

ESTATES STRATEGY 2024-27





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1. INTRODUCTION

The college has been on an incredible journey for more than a decade, with recognition being confirmed through our receipt of the Queens Anniversary Prize for our technical education in 2020.

A key aspect of this journey has been the redevelopment of our estate to ensure it offers the best possible technical facilities to help prepare our students for their chosen career, working closely with the industries we serve in the design of these facilities. Since 2010 the College has invested over £80 million in the development of the Dudley Learning Quarter, creating inspirational, highly technical facilities in Dudley. The Brierley Hill Learning Quarter has seen investment in expanded specialist construction facilities at The Construction Apprenticeship Training Centre and new T level facilities for Digital at Inspired. In 2021 the college opened the Black Country and the Marches Institute of Technology, which was the culmination of many years planning to improve higher education in the community, increasing options to those who do not traditionally access it for many reasons.

The College currently now occupies 57,685m² of space with utilisation at 38%, which is well above sector norms. Running costs have risen from £72.54 per m² in 2019/20 to £86.07 per m² in 2022/23 when adjusted for inflation. A recent condition and suitability survey identifies the vast majority of the College's estate as 'good'. Our substantial investment and effective estates strategy has created dedicated campuses to provide learners, the local and regional communities and employers with the very best facilities to inspire learning and improve skills.

However, there are still opportunities to develop our estate further to provide even better facilities and resources for the delivery of our priority provision. The Broadway

campus in particular has some areas that are rated as 'satisfactory' for their condition and suitability. This is being addressed with recent grant funding allocations, but still has many areas to improve. Our ongoing commitment to the development at Innovation Park remains an important strategic priority for the College as we look to widen opportunities for higher level study in the borough. The completion of Health Innovation Dudley during the lifetime of this strategy should see the final piece put in place. In addition, we need to continue our investment in facilities for key curriculum developments, not least of which our ongoing commitment to the roll out of T-levels.

A major element of the college's strategy is the commitment to our ongoing work to improve the sustainability and efficiency of our estates reducing our impact on the planet.

The college has been prioritising sustainable development as a key aspect of its developments from the start of this journey, however further emphasis on both minimising impact in use, as well as waste from removal of older elements of the estate will be top considerations in any improvement and investment decisions.

The College remains resolutely focussed on providing all learners with an exceptional experience which provides for their successful careers. Therefore, this Estates & Infrastructure Strategy aims to make clear our priorities for continued investment and sustainable development of our Estate throughout the life of our current Strategic Plan and beyond.





2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dudley College is a large and successful further education college in the West Midlands, providing full and part time courses in a wide range of general and specialist subjects up to higher education level.

As a major centre for academic and technical education and training in the region, the College plays an important part in the economy by supplying the skills and expertise for industry, commerce and the service sector.

Over the past 14 years the College has worked in partnership with local employers and other key stakeholders to invest over £80m in the development of outstanding technical training facilities for key sectors.

The College has also worked in partnership with the FE Commissioner and the ESFA to support the ongoing delivery of provision and facilities in Dudley and Brierley Hill. The College continues to invest in priority areas, most notably in the development of the new Health Innovation Dudley (due to open in 2025) and the ongoing development of new facilities for the roll-out of new T-level programmes and the integration of digital technologies into every career path.

The investment has led to growth for the College over this period and means that the majority of its estate is fit for purpose. Details on all elements of the estate and infrastructure are provided in this strategy. In summary:

- The College now operates from 18 buildings across the borough of Dudley with a total gross floor area of over 57,000m².
- The huge majority of this campus has suitability and condition rated at good.
- The continued investment in new, more efficient, buildings has maintained running costs per m² at or below sector averages.

- Utilisation of space currently exceeds the target provided by the AoC RIBA guidance. This is driven by growth in student numbers, despite a shrinking demographic in the region. This demographic is now set to grow over coming years.

- The College continues to remain ISO14001 compliant and is committed to ongoing environmental sustainability and Net Zero by 2041.

- Substantial investment has been made in the IT Infrastructure that supports this estate and remote delivery of learning.

Despite all of this investment, there is still more to do. The College is committed to a continuation of our development of first class facilities for our students throughout the life of the current Strategic Plan and beyond. It will do this through two forms of investment:

1. A commitment to annually reinvest a proportion of the cash generated from our operating activities back into planned estates maintenance and improvement programmes, as well as into the latest equipment and technology.

The annual reinvestment of cash generated will see the College maintain its commitment to some existing planned capital expenditure, most importantly a contribution

of £0.15m towards a replacement heating system at The Broadway as part of the Salix energy improvement works and £0.75m towards the completion of the Capital Transformation Funds works as our part match funding contribution. As part of the Financial Strategy approved by the College Corporation, the College will continue to invest up to £0.7m per annum into new capital projects, estate improvement programmes and specialist equipment, net of any grant funded capital expenditure. This includes the annual IT refresh programme across the College IT estate. In the later period of this strategy this will increase to up to £2m as the college achieves its aim of reducing borrowing and generating cash.

2.A commitment to work with key stakeholders to identify and secure additional funding to deliver the larger capital aspirations of the College in line with our Strategic Plan and the expected future needs of our estate.

This document identifies 16 capital investment projects which the College believes will be needed in the coming few years. We will develop business cases for each element of capital investment and look to apply for all opportunities for financial support to complete these. With the changes to the college's status as a public body

there has been an increase of small formula-based grants such as Capital Transformation Fund, being issued to colleges to aid capital investment in the sector. The college will look to use these in the most economical way to further its planned investment, and improvements in sustainability.

Below is a summary of these projects. Should the College have additional funding to invest from its ongoing operations, the below list will enable us to prioritise where this money should be spent.

Capital Project	Estimated cost in millions	Target source of funding	Priority
New Transport Technologies Centre	8 - 15,000	Levelling Up fund, Salix	A
Re development of D and F blocks	5 – 9,000	T level / Salix	A
Improved employability Centre Skills shop	350	Part LSIF	A
Net Zero Upskilling facilities	500	LSIF	A
End Point Assessment Centre	200		A
De Carbonisation improvements to the estate	2 - 5,000 (during life of the plan)	Salix	A
Improved student social/eating facilities	350		A
IT Infrastructure upgrades	375		A
Improved security enhancements (Martyn's Law)	100		A
On site construction training facility Inspired	150		B
Refit of Dudley Sixth	350		B
Refit of Broadway Classrooms	500		B
Higher Education partner facility	500		B
Professional Services Hub	150		B
Permanent home for CAT Centre	35,000	Possible future FE CTF	B
Refurbish the main Hall Broadway	200		B

All of the projects identified as priority 'A' are considered essential and urgent to meet both demand from students and employers as well as essential redevelopment to meet the college's Net Zero commitment.

