

Minutes of a Meeting for Members to Meet the Building Development Project Team held on Monday 15th January 2024 at the RCIYC

The Commodore, Jeremy Swetenham, opened the meeting at 18:30 hrs.

Attendees: Project Committee (Rear Commodore, Vice Commodore & Honorary Treasurer), Project Team (Richard Cheal, Stephen Southern, Mike Richardson & Antony Gibb) and 41 members

1. Introduction to the Project by the Commodore

The Commodore began the meeting by outlining the challenges faced by the club, primarily focusing on the structural issues of the building, space constraints, and the need for improvements in sailing facilities. These challenges necessitated a comprehensive project to address them. He highlighted past attempts, including substantial plans by Axis Mason and recent applications for an “orangery” style extension on part of roof of the existing extension. However, challenges with planning processes and external factors such as potential environmental conservation status for St Aubin led them to reconsider their approach.

The Commodore emphasised the need for expert advice and the establishment of a dedicated Project Committee. He provided insights into the club's survey results, indicating members' preferences for middle options regarding building modifications. A Focus Group in October provided the confidence to move forward with the project, leading to the decision to form a Project Committee.

The timeline for the project was discussed, with a goal to reach "base camp" (a decision by members on their preferred option) by Easter. The Commodore outlined the structure of the project committee, with himself as the accountability point, the Vice Commodore as the Senior Responsible Officer, and key roles including a Project Manager, Senior User, Finance Partner, Fundraiser, and Senior Supplier.

2. Introduction to the Project Team by the Vice Commodore

The Vice Commodore proceeded to introduce key members of the Project Team:

- **Richard Cheal:** Former Head of Capital Projects for the States, providing valuable experience in project management.
- **Mike Richardson:** Principal and Studio Lead for Arcadis, bringing 35 years of design team leadership.
- **Steve Southern:** Project Manager and Quantity Surveyor, Director of Southern Projects Limited, tasked with coordinating feasibility and advising on project actions.
- **Anthony Gibb:** Providing expertise in design guidance, heritage, conservation, and advice on the planning process.

The Vice Commodore highlighted the diverse backgrounds and expertise of the team members, ensuring a well-rounded approach to the project.

3. A Word from the Project Manager and Quantity Surveyor

Steve Southern, the Project Manager and Quantity Surveyor, provided insights into the ongoing efforts to reach feasibility. He mentioned collaboration with Richard and Anthony to discuss proposals and implications on the building, particularly in terms of conservation and preservation. The goal is to present costed options within three weeks, allowing informed decisions based on the club's requirements and a realistic budget.

The timeline was reinforced, with the intention to have a range of options ready by Easter. Steve emphasized the importance of feedback and flexibility in the process, indicating that the team is actively working towards meeting the project goals.

4. Questions and Feedback from Members

Further discussion, feedback, and questions were encouraged from members. The following summarises the main points of the discussions. A full transcript is also available:

a. Consulting with Members on the Project

Attendee Selection:

The initial October Focus Group meeting involved a limited number of attendees, and the Commodore acknowledged the desire for member-wide participation.

- Commodore: "These were the people who had shown the most interest in the survey. They were the ones who were most engaged in the project and could give us the most valuable feedback at that early stage. This allowed us to come to you today with a structured plan of how we are going to move forward to scope a range of options."
- Member 8 suggests reaching out to a broader audience: "...for anyone that you know who wanted to attend, but couldn't, please let them know that we also host these meetings on Teams."

b. Range of Options, Member Ideas, and Considerations

Member Concerns and Considerations:

Members expressed various concerns, including the potential loss of the social aspect, the challenges of attracting new members during the project, the possibility of maintaining the existing building versus embarking on a more significant project and the need to carefully consider all options.

- Member 8: "We will lose a lot of money because we will not be having anyone for lunch..."
- Commodore: "We hope to come back to you with a range of options, from doing a very small amount, to address some of those short-term issues, to some that actually will carry

us forward into the future without having to come back to you in two years time saying, well, the building itself is still decaying.”

c. Building Maintenance Costs, Existing Extension, and Foundations

Maintenance and Refurbishment:

Members inquire about the cost of maintenance if the project is not pursued. The Commodore emphasizes the need for a thorough examination before deciding on any course of action.

- Member 8: "...what it would cost to just keep doing the maintenance? The cost of doing nothing."
- Project Manager and QS: "The first stage will give you this information so you can make an informed decision."

