

Life and Mind Building

Introduction

Professor Chris Kennard, Senior Responsible Owner

Welcome to this new bimonthly Life and Mind Building (LaMB) Newsletter, in which we will bring you up to date news on various aspects of the Tinbergen demolition, CTL enabling work and the development of plans and construction of the LaMB.

This is an extremely complex, high value (£201.8M) project involving many hundreds of people including demolition experts, architects, engineers, project managers, landscape designers, cost consultants and planners, to name but a few. I have been amazed at the huge range of expertise which has to be called upon to create the LaMB, and how they so seamlessly interact with each other and with the all important users, who will eventually occupy the building. It is a very exciting project for all concerned and I'm pleased to report that we are currently on target to have the Tinbergen demolished this coming September, and the new building opened for the Michaelmas term 2024. Fortunately, so far the lockdown associated with the coronavirus pandemic has only minimally interfered with the demolition and enabling works programme and the design development is moving forward well, despite the fact that now everyone in the team is required to work remotely and hold all meetings on-line.

With the imminent appointment of the main contractor who will build the LaMB, the steadily increasing involvement of all their teams to create even more detailed plans prior to the commencement of construction in the late summer of 2021, there will be much to inform you about over the coming four years.

Inside this issue

- Tinbergen demolition and CTL enabling works
- The developing design for the LaMB
- Site logistics
- Planning and public consultation
- End user consultation
- Appointment of the main contractor
- Fundraising



Tinbergen demolition and CTL enabling works

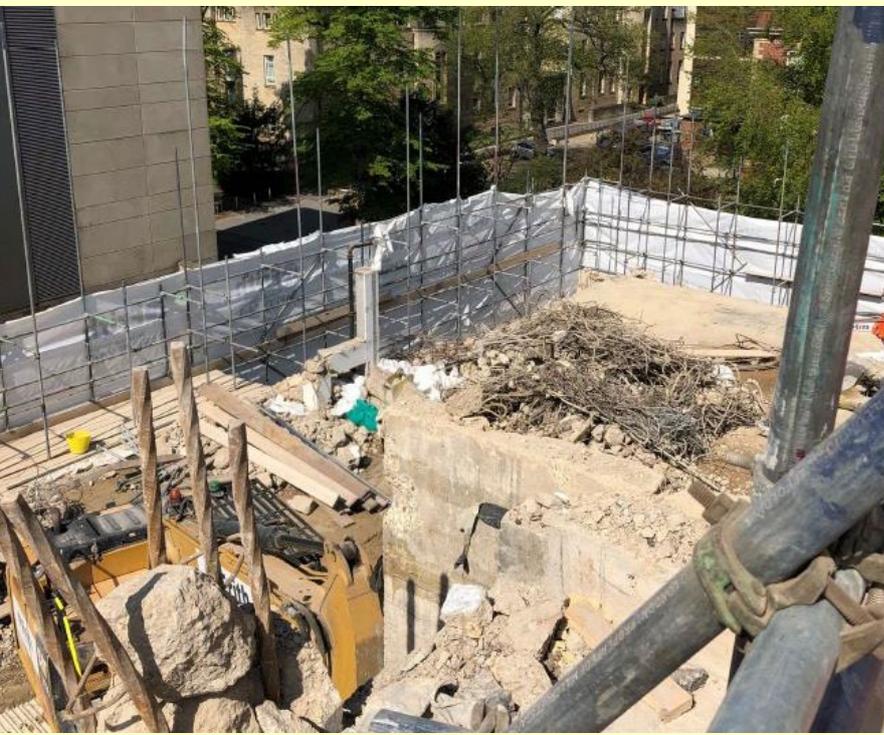
**DEMOLITION AND ENABLING WORKS PROJECT
MANAGER, BIDWELLS**

Substantive demolition has commenced following the conclusion of nearly 18 months of asbestos removals and is progressing on programme. This, coupled with the arrival of the temporary flues and the temporary plant room, marked two significant milestones in the overall package of works that pave the way for the main build.

Demolition and installation of the temporary plant room has been largely unaffected by the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 and continue on programme.