This strategy, along with the related actions detailed in our Strategic Plan 2040-27 show the College's commitment to continuing our mission of providing 'outstanding technical and professional learning, which raises aspirations, develops skills and changes lives'.

3. WHERE WE ARE NOW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Dudley College is a large and successful Further Education College in the West Midlands, providing full and part time courses in a wide range of general and specialist subjects up to higher education level.

As a major centre for academic and technical education and training in the region, the College plays an important part in the economy by supplying the skills and expertise for industry, commerce and the service sector.

The college's reputation locally, regionally and nationally has grown markedly over the past decade. Young people, their parents and employers demonstrate a significant level of trust in the college, evidenced by the substantial growth in full time enrolments and the dramatic increase in the number of apprentices. The College now supports over 11,500 learners a year, including over 5,000 full time students (580 of which study A-levels in our dedicated Dudley Sixth), over 1600 apprentices and over 4,800 adult learners.

Key local partners such as the West Midlands Combined Authority, Local Enterprise Partnership and Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council recognise the college's pivotal role in developing skills and raising aspirations in the Black Country. Employers have been at the heart of the college's work plan over the last few years. Their heightened strategic engagement at Corporation level has supported the successful realisation of multi-million-pound employer facing projects, such as the development of The Black Country and the Marches Institute of Technology. The development of the Dudley Learning Quarter is a physical manifestation of our vision. The Black Country and the Marches Institute of Technology, and Dudley Advance II are inspirational

new facilities added since 2017. In Brierley Hill Inspired has been recently enhanced through the creation of a £1.3 million new digital training facility to support the launch of the first T-levels. Work is well underway on the new Health Innovation Dudley due to complete in 2025, which marks the final stage development of Innovation Park offering higher level learning opportunities to local people and employers.

Dudley College's estate is currently spread over eighteen locations comprising:

- Broadway Campus
- Dudley Evolve
- Dudley Sixth
- Advance I
- Advance II
- Wolverhampton Street
- Dudley Enhance
- CAT I
- CAT II
- Aspire Living
- Aspire Works
- Inspired Brierley Hill
- Skills Shop
- Priory Villa
- 12 The Broadway
- 3G Pitch Complex
- Castle View Pitches
- Black Country & The Marches Institute of Technology
- ADC Brierley Hill
- Skills Shop
- Priory Villa
- 12 The Broadway
- 3G Pitch Complex
- Castel View Pitches

	Gross Floor Area (m ²)
Broadway Campus	20,420
Dudley Evolve	8,350
Dudley Sixth	2,556
Dudley Advance I	2,987
Dudley Advance II	3,398
Wolverhampton Street Campus	1,544
Dudley Enhance	616
CAT I	6,592
CAT II	1,305
Aspire Living	206
Aspire Works	310
Inspired Brierley Hill	3,557
Skills Shop	289
Priory Villa	328
12 The Broadway	230
3G Pitch Complex	128
Castle View Pitches	119
Institute of Technology	4,750
College Occupied Total	57,685





The Campus provides a wide range of social and educational facilities including a large LRC and library, administration and social areas. The programme of courses offered includes Humanities, Adult education, Business and Management Studies, Health and Social care and Sciences. In addition, the site houses a small conference facility, used by corporate clients.



3.2 BROADWAY CAMPUS

The Broadway site represents the College's largest campus, providing a total gross floor area of 20,420m². As previously stated it provides the focal point for the identity of the College. Centred around a core building constructed in the 1930's the site has been adapted and developed in a number of phases resulting in a relatively intensive development. Nevertheless, the site is well placed on the edge of the town centre with good public transport links and adequate on-site parking.

The three-storey main building (A/B/C Block) is typical of its period, with a plan form of simple blocks linked to form a number of small courtyards and constructed from load bearing masonry and a mixture of pitched and flat roofed areas. To the east of the main building, several blocks (D/E/F Blocks) were constructed soon after the main building, offering two and three-storey flat roofed steel framed structures clad in brickwork. These buildings are in poor condition and partly unused, with the old workshop in D block being recently demolished. E block is currently being refitted to provide a new Animal Science facility due to open in September 2024. The latest development on the site comprises two linked three-storey steel framed buildings (G/H Blocks) completed by the College in 1993. These buildings are brick faced with pitched slated roofs and form an L shape to the south of the Main building, enclosing a pleasant open sided courtyard.



3.3 DUDLEY EVOLVE

The Evolve building was the first of the new buildings to be developed as part of the Dudley Learning Quarter capital development programme undertaken by the college with a floor area of 8,350m² and opened in 2012.

It is a four storey modern bright building with a centre atrium. It comprises one large block of steel frame construction with structural concrete floors clad in various materials copper, glass, stone and brick to create the appropriate street scene for each elevation. It is a BREEAM Excellent building with a biomass boiler.

The building provides facilities for a wide range of vocational subject including Art and Design, Media, Performing Arts, Travel and Tourism, Hair and Beauty, and Sport. It boasts a fully licenced theatre, public sport and fitness facility and a commercial hair and beauty salon.

3.4 DUDLEY SIXTH

Dudley Sixth was also completed simultaneously with the Evolve building as part of the Dudley Learning Quarter capital investment programme and opened in 2012. It is a three storey 2,556m² steel framed structure finished in brick glass and copper cladding to match the Evolve building which it visually links to.

Also BREEAM excellent it is more institutional in its design and provides a unique learning environment for dedicated A level study in over 40 subject areas. It provides the more traditional set of classrooms and science laboratories required for this provision.



3.5 ADVANCE I

Advance I was the first building constructed by the college which was developed and designed in partnership with local employers to provide the environment required to deliver the skills they require.

Part of the Dudley Learning Quarter and 2,987m² in floor area it opened in 2014, and comprises a four storey steel framed structure with structural concrete floors clad in a zinc type sheet cladding giving the appearance on a machined block externally. Again BREEAM excellent by design it provides leading edge facilities for delivery of Engineering and Manufacturing skills training.



3.6 ADVANCE II

Advance II is the newest building completed as part of the Dudley Learning Quarter, and was the first building not to be developed as a direct replacement for existing facilities in the college.

