



AGENDA OF MEETING

DATE OF MEETING	9 November 2023	TIME OF MEETING	6.30pm
VENUE	Presidents' Hall, Blackhall Place, Dublin 7 and by Zoom Webinar. Registration is essential for online attendance. Please refer to www.lawsociety.ie/AGM		
MEETING	Annual General Meeting		

1. Reading of notice convening the meeting.
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 10 November 2022.
3. Consideration of the Annual Report for the year 2022/2023 and approval of Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.
4. Report of the Scrutineers on the Annual Election and the Provincial Elections and the final declaration of results.
5. Election of auditors.
6. Special Business pursuant to Bye-law 4(3)(a) of the Bye-laws of the Law Society:

Motion 1:

That pursuant to Bye-Law 9(3)(b) of the Bye-Laws of the Law Society of Ireland, this General meeting approves the expenditure of up to €13,000,000 for the purpose of the planning and construction of a multi-purpose educational facility building, together with associated works to adjoin the Green Hall on its southern (Benburb Street) side; such expenditure to be funded from the financial reserves of the Law School of the Law Society of Ireland available for that purpose, to the extent required to fund the balance of such expenditure the financial reserves of the Law Society of Ireland of up to €5,500,000 in the form of an intra-Society loan. The decision of the 2022 General Meeting to approve a less comprehensive development with a westward focus is hereby rescinded.

Proposer: Richard Hammond S.C.
Seconder: Paul Keane

Note: Please see Appendix 1 for explanatory memorandum on this motion.

Motion 2:

That the Law Society will publish, within two years of this AGM, a statement of principles on the best type of class action system for Ireland taking account of the views of stakeholders and especially the Bar Council and the Irish Judiciary.

**Proposer: Philip Andrews SC
Seconder: Ronan Dunne**

Motion 3:

That the Law Society will publish, within six months of this AGM, a report on the costs and competitive effects of increased regulation on solicitors over the last decade.

**Proposer: Philip Andrews SC
Seconder: Ronan Dunne**

7. Appointing date of next Annual General Meeting.
8. Appointment of Scrutineers for Council Election 2024/2025.
9. Any other business properly arising.

**Mark Garrett
Director General and Secretary
26 October 2023**

Note: *President of the Law Society, Maura Derivan, invites those attending the Annual General Meeting to a reception in the Members' Lounge immediately following the meeting.*

Appendix 1 on next page

Following the project's approval in November 2022, significant progress has been made towards shaping a new educational facility.

At a pre-planning meeting in November 2022 with Dublin City Council, its representatives expressed concerns about the initial extension's location in an area with Land-Use Zoning Objective Z9 (to preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity and open space and green networks) and the intended elimination of the tennis court. They also noted the absence of a campus wide masterplan and advised that they would not grant a non-conforming use for the site when we had the Benburb Street site lying vacant. It was suggested that we look at adjusting our initial proposal and they emphasized the importance of integrating our revised proposal with a revised Masterplan that would cover the entire campus, including the adjacent Benburb Street site.

Separately, in November 2022, the Director of Finance and Operations, with Howley Hayes Cooney ('HHC'), began developing a Society wide property strategy masterplan. Following the feedback from DDC, HHC produced a revised campus wide masterplan, which included reshaped plans for a new Education Hub set within the vision of the master plan, and developed southward from the Green Hall on the Benburb Street site.

In September 2023, another preplanning meeting took place on site with the presence of the DCC Acting City Planner, along with Planning and Conservation Officers at which the revised plans were positively received.

In essence, while always subject to planning, the local authority is much more positively disposed toward a development on the southward (Benburb Street) side of the Green Hall, which accords with its zoning for the area, and sees an under-utilised site commence regeneration.

Opportunity

Simultaneously, the Law Society is mapping out its five-year strategy. A central request from the planning process of the strategy review was to consider expanding the project brief to accommodate more teaching space to ensure that we fully optimise land use within the revised master plan.

Additionally, feedback from trainees on the inaugural Professional Practice course pointed out the students' disappointment with the shortage of study and collaboration spaces.

To keep pace with the profession's dynamic shifts and to ensure we can effectively roll out our suite of 20+ interactive advanced electives each year, we have recognised the essential need for additional multi-functional and multi-zone teaching and collaborative spaces. It is clear that to meet these evolving requirements, expansion and integration of such versatile spaces are crucial.

As we strive to make the profession more inclusive and welcoming, the importance of adaptive zones is also becoming increasingly clear. The demand for quiet areas, rest pods, and the like is growing steadily.

The development will also be adaptable for other uses by the wider Society and the Law School.

There is also an opportunity to implement some improvements set out in the masterplan in tandem, for example, the creation of a roadway into the Society via the Benburb Street site that would improve access to the proposed extension, as well as the Blackhall Campus.

