

**A Record of the Factors Leading to,
and the Consequences of,
the Merger of Wye College
University of London
with Imperial College**



WYE COLLEGE AGRICOLA CLUB

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	6
INTRODUCTION	7
BACKGROUND TO WYE COLLEGE	7
PART 1: FACTORS LEADING TO THE MERGER	8
External factors	8
Depression in the agricultural industry	8
Changes in the agricultural industry and demand for degree courses	10
Barnes Report 1988 on future of R&D in MAFF	10
Government funding for higher education	10
Internal factors	12
Student numbers	12
RAE assessment	15
Reduced research income	15
College finances: capital, assets, reserves	17
College finances: consolidated accounts	19
Options considered and decision for merger	20
Continued viability of the College	20
Mission of the Wye College	20
Merger options considered and decision	21
The merger agreement	21
Heads of Agreement	21
The Imperial vision	20
The Imperial Act	22
Transition arrangements 1999/2000	22
Schedule of Estates and Treasures at time of merger	23
Financial position at merger (1999/2000 audited accounts)	23
Handover of the Statutes	26
PART 2: POST MERGER	26
Introduction	26
1 August 2000–31 July 2001	26
Statements made at the Merger Ceremony 1 August 2000	26
Organisational structures	27
Appointment of new Rector at Imperial	27
Merger impact on undergraduate recruitment	28
1 August 2001–31 July 2002	29
Revised departmental re-structure and new Provost appointment	29
Revised degree courses	29

Early Imperial concerns about Wye merger	30
HEFCE transitional funding	31
1 August 2002–31 July 2003	32
The updated Business Plan accepted for Agricultural Science	32
Taught undergraduate courses	32
1 August 2003–31 July 2004	32
Taught undergraduate degree courses	32
Business Plan for 2004/05	33
Rector's comments on Wye merger	33
1 August 2004–31 July 2005	33
Announcement to close down Agricultural Sciences Department	33
Reactions to announcement	34
Meeting at Holiday Inn, Wrotham	41
Stepping down of Provost at Wye	42
Appeal to Imperial Court	42
1 August 2005–31 July 2006	43
Bearman Review of options for Wye	43
Decision to transfer teaching of ABM to University of Kent	44
The emergence of the Concordat	45
The chronology of the Wye Park project	45
1 August 2006–31 July 2007	48
Imperial's exit strategy from Wye Park project	48
The campaign and Imperial's decision to close Wye	48
Imperial withdrawal from science park vision	49
Transfer of External Programme to SOAS	49
1 August 2007–31 July 2008	49
ABM course moved to the University of Kent	49
Closure of College	50
Savills take over Wye campus property management	50
College farm	50
Government Department responses to the Wye College demise	51
1 August 2008–31 March 2010	51
Programme of closure and dispersal	51
Imperial Treasures policy	52
Local Development Framework .	53
The future of the College	53
Conclusion and postscript on the loss of Wye College	54
Postscript by the President of the Agricola Club	55

Appendices	57
1 Table of student numbers per department at Wye College	57
2 Expenditure on research contracts in operation at Wye College	59
3 Consolidated financial results of Wye College 1989–1999	60
4 Heads of Agreement	62
5 The Imperial vision	67
6 Imperial College Act 1999	70
7 Schedule of College Estate at merger	73
8 GCE A-level points of student intake at Wye	77
9 Imperial Final Report to HEFCE for £2.5m from Restructuring Fund	79
10 Imperial payment profile for £2.5m from Restructuring Fund	82
11 Imperial statement on the future of teaching and research at Wye Campus	83
12 Agricola Club 2004 AGM emergency resolution	86
13 Letter of Appeal to Imperial Court April 2005	87
14 Imperial Court response to Letter of Appeal	89
15 Section from Imperial College audited accounts 2002/03	92
16 Imperial update on withdrawal from teaching and research at Wye	93
17 Extract from the Imperial College Council minutes of November 2009	94

Abbreviations

ABC	Ashford Borough Council
ABM	Agricultural Business Management/Applied Business Management
ADAS	Agricultural Development and Advisory Service
AEBM	Agricultural Economics and Business Management
AFRC	Agriculture and Food Research Council
AHE	Agriculture, Horticulture and Environment Department
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AUT	Association of University Teachers
BBS	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Department
BIS	Business Innovation and Skills (Department of)
BP	British Petroleum
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
DPD	Development Plan Document
DSc	Doctor of Science
Econ	Economics Department
EP	External Programme
EU	European Union
FE	Further Education
FOI	Freedom of Information
FRI	Full Repairing and Insuring (lease)
FRS	Fellow of the Royal Society
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
KCC	Kent County Council
LDF	Local Development Framework
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
MP	Member of Parliament
NFU	National Farmers Union
o/s	Overseas
P/G	Postgraduate
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
R&C	Restructuring and Collaboration
R&D	Research and Development
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
SEEDA	South East England Development Area
SOAEFD	Scottish Office
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
U/G	Undergraduate
UCAS	Universities Central Admissions Service

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to set on record the factors that contributed to the decision taken in June 1998 by the Governing Body of Wye College to merge with Imperial College. It also documents the events and consequences following the formal merger in August 2000 that led to the confirmation to College staff by Imperial College in January 2008 that the College at Wye was 'surplus to their requirements' and was to be closed.

This task has been approached as a documentary. All entries and references are supported by evidence and can be verified. Documents referred to are either referenced as footnotes or set out in full in the Appendices. Bound publications, such as the *Reports of the Principal to the Governing Body* and prospectuses, may be accessed through the Agricola Club Secretary.

This record has been compiled for the alumni of Wye College, for former staff, and for members of the Wye community and beyond who have been affected by the closing down of the College. It is also for the interest and attention of fellow academic institutions and for those whose concern is the governance of individual institutions, their public funding, and the system-wide national level of higher education related to the agricultural industry.

BACKGROUND TO WYE COLLEGE 1894–2000

Wye College has been a centre of learning since 1447 when it was founded by Cardinal John Kempe as the College of St Gregory and St Martin for the education of priests. After the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, it re-opened as a grammar school for gifted boys, later to become a school for underprivileged boys and girls. In 1894 this school moved to other premises when the South Eastern Agricultural College was established. The College became a School of the University of London in 1898, and Wye College was awarded a Royal Charter in 1948, following its amalgamation with the Swanley College of Horticulture.

Wye College developed as an internationally renowned centre for the study of the science, management, and economics relating to agriculture, horticulture, the rural environment and the food industry. In 1999/2000 it had students from 50 different countries, 477 undergraduates, 259 MSc and PhD postgraduates (Appendix 1), and 200 postgraduate professionals attending a wide range of short courses. The External Programme launched in 1988 was awarded one of the first Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher Education, and had 975 mid-career professionals registered from 120 different countries. In 1997, a new Learning Resource Centre was opened by HRH The Princess Royal¹.

¹ (taken from the leaflet, *Imperial College at Wye—a world class merger* 1 August 2000)

The detailed history of the evolution of Wye College is comprehensively documented in Stewart Richard's book, *'Wye College and its world—a centenary history'*²; prefaced by HRH The Princess Royal, Chancellor the University of London, as...

'meticulous in its scholarly standards and captures the essential ethos of the College over the last one hundred years'.

At the merger between Wye College and Imperial College on 1 August 2000, Wye College became known as Imperial College at Wye. In January 2008, Imperial College announced to staff that the College was to be closed.

PART I: FACTORS LEADING TO THE MERGER

The decision by the Governors of Wye College to merge with Imperial College was driven by a series of external and internal factors, some of which spanned many years. These contributory factors are set out below:

External factors

- Depression in the agricultural industry
- The Barnes Report on the funding of R&D in MAFF
- Government funding for higher education

Internal factors

- Student numbers
- RAE assessment
- Research income
- College finances

External factors

Depression in the agricultural industry

There is evidence that for many years income from farming, in real terms in the UK, has been in long-term decline. Charts 1 and 2 published by Defra illustrate the decline in farming income and the deteriorating relationship between product and input prices. Some consequences are reflected in Defra's figures³ for self-sufficiency for all food in the UK between 1996 and 2006 when it reduced from 68.6% to 59.5%; in some sectors there has been a 'huge gulf to bridge'⁴. While this simplifies complex issues, the relevant point is that, over the last two decades, the contraction in the farming industry is likely to have impacted on higher education and research.

² Richards, Stewart (1994) *Wye College and its world—a centenary history*, Wye College Press, ISBN 0-86266-091-2 Hbk, ISBN 0-86266-191-9 Pbk

³ Defra (2008) Agricultural Quick Statistics <http://statistics.Defra.gov.uk/esg/quick/agric.asp>

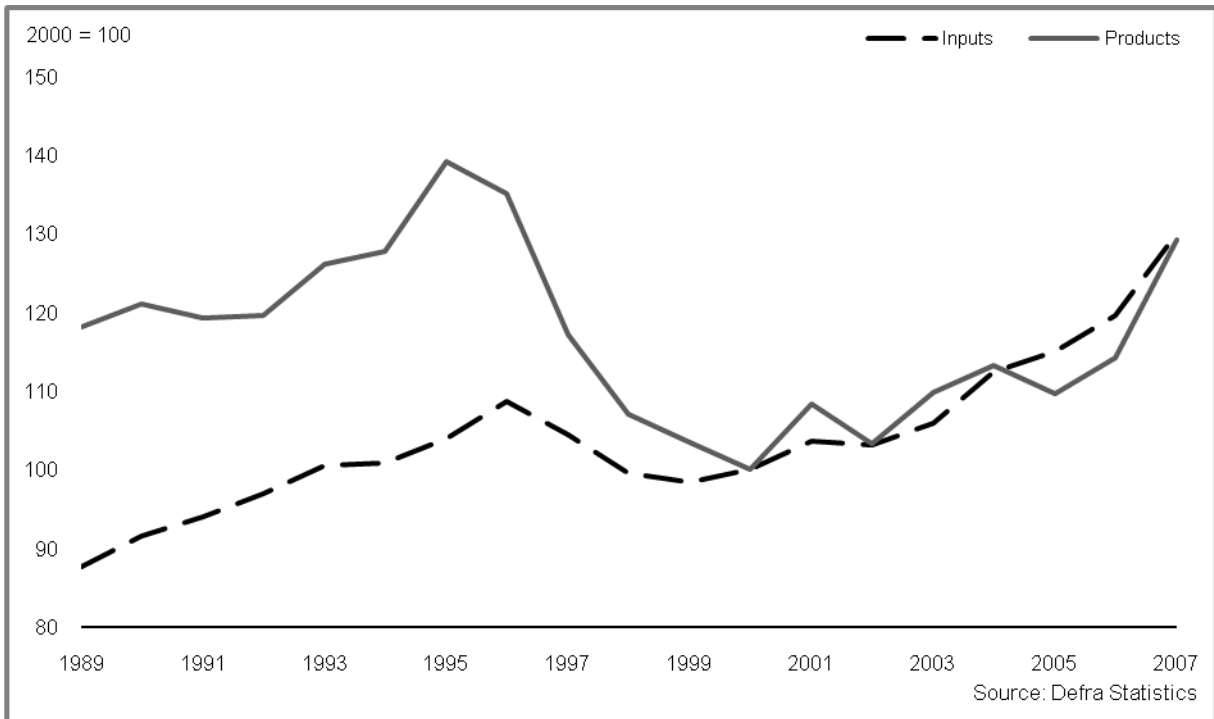
⁴ NFU (2006) Why farming matters. What agriculture and horticulture mean to Britain.