Opening in 2017 and comprising 3,398m² it is an example of modern design possibilities and strategies that minimise energy use by the use of natural ventilation and minimal environment controls. It is a five storey steel framed structure clad with metal cladding units, and has a separate three and a half storey Hanger which can be used to allow delivery of off-site manufacturing and site installation skills; it is currently the base for electrical installation workshop facilities.

It was designed using the best elements of various environmental measures including BREEAM, Well Building Standards, and professional body measures such as Chartered Institute of Service Engineers CIBSE. The building provides a live learning environment for the students, as the majority of services and construction details are 'on show' and lined to a full 3D model.

An award winning building for its procurement and construction process it provides leading edge facilities for delivery.



3.7 WOLVERHAMPTON STREET

A small campus situated less than a kilometre from the Broadway site; Wolverhampton Street provides a specialist facility catering for motor vehicle engineering and maintenance. The workshops were built in 1985 and the teaching block in 1997, both comprising flexible steel framed buildings finished in a mixture of brickwork and profiled metal cladding. The total gross floor area is 1,554m². Entrance to the site is through a public car park with a direct service access restricted to deliveries only, restricted to deliveries only.



3.8 DUDLEY ENHANCE

Dudley Enhance was developed following the successful development of Dudley Sixth as an extension of the Sixth form provision space, as well as a building providing social and catering provision for that zone of the Learning Quarter. Opening in 2014 it is a 616m² building of steel frame construction clad in block and timber. It is two storeys in height with level 2 being a part mezzanine floor only.

As well as providing a bistro eating facility it also provides a central lecture theatre for the learning quarter as well as the facilities for A level art studies.



3.9 CONSTRUCTION APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING (CAT) CENTRE – UNIT 5

The CAT centre is a leased property run by the college and is the centre for delivery of construction trade skills. Opening in 2017, it is a 3 story steel framed building with external metal sheet cladding. It is 3.5 miles from the Dudley Learning Quarter on the Waterfront business park in Brierley Hill. The area is central in the borough for delivery and well served by public transport.

It provides 6,592m² of bespoke facilities for all construction trades including carpentry, painting and decorating, plumbing, heating, gas, and multi-skills delivery.

The building is on a ten-year lease which was renewed to run until March 2029 which ties in with the lease of the supporting building CAT II.



3.10 CONSTRUCTION APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING (CAT) CENTRE – UNIT 4

CAT II is a more recent expansion of the construction delivery Facilities opening in 2019 and is also a leased property on a ten-year lease having a coterminous end date with CAT I in 2029.

It is a simple single story steel portal framed building with a metal cladding finish comprising 1,305m², and provides workshop and supporting classroom spec for trowel trades, including bricklaying and plastering.



3.11 ASPIRE LIVING

This building is a large 1930's converted domestic building of 206m² of two storey brick cavity wall construction and tiled roof.

It provides bespoke facility for supported learning delivery specialising in independent living skills and preparation for progression to mainstream learning.



3.12 ASPIRE WORKS

This building is a large 1930's converted and extended domestic building of 310m² of two storey brick cavity wall construction and tiled roof.

It provides bespoke facilities for supported learning delivery with a particular focus on employability skills.



3.13 INSPIRED BRIERLEY HILL

The Inspired building was acquired by the college in August 2019. It was built in 2011 and is a steel framed structure with glazed curtain walling and metal cladding finish. It consists of 2 buildings; the main building and a small independent living building to the rear. Having a floor area of 3,557m² it provides facilities for delivery of T level digital studies some art and design studies and foundation learning. There is also a small external site works delivery area to the rear which supports the construction delivery for the CAT Centre which is 0.4 miles away.

The site consists of two parcels of land, one owned by the college and the other owned by DMBC on a peppercorn rent to the college.



3.14 SKILLS SHOP

The Black Country Skills Shop is based in the Merry Hill shopping centre one unit at L76 Lower Mall. It is a rented commercial unit of 289m² which provides learning facilities for adult education and employability courses.





3.15 PRIORY VILLA

Priory Villa is a traditional brick and tiled roof building built in 1865, and is a grade II listed building. It is 328m² in area and currently provides office facilities and some small teaching and tutorial spaces to support Dudley Sixth.



3.17 3G PITCH COMPLEX

The 3G pitch complex was completed in 2016 and provides a professional standard floodlight 3G football pitch with spectator facilities and changing rooms. The 128m² changing rooms are a modular off-site constructed building finished in timber cladding.

3.18 CASTLE VIEW PITCHES

Two traditional grass football pitches are located less than half a kilometre from the Town Centre Campus, and are supported by a 119m² steel framed clad changing room facility built in 2012.



3.16 NO.12 THE BROADWAY

This building is a large 1930's extended domestic building of 230m² of two storey brick cavity wall construction and tiled roof.

It is currently unused, but will be converted into a facility to support the adjoining Aspire buildings, as an initial simulated work experience commercial outlet preparing LDD students for supported internships.



3.19 BLACK COUNTRY & THE MARCHES INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

This is the latest addition to the college estate. It is a 4,750m² three storey steel framed building which opened in September 2021. It provides courses from level 3 onwards in partnership with private and further/higher education partners, for Construction Engineering and Medical Engineering.

Following on from the initiatives used in the development of Advance II it is an improved example of modern design possibilities and strategies that minimise energy use by the use of natural ventilation and minimal environment controls. It is clad with metal rainscreen cladding units, and has a separate two storey hangar which can be used to allow employers to set up product development facilities which can enjoy the use of the institution's cutting edge manufacturing equipment, as well as being able to call on students for assistance in the process, providing essential workplace experience.

It too was designed using the best elements of various environmental measures including BREEAM, Well Building Standards, and professional body measures such as Chartered Institute of Service Engineers CIBSE. The building again provides a live learning environment for the students, as the majority of services and construction details are 'on show' and lined to a full 3D model.

It is also a Constructing Excellence award winning building.



3.20 CONDITION & SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

The College is well aware of the importance of maintaining the building stock and has a 10 year planned maintenance programme informed by a detailed independent condition survey in 2022 that identifies anticipated investment.

The condition assessment made use of these planned and proposed maintenance records and a visual survey of each building. The condition of a building is reflected not just in the standard of finishes (paintwork, carpets, ceilings etc.), but more importantly in the condition of the structure, external envelope and mechanical and electrical services. The results categorised the buildings as good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory and unacceptable.

