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24 OCT 1994

HCS/959/94

Mr Quinn
~~Mr [unclear]~~ 29/10.
- for urgent
Committee ph

FROM: PS/MR FELL
21 OCTOBER 1994

cc NI Perm Secs
Mr Legge 25/10
Mr Watkins

MR CARVILL

Sum C
PA in 1049/93
27 31/10

SPRINGVALE

X 1

Professor Trevor Smith, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ulster, has faxed to Mr Fell the attached copy of a pamphlet or brochure which the University is having printed at present. Mr Fell thought that you and other Permanent Secretary colleagues would be interested to see it right away.

[Signature]
Urgent

MAURA QUINN

cc Dr Piller
~~Dr Harrison~~

Mr Reynolds
Mr [unclear]
No comment.
26/10.

DR/52870

See [unclear] returned in the
(mainly on the education side).
Security is speaking to [unclear] about PE
about the effort [unclear] about PE
further to the beginning of section 6.
Any other comments (note & above!)

28/10
Mr [unclear]
Mr [unclear]
Mr [unclear]
For file (or shred)
27/10

[Signature]
25/110

A PEACELINE CAMPUS FOR THE MILLENNIUM

THE UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

AT SPRINGVALE

'An imaginative proposal ... a visionary initiative ... it marries the need to meet the growing demand for University places with the need for economic regeneration in an area of multiple deprivation.'

**Sir Patrick Mayhew QC MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland**

An 'audacious idea.'

**Mr David McKittrick
The Independent**

'It is all of a piece/peace ... it could make a significant contribution to the peace process.'

**Professor Paul Arthur
The Times Higher Education**

'The British and Irish governments are looking for projects on which to work. Here is one.'

**Mr John Maddox
Editor, Nature Magazine**

1. INTRODUCTION

Some eighteen months ago the University of Ulster proposed that a new campus be established at Springvale in an area which straddles the 'peaceline' between West and North Belfast. This proposal may be summarised as follows:

- In 1992 it was decided that Springvale would be the subject of a major new development scheme, but so far no anchor-tenant has been identified by the government.
- In view of its key characteristics - vocational courses, applied research, flexible mode of operations, and province-wide network of collaborative activities - the University is convinced that it would be the ideal anchor-tenant at Springvale.
- This conviction is supported by the findings of a major feasibility study, commissioned by the University and conducted by Touche Ross Management Consultants.
- The University has formulated detailed plans for the physical and academic development of the proposed new campus.
- These plans are firmly based on a decade of successful experience at Magee College in Londonderry, where the University campus has been a focal point for inward investment, economic and social regeneration, and urban renewal.
- The University believes that it is better equipped than any other agency to perform a similar role in West and North Belfast.

2. ORIGINS OF THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The Government's Springvale Development Initiative

In 1990 the government supported a take-over of James Mackie and Son's foundry by the US company Lummus, and the new firm, Lummus Mackie, relocated from its Victorian foundry site south of the Springvale Road in West Belfast to modern, purpose built premises in nearby Woodvale. Subsequently, driven by the Government's commitment to the social and economic regeneration of Belfast, the Minister for the Environment, Richard Needham, announced the initiation of a major development programme for the Springvale area, focusing on the former Mackie site, which was subsequently acquired by his Department. A Development Office was set up in the area and a Project Team established. After an intensive period of research and community consultation, the Springvale Development Scheme was adopted by government in October 1992. The key issues to be addressed by the Scheme were high unemployment; housing pressure; the poor physical environment; the underprovision of outdoor recreation facilities; and inadequate service facilities.

The Springvale Development Area contains approximately 280 hectares (689 acres) of derelict and underutilised land which extends from south of the Springvale Road to Glencairn, following the valley of the Forth River (see Figure 1). The southern sector from Beechmount to Woodvale Park straddles the 'peaceline' between Catholic and Protestant West and North

Belfast.

2.2 The University's Proposal

The main thrust of the government's initiative was to create conditions conducive to the regeneration of the area in order to encourage investment and reduce unemployment. To date, despite considerable environmental and housing improvements there has been little progress in attracting investment and jobs. However, the experience of its other campuses in Northern Ireland, particularly that at Magee College in Londonderry, has demonstrated the University's capacity to be the successful anchor-tenant in the Springvale Development Scheme.