Feasibility Study

Following discussions with Howley Hayes Cooney and Austin Reddy & Company, updated plans were crafted, showcasing the potential to incorporate an additional 14 smart community learning labs and a dedicated student clubs and society room with the opportunity to also add adaptive zones.

- **Space to include:** 24 smart community learning labs, mock court, recording room, large CPD training room, smaller lecture theatre plus a large number of breakout spaces and adaptive zones.
- **Area:** 2,255sqm

By shifting a portion of the construction to the Benburb Street site, its split-level design enabled us to expand the project's size almost twofold compared to its initial scope, without proportionally doubling the expenses, allowing the project to more adequately meet and future proof our needs

Funding

It is intended to finance the development without external finance, deploying funds from Law School reserves, and temporarily using funds from Law Society reserves, which will be replenished back to the Law Society from future Law School operating surpluses.

The Law School is answerable to the President of the High Court for its spending and budgeting. His consent is required for any new fees order. Consequently, any Education surpluses are earmarked for capital spending. The Education reserve fund can currently contribute up to €7,500,000 from its reserves for the Education Hub development. Additionally, the Law Society of Ireland will temporarily advance up to €5,500,000 from its own reserves through an intra-Society allocation, which will be reimbursed by the Law School to the Law Society of Ireland from operating surpluses in the future. This is the reverse of a similar arrangement, which occurred to assist with funding for the purchase of the Benburb Street site. Everyone involved in the Education Hub 2030 Project is committed to cost control and project management.

Oversight

An oversight committee, featuring representatives from both Finance and Education, will be established to supervise the project, with input also on behalf of the Benburb Street Property Company Limited, as owner of the underlying site.

A memorandum of understanding ('MoU') between the Finance Committee, Education Committee and if required, the Benburb Street Property Company, will be prepared and agreed with the assistance of specialist expertise and is intended to cover aspects including (but not limited to):

- The proposals' consistency with the larger masterplan
- Ensuring that the proposal will allow for phased development of the Benburb Street site
- Levels of authority and approval routes for the project (e.g. Council approval for planning application, authority to enter into contract etc.)
- Budget review and approval by Finance Committee
- Regular reporting
- Funding of capital expenditure, repayment of the inter entity loan and funding of maintenance and renewals is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Finance Committee

It is proposed that no funds are drawn down for the proposal until this MoU is in place.

Projected Costs

Description	Cost	VAT Rate	VAT Amount	Total
Construction Costs	€ 9,100,000	13.50%	€ 1,228,500	€ 10,328,500

Design and planning fees (inc. Architect led design and planning team)	€ 1,170,000	23%	€ 269,100	€ 1,439,100
<i>SUB TOTAL</i>	<i>€10,270,000</i>		<i>€ 1,497,600</i>	<i>€11,767,600</i>
Contingency @10%				€ 1,176,760
OVERALL TOTAL				€ 12,944,360

Conclusion

As we strive to overcome our current space limitations, we are also aiming to align The Law School at the Law Society of Ireland with the strategic objectives that the Law Society has set out for the upcoming years.

The Law School understand the significance of the request for additional funds. The intervention of the local authority planners has resulted in last year's proposal being rendered impossible to deliver. Nonetheless, this intervention, coupled with the experience of delivering the new fused PPC with over twenty advanced electives in our current infrastructural configuration, means that everyone is now wiser. It is clear now that in last year's proposal we were building for our current needs. This year's proposal allows for the evolving nature of the educational offering of the Law School at the Law Society of Ireland, allows opportunity for wider review of this offering and builds for our future needs. It also finally begins the first step of developing the Benburb Street site to realise the vision behind its original purchase.

Supporting solicitors and trainee solicitors to meet the ever-increasing challenges that they will face in their careers is some of the most important work undertaken by the Law Society of Ireland through the Law School. Our curriculum development and teaching approaches are deeply rooted in the public interest and focussed on the future.

The Education Hub 2030 development will enable the Society to be an exemplar in a competitive market and allow us to continue to deliver education and support to our members and the profession in the decades to come.

Appendix A – Excerpt HHC Proposal (page 3)

Note – this is not final proposal and changes may be necessary during the planning and development phases.

