

# Summary Strategic Accommodation Plan

Utrecht University is the owner and user of a sizeable property portfolio located in the historic city centre of Utrecht and in Utrecht Science Park (USP) De Uithof. At Utrecht University, there is growing awareness of the importance of accommodation and the need to use it more efficiently. Utrecht University's current property portfolio includes approximately 85 buildings with a total of around 325,000 m<sup>2</sup> of functionally useful floor area.

This strategic accommodation plan takes the strategic objectives and the strategic plan 2016-2020 as the basis for developing frameworks and establishing the campus vision and property portfolio. The strategic accommodation plan is based on the outline memorandum on property policy (*contourennota vastgoedbeleid*) of 9 September 2016.

Up to and including version 2.0, the strategic accommodation plan was developed in co-production by Corporate Real Estate & Campus (V&C) and Twijnstra Gudde. For version 3.0, V&C has facilitated the process to prioritise accommodation issues with the faculties and explore opportunities for reducing the portfolio.

## **Future vision – Utrecht University campuses**

Utrecht University has three separate campuses, USP De Uithof, International Campus Utrecht (ICU) and the city centre campus. The campus vision will be the precursor to the Local Area Vision (*Omgevingsvisie*) and will form the basis for potential solutions to the accommodation issues Utrecht University faces. On the campuses, Utrecht University aims to project the following profile.

### *1) The campus connects*

Utrecht University Campus 2030 will contribute to interdisciplinarity and community-forming. To achieve this, Utrecht University will need to ensure that:

- a network of meeting places is developed within buildings or in outdoor areas;
  - facilities are developed that help people meeting and individuals and groups connecting.
- A campus that connects calls for a low-traffic centre, the removal of barriers and short walking distances.

### *2) The campus inspires*

Utrecht University Campus 2030 will offer an inspiring and attractive environment. To achieve this, Utrecht University will need to offer space for:

- sufficient facilities for top-level education and research;
- knowledge transfer facilities, including spaces for incubators and accelerators;
- the establishment of research companies and knowledge institutions.

### *3) The campus is sustainable*

Utrecht University Campus 2030 will contribute to the well-being of people and the environment and the transition towards a sustainable society. To achieve that, Utrecht University will need to work with its partners and the public authorities in:

- strengthening the sustainable development and organisation of the campus;
- creating a healthy learning and working environment on campus;
- promoting sustainable accessibility of the campus;
- facilitating the transformation into a CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral campus;
- moving towards sustainable operations.

### *4) The campus is international*

Utrecht University Campus 2030 will be a hospitable campus for the international community of students and knowledge workers. To achieve this, Utrecht University will need to:

- promote an international look and feel;
- ensure that there is sufficient living accommodation in various segments on campus or in the direct vicinity;
- ensure that international facilities are developed.

The development of the future vision will result in a vision and direction of development for each campus.

## **Accommodation policy and framework**

For Utrecht University, accommodation is an essential asset. Property serves to support the primary process of education and research and has a substantial and long-term financial effect on

operations. This calls for the property portfolio to be managed professionally based on an explicit and properly-embedded property policy that is in line with the Strategic Plan.

Utrecht University's property policy can be expressed in terms of six objectives:

Functional quality: based on standardisation and uniformity where possible and specific solutions where necessary. A continuous process of management and maintenance will ensure that a building's initial performance levels are maintained;

Safety: the buildings and environment are safe and at least compliant with prevailing legislation and regulations;

Flexibility: the property portfolio is scalable and able to accommodate rises and falls in demand and buildings can be adapted to changes in the primary process with minimal or no intervention;

Sustainability: the property portfolio contributes to Utrecht University's sustainability ambitions, in part by focusing on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and energy conservation;

Manageability: the total number of projects being implemented and their size;

Affordability: in terms of operation and investments, the property portfolio is affordable for Utrecht University (and users) on a structural basis.

Utrecht University applies the following basic principles with regard to its property policy:

Utrecht University's average housing costs do not exceed 15% of annual income;

Solvency can be expressed as the share of equity capital in total assets. It has been agreed that this should remain above 40%.

The share of long-term liabilities relative to equity capital cannot exceed 40%;

In financial decisions relating to property and accommodation issues, costs must be assessed relative to the total cost of ownership (TCO). This means that accommodation costs are assessed in a multi-year perspective but also in relation to facility costs, energy charges and ICT costs;

In principle, Utrecht University invests in accommodation only if it involves functions or facilities for the purposes of education or research, knowledge transfer and functions that directly support these main functions, as well as for student activities;

From the perspective of flexibility and cost control, leasing (or other forms of ownership or operation) should be considered as well as outright ownership for the functions or facilities (educational research, knowledge transfer and direct support) referred to above.

### **Accommodation issues**

Utrecht University's accommodation issues can be divided into five categories:

1. Replacement investments
2. Developments based on research, education and knowledge transfer
3. Maintenance
4. Energy transition
5. Campus developments

The main issues for the next 15 years will be:

Accommodation for the experimental research in Science and Veterinary Medicine (arising from the 'Big 5' issues).

Further raising the (functional) quality of the accommodation for Academic Affairs in the Humanities, LEG and University College Utrecht.

The completion of the process of rehousing teaching accommodation for Science, Geosciences and Social and Behavioural Sciences.

Raising the standard of management and maintenance

Issues arising from energy transition as a statutory obligation

### **Managing the property portfolio**

Utrecht University aims to maintain financial investment in education, research and knowledge transfer at current levels. This has resulted in the financial frameworks, in which € 720 million has been determined as the guideline budget. These financial frameworks do not enable all plans and ideas forecast in 2015 to be implemented. This means that it will not be possible to achieve the current level of property projects.

For an affordable long-term property portfolio, in which the volume of investments is in line with the financial framework, there needs to be focus on the size of the portfolio and projects. This can be achieved in various ways:

1. Improving occupancy levels and usage in order to reduce the portfolio;
2. Lowering levels of investment by modifying the size of projects and programmes with a view to reducing total investments;
3. Agreeing on a profile and organisational choices that influence the size of the portfolio and the level of property investments.

### Prioritising the issues

Based on the guideline budget of € 720 million, agreement has been reached with the faculties to prioritise the various issues and an initial budget allocation has been achieved. Although no plans have been discarded, priorities have been identified. The issues with the highest priority are at the centre of the model below.