Chart 1. Long-term trends in farming income in real terms at 2007 prices, UK



Source: Defra Statistics 2008

Chart 2. Price indices for products and inputs, UK



Source: Defra Statistics 2008

Changes in the agricultural industry and demand for degree courses

A large number of students in agriculture and horticulture have traditionally come from families involved in the industry. Farming has been in long-term decline in terms of its contribution to the national economy and to the work-force, both in absolute numbers and proportion of the total. The financial prospect of a career in this sector is something that will be borne in mind when a choice of University course is made. These changes in the agricultural industry and expectations relating to them are factors that are likely to influence potential numbers of degree students in agriculture.

The Barnes Report on the funding of R&D by MAFF

In 1988, following a review of expenditure by MAFF on research and development, the Barnes Report recommended that the Government should withdraw from funding 'near-market agricultural research'. The review recommended that £21.5m spent on agriculture near-market R&D be withdrawn with the expectation it would be picked up by the industry. This had a significant impact upon research funding of MAFF and upon the AFRC⁵.

With responsibility for near-market research being passed to industry, a counter-balancing cut of £30m was made by MAFF and Scottish Office Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Department (SOAEFD) R&D budgets. This severely curtailed the national funding available for applied agricultural and horticultural research. Although the levy bodies carry out their responsibility for supporting industry R&D, the amounts spent annually are small (<0.25% of agricultural GDP)⁶.

Government funding for higher education

Until the early 1970s, university funding had been on the basis of quinquennial agreements, but this arrangement failed in the face of the inflation rates seen in that decade. An annual settlement was introduced which made long-term planning increasingly difficult.

Reduction in student support

At the same time as the government support per student started to decline, moves were made to expand the size of the university sector. Thus, between 1980 and 1998, support per student fell by around 50% as shown in Chart 3. Since 1970, support per student had fallen by approximately two-thirds. An implication of this was that Wye would have had to expand by three times its 1970 student numbers, without any increase in staff and other costs, simply to maintain its 1970s financial position. All universities faced such pressures, but they were most acute in small specialist institutions such as Wye.

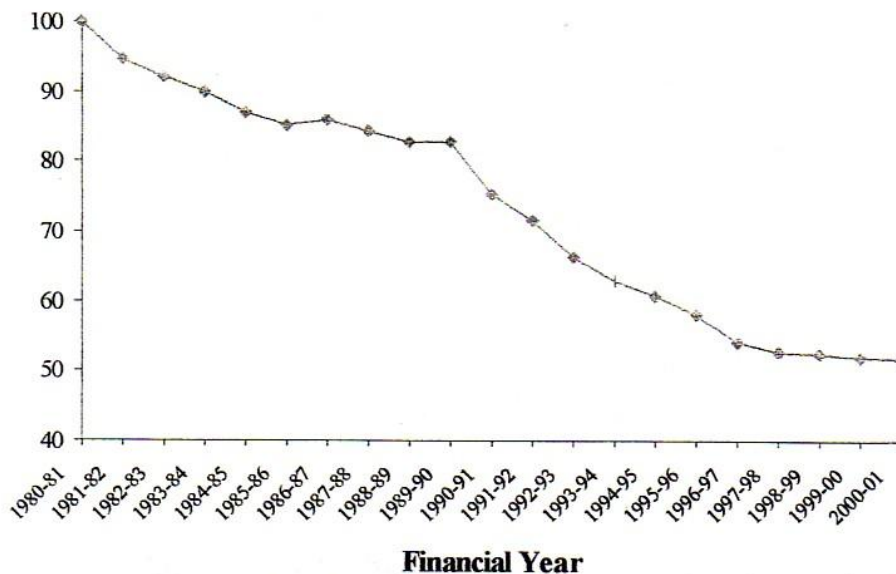
The introduction of student tuition fees in 1998 and the phasing out of student maintenance grants by 1999, substituted by student loans, meant that students were

⁵ The BSE Inquiry: The Report, <http://www.bseinquiry.gov.uk/report/volume2/chaptec6.htm>

⁶ The Commercial Farmers Group (2008) *The need for a new vision for agricultural research and Development* www.commercialfarmers.co.uk

likely to become more responsive to market signals about the value of different degrees and make their choices accordingly. With declines in the numbers involved in both agriculture and its service industries, Wye's traditional markets were clearly under severe pressure.

Chart 3. Index of public funding for higher education 1980/81 to 2000/01 (expenditure per student)



Source: DfEE

The HEFCE teaching grant is based on a 'Price Group' league table: see Table 1.

Table 1. National weightings of teaching grants

Price group	Weighting up to 2003/2004	Weighting from 2003/2004	Subject area
A	4.5	4	Clinical
B	2	1.7	Science, engineering & technology
C	1.5	1.3	Other high cost subjects with a studio, laboratory, fieldwork element
D	1	1	All other subjects

Source: Funding higher education in England. How HEFCE allocates its funds (HEFCE 2003, 2004)

The teaching grant for group A (e.g. veterinary/medical students) is four times that of group D. Agriculture, Horticulture, and Biological Sciences students fall within B, Applied Economics into C, and Business Studies D, and therefore funding was reduced from 2003/04.

Core research grant

Research grant funding is mostly determined by an exercise undertaken approximately every five years on behalf of the UK Funding Councils to evaluate the quality of research undertaken by UK higher education institutions. Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) submissions from each subject area are given a rank by a specialist peer review panel (Table 2). The rankings are used to inform the allocation of quality-weighted research funding that each higher education institution receives from their national funding council. However, the RAE has tended to encourage more basic science rather than applied industry-orientated science and, as a consequence, applied agricultural research was not highly rated. The higher research rankings carry a significant grant premium which, for smaller institutions, can make an important contribution towards total income. The RAE ranking system was as follows:

Table 2. 1992, 1996, 2001 RAE rankings

1992 rating	1996 & 2001 rating	Description
	5*	>50% international excellence, national excellence in the remainder of research activity
5	5	Up to/ 50% international excellence, national excellence in the remainder of research activity
4	4	National excellence in all research activity, some evidence of international excellence
3	3a	National excellence in two-thirds of research activity, some evidence of international excellence
3	3b	National excellence in more than 50% research activity
2	2	National excellence in up to 50% research activity
1	1	National excellence in none, or virtually none of research evidence submitted

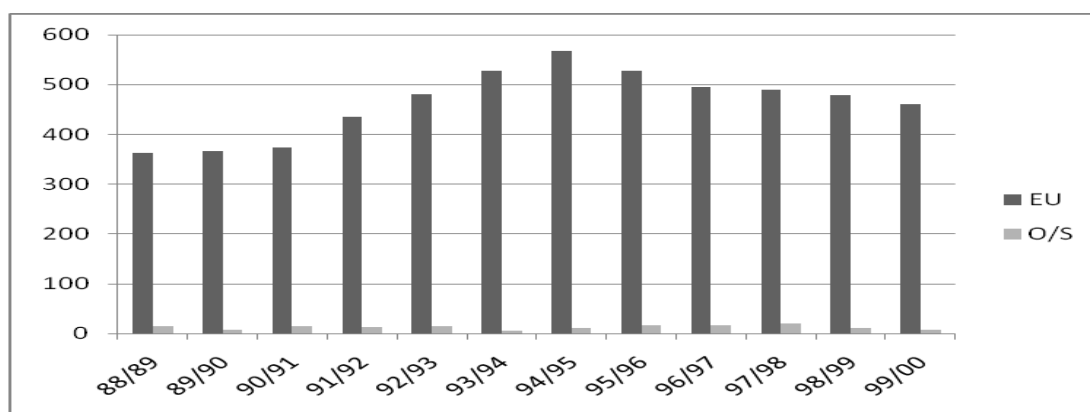
Source: HEFCE

Internal factors

Student numbers

Undergraduate (U/G) recruitment at Wye grew in the mid-1990s, and declined towards 2000, but still remained at a higher level than 1988–1992 (see Chart 4)

Chart 4. Undergraduate registrations 1988–2000

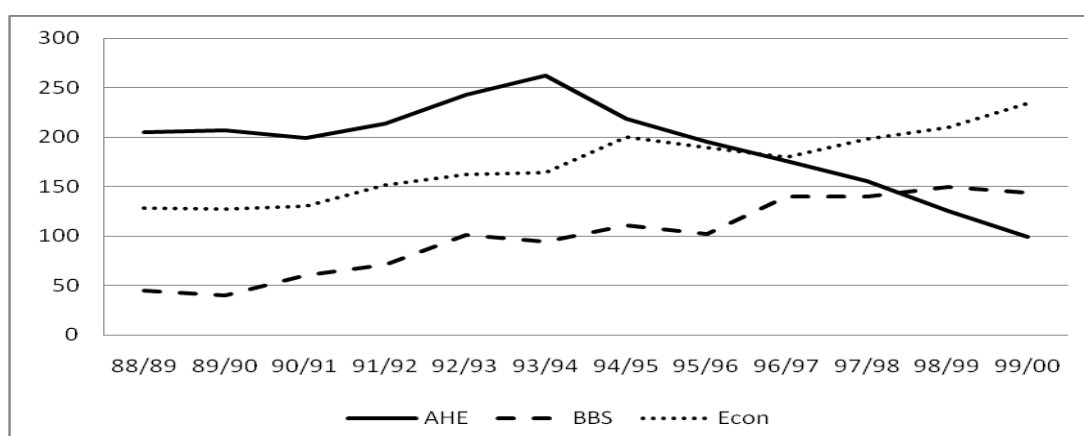


Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*, p. 155

Although total undergraduate recruitment had fallen gradually, the courses elected by students had altered, as shown in Chart 5 (detailed in Appendix 1). Registrations to the Agriculture, Horticulture and the Environment Department (AHE) fell steeply, whilst registrations within Agricultural Economics and Business Management (Econ) grew – particularly due to the popularity of Business Studies. The number of students registering with the Department of Biotechnology and Biological Sciences (BBS) also sustained a steady growth, boosted by the new degree in Equine Science. Student registrations within AHE dropped by 88 (41%) between the years 92/93 and 97/98, reflecting the depression in the industry nationally.

Courses in the AHE Department and BBS Department attracted a ‘B’ HEFCE grant rating with a higher level of funding. Economics Department courses were either C for Agricultural Business Management or D for the Business studies courses. In 1997, Wye faced an overall reduction in income from student fees of £500k per annum⁷.