Having considered the physical condition of the buildings, the inherent suitability was assessed in terms of the ability of each to contribute to the College's long-term goals. Factors that affect the suitability of a building include ease of access, flexibility, ease of movement around the building, location and, ultimately, image. It is possible to have a well-maintained building that is fundamentally unsuited to its purpose, for example, an educational building without access and facilities for the disabled.

The suitability assessment categorised the buildings under the same headings as in the condition survey above, with the inclusion of 'requiring remedy' when certain specific defects need to be remedied for satisfactory medium to long-term use.

The criteria for assessment, together with the results for each site are described in detail in Annex A of this report. The chart below summarises the relative condition and suitability of the College's existing estate.



CONDITION AND SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

	Leasehold Freehold	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Un-acceptable	Comments
Broadway Campus	F					
Suitability						Well located site. Reasonably suitable buildings. Problems with suitability, flexibility & access to D block
Condition						Well maintained. Block D however require considerable investment
Dudley Evolve	F					
Suitability						Purpose designed new build
Condition						Completed 2012
Dudley Sixth	F					
Suitability						Purpose designed new build
Condition						Completed 2012
Advance I	F					
Suitability						Purpose designed new build
Condition						Completed 2014
Advance II	F					
Suitability						Purpose designed new build
Condition						Completed 2017
Wolverhampton Street	F					
Suitability						Fairly flexible purpose built but in poor location, facilities now starting to lack flexibility for the future of transport technologies
Condition						Generally well maintained
Dudley Enhance	F					
Suitability						Purpose designed new build
Condition						Completed 2014
CAT I	L					
Suitability						Purposely fitted out from shell. Rented property
Condition						Some issues with mechanical installation
CAT II	L					
Suitability						Simple shed with large workshop space
Condition						Generally well maintained

	Leasehold Freehold	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Un-acceptable	Comments
Aspire Living	F					
Suitability						Purposely designed converted specialist facility
Condition						

Aspire Works	F					
Suitability						Purposely designed converted specialist facility
Condition						

ADC	F					
Suitability						Built in 2010 but rooms are small and inflexible
Condition						

Skills Shop	L					
Suitability						Adapted retail unit
Condition						Maintained by centre owner other than F and F

Priory Villa	F					
Suitability						Office use to support Dudley Academies Trust
Condition						Refurbished large domestic property from 1900

12 The Broadway	F					
Suitability						Domestic property currently empty awaiting re modelling
Condition						Good general order

3G Pitch Complex	F					
Suitability						Purpose designed to FA standards specification
Condition						Newly constructed in 2013

Castle View Pitches	F					
Suitability						Standard grass pitch with changing facilities
Condition						Changing rooms built in 2011

Institute of Technology	F					
Suitability						Purposed designed facilities highly flexible completed in 2021
Condition						

3.21 RUNNING COSTS

The running costs of a college property depend on two assessments. These are firstly, the actual consumption in terms of fuel, power, cleaning, routine maintenance etc., and secondly, a number of fixed estate costs that are spread over the total estate. These include insurance, rates, security and administration.

The table below summarises the cost of running the College sites and compares it to student numbers and floor area.

The historic cost of £100.24/m² inc VAT gross floor area is difficult to compare against the sector, as figures are not available in similar formats.

ESFA Figures for colleges in 21/22 shows an average sector cost of £82/m² for non-pay cost expenditure, which compares favourably to the college's £67.77. It also shows a total average annual operational staff cost of £1.038m, which again compares well with the college's £1.068m though this is a less accurate

comparison, as colleges have differing levels of staff i.e. the college employs its own security guards which others don't.

The inflationary adjusted figures show a continued investment by the college to maintain the high standards of the estate even during times of increased costs due to energy prices.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Non Pay Costs	£3,103,718	£2,908,645*	£3,933,911	£4,456,078
Pay Costs	£779,848	£863,933*	£1,067,769	£1,337,145
Total Cost Inc VAT	£3,883,567	£3,772,578*	£5,001,680	£5,793,223

Inflation %	1.79	0.85	2.58	9.07
Inflation adj inc VAT	£3,814,051	£3,672,981*	£4,740,592	£4,965,371

Floor area/m ²	53,534	53,534	58,047	57,686
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Actual Inc VAT				
Cost per metre Inc VAT	£72.54	£70.47*	£86.16	£100.42
Non Pay cost per metre Inc VAT	£59.58	£54.33	£67.77	£77.24

Inflationary adj Inc VAT				
Cost per meter Inc VAT	£71.24	£68.61*	£81.67	£86.07

Student FTE	5,622	5,539	5,573	5,042
Costs per student FTE	£691	£681	£897	£1,149

3.22 SPACE UTILISATION

It is unusual for institutions to have the opportunity to actually design all the accommodation used. Rather, most inherit an estate accumulated over a number of years and for a variety of reasons. Consequently, most colleges, while having no overall space shortages, often lack the right sort of space in the right place. This can present problems, particularly at peak times when demands for such accommodation prove hard to meet.

Dudley is fortunate to have been able to design a large amount of its specialist facilities over the last 12 years, however there is still a strong demand on specialist facilities at peak times.

The college regularly monitors its utilisation rate of rooms using electronic register systems.

Utilisation rates for the this academic year compare to the last full year and the last pre- COVID were:

As can be seen the effects of COVID were still being felt during 22/23, but 2023/24 has seen a return to previous levels of utilisation.

Guidance for the AoC RIBA client forum guide indicated that for general FE colleges a target of between 33 and 37% utilisation depending upon types of provision should be used, and that for 6th form provision should be raised to 40%.

As can be seen the college already exceeds these sector targets in almost all areas, with Dudley Sixth being 50% better than the sector target.

Specifically, large vocational space should be considered well utilised if it is has a utilisation figure over 30%. The college average utilisation for its specialist vocational spaces is 35%, with general teaching use averaging 40%.

Utilisation has fluctuated as would be expected from year to year depending upon course numbers but in general has remained good in well utilised sites and improved in less well utilised sites.

The college has seen sustained growth in numbers over the last 12 years, even though this has been during a prolonged period of a reducing demographic. In 2019/20 it reached its lowest figure, and the student cohort is shown to increase steadily for the next 8 years based on school numbers in the four adjoining authorities that provide around 95% of the college's student base at 16.

Utilisation measurement is a crucial source of information, not only for monitoring the efficiency of the estate, but also in planning the strategic development of facilities to meet the curriculum plan and requirements for the future.