In March 1993 the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ulster approached government with a proposal to develop an inner-city campus of the University in the Springvale area. As a large and successful institution with widespread community links the University believed that it could significantly enhance educational opportunities in the area, and also develop recreational and other social facilities in partnership with local groups. In addition, through its research expertise and its general ability to increase the quality of life at Springvale, the University could stimulate inward investment and both industrial and commercial development.

There is increasing demand for higher education places in Northern Ireland. While demographic trends among 18-year-olds show a marginal decline in the short term, further projections indicate growth towards the end of the decade and beyond, and participation rates among all groups are rising steadily. Moreover, in Northern Ireland demand for places greatly exceeds supply with the result that around 13,000 new entrants to universities and colleges leave the province each year, many of them not from choice but many of them never to return.

A preliminary evaluation by government concluded that, while a new campus might contribute significantly to the regeneration of the Springvale area, further detailed study by the University was necessary.

2.3 The Feasibility Study

In September 1993 the Council of the University commissioned a feasibility study into the proposal to include a campus at Springvale within the University's future development plans. A Springvale Steering Group was formed, with membership drawn from the Senate and the Council of the University, and in December 1993 the Steering Group appointed Touche Ross Management Consultants to undertake the feasibility study. In June 1994 the report of the study was presented to the University's Senate which recommended to Council the inclusion of a Springvale campus in future updates of the University's Corporate Plan. Council ratified the Senate resolution and authorised Senior Officers to engage in further discussions with government. The Northern Ireland government has indicated that it intends to conduct its own study of the feasibility of establishing a campus at Springvale, and expects this to be completed by February 1995. Meanwhile, the University is progressing and refining its own plans, much encouraged by the turn of public events in Northern Ireland. It must be emphasised, however, that the University's proposal was formulated some eighteen months prior to the recent ceasefire.

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about? Q.

3. THE NATURE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

The University of Ulster is a unitary institution with four campuses (at Coleraine, Jordanstown, Magee College in Londonderry, and York Street in Belfast), and, currently, over 18,000 students (see Figure 2). Not all third-level institutions would constitute suitable anchor-tenants for a development scheme such as that at Springvale. What is it about the University of Ulster which, in its view, specially equips it to discharge this role?

3.1 The University is very popular and in 1993/94 came tenth out of 180 institutions in the national league table of numbers of applicants through UCAS with a total of 38,641. Without exception the leading institutions in this table are inner-urban in character: the bulk of demand is not only derived from but directed towards large centres of population, with campuses which make appropriate provision for the 'new majority' of students, so different in character from yesteryear's relatively uniform cohorts of 18-year-olds. The UCAS figures, however, do not tell the whole story. Candidates for programmes in Art and Design, HND and postgraduate courses etc. apply through ADAR or directly to the University, so that the overall total number of applications in 1993/94 amounted to 59,368. The congested Jordanstown campus of the University caters heavily for applicants from the Greater Belfast area, with many proceeding from north and west Belfast, but because demand greatly exceeds supply large numbers are obliged to leave Northern Ireland in pursuit of qualifications. The University wishes to be in a position to persuade more of them to stay, particularly in view of its strong record in admitting students from manual as well as non-manual backgrounds.

3.2 Since its inception in 1984 as the first, and only, institution to be formed from a trans-binary merger, the University has developed a very flexible system of operations which allows it to respond effectively to the needs of the 'new majority' of students. Thus, in addition to full-time students, about one-third of enrolments are of part-timers. Since 1 October 1993 the University has fully semesterised and modularised its courses, thereby facilitating credit accumulation and transfer, and providing three entry points (October, February and July) to the academic year. In particular, it has developed what is currently the most substantial third (or summer) semester pilot scheme in the U.K., allowing an increasing proportion of students to accelerate their progress through all-year-round work. As the costs of higher education shift inexorably from the taxpayer to the consumer (maintenance awards were frozen in 1989 and are reducing by 10% in each of the next three years) other students wish to 'slow-track', taking time out from their studies in order to recoup their finances. The University's system is well geared to cater for both types of student and it is likely that the current sharp distinction between full-timers and part-timers will be progressively eroded.

3.3 In accordance with its distinctive Charter, the University provides not only first-degree and postgraduate programmes but also sub-degree (certificate and diploma) courses. It also has an extensive portfolio of award-bearing short courses, delivered both on and off campus.