Proposed Development

Preplanning

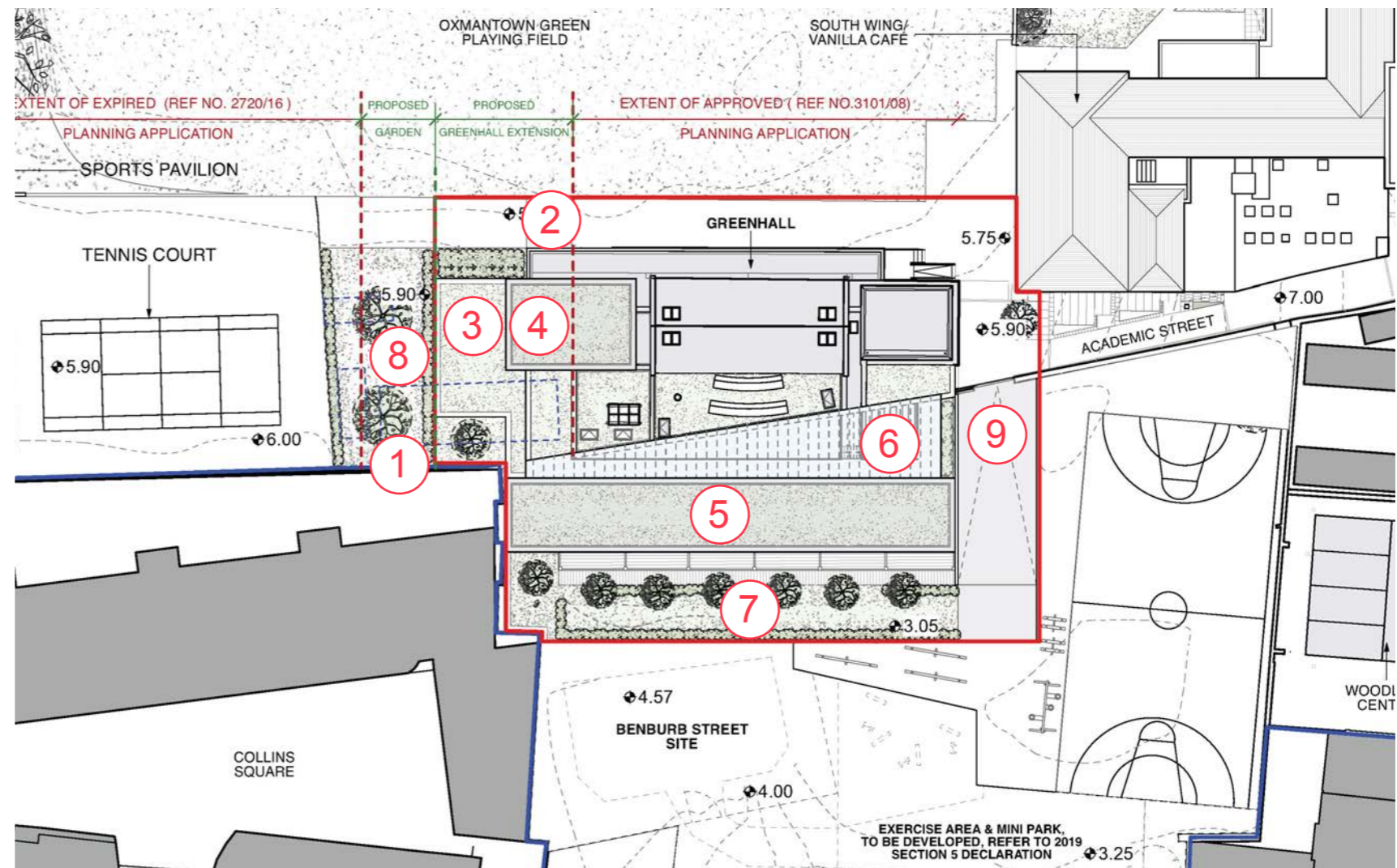
Following feedback received from DCC City Planner at a pre planning November 2022 the area to the west in Z9 zoning has been significantly reduced and a significant portion of accommodation has been relocated into the Benburb street site, Z5 zoning. The layout of this extension has been designed in tandem with the updated development masterplan, thus future proofing both the Greenhall expansion proposals and the further development of the Benburb St site.

A further preplanning meeting was held on site 22nd September with DCC Acting City Planner, Planning and Conservation Officers in attendance to review the revised tutorial centre proposal set within an overall masterplan. DCC informally advised the proposal of a reduced extension to the west in Z9 zoning was acceptable and advised on what information they would require as part of a planning application to support the extended 'non conforming use' within Z9 zoning. The extension to the rear into Benburb Street Z5 zoning was acceptable in principal. DCC advised they would be available for any other preplanning meeting required in advance of lodging the planning permission.

Area	
Existing building area	744sqm
Proposed	
New build extension	2255sqm
Refurbishment	290sqm
Existing	454sqm
TOTAL	3000sqm
Cost	
Construction cost	€9.1m ex VAT €10.4m incl. VAT 13.5%
Design and planning team fees includes Architect led design and planning team	
Professional fees (12.87%)	€1.17m ex VAT €1.44m incl VAT 23%
Total project cost	€11.83m (incl VAT & Fees)

Key

1. Remove print room and adjacent structures.
2. New entrance on Oxmantown Green
3. Single Storey extension with buffer to tennis courts.
4. Upper floor alignment to mitigate impact on Collins Square.
5. 24 tutorial rooms arranged over four floors
6. Circulation space with breakout spaces.
7. Landscaped area
8. Garden and bike parking



Extract from proposed site plan