It helps to ensure that the correct space is developed and where possible under-utilised space can be considered for redeployment for new space needs as opposed to building new facilities.

Site	Utilisation 19/20 (Pre COVID-19)	Utilisation 22/23	Utilisation 23/24
Broadway Campus	41%	31%	43%
Dudley Evolve	47%	40%	44%
Dudley Sixth	49%	55%	60%
Dudley Advance I	39%	17%	29%
Dudley Advance II	31%	23%	30%
Wolverhampton Street Campus	35%	24%	30%
Dudley Enhance	13%	11%	19%
CAT Centre	25%	19%	25%
Inspired	32%	23%	31%
Aspire total	83%	56%	46%
College Occupied Total	38%	30%	38%

3.23 SUSTAINABILITY

Everyone has a role to play in delivering on net zero targets. Colleges are uniquely placed at the heart of communities to support a fair transition to a green economy for people and employers. They must be invested in and empowered to play their role in the journey to net zero and meet the need for green skills and green jobs. The college will take action and put sustainability at the heart of decision-making using the FE College Climate Action Roadmap, in response to the climate emergency and to advance sustainability.

Dudley College has developed a Sustainability and Environmental Policy. The main aim of this policy is to highlight the college's commitment to achieving sustainability and details its aims to incorporate the principles of environmental sustainability into all aspects of institutional planning and operations. The Policy is backed by a Net Zero Commitment statement that the college corporation agreed in July 2023, which further outlines key aspects to control and develop.

The key aims of the college are:

1. Excellence in education and skills for a changing world: preparing all young people for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience.
2. Net zero: reducing direct and indirect emissions from education and care buildings, driving innovation to meet legislative targets and providing opportunities for children and young people to engage practically in the transition to net zero.
3. Resilience to climate change: adapting our buildings and system to prepare for the effects of climate change.
4. A better environment for future generations: enhancing biodiversity, improving air quality and increasing access to, and connection with, nature in and around college settings.

To ensure we play our part in reducing public-sector emissions against a 2017 baseline by:

- 50% by the end of Carbon Budget 5 (2032)
- 75% by the end of Carbon Budget 6 (2037)
- Net Zero by the end of 2041

The college has initiated an approach to further sustainability improvement based on a Seven Pillar approach. These are:

1. Leadership and Governance
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Built Environment
4. Travel and Transport
5. Sustainability and supply chains
6. Investment in the future
7. Partnership and Promotion

Each pillar has a lead and individual action plan. As can be seen the Estate has a key role in facilitating improvement in most of the pillars, and the Investment in the Future pillar is a key consideration for the college's Estates Strategy. All investment decisions will have sustainability as a key consideration and any procurement will ensure sustainability and reduction of the college's carbon emissions is an aspect of product and service requirement and the selection criteria.

To aid the planning of the journey to Net Zero, the college has commissioned the start of decarbonisation plans for individual buildings. These will prioritise areas for investment and ensure any business need developments are linked to this plan to maximise impact of the investment.

These aims and the overall objective are a core consideration in any capital investment and development proposal the college considers. This will lead to sustainability specific Capital works becoming a key aspect of the capital investment spend over the life of this strategy.

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

As stated a key aspect of this strategy is to improve the college's estate as part of its commitment to becoming Net Zero by 2041. It is necessary therefore to record the current status of the sustainability of the estate to help ensure correct investment decisions and highlight priority areas for consideration.

	Leasehold Freehold	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Un-acceptable	Comments
Broadway Campus	F					
Assessment						1930's building low thermal performance Recently upgraded roof insulation, and new windows and low carbon heating planned for 2024
Dudley Evolve	F					
Assessment						2012 biomass heating good but high energy use.
Dudley Sixth	F					
Assessment						2012 good but high energy use. Some solar generation
Advance I	F					
Assessment						2014 good but high energy use, some solar generation
Advance II	F					
Assessment						Good thermal performance and low carbon output
Wolverhampton Street	F					
Assessment						Traditional build to 1990's standards
Dudley Enhance	F					
Assessment						2014 good with minimal energy use
CAT I	L					
Assessment						2001 rented, low thermal performance poor heating systems
CAT II	L					
Assessment						2001 rented, low thermal performance shed
Aspire Living	F					
Assessment						1930's converted house, no wall insulation poor thermal performance
Aspire Works	F					
Assessment						1930's converted house limited wall insulation and thermal performance

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT CONTINUED

	Leasehold Freehold	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Un-acceptable	Comments
Inspired	F					
Assessment						2010 fair thermal performance with aging services.
Skills Shop	L					
Assessment						Adapted retail unit with central services by others
Priory Villa	F					
Assessment						Early 1900's no insulation poor thermal performance, single gazed windows
12 The Broadway	F					
Assessment						2014 good but high energy use, some solar generation
Advance II	F					
Assessment						Domestic property currently empty awaiting re modelling which will improve this.
3G Pitch Complex	F					
Assessment						2016 fair insulation levels and efficient heating system
Castle View Pitches	F					
Assessment						2012 standard building regulation performance for the time
Institute of Technology	F					
Assessment						2021 excellent thermal performance, only onsite generation prevents Net zero achievement.

3.24 IT INFRASTRUCTURE

Since 2020 the IT Services Department has been a catalyst for positive change and innovation that have enhanced efficiency, security, and overall operational excellence. The successful integration of advanced technologies such as Office 365 has enabled seamless collaboration and accessibility. The implementation of robust cybersecurity measures has significantly strengthened the college's defence against cyber threats. Safeguarding sensitive information and ensuring business continuity. Furthermore, the IT Services department's commitment to staying abreast of technological trends has resulted in the adoption of cutting-edge solutions, fostering a dynamic and agile IT infrastructure. This adaptability has not only increased productivity but has also positioned the organization at the forefront of industry advancements, ensuring a competitive edge in the ever-evolving digital landscape. Overall, the positive changes initiated by the IT Services department have not only optimized internal processes but have also contributed to the overall resilience and strategic positioning of the organisation..

Cybersecurity Enhancements

- Segmentation of college network to improve performance, resiliency, and security.
- Achievement of CyberEssentials & CyberEssentials Plus accreditations
- Implementation of Microsoft Defender 365 – An all-in-one solution for protecting Endpoints, Identities, Cloud Application & Email.
- Implementation of Multi-Factor-Authentication for all staff and students.
- Implementation of 802.1x to reduce the risk of a cyberattack occurring onsite.
- Consolidation of college systems to reduce attack surface against internal and external threats

Infrastructure Enhancements

- £200k investment in the replacement of college's virtual server infrastructure.
- £40k on replacing core network switches at Broadway.
- £150k on 100 replacement edge network switches across campuses
- £200k investment rolling out Wi-Fi 6 to all college campuses.
- Full implementation of Microsoft Endpoint Manager offering full oversight of the entire computer estate through a single pane of glass.
- Full overhaul of IT disaster recovery arrangements including a contract with a 3rd party & a 'break-glass' solution based at the Institute of Technology.