3.4 Very many of the University's courses are vocational in character with a strong emphasis on the need to link theory with practice. In recent years this has been greatly enhanced by successful participation in the Enterprise in Higher Education initiative promoted

by the N. Ireland Training and Employment Agency. Moreover, the University has a long-established and substantial commitment (second only in the U.K. to Sheffield Hallam University) to student placement schemes: each year some 1.250 undergraduates undertake a full year of sandwich placement in either the private or the public sector, while many others enjoy shorter periods of placement. This enables them to review their career choice, gives a more practical focus to their subsequent final-year work, and significantly enhances their job prospects. In the six months following graduation in 1993, for example, a larger proportion of the University's students found employment than in any other U.K. university (54% against a national average of 44.5%), with 25.7% going on to further education and training.

3.5 The University's title is clearly reflected in the spatial extent of its activities. It has a highly developed and expanding network of collaborative arrangements with the Further Education sector in N. Ireland. The University is the Authorised Validating Agency for Access Courses in Ulster and in 1994/95 some 17 such courses with a total enrolment of c.950 students will be delivered under its aegis in 11 F.E. Colleges and Institutes. Two of these are in west Belfast, one at the Dairy Farm Outcentre which serves both the Poleglass and Twinbrook Housing developments, and the other in Whiterock. This level of activity clearly demonstrates the strength of the University's commitment to the educationally disadvantaged. The University also franchises HND and HNC courses throughout the province: some 28 of these will be delivered to c.650 students at 10 Colleges or Institutes in 1994/95. Taken together, these 1,600 students represent a significant addition to the c. 18,000 students enrolled on the four campuses of the University. Many of them will proceed to the University of Ulster or to other universities via the ladders of opportunity which connect the University firmly with the F.E. sector. Collaboration also extends into the Republic of Ireland where the University has forged close links with the newer universities of Dublin City and Limerick through the Computers in Teaching Initiative, distance learning projects in nursing and business studies, and jointly delivered modules in Peace Studies. There is also an on-line link with the Regional Technical College in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, through the British Telecom-sponsored ACTOR programme.

3.6 Drawing on the experience of other institutions (such as Miami Dade Community College and the City University of New York), the University is developing a major programme of outreach to the province's schools, both primary and secondary, particularly those in close proximity to its campuses. Over and above the long-established engagement of staff and teacher-trainees from the School of Education, students from a variety of other disciplines are involved in the Tutoring in Schools Scheme, whereby they spend part of each week assisting school staff and acting as role models for pupils whose background tends to alienate them from further study. In 1994/95 some 250 students will be involved in some 90 schools, the highest participation rate in the U.K. In addition the University has played a major role in the government-sponsored programme to deliver Education for Mutual Understanding and staff from the School of Social and Community Services are heavily engaged in adult education and community development programmes, particularly in the areas of literacy, parent education and women's studies.

3.7 The University's research strategy places great emphasis on the application of research, as exemplified by the EU STRIDE centres in Knowledge Engineering and Engineering Composites, the Northern Ireland Bioengineering Centre and the IFI funded Interactive

Systems Centre. The research programme also encompasses work in biotechnology, human nutrition and other aspects of biomedical sciences, as well as environmentally related research, covering aspects of the built environment, coastal and terrestrial environments and freshwater studies. Other successful research groups are concerned with housing, public policy and management, economics and law, SME economics and nursing and community health.

The University has an outstanding record in relation to the Teaching Company Scheme, one of the most successful alliances between higher education and industry. Currently twenty programmes are funded under the Scheme through the University, and four further programmes will commence in the near future. Total funding for the 24 programmes is £3,723,000, of which £1,334,000 is from the companies concerned, the remainder being contributed by the Scheme. This funding facilitates the employment of teaching company associates in industry, working on projects agreed by the company and the University. It is a powerful vehicle for promoting inward investment and company development, and it enables many young, highly-qualified graduates to remain in or return to Ulster.

3.8 In teaching, research and consultancy the University has actively sought specialist assistance and advice from people of eminence in industry, commerce and the public services. During the past three years over 50 such individuals have served the University under a Visiting Professorship programme.

So the University of Ulster is a forward-looking and imaginative institution. Its system and activities have been explicitly designed to address the needs of the community in which it is situated; and it now seeks the opportunity to engage directly with West and North Belfast, the epicentre of decades of conflict and economic deprivation. The University believes that it is better-equipped to do so than any other agency.

4. ACADEMIC AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS AT SPRINGVALE

The plans which have been laid to support the University's proposal have drawn heavily on recent experience of developing the Magee College campus. Ten years ago Magee College was an underdeveloped facility in a deprived and run-down inner-city area. Today it is one of the focal points of successful economic regeneration in the north-west.