A considerable number of modifications within the CTL are now underway. These include a new main entrance on the south side; construction of a goods lift and stairwell; changes to the prep rooms; new toilets.

Some early works took place from December 2019 to March 2020, and following discussions around risk mitigation in view of the coronavirus pandemic it was decided to undertake the full scope of works in one continuous programme for completion in November 2020 rather than in two phases extending into summer 2021.



The developing design for the LaMB

ARCHITECT, NBBJ

The design of the Life & Mind Building is progressing extremely well through RIBA Stage 3 and the project remains on the full scope of works for completion in November 2020 programme and budget.

Despite impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic, the project team, like many industries, rapidly mobilised in early March to operate from home and have deployed a 'COVID-19 mitigation plan' to keep the design development continuing unimpeded. All meetings are being held on-line and communication amongst all groups is proving to be very successful.

A recent example of this has been a large volume of Design Engagement meetings completed by the designers with a large range of User Groups (23 in April and a further set in May). These are currently running through a final round to help with the refinement of the design layouts, the functionality of the departments, safety, logistics and operational requirements.

The design team are focused on delivering a completed RIBA Stage 3 (Detailed Design) package by early July and subsequent Town Planning Application by the end of July.

This level of design information captures how the project has been developed to a greater level of detail following significant work with all Departments and User Groups, the Life and Mind Project Team and the University Estates team.



Information currently being produced includes:

- General Arrangement Plans, Sections and Elevations plus internal and external 3D visualisations
- Building and Engineering Specifications