Chart 5. U/G student numbers per department 1988–2000

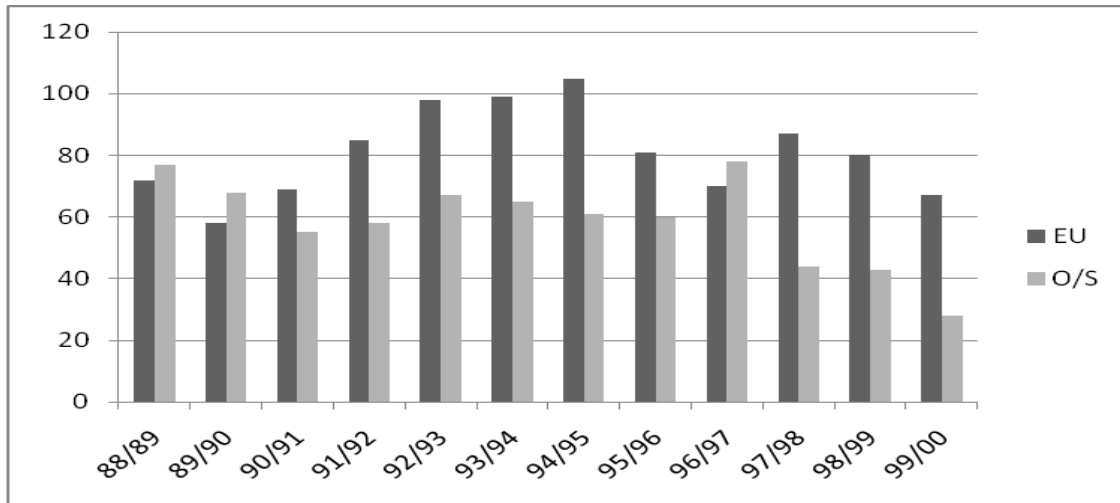


Source: *The Reports of the Principal to the Governing Body for the years 1988–1989 to 1999–2000*

⁷ Prescott, John (2007) *The financial difficulties in sustaining research and resident undergraduate and postgraduate courses at Wye 1997–2007* derived from the relevant *Reports of the Principal to the Governing Body*

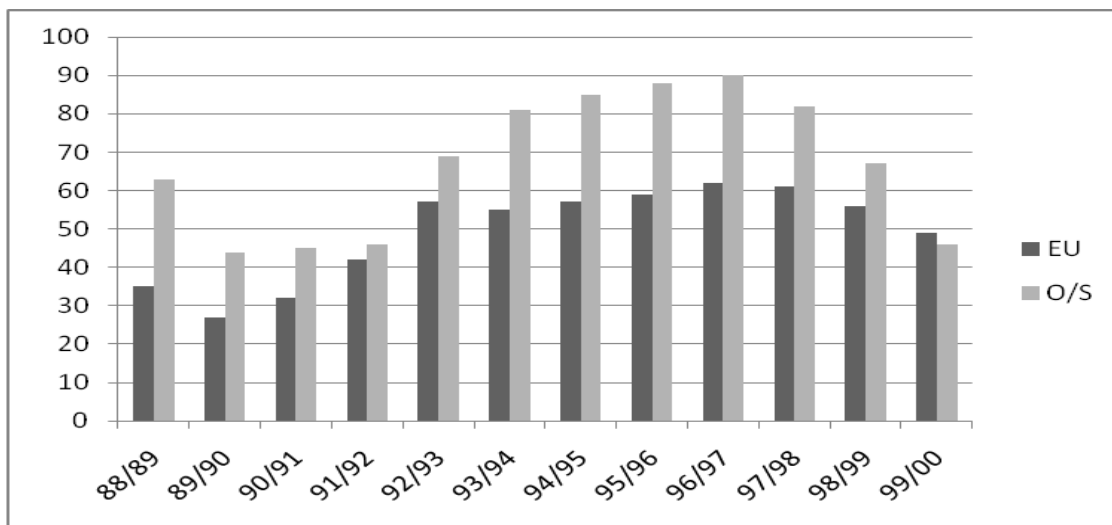
Postgraduate recruitment for both taught and research registrations peaked in the mid-1990s, but declined gradually towards 2000 as shown in Charts 6 and 7.

Chart 6. Postgraduate (P/G) taught registrations 1988–2000



Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*

Chart 7. Postgraduate (P/G) research registrations 1988–2000

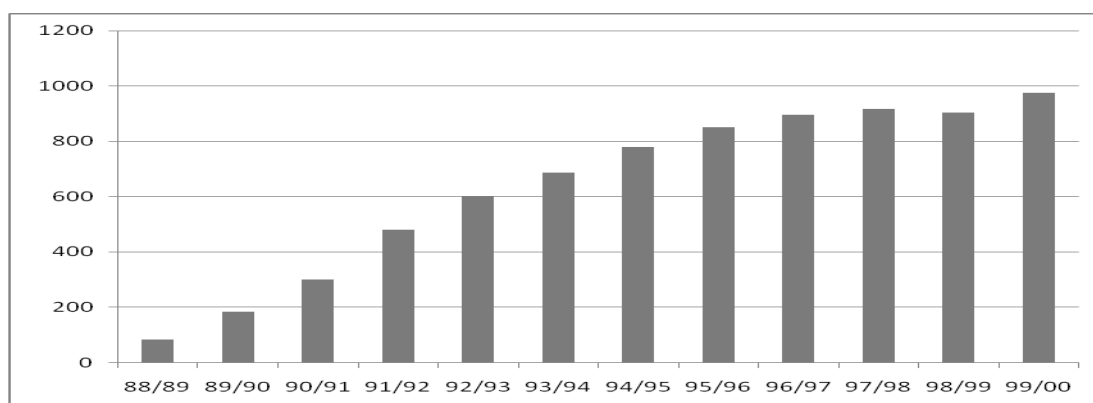


Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*

Overseas student fee income reduced from over £1.0m in 1996 to c. £0.6m in 2000. This was ascribed by the College Treasurer to the strong value of sterling coupled with the economic factors in developing countries severely affecting recruitment of overseas postgraduate students. (Treasurer’s Report in the Final and Audited Accounts of Wye College, 2000.)

The number of students registered with the External Programme grew substantially and income rose from £196,000 in 1988/89 to £908,000 in 1999/2000 (Chart 8).

Chart 8. External Programme student registrations 1988–2000



Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*

Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 1996

The College submission for the 1996 RAE included 60 of the current staff registering four publications and three others with three publications. Three independent investigators also had four publications. The assessment for research quality of the College as a whole was rated down from 4 in 1992 to 3A in 1996. Plant molecular biology was flagged as being of exceptional merit.

Many of the publications submitted by Wye were for applied research rather than for basic science that was being encouraged by the RAE.

The consequence of the RAE rating was to reduce Wye’s annual research grant from HEFCE by £500k from 1997, but this was safety-netted by HEFCE⁸.

Reduced research income

Research income (grants and contracts) for 1998/99 was £2,201,000 and for 1999/2000, £1,500,000. The changes in research income between 1988 and 2000 can be seen in Table 3 and Chart 9.

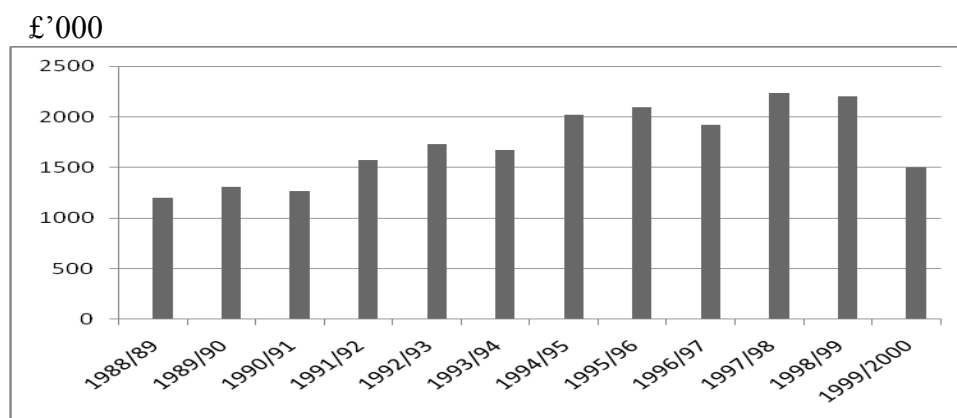
Table 3. Summary of changes in research income 1988/1989–1999/2000

	88/89	89/90	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Gross research income	1,203	1,304	1,263	1,577	1,734	1,675	2,018	2,093	1,920	2,232	2,201	1,500

Source: Wye College University of London Governing Body, consolidated financial results 1989-2000 ref: APP32/3.3

⁸ Prescott, John (2007) *The financial difficulties in sustaining research and resident undergraduate and postgraduate courses at Wye 1997–2007*, derived from the relevant *Reports of the Principal to the Governing Body*

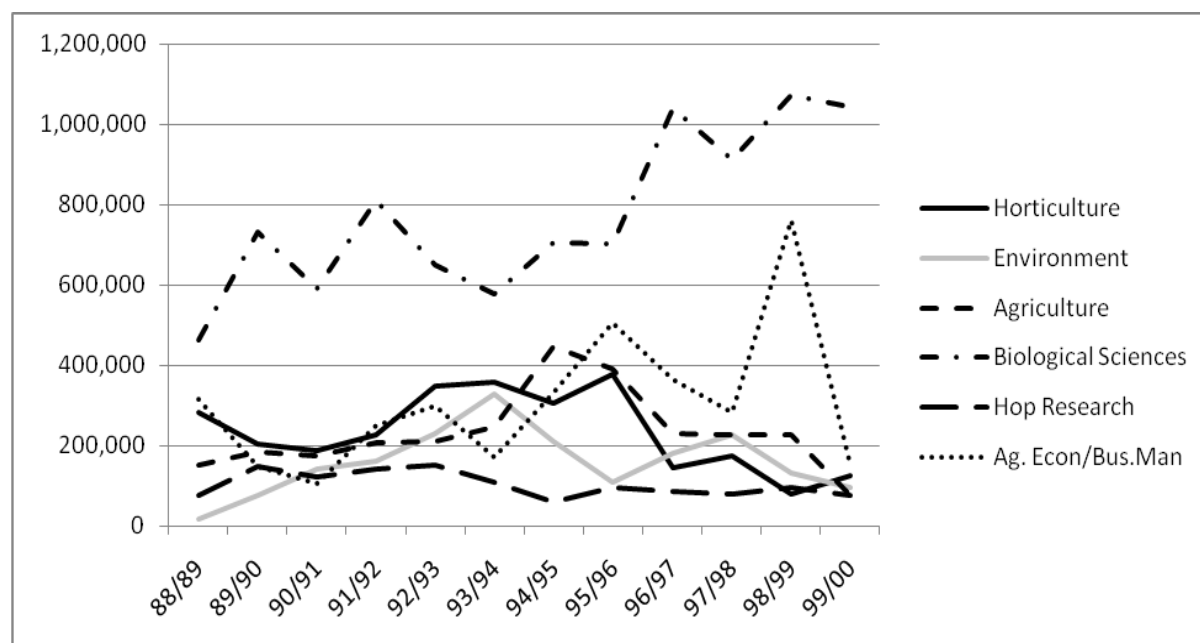
Chart 9. Summary of changes in research income 1988/89–1999/2000



Source: *The Reports of the Principal to the Governing Body for the years 1988/89–1999/2000*

Expenditure against research income for research contracts at Wye 1988–2000 is shown in Chart 10.