4.1 In general the University intends to ensure that the best practice and most positive features of its experience at Magee College are introduced to Springvale.

4.2 Springvale will not be a fifth campus but rather a new fourth campus. The Belfast campus at York Street is not purpose built: there are constraints on further physical development: its existing plant is in need of significant refurbishment; and its mono-Faculty nature (Art and Design) is an impediment to valuable interdisciplinary activity.

4.3 All Faculties, all levels of course, and all modes of study will feature at Springvale.

4.4 The closest collaboration, involving two-way traffic, with local industry, Colleges, Schools, other institutions (such as Hospitals), and community groups will be a central feature of course design and delivery.

4.5 Springvale will be designed as the first custom-built electronic campus in these islands, fully networked internally and externally, and able from its inception to reap the economies and exploit the opportunities to be derived from up-to-date information technology. In particular, on-line facilities will be available to neighbouring industry, business and commerce.

4.6 Springvale's development to a projected FTE count of 3,750 students by 2,004/2,005 will be facilitated by a judicious combination of transfers of existing activities from other campuses, and of new programmes. Transfers will include the entire Faculty of Art and Design from York Street; the therapies (Occupational, Speech and Physio-) from Jordanstown, to bring them closer to the teaching hospitals (Royal Victoria, City, Mater, Ulster, Ards, and Lagan Valley) where students currently undertake clinical placement; and Nursing, through the arrangements envisaged under Project 2000. New programmes will be primarily interdisciplinary at the interfaces between Design/Informatics/Technology; Business/Management; and Humanities/Social/Community Studies. Foundation and Access courses will be specifically catered for and local outcentres will be utilised as a matter of policy rather than merely as necessary.

4.7 Forward projections also provide for growth at Coleraine, Jordanstown and Magee College, while the proposed transfer of students from Jordanstown to Springvale will enable the University to expand activity there particularly in Science, Engineering and Informatics. A central thrust of government policy is to encourage growth of numbers in these key areas: in sharp contrast to the record of most other institutions, in the period 1989-94 the University achieved a 47% expansion in numbers in these disciplines compared to a 33% expansion in other subjects.

5. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCING

5.1 The Feasibility Study identified a total land take requirement of some 33.4 hectares (82.6 acres) to accommodate 3,750 fte students at Springvale by 2,004/2,005. This would permit the development of a full scale, multi-disciplinary campus with a complete range of teaching, learning and research facilities together with student residences, social and sporting facilities, and off-road car parking. The area proposed for the development comprises primarily, derelict land currently zoned for recreation/open space, but also includes the Smythlands area to the north zoned for industry/commerce, and the Cotton Mill site to the south, designated for either industry/commerce/offices or housing (see Figure 1). The proposed development would be in the form of a high quality, low density university parkland which would include landscaping of the Forth River Valley. Indoor and outdoor sports facilities and other social and cultural amenities would be promoted for use by the local community. The existing Paisley Park sports complex would be upgraded and operated in partnership with the local community.

5.2 The campus would be developed in two phases. The first and major phase would accommodate two-thirds of all academic and residential accommodation and car parking, all indoor and outdoor sports facilities and the major infrastructural work. It would be available for occupation by the start of the 1999/2000 academic year. The second phase would complete the development by 2001/02. The planning/building timetable required to achieve

these dates is: November 1995 - outline planning application submitted; During 1996 - detailed building design and tendering; 1997-October 1999 - construction and fit out of Phase 1; and during the period 2,000/2,003 - Phase 2 construction and further fit out.

5.3 Using broad estimates for accommodation requirements the indicative capital cost of a two-phase development would be £98 millions made up as follows: Academic buildings and central facilities - £45,500,000; Student residences - £11,000,000; Allowance for fittings and equipment - £3,500,000; Site clearance, decontamination, landscaping, internal roadways, service diversions, mains connection and car parking - £11,500,000; Adaptations to off-campus roadways - £10,000,000; and Land purchase - £4,000,000. The annual capital funding requirements for the development are estimated to be between £5.5 millions and £20 millions (see Figure 3). Using recommended Treasury guidelines and taking into account the long term residual values of the buildings and land, the net present value of the capital programme is approximately £54 millions.

5.4 Projections based on the University's current income and expenditure profile predict that the Springvale campus would incur an operating deficit in the early stages of the development. It is estimated that the campus will come into balance by 2003/4 due to the economies of scale associated with an increasing student population and operational efficiency gains (see Figure 4).