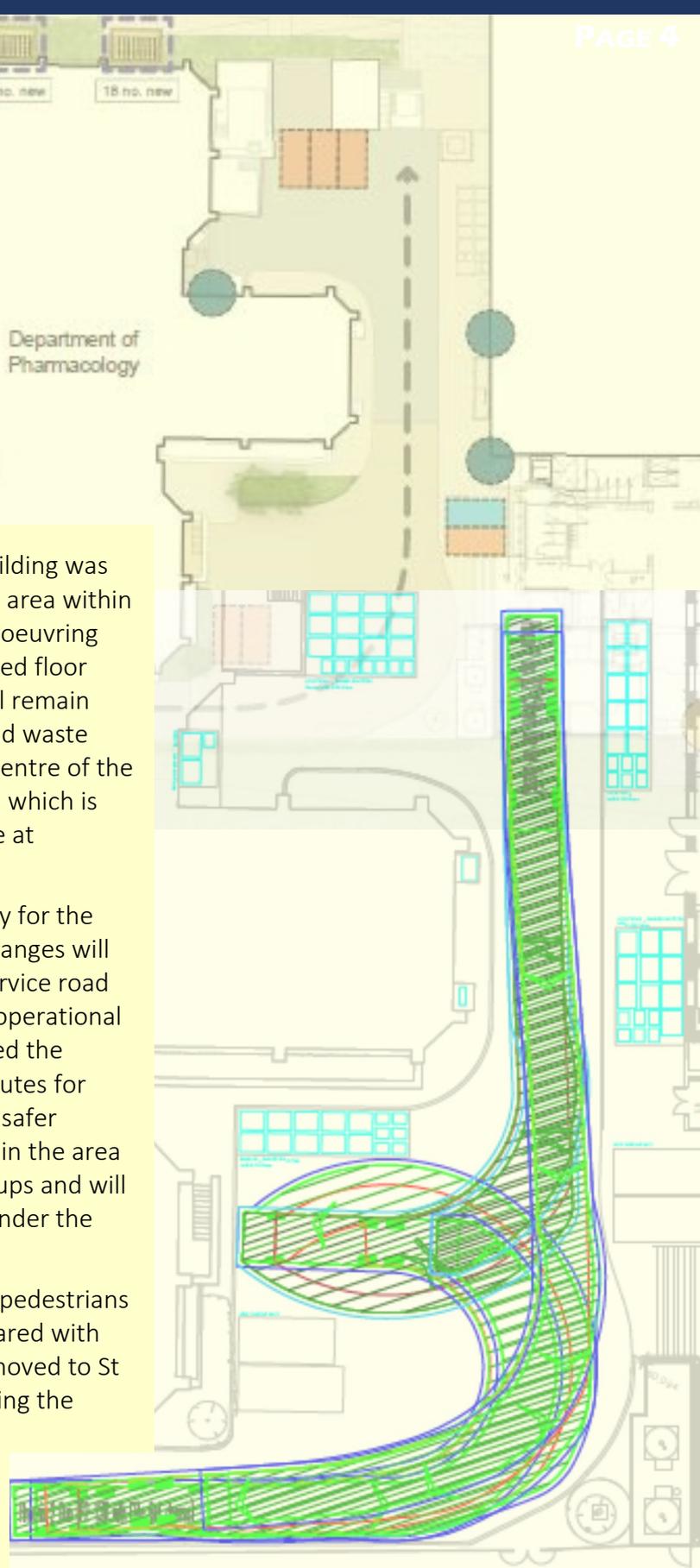
Site logistics

LAMB PROJECT MANAGER, ARUP

Delivery and waste collection for original Tinbergen building was on St Cross Road, which required a large double height area within the basement of the building to be used solely for manoeuvring and off loading vehicles. In order to achieve the required floor area in the new LaMB it is essential that all vehicles will remain outside the building. The access point for deliveries and waste collection will be from the existing service yard in the centre of the block bounded by South Parks Road and St Cross Road, which is reached via the existing service road from the entrance at Mansfield Road adjacent to the Tinsley building.

The service yard supports logistics management activity for the Pharmacology and Peter Medawar buildings. These changes will result in some additional vehicle movements on the service road and activity within the service yard above the present operational levels. The logistics activity for the LaMB will not exceed the capacity of these areas and will provide safer access routes for pedestrians and cyclists, along with more efficient and safer movements of vehicles. A plan to rationalise deliveries in the area has been developed by a Mansfield Road Logistics Groups and will be considered by the University for separate funding under the small capital project scheme.

Access to the Chemistry Teaching Laboratory (CTL) for pedestrians and cyclist is currently via the service road, which is shared with delivery vehicles. Pedestrian and cycle access will be moved to St Cross road linking to a new entrance into CTL overlooking the sports field.



In accordance with new University requirements all car parking will be allocated for a reduced number of essential users or repurposed to create additional cycle parking areas. Overall cycle parking in the block will be increased by 578 spaces.

Town planning and public consultation

TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANT, SAVILLS

Work for the Town Planning Application includes a Design & Access Statement, which is also being developed. This captures a vast array of essential reports and statements of impact upon the development area and wider environment including:

- Visual Impact Assessment, which includes the use of photos and verified views representing the landscape and proposed development as accurately as possible
- 3D modelling so that the impact of the development from different locations around Oxford can be understood, including any 'view cone' views that are affected
- Impact of the proposal in terms of potential obstruction, impact on the skyline, change of character etc.

The project team also continue to assist with the procurement of the Main Contractor for their engagement on pre-construction buildability advice. Prior to submission of the full Planning Application to Oxford City Council (OCC) we are required to hold a public consultation, but due to the current lockdown situation we are taking this event for the new LaMB online.

Ahead of this the Project team will be meeting with the Oxford Design Review Panel (ODRP), a panel of experts in building design used by OCC to ensure that there is a consistently high standard of design for significant built environment projects, embedding best practice into the planning.

Information on the proposals will be hosted on the University's Building Our Futures website from 4th June. The website will include a series of consultation boards which will cover the project background and work to date, the design development and proposed plans for the site, public realm and landscaping proposals, access and logistics, cycle parking arrangements, sustainability and the project programme. Any questions can be emailed to the project team and there will be a feedback form on the website giving the opportunity to make comments on the proposals shown. All feedback will be reviewed by the project team and will be considered in progressing the proposals before submission of the planning application at the end of July. Further details on this public consultation will be circulated in due course.

On-line Public Planning Consultation opening 4th May - "[Building our Futures](#)" UoO website.

