housing on campus. Preliminary results indicate that a significant number of postgraduates would value customized postgraduate student housing on campus.

It is therefore recommended that cluster-type, customised postgraduate housing units be provided on campus which accommodate 30 – 50 postgraduate students (configuration to be determined following analysis of questionnaire and further consultation).

**Current Status:**

The architect is currently producing concept drawings for discussion. This project is in the design and conception phase, with work being done to test various configurations and models.

**INDOOR SPORT CENTRE**

The Alec Mullins Sports Centre consists of one basket-ball sized hall, a dojo and basic ablution facilities. It has no change-rooms and or dedicated spectator seating.  The centre is used by a number of sporting codes, including basketball, volleyball, badminton, dance sport, rock-climbing and martial arts.  It is the largest flat floor space on campus, and therefore is used extensively during examinations and during the festival.  There have been few improvements made to this facility for decades despite student numbers increasing more than threefold since it was built; hence the need for a more substantial indoor sports centre has long been felt. It is becoming more urgent as student enrolments and sports participation increase.

It is envisaged that the Alec Mullins hall be demolished, and a new hall approximately two-and-a-half to three times the size be constructed on the same site.  The hall is planned to accommodate two basket-ball sized courts and a martial art area next to each other, surrounded by raked seating along the sides of the hall. Change rooms and ablutions will be located either underneath the seating area or lateral to the rest, depending on design.  This will facilitate the simultaneous use of the facility by an increased number of teams and sporting codes as well as providing much needed seating for spectators.

Of major importance to the University would be the availability of the facility as flat-floor space for examinations, large indoor activities such as concerts, and possibly even graduation ceremonies.

Parking would be of major challenge, and various options are under consideration.

It is thus evident that an indoor sports facility will address both a social as well as an academic need of the university.

**Current Status:**

The architect has produced initial concept drawings relating to expanding the existing Alec Mullins hall. The feasibility of locating a renovating Alec Mullins into a larger In-door Sports Centre is being evaluated. The issue of parking is a major consideration, but various alternatives are being investigated in conjunction with Sports Admin.

**POST GRADUATE CENTRE**

In line with the strategic focus on increasing post-graduate numbers at the University, it is critical to provide appropriate levels of support to these students. There is a significant level of support provided to both local and international undergraduate students, and the residential nature of the University provides a sense of inclusion and belonging. This is not always the case for post-graduates, who typically do not enter the University through the residence system, and do not have the same level of support and guidance, in terms of access to financial and educational support.

It is envisaged that the University would provide a Centre specially geared to support post-graduate students, in addition to what is planned for Level Zero in the Library. This Centre would accommodate facilities such as post-graduate Financial Aid Administration and academic support. Over time, the University may decide to appoint a Dean or Director to oversee post-graduate studies.

The Centre would either be in the form of a stand-alone building, preferably situated near to the Eden Grove precinct, ie close to the Registrar and the undergraduate equivalent. Alternatively, the top floor of the Eden Grove building could be renovated for this purpose, and additional flat floor space identified elsewhere in the University to replace what is currently utilized for that purpose.

**Current Status:**

This project was originally ranked as a priority, but on re-assessment it was decided to remove the project from the list of priorities pending clarification, and Task Team been established to determine exactly what would be needed by the University for Post Graduate support. These deliberations are expected to provide more direction with respect to infrastructural requirements.

**SUPPORT SERVICES HUB**

The University has grown significantly over the past decades, and the appropriate utilization of buildings and space is critical in terms of the Spatial Development Framework. It is now time to question the suitability of the location of certain Support Services, and it is clear that in many instances they occupy space that would now more logically be utilized for academic purposes.

In identifying a more suitable location for Service Divisions it is essential to ensure that they are located in an area not likely to be used for academic or residential purposes in the medium to long term but also not too far from the central part of campus. Service Staff, most of whom do not have transport, need to be able to access the facilities as well as the campus in order to perform their functions effectively. It would not be appropriate to locate the Divisions in an isolated area of campus.

