

## SECTION 4

We're very grateful that the Committee has agreed that a representative for the Students' Union can present students' suggestions about the design for the proposed new Union building. We appreciate that some of our ideas may not be feasible in the circumstances, but we do feel that it is important that the ultimate beneficiaries of the facilities should have some say in its design.

If I could start by briefly explaining what steps were taken to find out student opinion and how we have arrived at conclusions. Firstly, a meeting was held in the current Union for our SU Committee to explain the options. Then we invited all students to submit written suggestions for the design, placing cards in a suggestion box. These suggestions then provided the basis for the design of a questionnaire, which was completed by approximately *Q31, Q32* two thousand of the College students over a period of three weeks. Finally, the SU Committee collated the results and drew up a report. If I can just hand around a copy of that report. This presentation is essentially a summary and discussion of the key points of this report.

So, in broad terms, the consensus was as follows. Firstly, regarding the crucial matter of the site, we presented the three options that you have proposed. One: in the city centre, near

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the Faculty of Education; two: on the outskirts of the city, near the park, and three: out of town, near the halls of residence. We asked students to cite reasons for and against these sites and, and there was remarkable agreement on all three. Site One was unpopular because of traffic and parking problems. Site Two had a number of supporters, mainly because it was close to most lecture rooms. And Site Three, out of town, near the halls of residence, was clearly the most popular because of access from living quarters. It was clear that the Union was mainly to be used after lectures. It was also felt that the larger site would allow more room for a choice of facilities.

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Our second area of interest was obviously the facilities: there was minimal interest in having a library on the premises, but one option seemed to be a reading room instead – more useful. We would like the current table games room to be replaced with a small gym. And, if possible, a small swimming pool – not, of course, Olympic-sized! There was a large number of respondents in favour of a travel agent's and insurance centre. We also request that there be the offices of the Student Counselling Centre, moving this from the Refectory. There was, however, much disagreement about whether to build a drama theatre. Just over forty per cent of the respondents were in favour, but a largish minority were strongly against it, claiming that it is elitist and a waste of funds. Essentially the jury is out on that.

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Finally, given the number of unfortunate incidents in the current Union over the past few months, a strong point was repeatedly made about security. The recommendations would be at least video surveillance and security personnel who would check Student Union cards on request. We doubt if it would be feasible to have a check at reception of all people coming in.

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Well, this is the summary of the views of the student population. As I say, fuller details are given in our report but I'm happy to take any questions if you have them . . . *(fade out)*