Chart 10. Research expenditure against income



Source: *The Reports of the Principal to the Governing Body for the years 1988/89–1999/2000*

Albeit based on expenditure, this illustrates the general decline in research contracts across departments, but especially in the AHE Department as a consequence of the national withdrawal of industry-related research funding. Net income from research contracts from MAFF and the EU was significantly reduced. Biological Sciences sustained their research contract growth, but this required support by high levels of expenditure. Further breakdown of the research expenditure is given in Appendix 2.

College finances: capital, assets, reserves

Capital development 1988–1998

The College Built Estate strategy over the decade started with the completion of the Wolfson Lecture Theatre and then included the development of four new Halls of Residence (Dunstan Skilbeck Hall, Sunley Hall, Garden Hall, Edward Partridge House), improved lecture rooms, laboratories, and offices (including the Carr Lecture Theatre, Top-Hat, Business and Economics Department) which resulted in a net increase in the value of the Built Estate in 1997 of £2m with, in addition, £3.5m invested in the new Learning Resource Centre, completed in 1996. There was also a further £2m investment in establishing 50 postgraduate courses to be completed for delivery by distance learning. Substantial charitable funding supported most of this development and the College's total capital liabilities were, in 1997, consolidated into a bank loan for £1.85m repayable over a 15-year term. By this time the turnover of the College had doubled from some £6m to well over £12m per annum (see Table 4).

Table 4. Summary of funding sources for capital development 1988–1998

Built Estate	Name	Sources of funding
Student accommodation (built and/or refurbished)	Dunstan Skilbeck Hall, Sunley Hall, Garden Hall, Edward Partridge House	Pump priming funds raised from the sale of peripheral properties and substantial charitable donations. Long-term loans kept to minimum
Academic facilities (expansion of facility)	Carr Lecture Theatre	Supported by donation from Stephen and Ann Carr
Academic facilities (refurbished)	Biotechnology Laboratory	Supported by the Wolfson Foundation
Modest improvements to teaching and research facilities	Various	HEFCE capital supported by sales of the College's own peripheral properties
New Learning Resource Centre	Kempe Centre	Significant funding from the Wolfson Foundation, the Parkinson Trust and the sale of non-core properties, including the Principal's house. Funding from Westminster Foundations, individual alumni, and the Agricola Club

Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the years 1987–1988 to 1999–2000*

Kempe Centre

It has been suggested that the funding of the New Learning Resource Centre had been a key factor in the financial difficulties leading to the merger⁹ but this was not the case. Governors of the College were expeditious in securing funding from all

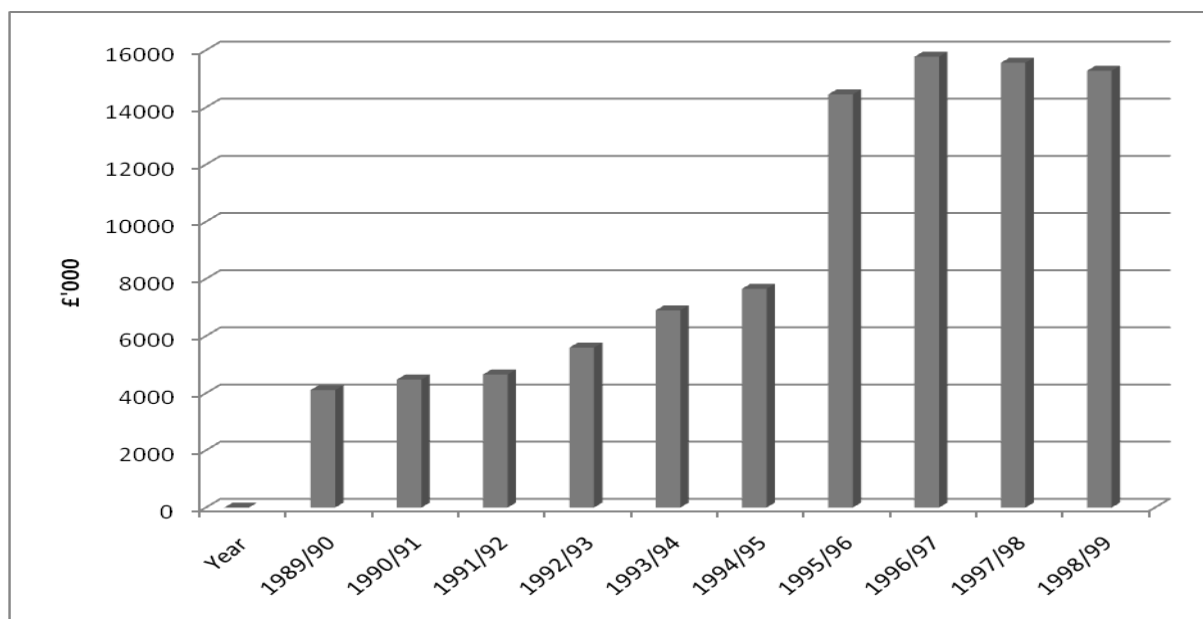
⁹ Wye: *The Journal of the Wye College Agricola Club 2006–2007*, Volume XVII, No. 5, page 10

potential sources. The Kempe Centre and IT costs totalled £4m. Funding contributed all but £1.5m which was consolidated into the £1.85m 15-year bank loan.

Tangible fixed assets

The College estate was re-valued to a fair value in 1994/95, increasing the total reserves but also the depreciation charge to reflect the utilisation of these assets. Over the years, exceptional gains on sales of non-core properties had previously mitigated disappointing operating activities, enabling the College to continue as a going concern (Chart 11).

Chart 11. Wye College tangible fixed assets 1989–1999



Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*, page 152

College total reserves

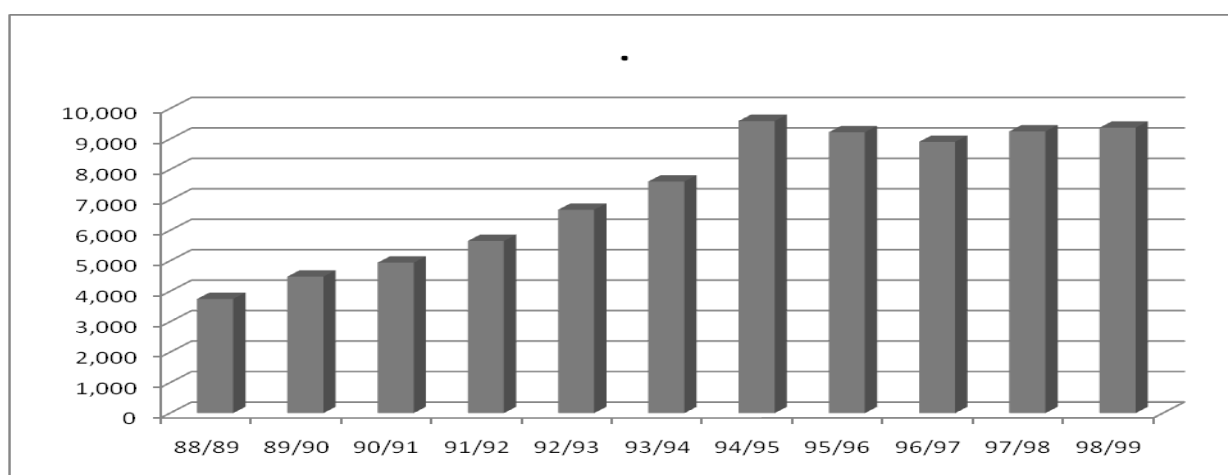
College reserves were made up of:

- Income and expenditure reserve
- Other income reserve
- Capital reserve*
- Revaluation reserve
- Endowment reserves
- Unexpended balances*

*Changes in accounting requirements in 1994/95 meant that unexpended balances could no longer be shown in reserves and that the capital reserve had to be reallocated between the revaluation reserve and the income and expenditure reserve.

Substantial bequests to endowment funds, together with high annual growth on these funds contributed to the College's reserves. The reserves increased to £9.6m in 1994/95, and then declined to approximately £8.3m at merger (Chart 12).

Chart 12. Wye College total reserves 1988–1999



Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*, page 152

College finances: consolidated financial results from 1989–1999

Detail of the consolidated financial results from 1989–1999 is given in Appendix 3. Prior to 1989, significant efforts had been made to reduce the dependence of the College on central government funding. In 1989, more than half the total income of the College was derived from student fees and from research grants and contracts. Despite this, the consequence of core funding, provided for undergraduate teaching and the training of postgraduate students, not keeping pace with inflation was significant. This had drained readily realisable reserves, resulting in a significant deficit at the end of the academic year 1988/89¹⁰. This trend continued throughout the following decade, as seen in the operating surplus/(deficit) given in Table 5.

Table 5. Wye College operating surplus/(deficit) 1988–1999

Year	£'000
88/89	(300)
89/98	(84)
90/91	(66)
91/92	(130)
92/93	201
93/94	(182)
94/95	(108)
95/96	(346)
96/97	(298)
97/98	(150)
98/99	(63)

Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*, page 152

Over this 11 year period, the College had been in operating surplus only once. At 31 July 1999 College's investment in depreciable tangible fixed assets (equipment and buildings, not land) carried a future commitment to depreciation of approximately

¹⁰ *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1988–1989*

£13.5m over the life of the assets. College could not generate enough income to cover its year-on-year cash outflows (labour, interest, and other operating expenses). This was compounded by there not being any surplus generated, sufficient to cover the deferred capital costs that were reflected in the annual depreciation charge.¹¹

Options considered and decision for merger

Continued viability of the College

During the financial year 1997/98, a working group comprising Governors and staff met to consider and progress matters relating to academic co-operation. Discussion at Governors' meetings focused on the chronic difficulties in the financial operating position of the College and the delay in relation to capital sales relating to the former student car park and the consequent serious effects on the College's cash flow. A HEFCE evaluation of internal control arrangements concluded that although College had a comprehensive and effective range of management controls, it was the structural and strategic formula-driven funding applied nationally, when worked through to a small specialist institution such as Wye, that presented continuing and fundamental difficulty.

Governors were mindful of their statutory and long-term responsibility in relation to the protection of the institution mission and the rights and duties associated with students and staff. While the medium term loan (15 years) of £1.85m had been taken out with the bank, it became increasingly clear that the Governing Body would need to address a full range of solutions, including the most radical. There was growing concern about the continued financial viability of the College and whether it could remain autonomous and still protect its Mission. After wide consultation, the Governing Body resolved at its meeting of 19 June 1998:

'that taking account of all the information provided to the Governing Body, including the progress report and covering letter from the Rector of Imperial College, and the consideration of the options open to the College, the Governing Body resolved to merge with Imperial College in an amicable and mutually beneficial manner, subject to a similar resolution being approved by Imperial College on the terms of final and legally binding Heads of Agreement.