5.5 In keeping with recent successful ventures at Magee College and Coleraine the University would seek to enter into partnership with private developers in order to provide residential accommodation for students.

6. PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

3 In reviewing its guidelines for public expenditure in the current, rapidly changing circumstances the government has identified four policy priorities: urban regeneration; the need to stimulate inward investment; education and training; and leisure and tourism. The University believes that its plans for Springvale offer the prospect of significant, varied and sustained contributions to each of these areas.

6.1 At present the physical and social environment of Springvale is characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment and social deprivation. The introduction of a university campus would substantially and permanently boost the quality both of the local environment and of public levels of self-esteem. It would lead directly to a growth in employment, initially through capital and then through recurrent expenditure. Indirect employment would also increase through the multiplier effect of staff, student and institutional consumption (see Figure 5). A range of services in the housing, retailing and related sectors would be stimulated and the locality would become one of net inflow rather than, as in recent decades, net outflow. Examples from the experience of the Coleraine campus are pertinent: there a population of c. 4,500 students has generated over 1,000 jobs on campus, some 900 of which are full-time. Significantly, personnel range from academics and administrators, through librarians, computer operatives and technicians, to secretaries, security officers, tradesmen, porters, cleaners, groundsmen and other manual workers. The employment profile is diverse. Moreover in the four months from 1 June 1994 over 8,500 people attended conferences on campus and, as on other campuses, there is a constant stream of visitors for a variety of

purposes. In Londonderry the recent development of the Magee College campus has had a dramatic and visible effect not merely on the immediately surrounding area but also in the city as a whole.

6.2 Together with this broader impact, the research expertise and specialised facilities of the University would act as a catalyst for inward investment. Much of the University's research programme is directly concerned with technology transfer and its research centres and Teaching Company schemes have an established track record in this critical respect. Seagate International and ABC Laboratories, in Londonderry and Coleraine respectively, are recent examples of companies which have stated publicly that they would not have located on their present sites in the absence of the expertise and advanced electronic facilities available on adjacent campuses. The University has played the lead role in planning for the Ulster Science and Technology Park in Londonderry where in addition its staff in the G.T.T.A. and the Faculty of Informatics are working closely with AVM (N. Ireland), the clothing equipment manufacturers. The corpus of the University's experience, not least through its Business School, would be brought to bear at Springvale and specific provision made for research activity at key interdisciplinary interfaces: particularly valuable in this respect would be the ability of technologically-oriented staff in Art and Design to interact with colleagues in Engineering, Informatics and Business and Management. Above all, stability would be the key feature of the University's anchor-tenancy at Springvale.

6.3 Education and training are core features of any University's mission but the University of Ulster's flexible system and vocational courses are peculiarly suited to the task of increasing participation by non-traditional entrants to tertiary education. Springvale will have a broad spectrum of such courses from Access and Foundation through to postgraduate levels, with placement schemes and the enterprise culture as central features. Teaching and learning activities will be thoroughly integrated with the University's extensive network of collaborative arrangements and be the focus for major outreach programmes into the local community. Springvale's contribution to the institution's overall Corporate Plan will enable the University significantly to reduce the current, substantial outflow of students (39% of N. Ireland-domiciled University entrants) from the province.

6.4 For many years parts of West and North Belfast have been de facto 'no-go' areas. A new campus would dramatically reverse this situation. As with other campuses currently, sporting facilities and cultural activities would be developed and promoted in partnership with the local community. The University would also seek to attract a partner from a major European hotel chain with a view to providing, firstly, a training school for the chain and for the University's School of Leisure and Tourism; and secondly, a self-service cafeteria, fast-food outlets, and a high-class restaurant for the area as a whole.

7. CONCLUSION

The reduction of hostilities in Northern Ireland has come in stages with the north-west of the province experiencing relief somewhat earlier than other parts of Ulster. At Magee College the University has both contributed to and benefited from the peace dividend. It is time for that process to be replicated in West and North Belfast. The proposal for a new campus was forwarded to government some eighteen months ago. There was then, and still is, no alternative anchor-tenant for Springvale. This high yield and low risk project is the only one

THE COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE 01260 244501 P.11

which offers cost-effective economic and social regeneration with an inbuilt guarantee of stability. For, unlike some private concerns which are capricious and highly speculative, universities, once established, remain: if admitted to Springvale, the University will still be there in a hundred years' time. Its plan is unapologetically visionary: being firmly grounded in experience, it is also thoroughly realistic (see Figure 6)