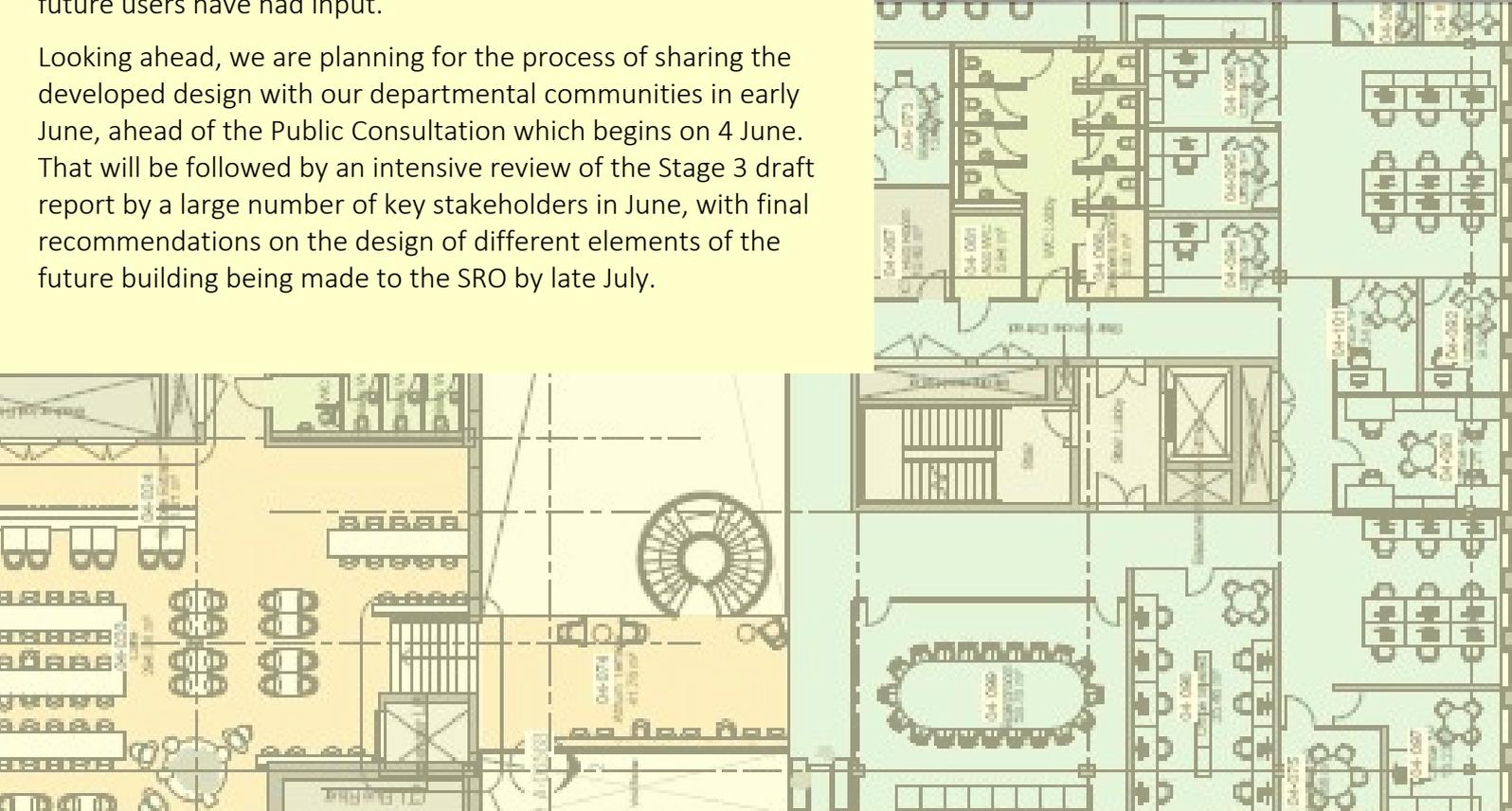
End-user consultation

PROFESSOR BEN SHELDON, SENIOR USER REPRESENTATIVE

The past month has been dominated by an intense period of user consultation as part of the Stage 3 design process, reviewing the details of plans as we draw up the Room Data Sheets and work towards the Stage 3 report for the Life and Mind Building. With no fewer than 47 online meetings totalling almost 100 hours over the past four weeks, some of us feel like Microsoft Teams veterans. These meetings have dealt with specialised research spaces for Experimental Psychology and the future Biology Department, the design of offices and teaching spaces, as well as with shared and service spaces.