The Governing Body believed such a course of action to be in the best interest of the Mission of the College, and in the interests of students (past, present and future), staff and assets of the College and development...¹².

¹¹ *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*, page 151

¹² *Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1997–1998*, Governing Body, Administration and Finance, page 79

The Mission of Wye College 1996–1997

Wye College, University of London aims to maintain and develop its distinctive identity as a national and international centre of excellence for research and scholarship in science, management and economics relating to natural resources, agriculture, horticulture, the rural environment, and the food industry.

Merger options considered

Over the years, there had been tentative enquiries by other constituent Colleges of the University of London about a merger with Wye College, but these had not been pursued. When a merger became a real possibility, three institutions, The University of Kent at Canterbury, The University of Greenwich, and Imperial College (University of London) were serious contenders. Greenwich and Imperial were already partners with Wye as equal members of the consortium responsible for the privatised Natural Resources International Ltd at Chatham which bid for and managed overseas research and management projects.

Of these three institutions, Imperial College, like Wye a constituent College of the University of London, complemented Wye most closely. Exchange of information and in-depth discussion in relation to research and professional training confirmed the potential synergy of expertise and resources of the two Colleges.

The Rector of Imperial, Lord Oxburgh, subsequently expounded on *‘the tremendous opportunities to bring together the strengths of Wye College in food, agriculture, and rural environment with those complementary activities in the TH Huxley School and Biology Department at Imperial College. This powerful combination will stimulate inter-disciplinary research and new initiatives which in turn will promote undergraduate and postgraduate teaching’*¹³.

The nature of Imperial’s interest in Wye and the shared commitment of staff in both Colleges was realised as being the best safeguard for future developments at Wye.

Merger agreement

Heads of Agreement

A copy of the Heads of Agreement, signed on 13 November 1998 at 170 Queen’s Gate in South Kensington, is given in Appendix 4. Because Wye College was to become part of Imperial College and all governance would be relinquished, Wye College would cease to exist on the handing over of the Statutes. The Heads of Agreement could therefore be considered an ‘agreement based on trust’, and not a contract as, after merger, there would be no Wye Governing Body.

A quotation from Dr Eastwood, Director of Planning and Management Information Services at Imperial College’, illustrates this understanding:

‘

¹³ <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/P2017.htm>

*We are still legally independent until the merger, although we are now affiliated. The heads of agreement signing is like an official engagement. Academic collaborations and the possibility of joint teaching, however, are already under discussion*¹⁴

The Imperial vision

The Imperial College vision for the merger with Wye was set out in detail in the address given by Lord Oxburgh to the Governing Body of Wye College on 18 June 1999 (Appendix 5)¹⁵.

In summary, the merger would advance Imperial's application of science within the environmental spectrum by the introduction of agriculture and the acquisition of unique experimental facilities. It was envisaged that Wye would benefit by merging with a larger institution where environmental and biological disciplines were already strong, enabling growth in these areas to take place without the financial vulnerabilities.

The Imperial Act

A copy of the Imperial Act, passed on 30 June 1999, is given in Appendix 6.

Transition arrangements 1999/2000

In recognition of the implications of the College's financial situation, consultation with staff took place to identify mutually agreeable terms for prospective voluntary severance and voluntary early retirement. As a consequence, and on a voluntary basis, over the period of transition to merger, 25 academic and academic-related staff and 17 non-academic support staff accepted such terms. This comprised over 25% of the full-time academic staff and 15% of the core full-time non-academic staff complement. For some academic staff, retirement was phased with part-time re-engagement for up to three years in order to safeguard the ongoing teaching requirement.

All other aspects of College finances were rigorously controlled, and all expenditure on infrastructure in this final year of Wye College operation was constrained¹⁶.

It was announced in January 2000 that Professor Tim Clark, a Pro-Rector at Imperial College, would be the new Provost at Wye, responsible for co-ordinating the function of Imperial College at Wye. His responsibilities were to be:

- to represent Wye's interests and secure its full integration in the academic development of Imperial College
- to have oversight of staff and student welfare on the Wye campus and ensure that Wye campus services provided by Imperial College were effective in supporting research and teaching, while maintaining the collegiality of academic life at Wye

¹⁴ <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/publications/reporterarchive/0071/news01.htm>

¹⁵ *Wye The Journal of The Wye College Agricola Club 1999–2000*. Volume XVI Number 6

¹⁶ *Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*, page 16

- to ensure communication locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally with the communities to which Wye relates; this specifically includes relationships with the residents of Wye and the Local Authorities
- to contribute to the vision for research-led development of Imperial College at Wye, extending the initial integration with the Huxley School and with Biology to other Departments
- to have an Advisory Committee to which he will report annually on the deployment of endowments and trust funds which will pass to Imperial at merger and will continue to be used thereafter for the benefit of students and academic life at Wye¹⁷.

Transition costs incurred by Imperial

The transition period realised opportunities for research innovation, with the appointment of three new professors and three new lecturers, prospective HEFCE capital investment in the refurbishment of the glasshouses and teaching laboratories, and for the restructuring of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at Wye and the development of the External Programme.

At the time of the Heads of Agreement, Imperial had made a loan of £2.6m to Wye College to pay off debts and cover running costs and merger expenditure to that date. In January 2000, a further £500k loan was made to meet the identifiable costs of merger prior to 1 August 2000.

Student recruitment arrangements for 2000/2001

The responsibility for undergraduate recruitment for 2000/2001 was transferred to Imperial.

Schedule of College Estates and Treasures at time of merger

The schedule of assets (property, facilities and land) at the time of merger is given in Appendix 7. The land in Wye, Brook, and the North Downs had been designated as part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), with parts between Brook and Silks designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Parts of Wye village are in a conservation area including the listed old buildings of the College.

The schedule of Wye Treasures at the time of merger was substantial and consisted of numerous oil and water-colour paintings including many portraits, drawings, and prints, antique furniture, trophies, silver, porcelain, and figures (some were listed, and may not be moved from College without specific consent from Ashford Borough Council's Listed Buildings Department). A full list of Treasures at the time of the merger is lodged with the Agricola Club.

¹⁷ *Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*, pages 17, 18

Financial position at merger

The consolidated income and expenditure account for 1998/99 and 1999/2000 is given in Table 6. A five-year summary to 1999/2000 is given in Table 7 and the balance sheet in Table 8.

Table 6. Wye consolidated income and expenditure account year ended 31 July 2000

	2000	1999
Income		
Funding Council Grants	4,160	4,192
Tuition fees and support grants	2,406	2,650
Research grants and contracts	1,713	2,301
Other income	2,690	2,449
Restructuring income receivable	1,134	–
Endowment and investment income	550	305
Total income	12,653	11,897
Expenditure		
Staff costs	7,101	6,902
Other operating expenses	4,660	4,810
Restructuring costs	1,134	–
Depreciation	574	508
Interest Payable	167	129
Total expenditure	13,636	12,349
Deficit before tax	(983)	(452)
Share of income from associated under takings	21	–
Taxation	(7)	–
Deficit after depreciation of revalued assets	(969)	(452)

Source: Wye College, University of London, Final audited accounts, 31 July 2000

Table 7. Five year summary

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Operating deficit	(346)	(298)	(150)	(151)	(632)
Depreciation charge	(372)	(511)	(535)	(508)	(574)
Release of deferred capital grants	273	291	296	212	223
Surplus/(deficit) on sale of properties	44	(30)	220	(5)	-
Share of income from associated undertakings	-	-	-	-	14
Reported deficit for the year	(401)	(548)	(169)	(452)	(969)

Source: *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000*

Table 8. Balance sheet for year ending 31 July 2000

	Consolidated		College	
	2000 £000	1999 £000	2000 £000	1999 £000
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	20,057	15,285	19,761	14,945
Investments	175	73	83	73
	<u>20,232</u>	<u>15,358</u>	<u>19,844</u>	<u>15,018</u>
Endowment assets	<u>1,883</u>	<u>2,089</u>	<u>964</u>	<u>1,121</u>
Current assets				
Stocks	325	334	325	334
Debtors	2,102	1,227	2,175	1,314
Debtors..due after more than 1 year	–	–	595	623
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>48</u>	<u>361</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>857</u>
	2,475	1,922	3,137	3,128
Creditors falling due within 1 year	<u>(2,574)</u>	<u>(2,141)</u>	<u>(2,557)</u>	<u>(2,632)</u>
Net current (liabilities)/assets	<u>(99)</u>	<u>(219)</u>	<u>580</u>	<u>496</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	22,016	17,228	21,388	16,634
Creditors..due after more than 1 year	<u>(3,354)</u>	<u>(2,710)</u>	<u>3,354</u>	<u>(2,710)</u>
Provision for liabilities and charges	<u>(420)</u>	<u>(235)</u>	<u>(420)</u>	<u>(235)</u>
Net assets	<u>18,242</u>	<u>14,283</u>	<u>17,614</u>	<u>13,690</u>
Deferred capital grants	4,782	4,909	4,782	4,909
Endowments	1,883	2,089	964	1,121
Revaluation reserve	9,583	4,500	9,583	4,500
Income and expenditure a/c reserve	1,994	2,785	1,798	2,681
Other reserves	–	–	487	479
Total	<u>18,242</u>	<u>14,283</u>	<u>17,614</u>	<u>13,690</u>

Source: Wye College, University of London, Final audited accounts, 31 July 2000

Handover of the Statutes

On 1 August 2000, Wye College became Imperial College at Wye in a formal bestowal ceremony which took place in the Old Hall. Lord Brabourne, Provost of Wye College, handed the ancient Statutes of 1447 and the Royal Charter of Incorporation (granted by George VI in 1948) to Lord Oxburgh, Rector of Imperial College, for safekeeping in the Imperial College archives¹⁸.

PART 2: POST-MERGER

Introduction

The post-merger section of this record covers the period from the handover of the statutes of Wye College to Imperial College on 1 August 2000 to March 2010. It presents the initial opportunities voiced by Imperial at the outset of the merger and the chronology of events leading up to closure of the Wye campus as an academic institution and the uncertainty over its disposal plans.

This section is indebted to the investigations by David Hewson and Justin Williams through the Save-Wye campaign. Factual information obtained by them which has been included in this Record is referenced throughout. The full details of their investigation, exposures, and outcomes is given in David Hewson's book *Saved*¹⁹.

The postscript of this Record identifies the state of agricultural and horticultural policy in the UK in 2009, and poses some of the questions the closure of Wye has raised.

1 August 2000–31 July 2001

Statements made at the Merger Ceremony 1 August 2000

At the handing over of the 1447 Statutes of Wye College University of London to Imperial College of Science and Technology in the official merger ceremony on 1 August 2000, the new Provost of Imperial College at Wye, Professor Tim Clarke, stated that, 'my challenge is to make the merger work to the benefit of all parties...'. The Rector of Imperial, Lord Oxburgh, identified the 'importance of agriculture as a discipline of increasing importance that would benefit from the tremendous opportunities of bringing together the strengths of Wye in food, agriculture and rural environment with those complementary activities in the T.H. Huxley School and the Department of Biology at Imperial'²⁰.