Classroom Enhancements

- Over £1.2m invested in new and replacement computers -
- £400k invested in replacing old lamp-based projectors and whiteboards with interactive screens.

As can be seen this means some areas of the IT system are in a good position for the future, such as the integration of systems to allow offsite delivery and working to be supported.

However, there are still key issues to be addressed to keep the infrastructure able to support the ever increasing use and demands of IT in the college

By the end of 2026 the college wireless infrastructure will be 6 years old, and Wi-Fi 7 will have matured as the new wireless standard. Wi-Fi 7 will bring network connection speeds of 40gbps per device and in some cases the college may no longer require structured network cabling for certain operations.

To ensure we are futureproofed to facilitate enhancements in the digital landscape it is critical the core of our network is futureproofed to meet those needs. This enhancement will futureproof the core speed of the college network for the next 15-20 years.

We will therefore plan to:

- Complete the replacement of all remaining Network Switches at the Broadway site.
- Rollout Wi-Fi 7 compliant access-points which will provide an end to the contention issues we have on a normal working day. We will be able to provide ultra-high-speed connectivity for up to 5,000 users simultaneously.
- Replace all fibre modules connected between our campus buildings.

4. ANNUAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLAN

The College is committed to providing first class facilities and learning environment for students.

We will do this by continuing to reinvest a proportion of the cash generated from our operating activities back into planned estates maintenance and improvement programmes, as well as into the latest equipment and technology.

Following the £80m plus investment by the College over the last 10 years together with the already actioned £39m investment into the Dudley and Brierley Hill Learning Quarters and the challenging funding environment that FE colleges have to work within, the College has to carefully plan its limited financial resources.

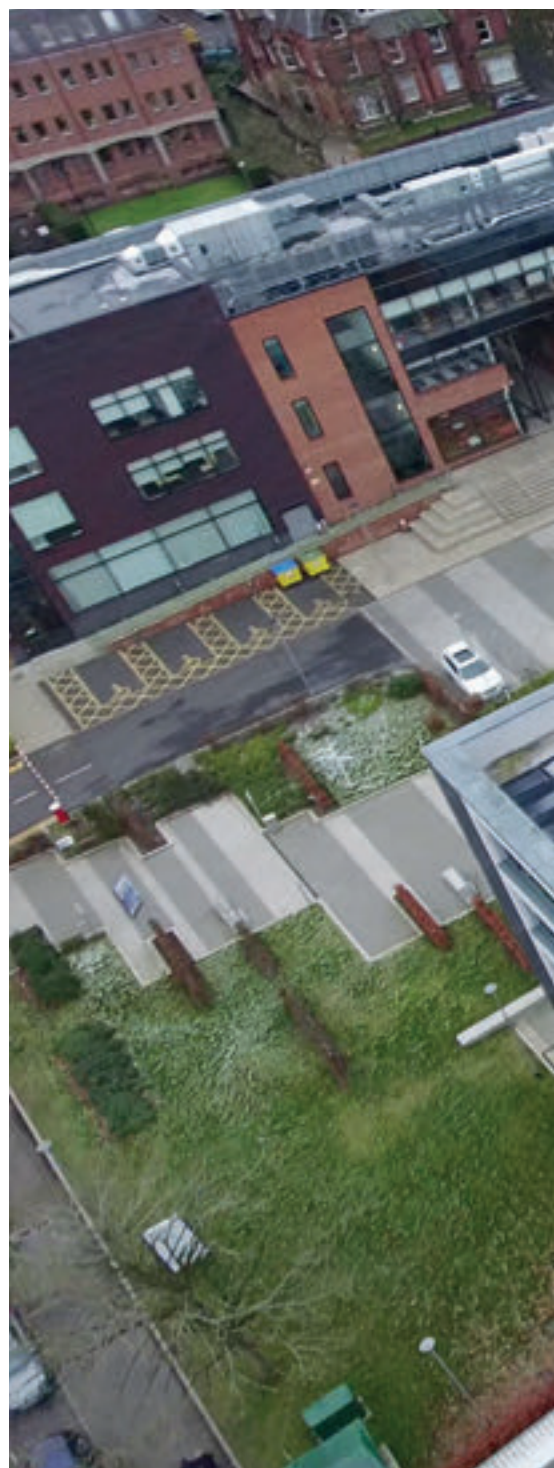
However, as part of the Financial Strategy approved by the College Corporation the College will continue to invest up to £0.75 per annum into new capital projects, estate improvement programmes and specialist and IT equipment from the 2024-27 year, net of any grant funded capital expenditure. This is in addition to any annual IT refresh programme across the College IT estate, which is financed through leasing arrangements.

By 2026 the college financial position will enable sufficient funds to be available to increase this investment by an additional £3.0m from generated cash reserves.

Given the still ambitious aims for the estate over the next 3 to 5 years the college will continue to explore opportunities to secure capital grant financing from a range of sources, such as West Midlands Combined Authority, Local Enterprise Partnership and DfE capital funds, as and when they become available. We will also continue to leverage employer relationships in an attempt to secure the latest industry standard

specialist equipment through loan or gifting arrangements from employers to enhance the learning experience and ensure students are job-ready at the end of their course.

As set out elsewhere in this strategy, a condition survey has been undertaken across all College sites, which identifies the priority level for each element of capital improvement work. From 2024-27, the £0.75m available for capital expenditure will be prioritised based on the condition survey, along with an assessment and prioritisation of curriculum equipment requests to help improve the programme offer.





5. OUR PRIORITIES FOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Outside of our annual capital investment, we will look to secure additional funding to deliver the larger capital aspirations of the College in line with our Strategic Plan and the expected future needs of our estate.

Below is a summary of potential future projects along with an estimation of cost, sources of funding and priority ranking. Following this is detail on the scope of each project.

The College is committed to securing funding to undertake these developments in line with the priority order detailed below. We will develop business cases for each element of capital investment and look to apply for all opportunities for financial support to complete these. Should the College have additional funding to invest from its ongoing operations, the below list will enable us to prioritise where this money should be spent.