It is planned to construct a Support Services Hub to house the abovementioned Divisions in the area known as the Rifle-Range. As the Services do not require purpose built buildings, the architects have been tasked with designing a large warehouse that can be sub-divided, whilst at the same time retaining the look and feel of other buildings on campus. The warehouse structure/s will accommodate large areas under roof, as well as offices. The location in the old quarry, currently utlised as a rifle-range, is far enough away from residences and academic buildings for the noise generated by the operations to be a factor.

The Support Services Hub is planned to accommodate the following Divisions:

* Estates Head Office
* Residential Operations Head Office
* Grounds and Gardens
* Building Maintenance
* Furniture & Equipment Store
* Housekeeping
* Catering Head Office
* Catering stores, both dry goods and refrigerated goods
* Store room for samples, eg Geology rocks

As part of the overall plan, it is envisaged to build access roads to and from this Hub from the Monument side of campus instead of through the heart of campus, so as to limit the necessity for heavy vehicles to drive where students are walking. This would be dependent on the erf adjacent to the Quarry being acquired by the University.

**Current Status:**

Discussions and site-visits have taken place with the Architect and Project Manager regarding this project. The next step will be the preparation of concept drawings.

**CPU RELOCATION**

The CPU Operations room is currently located in Rhodes Avenue. It would be preferable to locate the Security Centre of campus in a position that is highly visible and accessible. The premises that are currently occupied by Grounds and Gardens on the corner of South and Prince Alfred Streets would be an appropriate location.

The Grounds and Gardens Head Office would need to relocate to new premises, and the ideal solution would be the proposed Support Services Hub. If the Support Services Hub is not supported, an alternative solution for the Grounds and Gardens Head Office would have to be sought.

**Current Status:**

Planning for this project will begin once an alternative location for Grounds and Gardens Head Office has been identified. This is currently envisioned to be part of the Support Services Hub project under consideration.

**REHABILITATION OF QUARRY**

Two Erven (numbers 5448 and 8507) situated between Main Campus and the Gavin Relly Post Graduate Village are surrounded by land owned by the University. An unused, mined-out quarry is situated on Erf 8507. For more than a decade and a half the University has been engaging with the Makana Municipality to alienate the two parcels of land in return for taking on the responsibility of the rehabilitation of the unused quarry. The reasons for the University wishing to acquire the land are largely strategic.

* This land would be potentially be used for future residence expansion. In the university’s Spatial Development Framework, part of the area made up by Erf 5448 has been earmarked for residences in future years. Although no new undergraduate residences are currently under consideration, this may change in the years ahead. This land is reasonably close to Main Campus compared to other land owned by the University.
* It is planned that the University would construct a road on part of this land to link up with the proposed Support Services Hub.
* If a developer would acquire this land, the University may have inappropriate development happening on its doorstep. On the other hand, a residential development may be imminently suitable to the University.
* An opportunistic entrepreneur with the right contacts may be able to acquire the land, hold on to it, and offer it to the University for a small fortune when the University it in the future . The likelihood of this taking place is deemed to be not great.

In 2010, the Makana Council agreed to alienate the two parcels of land to the University on condition that the University covers the cost of the rehabilitation of the quarry. As part of the process the University sponsored the preparation of a Mine Closure Plan which has been accepted by the Department of Minerals and Energy. The cost of the rehabilitation has been estimated to be in the region of R 5,6 million. This estimate vastly exceeded the amount originally anticipated.

The rehabilitation of the quarry comprises the following major processes:

* Packing and wiring of gabion walls along the inside wall of the quarry
* Dislodging and removing unstable rocks from the sides of the quarry
* Stabilizing one of the walls with bolts
* Removing alien vegetation

The University has approached the Makana Municipality with the view to applying for support in terms of an Extended Public Works Programme, as a large proportion of the work can be carried out using manual labour. Some of the work will require the use of heavy machinery, such as an excavator, trucks and drilling machines. This work would have to be undertaken by appointed sub-contractors.

**Current Status:**

A team comprised of a professional engineer as well as representatives from the University and Makana Municipality has been formed to explore ways in which this project can be funded without using University funds. Informal approaches have been made to various Government departments in this regard. The Municipality has been kept up to date with progress made to date.