¹⁸ *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body for the year 1999–2000.*

¹⁹ David Hewson (2007) *Saved' How an English village fought for its survival and won.* Matador ,ISBN 10: 1-90588676-4

²⁰ Agricola Club Journal 2000–2001 p.12

Organisational structures

Academic

The academic departmental arrangements for Wye had been announced pre-merger. The Departments of Agriculture and Horticulture, Environment, Agricultural Economics and Business Management, and the External Programme, were to become part of the Imperial T.H. Huxley School of Environment, Earth Sciences and Engineering headed by Professor John Beddington FRS²¹. The Department of Biological Sciences was to become part of the Imperial Biology Department, headed by Professor Michael Hassell FRS. The lead at Wye for the T.H. Huxley School was Professor David Leaver, the former Head of Department for Agriculture and Horticulture at Wye, and the lead at Wye for the Department of Biology was Professor Nick Russell, the former Head of Department for Biological Sciences.

Administration, Residential Services, and Estate

The transfer of the administration services from Wye to centralisation at the Imperial South Kensington site had commenced before the merger. Finance, payroll, human resources, and registry were absorbed into the respective Imperial systems. The management of residential services was taken over centrally, as was estates management.

The financial accounting for these different services and for the two departments were fragmented into the respective departmental costing streams at Imperial. Information for the overall financial performance of the Wye Campus *per se* was no longer transparent. The absorption of overheads was standardised across Imperial departments, based on a per capita basis and a 'space' basis for built environment costs, as appropriate. The 'space' charge was £15 per square foot per annum, and incorporated greenhouses (but not farm buildings). The Wye campus was, in this respect, disadvantaged financially, in that there was a considerable area of glass houses, and utility space charged for at the same rate as the intensively occupied, higher maintenance buildings at other Imperial sites (i.e. South.Kensington).

Wye Governors

On handing over the Statutes to Imperial on 1 August 2000, ownership and trusteeship of Wye College, held by the Governors of Wye College, was relinquished and Wye College ceased to exist. One former Governor, Hugh Lowe, who was the former Vice Chairman of Governors at Wye College, was appointed as a member of the Imperial Council and Court.

Appointment of new Rector at Imperial

Lord Oxburgh, whose vision for Wye played a significant part in the Imperial merger, retired as Rector of Imperial College at the end of December, 2000. Sir Richard Sykes DSc FRS replaced him on 3 January 2001. Professor Clarke, the Wye Provost alluded to the appointment of the new Rector bringing a fresh look at the

²¹ Professor Beddington was made a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2001 and is currently Government Chief Scientist

academic structure of Imperial College as a whole. Following a visit to the Wye campus in November 2000, Sir Richard Sykes had expressed optimism that academic investment to secure the future of Wye would be forthcoming, and that the strengthening of the research base would enable Imperial to continue with excellent undergraduate courses, maintaining both undergraduate and postgraduate education at Wye. He had said that among these opportunities was the possibility of a new academic activity on the ADAS site, which might lend itself to developing a science park that could focus on agriculture and biotechnology²².

The new Rector began to plan his departmental restructure soon after taking up his post, and announced his intention of Imperial dividing into four faculties: Engineering, Medicine, Physical Sciences, and Life Sciences. Wye would become part of the Life Sciences faculty²³.

Merger impact on U/G student recruitment

Due to administrative internal confusion, Imperial had omitted to include undergraduate degree courses at the Wye campus within the Imperial undergraduate prospectus for the 2000 intake. This, combined with the impact of introducing higher entry A-level requirements, had a serious detrimental effect on student intake numbers for the year²⁴.

A table giving the detail of changes in the requirement of GCE A-level points for student intake at Wye and undergraduate student intake for the years 1996–2001, by course, is given in Appendix 8. A summary is shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Summary of A-level points for U/G entry and U/G intake 1996–2001 Wye campus

	All U/G degree courses					
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
A-level points	15.0	15.5	17.3	18.9	21.4	23.5
Total student intake	153	185	170	135	95	42
Plus:						
Non-A-level (i.e. EU equivalent)	10	26	17	21	20	1
Mature students	32	38	20	22	10	3
Non-UK students	13	15	11	9	8	4

Source: Department of Agricultural Sciences records

The impact of the administrative error by Imperial in not including Wye-based undergraduate courses in the Imperial prospectus, and the uncertainty over the change from Wye to Imperial, also contributed towards the detrimental impact on the 2000/2001 intakes and had an effect on student numbers for the next three or four years.

²² Agricola Club Journal 2000-2001 p.15.16

²³ Agricola Club Journal 2000-2001 p.31

²⁴ Agricola Club Journal 2000-2001 p.18

1 August 2001–31 July 2002

Revised departmental structure and appointment of new Provost

The new departmental reorganisation took place, on 1 August 2001. The new Faculty of Life Sciences was formed, incorporating three campuses at Wye, South Kensington, and Silwood Park. Professor Michael Hassell FRS was appointed Head of Faculty. Wye became the Department of Agricultural Sciences within the Faculty. Professor Jeff Waage, who had been CEO of CABI Biosciences where he was in charge of global operations, was appointed Head of the Department of Agricultural Sciences. Professor Tim Clarke, who had acted as Provost at Wye, vacated his role at this time.

Revised degree courses

Undergraduate courses to be taught at the Wye campus had been renamed for the 2001/2002 academic year. The revised courses (which had been advertised in the U/G prospectus under the former Biology and Huxley School Departmental structures) included:

Undergraduate

BSc degrees (Department of Biology)

Animal Science

Equine Science

Environmental Biology

BSc/MSci (TH Huxley School)

All the Huxley undergraduate degrees at Wye were now renamed under the heading of Natural Science and therefore the former Wye College degrees, including Applied Business Management, were obscured from prospective students in both the Imperial and UCAS prospectuses.

Applied Natural Science with Management

Specialist options in

Agricultural Science

Horticultural Science

Applied Environmental Science

Environmental Management

Agricultural Business Management

Equine Business Management

Business Management for the Food Chain

Postgraduate

Diplomas and MSc degrees

Environmental Management

Specialist options in:

Applied Environmental Science
Landscape Ecology and Management
Rural Environmental Policy

Agribusiness Management
Agricultural Economics
Applied Environmental Economics
Economics of Rural Change
Food Industry Management and Marketing

Applied Plant Sciences
Plant Biotechnology

Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
Specialist options in:
Agrobiodiversity
Agroecology
Production in Tropical Environments

Early Imperial concerns about the Wye merger

The Save-Wye investigation discovered from the HEFCE internal correspondence, that as early as January 2002,²⁵ Imperial was expressing concerns to them about the merger with Wye, fearing that it might have been a mistake. In 2001, Wye had scored a research assessment exercise evaluation of 4, from submissions from 58% of their staff, which was lower than the overall Imperial performance, but an improvement on the previous overall score, prior to merger, of 3A. Consequently, Imperial was considering restructuring, or closing Wye and were asking HEFCE for financial help to do so. The HEFCE official concerned offered them the option of brokerage support in transferring the Wye campus to Kent or local Further Education (FE) colleges.

At a further meeting between the Imperial Rector and Professor Waage with HEFCE in February 2002, the earlier view was changed. It was established that, although Imperial still had concerns about Wye, they were determined to sort it out and had appointed Professor Jeff Waage to do so. They had decided, therefore, to reject the option of brokerage for transfer to another institution and to press ahead with their plans which would include the re-structuring of staffing (involving 50 staff redundancies and retirements), new research groups being brought in, sale of some assets and refurbishment of others. They would not be looking to HEFCE for any extra money.²⁶

Brochure to promote Imperial College Wye

In May 2002, Professor Jeff Waage drew up a new Imperial College Wye brochure with the intention of putting Wye back on the map after 'a period of invisibility'²⁷ following the merger with Imperial College. The brochure titled, *Imperial College*,

²⁵ HEFCE internal e-mail 29 January 2002 (Save-Wye FOI HEFCE document release)

²⁶ HEFCE internal e-mail 20 February, 2002 (Save-Wye FOI HEFCE document release)

²⁷ Quote from letter to Agricola Club members from Prof. Waage (May 2002) introducing New Wye Brochure

Wye: A New Force in Education and Research, gave an up-beat and positive account of the new Department at Wye, promoting a merged force offering opportunities for tomorrow's leaders in natural and social sciences, research in a range of diverse areas such as molecular biology in crop production, prevention of pollutants in the human food chain and the design of new economic models for European agriculture. This brochure was circulated widely.

Five year strategy for Imperial College Wye (2001/2 to 2005/6)

A five year strategy for Imperial College.Wye was drawn up by Professor Waage for the Department of Agricultural Sciences in the required Imperial annual business round format, and was presented to and approved by the Imperial Management Board²⁸. In applying the Imperial departmental costings system, Wye was particularly disadvantaged due to the charges for 'space'. The strategy projected a year on year steady growth in new student recruitment numbers (U/Gs from 42 to 100, taught P/Gs from 43 to 100, research PhDs from 12 to 32, EP from 259 to 300), growth in research income (from £1,817,000 to £2,686,000), improvements in academic performance, and a sound Department financial position.

HEFCE transition funding

An agreement had been made between Imperial and HEFCE on 17 July 2001²⁹ for Imperial to recover legitimate costs of activity incurred through the merger, from the HEFCE Restructuring and Collaboration (R&C) Fund. Imperial had originally submitted a bid to HEFCE identifying their costs totalling £10,179,000 associated with the merger. Approximately half the costs included forecast deficits, capital written off and interest foregone on loans made to Wye, which were ineligible under the terms of the HEFCE R&C funding. Other costs, which were eligible under the conditions of the R&C funds, included legal and professional fees of the merger, redundancies/early retirements, and IT infrastructure upgrades.

The HEFCE R&C Advisory Panel agreed to fund 50% (£2.5m rounded) of the legitimate R&C costs in February 2002³⁰, having decided that the 50% balance of these costs should be treated as 'Imperial's matching funding towards the project'. Payment of 90% (£2.25m) was authorised on 21 February 2002.³¹

On 21 October 2002, Imperial submitted a final report to HEFCE outlining the objectives of the merger and demonstrating how these had been met, and their future plans and developments for the college at Wye. This report (Appendix 9). gave the following future intentions:

- the aim of teaching at Wye would be to promote the profile of the degrees and to build up students numbers, recovering the 50% drop since merger, over the next four years

²⁸ A full strategy is lodged with the Agricola Club

²⁹ Price Waterhouse Coopers letter 15 October, 2002 to Dr. Rodney Eastwood Imperial College (Save-Wye FOI HEFCE document release)

³⁰ HEFCE Restructuring and Collaboration Fund Advisory Panel record (Save-Wye FOI HEFCE document release) undated but February 2002

³¹ HEFCE Memorandum, authorised by S. Marston 21.02.02 (Save-Wye FOI HEFCE document release)

- to focus research in key areas to create depth and critical mass and exploit the opportunities for interdisciplinary research within the Faculty and wider College in accordance with the aims of merger

The Management of Imperial College had prepared a payment profile (02/08/02) for, the R&C agreement, which had been audited by Price Waterhouse Cooper³², (15/10/02) and is detailed in Appendix 10. On the basis of progress made and future commitments set out by Imperial in the final report, and the audited expenditure, the balance of £0.25m was authorised for payment by HEFCE on 27 January 2003³³.