In addition to the projects already underway with allocated funds, such as:

- Health Innovation Dudley
- Animal Science building Broadway
- Aspire expansion no 12 The Broadway

The college has prioritised future investment proposals based on projected curriculum needs and improvements to support the wider strategic plan. These are:

Capital Project	Estimated cost in millions	Any identified sources of funding	Priority
New Transport Technologies Centre	8 – 15,000	Levelling Up fund, Salix	A
Re development of D and F blocks	5 – 9,000	T level / Salix	A
Improved employability Centre Skills shop	350	Part LSIF	A
Net Zero Upskilling facilities	500	LSIF	A
End Point Assessment Centre	200		
De Carbonisation improvements to the estate	2 – 5,000 (during life of the plan)	Possible future FE CTF	B
Improved student social/eating facilities	350		A
IT Infrastructure upgrades	375		A
Improved security enhancements (Martyn's Law)	100		A
On site construction training facility Inspired	150		B
Refit of Dudley Sixth	350		B
Refit of Broadway Classrooms	500		B
Higher Education partner facility	500		B
Professional Services Hub	150		B
Permanent home for CAT Centre	35,000	Possible future FE CTF	B
Refurbish the main Hall Broadway	200		B

5.2 NEW TRANSPORT TECHNOLOGIES CENTRE

The college has provided motor vehicle courses for many years, which have developed into modern propulsion systems in recent years such as electric and hybrid vehicles.

Given the exponentially increasing market for electric and other alternative fuel vehicles and modern transport systems, together with the newly created very light Rail and transport innovation centre adjoining the college's Institute of Technology, there is a need to develop our current offer into the wider transport technologies sector to meet the regional needs of employers for the future. The West Midlands Metro is also due to complete its link to Dudley in 2024 which will further require skilled trades, as well as increase the uptake of more modern transport technologies by manufacturers and service providers in the region.

The college has developed 2 options for providing the facilities required. The first option proposes development of a new building to the rear of the college's Inspired building at Brierley Hill. This would provide a 3,300m² facility on three floors providing both traditional workshops as well as leading edge workshops and laboratories for electrification and other fuel technologies. Current estimates are circa £m including equipment.

The second proposal is to re purpose D and F blocks at the Broadway campus. These buildings are partly unused since the development of Advance I and are some of the college's least sustainable buildings. This option proposes a slightly reduced facility, as it can be supported by space in the main Broadway building, but would provide similar facilities, whilst also improving the estate as part of our Net Zero journey. Currently this would require £m including equipment.

Both options will enable the sale of the Wolverhampton Street site, which Dudley MBC have expressed an interest in to provide 'Town Centre' housing. The funds from the sale would provide the college's contribution towards the project.



5.3 REDEVELOPMENT OF D AND F BLOCKS

D and F are two blocks at the rear of the Broadway site which were semi-detached until the recent demolition of the old workshop. They were built in 1950's and are both in poor condition. The strategic plan for D block since 2010 has been to remove provision and eventually demolish. This was supported by the Planning permission to demolish them for additional parking provision being obtained in 2010 and renewed in 2015. However from a sustainability perspective it is better not to remove all the embedded carbon used to form the original building, and as was the strategic decision for E block, repurpose and refit to modern standards is best for the environment.

If the second option for the Transport Technologies Centre is not progressed, the college will look to refit the buildings as needs require, possibly on a phased approach to provide new facilities, using grants such as Salix to fund the building performance and heating systems.

The buildings are able to provide fairly large open areas which are easily divisible to provide either small workshops, laboratories or classrooms as needed.

5.4 SKILLS SHOP IMPROVEMENTS

The Black Country Skills Shop is part of Dudley College and provides an accessible location for adults seeking to up-skill or re-skill in a friendly supportive environment.

The shop, which was officially opened in October 2012, has almost 10 years of invaluable experience working in partnership with The Department for Work and Pensions to deliver short vocational qualifications that help move unemployed adults back into the world of work.

With its continued success, and the increasing demands for the type of training it delivers the Skills Shop needs to develop its facilities. Its current unit is approximately 260m².

Projected courses and service requirements means a facility of between 380 to 450m² depending



upon circulation space is needed moving forward, which would provide:

1. Four classrooms between 25 and 35m² each with demountable walls to allow opening up to double capacity when needed on popular courses.
2. A computer classroom of 45m²
3. A youth hub area, with space for 2 or 3 JCP youth work coaches with suitable interview spaces, approximately 30m²
4. A general break out space for flexible use, such as information sessions, and open events 65m²
5. 1 or 2 private interview meeting rooms, totalling 25m²

The college has agreed in principle the acquisition of the unit with the current operators of the Merry Hill Centre, on the same agreement as the current unit. A grant for the IT fitout has been obtained from LSIF funding, and the college is assessing options to provide the remaining £250,000.

5.5 NET ZERO UPSKILLING FACILITIES

This proposal is to install a Net Zero standalone training building at the rear of Advance 2. This will include training building with security grid windows and external protection around heat pump. The building would have an external access working platform with staircase, handrails and secure access gate to enable install and maintenance of PV arrays. We would also include Storage batteries / EV charging points and a working heat source air pump that would heat the building. All of the equipment would be used for training purposes.

The college has been successful in obtaining £272,340 LSIF grant for the creation of a standalone module centre for training on domestic and commercial electrification and sustainable technologies. This has to be spent between Dec 23 and Aug 24 for delivery from September 24. There is also an additional £100k per college for the creation of an immersive classroom with VR suite and resources to support training on these disciplines.



5.6 END POINT ASSESSMENT CENTRE

The process for apprenticeship provision has altered in recent years with the End Point Assessment now having quite stringent requirements. Currently students have to use separate test facilities, which in quite a few areas such as construction trades, air conditioning etc are few in number, and the fees associated with them can be 50% of the funding for the full course.

The college has traditionally been a major provider of Apprenticeships and construction is a key area.

The proposal is to remodel A floor at Broadway to provide a dedicated exam and End Point Assessment Centre. This would provide both a large exam hall in what is currently a large professional services office, and the specialist test areas for the specific skilled trades. The test areas could be developed in the workshop spaces currently used by painting and decorating following their move to the CAT centre.

These test areas can be booked out to other providers who do not have the facilities, on the same fee-paying basis as the college has to pay at present, both saving costs, and generating income.

