



Department
for Education



The Charter School
East Dulwich

Frequently Asked Questions: November 2022

Q. Would it be better to build the new hall and refurbish the chateau under separate contracts instead of a single contract?

A. Consideration has been given to splitting the chateau (the central block of the old hospital) and new hall into two separate contracts. The difficulty with this is that the buildings and building services are linked, it would complicate management of the construction site, would probably take longer to deliver the new facilities and increase the costs.

Q. Could the permanent new hall be built by August 2023 instead of the temporary buildings?

A. No. It is quicker to procure and install the temporary buildings by August 2023 than to build the permanent new hall.

Q. Why not just use the frontage of the chateau instead of refurbishing the entire building?

A. The planning consent already granted for the scheme is based on the retention of the whole of the chateau. To change approach now would entail developing new designs which would require a new planning consent which would delay construction.

Q. What form will the temporary accommodation take, how much teaching space will it provide and for what purposes?

A. The temporary accommodation will take the form of modular buildings designed for education use to Department for Education standards. The buildings will be equipped with water, power, and heating, toilets, computer connections and furniture. The arrangement of the buildings will be determined between the successful contractor, the school and the Trust. The buildings will provide approximately 610 m² of space for music teaching and practice; sixth form study room; a large group room for children with special needs and a small amount office space. The number of pupils using the buildings will be determined by the school.

Q. Where will the sixth formers go?

A. The temporary accommodation will include a sixth form study room.

Q. What will be in the new hall?

A. The new hall will provide space for assembly, performance and teaching purposes.

Q. Will there be a wider pathway from the canteen to the teaching block?

A. Once the early landscape works are complete and the temporary accommodation is in place, there will be a wider permanent route between the canteen and teaching blocks built in Phase 1.

Q. How much usable extra outdoor space will there be and when will it be available?

A. The Phase 2 early landscape works will provide approximately 4,170m² outdoor space in addition to that provided in Phase 1 and the multi-use games courts. It will be fully available by June 2023. Space will be released as and when it is completed by the contractor and we anticipate that areas should be ready by Easter.

Q. Which facilities will be ready for the current Year 12s by Sept 2023 or during the 2023/24 academic year?

A. The area between the existing teaching block, sports/dining hall and games courts will be landscaped and the temporary classroom accommodation installed.

Q. What, if anything, has been cut from the original scheme?

A. In terms of teaching provision, nothing has been cut from the original scheme. The scheme is designed to meet Department for Education teaching accommodation requirements.

Q. Why does it take so long to get a new contractor in place?

A. Getting a new contractor in place is a long process. It involves a public procurement which entails a number of steps over a period of months. To ensure a competitive price, the contract has to be put out to tender to a number of contractors. In order to calculate a price for their tender, contractors need time to assess the work required, develop their construction proposals and talk to their sub-contractors. Once received, tenders have to go through a thorough process of evaluation to determine the best one to award the contract.

Q. Why is it still scheduled to take two years to complete?

A. The works have to be put out to tender (see above), then once a contractor has been appointed, construction of the permanent facilities will take about a year.

Q. How do we know you will stick to any new timetable?

A. The council and Department for Education will try to keep to timetable. However, the construction sector is experiencing unprecedented inflation and supply chain disruption. This could impact the project in unforeseen ways.

Q. Did the building company face fines for not finishing the work?

A. The building company did not fail to complete any works. The council and the company were unable to agree terms to get into contract for the Phase 2 works.

Q. Is the project fully funded?

A. Department for Education and council funding has been allocated for the project on the basis of estimated costs and will be reviewed once the final contract price is known.

Q. Is the money for the project ring-fenced?

A. Department for Education and council funding is allocated specifically for the purpose of the project.

Q. Have the funds for 2022/23 been allocated elsewhere?

A. No the funds allocated to the project for 2022/23 will be carried forward.

Q. What will happen if costs spiral? Is there a financial contingency?

A. Arrangements are in place to deal with unforeseen additional costs. As with all projects, if costs threaten to exceed budget at any stage, the first step will be to look at ways to bring them back into line without sacrificing quality. To reduce the risk of unforeseen costs, the council has carried out extensive site investigations, surveys and strip-out works inside the chateau.

Q. What is the current timetable for delivery of the Phase 2 facilities?

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| • Landscape works | March to June 2023 |
| • Temporary accommodation in place | August 2023 |
| • Completion of the chateau and new hall works | September 2024 |
| • School moves into the finished chateau and new hall | September/October 2024 |
| • Temporary accommodation removed and remainder of landscaping works complete | September/October 2024 |