1 August 2002–31 July 2003

Updated business plan accepted for Agricultural Sciences

The Agricultural Science strategy targets were achieved at the year end and an updated Department business plan for 2003/2004 had been accepted by the Imperial Management Group in May/June 2003.

Taught U/G courses

The taught U/G degree courses available for the September 2002 intake of students are given in Table 10.

Table 10. Subjects taught to BSc and MSci level as full-time undergraduate degrees

Undergraduate degree	UCAS ref.	Three year BSc	UCAS ref.	Four year MSci
Animal Science	D320	x		
Horticultural Science	D410	x	D451	
Animal Science (Equine)	D322	x		
Plant Biology (Science)	C200	x		
Environmental Biology	C150	x		
Environmental Science (Applied)	F911	x	F912	x
Environmental Management	F9N2	x	F9NF	x
Agricultural Science	D400	x	D700	x
Agricultural Business Management	D4N2	x	DN42	x
Business Management (Equine)	D4NF	x	DNK2	x
Business Management Food Chain	D6N2	x	D6NF	x

Source: UCAS Applications for 2002 entry – Imperial Department of Agricultural Sciences

1 August 2003–31 July 2004

Taught U/G degree courses

The undergraduate degree courses for the 2003 intake were the same as for the 2002 intake, with the exception of Horticultural Science which had been withdrawn.

³² Price Waterhouse Coopers letter 18 October 2002 to The Director of Planning, Imperial College (SaveWye FOI HEFEC document release)

³³ HEFCE Memorandum, authorised by R.Thirunamachandran 27.01.03 (Save-Wye FOI HEFCE document release)

Business Plan for 2004/2005

An updated Business Plan and budget were again submitted to the Management Group for 2004/2005, but it was learned at a later date that this had been rejected in the May/June 2004 planning round.

Rector's comments on Wye merger

In a lecture to Civil Engineering students in October 2003, it was reported in *Live*³⁴ that the Imperial Rector commented on Wye College, describing it as 'a bit of an oddity' and 'that it had failed to efficiently merge with the rest of Imperial'. He revealed that Wye did not fit well with his 'Vision' for the whole of Imperial College. The report went on to state that reassurance had been received from Imperial College officials that they were committed to continuing the process of integrating the academic activities of the Wye campus³⁵.

1 August 2004–31 July 2005

Announcement to close down the Agricultural Sciences Department at Wye

On 4 August 2004, with no prior warning to staff including the Provost, a letter was sent out electronically to members of the Department of Agricultural Sciences, from Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Deputy Rector (Designate) of Imperial, announcing the re-structuring of the Faculty of Life Sciences and closure of the Department of Agricultural Sciences at Wye (Appendix 11). A press statement was released on the same day. The letter stated that the College's Management Board had been considering the future of teaching and research in the Faculty of Life Sciences, following the 2004 internal planning process conducted in April and May 2004. At its meeting on 23 July 2004, the Management Board agreed the following recommendations specific to the Wye campus:

1. The Faculty of Life Sciences will transfer its activities (except U/G courses in Applied Business Management) from the Wye campus in a managed and timely way
2. The Department of Agricultural Sciences at Wye will be closed
3. A new Department of Environmental Sciences will be created and will become a new strategic focus for the College, spanning all faculties
4. Some staff will move from the Department of Agricultural Sciences into other departments of the Faculty
5. Options for the future of the Wye campus would be considered by the College under a separate review

³⁵ 'Live' City and Guilds Media Group Publication <http://live.cgcu.net/news/766>

Across the Faculty there would be a loss of around 30 academic staff posts and a corresponding number of support staff posts.

The reasons for the decisions were given as:

- (a) The financial position of the Faculty of Life Sciences is unsustainable and cannot be allowed to continue. The Faculty's projected deficit by the end of the 2006/07 financial year was £11.6m. The Department of Agricultural Sciences based at the Wye campus contributes £1.8m per year to these deficits
- (b) The restructuring is necessary for the long-term viability of world-class teaching and research in life science at Imperial College London
- (c) The focus of the restructuring was the performance of individual staff in the Faculty

The statement reported that there would be no impact on course provision for current or prospective (2004/2005) students on taught undergraduate or postgraduate courses. PhD research students should likewise not be affected by the proposed restructuring. The College was to take forward options for the Wye campus under a separate review³⁶. Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Deputy Rector-designate, was to serve as interim Principal of the Faculty of Life Sciences with effect from 1 August 2004.³⁷

The statement announced that the partial withdrawal of teaching and the withdrawal of research from the Wye campus would be planned in detail after a consultation exercise, which was to start with immediate effect. On 5 August 2004, the Deputy Rector-Designate came to the Wye campus to make a presentation to academic staff and provide an opportunity for questions about the restructuring.

Reaction to the announcement

The timing of the closure announcement was critical – it came at a time when the Department at Wye was about to have a record intake and just before the internal RAE was due to report. Following the statement, much correspondence took place between those associated with Wye (academics, former Staff Governors and former Governors of Wye College, alumni, and the Agricola Club) and Imperial, strongly urging review and reconsideration of their agenda for Wye. A dossier of some of this correspondence is lodged with the Agricola Club. Formal approaches of support for Wye were made to bodies including the Kent National Farmers Union (NFU) and South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). Some of the reasoned arguments raised by Wye representatives, appealing against the decision, and the Imperial replies, are summarised in Table 11. Specific points raised and corresponding responses have been aligned:

³⁶ Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz – Statement on the future of teaching and research at Imperial College London Wye campus 5 August 2004

³⁷ Imperial Internal document to Wye Campus staff

Table 11. Challenges to Imperial to the statement to withdraw research from Wye and partially withdraw teaching and their responses

Challenges to the re-structure by former Wye College Staff Governors	Imperial responses to the challenges
<i>Inconsistencies in Imperial statements and discrimination against Wye</i>	<i>Inconsistencies in Imperial statements and discrimination against Wye</i>
There was inconsistency in the statement that the future of the Wye campus would be considered after a review of the Faculty academic structure and activities, with the decision to withdraw U/G teaching, and research at Wye (apart from ABM)	Imperial was treating the re-structure as a Faculty, not a Wye campus issue
Imperial was treating Wye differently from Silwood in considering the re-structure of Life Sciences	There was no discrimination against staff in the Department of Agricultural Sciences. Imperial had to act to safeguard the success of its academic mission which was international excellence
Imperial was not separating consideration of the future of the Wye Campus from the decisions about the restructure of Life Sciences. A separation would involve 'what the Faculty should be doing' and then 'where it should be operating'. The conclusion that the Faculty could not afford to carry out teaching and research activities at Wye, in the long term, was therefore premature	Imperial's course of action would be determined by the deliberate separation of two issues: the underperformance of the Life Science Faculty, and the future of the Wye campus
<i>Finance</i>	<i>Finance</i>
Research income has doubled since the 2001 RAE assessment. Although there was comparatively low research income per staff member at Wye, this reflected the number of social scientists who incurred lower research and overhead costs than most natural science staff	The Department of Agricultural Sciences performed significantly below the average of all departments submitted in agriculture at RAE 2001 in terms of research income

<p>The higher-than-average cost per student at Wye reflected the low student numbers that were currently recovering rapidly, following the merger dip</p>	
<p>Wye's financial position would be more favourable if it were not penalised by charges for inter-departmental services (i.e. space charges), and all financial contributions were included for the campus as a whole</p>	<p>As with other HE institutions, income from non-academic services is not accrued to the departments based at the campus on which they take place</p>
<p>Imperial had gained £25m assets with the Wye transfer</p>	<p>Capital cannot continue to run Imperial. The assets of the former Wye College cannot be part of the solution to the Faculty's problems as they do not help to resolve the problem with staff performance</p>
<p>It is agreed that capital cannot be used to continue running the College, hence the Department's commitment to implement a strategy to turn around its deficit. In this context it is entirely appropriate to take into account the capital brought into the College by the merger with Wye</p>	
<p>The financial arguments appear to be overstated as the College's internal financial allocation systems are designed to encourage departments to behave in certain ways that benefit the College as a whole, but do not present a true picture of the overall impacts of a department's activities on the College. As a result, the losses to the College from closing the Department are understated, while benefits from cost savings are overstated</p>	<p>The financial position for the Department of Agricultural Sciences had been prepared from information the Department itself had provided to the planning round</p>
	<p>The College does not subsidise other higher performing departments at Imperial, the subsidy flows the other way</p>

	Imperial could not subsidise underperforming departments
<i>Re-structuring</i>	<i>Re-structuring</i>
Performance at Wye had suffered from repeated re-structuring	
<i>Courses at Wye</i>	<i>Courses at Wye</i>
The re-classification by Imperial of Wye degrees, including Applied Business Management, contributed to the post-merger dip in student numbers	
It was not clear, since the ABM course was to continue at Wye, why research staff teaching on this degree should not be viable at Wye	
Most of the Department academic staff had been dismayed by the 2001 naming of the 'Department of Agricultural Sciences', and long recognised, and argued for, the need for a more topical name that better described the range of internally excellent teaching and research that addresses major scientific, technical, social and policy issues in the food and rural resources sectors	
There would be an obvious threat to student recruitment to the ABM degree if it was to be the only academic activity at Wye, carrying the fixed costs of the overhead and support services	
<i>Imperial agreement of Department business plans</i>	<i>Imperial agreement of Department business plans</i>
The closure decision overturned the College Management Board's approval	The 2004 Department of Agricultural Sciences academic and business plan

<p>in the 2002, 2003, and 2004 planning rounds, of the Department of Agricultural Science's Strategy to turn around the financial difficulties, as part of the Faculty plans</p>	<p>strategy was never agreed. It was rejected by the Management Board as part of the Faculty of Life Sciences 2004 planning round submission</p>
<p>The academic business plan strategies for 2003 and 2004, had been to improve performance on all fronts (financial, research income, research outputs, student numbers, and student entry requirements) and to break even by 2008/2009</p>	
<p><i>Performance</i></p>	<p><i>Performance</i></p>
<p>Agricultural Sciences was one Department in the Faculty where performance was improving and the Plan was on track to deliver a surplus. Targets in its planning submissions had been met. While the Faculty plans as a whole may have subsequently gone off the rails, this had not been due to under-performance by Agricultural Sciences</p>	
<p>The decision at the start of the consultation process to close the Department and withdraw Faculty activities from Wye then seemed precipitate and inconsistent</p>	
<p>The Department had improved the quantity and quality of its undergraduate, postgraduate and research activities with a range of degrees in natural and social science relevant to the food and rural resources sectors</p>	