Existing Extension and Foundations:

Questions arise about the existing extension and foundations, with the project manager highlighting the importance of detailed surveys.

- Member 14: "My question to the architects. What is the cost of the foundations for the new building on top? This is a very old building. Has anybody been down to the basement?"
- Project Manager and QS: "...do a proper D-Lap and condition survey of the existing building so you know what costs you've got coming down the line over the next five years."

d. Conservation Area, Planning Permission, and Communication

Planning Challenges:

Concerns about planning and conservation area regulations were addressed, emphasizing the importance of a well-prepared approach.

- Member 8: "...my common sense would be to have approached planning."
- Member 11 suggests initiating early dialogue with planning officers: "...get a planning officer in as soon as possible."
- Historical Buildings Consultant: "The answer to that is no, you wouldn't go to planning at this stage. What you want to do is work out, does the club want to do something on this site or not and can it afford it? My job is actually to speak with Mike and say, I don't think you should have a 13 story tower block here because I don't think it's going to wash with planning (an extreme example). At stage two, it is usually sensible to go to planning for some pre-application advice on what it looks like, because that's the stuff you start needing to get feedback on. And this is in advance of moving to stage three, when you submit your planning application, by which time you hope to have put to bed design aspects, financial aspects and planning aspects."

e. Phased Plan vs. Temporarily Relocating the Club

Comprehensive Approach:

The discussion touched on the dilemma of immediate repairs versus a more extensive project, with the Commodore highlighting the potential cost-effectiveness of a comprehensive plan.

- Member 3: "Should we not be looking at doing some piece of new projects...?"
- Commodore: "...we'd probably find that it would cost as much to do as it would a significant part of a more planned project. The options will be as broad as the views and as a club, we will have to go with what the whole membership wants. There will be fundraising options and plans that will commit against each of those options"

f. Cost Control for the First Phase

Cost-Effective Approaches:

Members expressed concerns about potential cost overruns and emphasized the need for careful financial control in the initial phase.

- Member 3: "Do we have a budget or a cap on the budget?"
- Commodore: "We have. We have a capped budget (£15,000) to get us to RIBA Stage 1 - where the Club has decided on its favoured option by Easter."
- Member 8 suggests drawing lessons from a similar project: "But I'd urge you perhaps to talk to the project team that delivered the Le Moye refurbishment, because exactly the same process was gone through..."

g. Financing the Project

Funding Options:

Various financing options were discussed, including the possibility of a bond scheme, drawing parallels with the success of another club's approach.

- Member 12: "...consider is the bond system, which is what La Moye did."
- Commodore: "... This is what mean when we refer to a debenture scheme. We used it previously for buying the car park, very, very similar. That's going to be one of the one of the fundraising options placed on the table.

h. Opportunities and Risks

Project Opportunities:

Members and attendees expressed enthusiasm for an exciting new project, foreseeing potential benefits and a more modern, functional club.

- Member 15: " My favorite club is at a point which would be very, very exciting for its future. I've seen a lot of different projects done. Most of which have done a lot for the Club, but I think you need to weigh up the ongoing maintenance of the club as it is, against an exciting new project, a more modern, a more functional club. And if you do it like that, I don't see that you will lose any members. I think you will hopefully create a new space and the membership that you have won't disappear. They'll be here because they want to be in a new space. And I think you've got an opportunity with a very, very exciting project, which I

wish you every success with. I hope it takes a club on into a new future. And if it's done properly, it's going to be very maintenance free for a very, very long time. Risks:

Project Risks:

Risks were acknowledged, including the challenge of keeping existing members engaged during the project and the need for thorough planning.

- Member 3: "...I'm glad I attended personally. I found it very interesting... disappointed out of 2,000 members how few of us are here."

i. Keeping Members Informed

Information Dissemination:

Plans for keeping members informed were discussed, including distributing meeting minutes and creating a dedicated section on the website for updates.

- Member 12 emphasizes the importance of careful consideration: "You put up a chart earlier showing the timeframe and the items. Might it be possible to distribute that plus any other pertinent items that you have in your pack to all of those of us who have come online...?"
- Commodore: "Yes what we'll do is distribute that via email, but what we're also hoping to do is get an area of the website up that will allow you to see the minutes of the various meetings, the plans, and the thoughts as they develop"

Final Comments:

The Commodore concluded the meeting by emphasizing the need for the Club to adapt and evolve and thanked the attendees for their participation and feedback. The meeting was closed at 1943