5.7 DE-CARBONISATION IMPROVEMENTS

The college has committed to Net zero: reducing direct and indirect emissions, driving innovation to meet legislative targets and providing opportunities for young people to engage practically in the transition to net zero.

To achieve this the college needs to strategically plan the improvements to the estate to raise its performance required to achieve Net Zero whilst also minimising our impact on the environment by wherever possible reusing existing buildings.

A survey for the less sustainable parts of the estate is currently being completed to help inform a plan to achieve this. This will be expanded to other areas on a priority basis, based on the sustainability assessment. The funds needed for this are likely to be beyond the capital funds the college can allocate from its operations, and applications for any sources of funding are being submitted, which has resulted in grants of £2.4m currently from Salix, with a current bid of £0.65m awaiting the outcome.

Wherever possible improvement works from any capital investment will be used to further this aim, and separate specific sustainability grants will also be used to support college business investment project works.

5.8 IMPROVED STUDENT SOCIAL/EATING FACILITIES

The college has seen sustained growth in student numbers for most of the last 12 years with only the period of COVID showing a slight downturn.

The increasing number and the changing customer expectation has led to the need for both increased and improved social spaces and eating facilities. The college has already made a start on these improvements, but further works are still required over the period of this plan, to increase the main facilities specifically at the Broadway campus. The completed works have been substantially funded through formula based capital grants issued by the DfE.

It is possible with the reclassification of the college to the public sector in November 2022, that these grants to the sector will be ongoing, and could be used to support these works. Otherwise a phased approach using college annual capital spend will be planned.



5.9 IT INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

The college has continued to develop its IT infrastructure on a planned investment basis recognising the ever-increasing use of technology in curriculum delivery and the increasing need for connectivity.

However, there are still key issues to be addressed to keep the infrastructure able to support the increasing use and demands of IT in the college

By the end of 2026 the college wireless infrastructure will be 6 years old, and Wi-Fi 7 will have matured as the new wireless standard. Wi-Fi 7 will bring network connection speeds of 40gbps per device and in some cases the college may no longer require structured network cabling for certain operations.

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Replace all fibre modules connected between our campus buildings.

Funding sources will be reviewed to ensure any that fit can be accessed to move these works forward.



5.10 IMPROVED SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS

The college has always seen the safety and security of staff and students as a priority and has had good levels of control and CCTV monitoring for many years. The College has also made significant improvements to both the operational and physical security measures during 2022/23 to further improve and maintain the strong feeling of safety our students tell us they enjoy.

It is not something however that can be forgotten with the fast pace of social change. With the introduction of Martyn's Law it is likely that further enhancements will be required during the period to improve security.

The college will work with external stakeholders and advisors to ensure we provide the best possible control going forward. Funding for this is likely to be part of the ongoing yearly capital programme unless any relevant grants become available.

5.11 ON-SITE CONSTRUCTION TRAINING FACILITY

This proposal is dependent upon the Transport Technologies Centre project not progressing at the Inspired campus in Brierley Hill. If the rear of the Inspired site is available there is a proposal to develop the land as an on-site training facility for construction courses. This will involve setting up mock roads, and pavements, together with 3 base slabs for standard houses enabling simulated ground working, drainage and civil engineering skills to be delivered.

5.12 REFIT OF DUDLEY SIXTH

Dudley Sixth was completed and opened in September 2012. This together with the planned development of a new Sixth Form sponsored by Eton School within half a mile has raised the issue of renewing the environment, to enable a refreshed offer to be presented.

5.13 REFIT OF BROADWAY CLASSROOMS

Given the vast majority of the college estate has been built in the last 12 years, The Broadway buildings are the remaining facilities to be refurbished and refitted to modern standards. The college has had an ongoing strategy of refitting rooms in parallel with new facilities needs, however some standard and specialist rooms still require works.

5.14 HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNER FACILITY

The recent development of the University Park at Castle Hill has meant an increasing amount of partnership working with HE institutions. Whilst the college has dedicated facilities for key strategic areas at the Institute of Technology and the Health Innovation Dudley development, there are a number of subjects that partner HE providers are also looking to work with the College such as Criminology. These subjects don't lend themselves to provision in the key developments and the college is investigating the option of providing a dedicated HE centre at the main Dudley Town Centre campus, possibly in H block.



5.15 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES HUB

The professional services hub is a proposal where the college may create a customer facing 'front end' facility to provide services to local SMEs as a way of also getting placement opportunities for our students.

The hub may be at the main Broadway site, or could even be based in the high street, for example. It would operate as a business, marketing services to SMEs (app development, cyber security checks, net zero strategy development, etc). It is in very early stages of development at the moment.

5.16 PERMANENT HOME FOR CAT CENTRE

The Construction Apprenticeship Training centre is now experiencing large student number increases. This has been driven by the success of provision at the site, including the college obtaining national training contracts with major national companies, as well as the additional student numbers that have transferred as part of the BMet closure of its Stourbridge site.

There is a need to review the current facilities and improve and expand where possible. As part of this, a mezzanine space has been investigated and costed to provide additional workshop space and classrooms in the CAT II building.

If the numbers continue to grow additional space will be required, and a short term solution could be the leasing of additional adjoining units.

The option to purchase will need to evaluate the ongoing space needs as they develop over the period of the 2024-27 Strategic Plan.

Options to relocate the CAT and Inspired facilities in Dudley close to the existing facilities is limited with the only viable space being close to the IoT development. Any relocation of Dudley College operations to this site 'on mass' could detract from the IoT brand. It would also limit option for future development and increased facilities for higher education provision, which has

already been proposed for the location and has been well received by both employers and local and central government funders.

The CAT centre facilities are on a 10 year lease, and have recently been acquired by new landlords Bridges Ventures. Their strategic model is to acquire tenanted investment property, improve it where possible and sell it on to either sitting tenants or others over a four to five year period. This should give the college the option to purchase its facilities possibly at the 5 year break date when rents are due to increase.

A strategic decision during the period of this 2024-27 Strategic Plan, to buy or rent until a new development can replace the facilities will need to be made before this date to allow sufficient planning for the desired option to be successfully completed.

5.17 REFURBISHMENT OF THE MAIN HALL

The main hall at the college's Broawady campus, is a main focus of many college activities, as well as a source of income for provision of community events.

It was last refurbished over 24 years ago, with only minor changes to the IT, over recent years. Given its central function and first impression it gives to many internal and external users it is proposed to refit it to modern standards, including removing the old corporate colours which changed nearly 18 years ago.







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