Despite the challenge of the online-only format, this has been an excellent series of user engagements with outstanding leadership from NBBJ and support from Hoare Lea throughout. Many have commented that the online format works surprisingly well, and while subject to the now familiar challenges of patchy connections, unexpected domestic interruptions and forgetting to un-mute, they enable a degree of focus that might be more difficult in a physical meeting. The end result is that we are close to finalising an excellent design to which a large number of likely future users have had input.

Looking ahead, we are planning for the process of sharing the developed design with our departmental communities in early June, ahead of the Public Consultation which begins on 4 June. That will be followed by an intensive review of the Stage 3 draft report by a large number of key stakeholders in June, with final recommendations on the design of different elements of the future building being made to the SRO by late July.



Appointment of the main contractor

COST MANAGER, ARCADIS

The appointment of a preferred contractor under a Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) has been substantially progressed in the last (monthly) reporting period.

Significant focus has been on ensuring the design deliverables / management is fully robust and completely clear & aligned to the sub-contract procurement strategy to eliminate ambiguity during the second stage as far as possible. Various workshops and meetings have been held to clarify these and reconfirm scope and associated fees with the main contractor and their design team.

The reduction to professional fees as a result has been factored in the forecast total project, assisting in maintaining the project within budget. As part of the full tender review, the programme has also been interrogated further to produce a reduction with associated cost savings, whilst commercial clarifications have largely been resolved.

Following agreement of the PCSA the main contractor will undertake a significant design validation exercise of the Stage 3 design as one of their key deliverables. Good progress has been made and we are currently on programme. In order to maintain the preferred contractor's involvement whilst the PCSA is being finalised, a limited Authorised Services Letter has been issued drawing down a relatively small amount of the total PCSA fee.



Fundraising

PROFESSOR TIM COULSON

The University has tasked us with finding £15m from philanthropy to put towards the capital cost of LaMB. We have been working with the University's Development Office both in Oxford and in New York over the past few months to identify potential funders, especially individuals and foundations. It has become clear that a major pull for potential funders is the concept of multidisciplinary research hubs working on a variety of major challenges, to be established in LaMB. Here is an outline of what we are proposing.

Interdisciplinary Research Hubs

As humans we are stewards of the natural world. However, we are also exposed to threats that arise as a consequence of our interactions with pathogens, plants and animals – as well as other humans. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed how vulnerable humanity can be, even in the developed world where many people enjoy security, health, and prosperity. Even once the pandemic has receded, we will remain vulnerable to the environmental consequences of a changing climate, including rising temperatures and sea levels, and food and water insecurity.

Meeting these challenges requires both a deep understanding of biological mechanism, and a firm grasp of human psychology and behaviour. For example, overcoming COVID-19 will require both the development of a vaccine and the creation of new social policies that prevent the spread of disease.

The Opportunity

Stepping up research into biological threats can help us plan for the future. More than ever, we need to work together to conduct high-quality, innovative research that will allow us to change the world for the better. Gathering world-class psychologists and biologists under the roof of the state-of-the-art Life and Mind Building (LaMB) provides an exciting opportunity for interdisciplinary research that meets the emerging challenges of the 21st century.

Although the building is not yet open, psychologists and biologists are already joining together to create research hubs. These hubs will identify and research pressing issues that are biological in nature, but where the solutions require an understanding of human behaviour. The hubs in development include: Animal communication; Antimicrobial Resistance; Conflict and Cooperation; Digital Life; Feeding the Planet; Healthy Ageing; Improving Global Health; Natural Intelligence; Nature-based Solutions; and Networks.

Finally, to mark Earth Day's 50th Anniversary, Professor Nathalie Seddon presented a virtual seminar titled 'Nature-based Solutions to Global Challenges', as part of a University of Oxford North American Office event. Attracting 170 attendees, Nathalie talked about her research, which focuses on determining the ecological and socioeconomic effectiveness of nature-based solutions to societal challenges, and how best to increase the influence of robust biodiversity and ecosystem science on the design and implementation of climate and development policy.