<p>The Rector had committed to an internal RAE assessment in the summer³⁸ of 2004 to gauge current performance of the Department, but cancelled it in July 2004 once the submission had already been completed</p>	
<p><i>Heads of Agreement good faith</i></p>	<p><i>Heads of Agreement good faith</i></p>
<p>The decision appeared to disregard Imperial's commitments in the merger Heads of Agreement (paragraph 33)</p>	<p>The Heads of Agreement (1998) clearly stated that methods of accounting, budgeting and planning to be adopted were to be those in practice at Imperial. The Heads of Agreement clause (point 33) must be read in context: it is preceded by (point 32) below:</p> <p><i>'The arrangements listed below will take effect. Unless otherwise agreed below or by mutual consent, these arrangements will operate in the form stated for a minimum of two years, after which they will be subject to Imperial's normal review procedures'</i></p>
<p>With regard to paragraph 32 of the Head of Agreement – this referred to 'arrangements, a minimum of two years and normal review procedures'. For reasons outlined, the current restructuring process would seem to be clearly opposed to the spirit of the Heads of Agreement</p>	<p>The Management Board was operating its normal review procedures</p>
<p><i>Consultation</i></p>	<p><i>Consultation</i></p>
<p>The basis and process of the consultation process with regard to Wye remains unclear and has not been transparent.</p>	<p>The basis for the restructuring proposal had been set out in some detail both in staff presentation materials and in a consultation paper sent directly to the College's three trade unions*. Consultation would take place until mid</p>

³⁸ Rector's staff meeting with Department of Agricultural Sciences 5 April 2004

	<p>September 2004. Meetings have been arranged for those affected by Imperial's HR department</p> <p>*see AUT response on page 41</p>
<p><i>Key stipulations requested by the Agricultural Sciences Department to Imperial</i></p>	<p><i>Key stipulations set out by Imperial</i></p>
<p>That Imperial modify its press statements to remove premature reference to the withdrawal of activities from the Wye campus</p>	
<p>To include within the review of the Faculty of Life Sciences an integrated examination of the academic and financial viability of activities at the Wye campus within a properly consultative process which builds on, rather than sweeps away, current successful growth in research and teaching at Wye</p>	
<p>To acknowledge its commitments made under the Heads of Agreement to merger and the considerable gains received through the merger</p>	
<p>To give categorical assurance that Imperial did not have a medium- to long-term agenda to realise benefits from developing Wye's real estate, rather than its academic activities</p>	
	<p>The Faculty could no longer carry out teaching and research at Wye in the long term</p>
	<p>The College would take forward options for the Wye campus under a separate review</p>
	<p>Winding down the Department would take place in a managed and timely way</p>

AUT response to consultation statement

The AUT denied that there had been proper consultation with Imperial maintaining that they had been informed but not consulted and that the proposed reorganisation of Life Sciences was being pushed through at a time when staff were on holiday³⁹.

The AUT (*The Guardian* 10 August 2004) said that the decision had 'come out of the blue. It is pretty disgraceful as there is now a question mark over the future of the place.' The Union wanted to discuss any plan, not just how to implement a decision already taken by the Board. 'We do not accept that there has been any consultation so far. We were informed before the staff meetings – that is not consultation.'

Meeting at Holiday Inn, Wrotham

A meeting was convened of national and local politicians, leaders of the agricultural industry: SEEDA, NFU, Kent County Agricultural Society, Kent Rural Task Force, KCC officers from Rural Regeneration, Ashford Borough Council Executive, farmers and growers, academics, former Governors of Wye College, ex-Principals, members of the Wye College Agricola Club, alumni, and other interested parties, to discuss the future of Wye. An information pack was circulated at the meeting and at the time it was agreed that the meeting procedures would be closed, but the following statement from the Wye College Agricola Club was released on the future direction and action of the group:

A Working Group of about twenty influential people and organisations who had attended the meeting, and who were closely concerned with the serious consequence of the Imperial decision should continue in being to:

- (a) *Represent the concern, not only of those present at the meeting, but also the many others throughout the world who have expressed anxiety over the threat to the integrity of this renowned institution*
- (b) *Secure a viable future for Wye as a centre of academic excellence*
- (c) *Co-operate with other individuals and organisations in the furtherance of (b)*
- (d) *Co-operate with Imperial College in its review of the future of the Wye campus*

Following the meeting and the formation of the Working Group, an Emergency Resolution was put forward at the Agricola Club September 2004 AGM (Appendix 12) and circulated to Imperial bodies, London University bodies and appropriate others. A briefing note, circulated by the Working Group in January 2005, explained that it was never the intention of the Group to oppose the changes put forward by Imperial but to be constructive in working with Imperial to retain an institution of vibrant, academic achievement at Wye. The Group would await the pending review of Wye.

³⁹ *Guardian Education* article by Donald MacLeod (10.08.04) http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2004/aug/higher_education.science

Stepping down of Provost at Wye

Professor Jeff Waage, Head of the Agricultural Sciences Department, stepped down as Provost of Wye in September 2004. He said he was saddened by the decision and expressed his own and staff shock. In a letter to the Agricola Club Council he stated how well the Department of Agricultural Sciences, created at Wye in 2001, had done in its three years of existence and thanked staff. At the outset of the five year strategy, the direction had been to restore the decline in student numbers associated with merger, to create a growth in research income and academic performance. On all academic fronts, the Department had made dramatic improvements, student intake had more than doubled and the financial position was ahead of the projected targets.

He subsequently rejected the suggestion that the Wye campus could be sold off entirely, adding that a partnership with another educational institution might be a possibility. Part of the site was a designated national nature reserve. A local estate agent and chartered surveying firm said it was impossible to put a value on the land and that much would depend on whether planning permission could be obtained to build housing on it. The college buildings alone would be 'worth millions'.⁴⁰

Appeal to Imperial Court

Professor Berkeley Hill, former Staff Governor of Wye College and elected member of the Court representing the academic staff, wrote to Lord Kerr of Kinlochard, Chairman of the Court of Imperial College, to request an agenda item on the merger activities, for discussion at the Court Meeting on 1 April 2005. The full content of the letter is given in Appendix 13. The core of the letter was to call for a review on the management of the merger, with an essential input from independent observers. The Heads of Agreement (Appendix 4, paragraph 33) that '*the Mission and the estate of Wye will remain intact at Wye as a developing part of the mission of Imperial*' had manifestly not happened, post-merger.

At the Eighth Meeting of the Court on 1 April 2005, the Imperial/Wye merger was discussed under Any Other Business. The section in the Minutes of the Court Proceedings covering the merger is given in Appendix 14. The Chairman referred to the undertakings governed by paragraph 32, that arrangements would operate for a minimum of two years, after which they would be subject to Imperial's normal review procedures. The acting Principal of the Faculty of Life Sciences, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, stated that of the annual deficit generated by the Faculty of Life Sciences of £4.4m, nearly half was directly attributable to the Department of Agricultural Sciences at Wye. The Faculty had reviewed its scientific activity, which included the Wye Department, and had found undergraduate courses at Wye, apart from ABM, to be unsuccessful in terms of recruitment. Research at Wye had lacked a critical mass in its current location. An **internal** review, led by Professor Bearman, would be conducted on the Wye campus. With respect to Professor Hill's specific proposal, the Council Chair said that he did not believe that the time was right for a retrospective review and that the key prospective review was being conducted by

⁴⁰ *The Times Higher Education* 14 October 2004

Professor Bearman. A separate review might divert energy away from Professor Bearman's work.

An independent review was therefore rejected by the Imperial Court.

1 August 2005–31 July 2006

This academic year saw the last intake of Agricultural Science students for subjects other than ABM.

The Bearman review of options for Wye

The internal review headed by Professor Bearman was concluded and published in September 2005. The full review is lodged with the Agricola Club. The Review concluded the following in the Executive Summary:

- Due to the large separation from the main undergraduate teaching departments in London, the College should not be basing new undergraduate courses at Wye
- Current analysis of average A level scores of students studying U/G Agriculture indicated that Imperial would have difficulty recruiting future cohorts of students with A level scores close to the College average for this subject
- U/G Business Studies was buoyant, and A level scores improving, but the Imperial Business School had no plans to offer undergraduate degrees in Business Studies
- Teaching of Business Studies would transfer to the University of Kent, and hopefully remain at Wye
- The Distance Learning Programme providing postgraduate courses in aspects of agriculture and rural development, should be retained by Imperial
- The main activity to be retained and developed at Wye should be research undertaken by multidisciplinary teams organised within an institute structure
- The aim has to be to deliver research of 5* quality in order to attract the best researchers, who may be based at Wye on a secondment basis
- Full advantage should be taken of the space available at Wye to develop well equipped, state of the art, laboratories
- Research themes need to have strategic importance and have the possibility to lead to results which will be of direct interest to industry
- Once the research base is established, a science park should be set up to attract new enterprises into the area
- The farm at Wye should be retained under College management until plans for development of the Wye campus becomes firmer. No leasing arrangement should be considered before October 2007
- A basic assumption of the review is that a substantial resource will be made available to fund developments and that this will come from some redeployment of the College's considerable assets on the Wye campus
- The College will need to be sensitive to local issues and will require support from Kent County Council and Ashford Borough Council in any planning matters.

There were many criticisms of the Report:

- The distance of Wye to Imperial was taken into consideration when Imperial entered into the merger, and if retrospectively this is now considered 'counter productive' then Imperial 'mis-sold' the merger agreement both to Wye and HEFCE
- Courses at Wye had long since ceased to be focused on agriculture
- Continuation and boosting of the U/G degrees, including Applied Business Management (ABM), had been the basis of Imperial receiving R&C HEFCE transition funding; recruitment to the ABM course had doubled

Decision to transfer teaching of ABM to University of Kent

In 2005/2006 there had been 1,000 applications for places on Wye's ABM degree programmes and 162 places were offered, one-third of them to students outside the EU. Potential students were expected to have three A level passes achieving 300 points (BBB) and for MSci courses 320 Points (ABB)⁴¹.

The Imperial Management Board Meeting (24 November 2005) included the presentation of a paper on the transfer of the Applied Business Management course from the Imperial Business School to the University of Kent. The following proposals had previously been discussed by the College Senate, which had not opposed the Head of Business Studies decision to withdraw from Applied Business Management undergraduate teaching:

- The ABM course would be an Imperial course for all students currently registered on the course for the next academic year entry in 2006 through to their completion of studies in 2009
- The staff of Agricultural Economics and Business Management (AEBM) would transfer to the University of Kent, retaining an honorary association with Imperial, and would continue delivery of the course to Imperial students under formal agreement with Kent
- From the 2007 entry the course would lead to a University of Kent degree and would be delivered by staff of the University of Kent, but there would continue to be a component taught by Imperial staff
- The course would still be delivered at the Wye campus under appropriate financial agreements
- The University of Kent insisted on a formal recognition of Imperial's continued involvement in the course and it was proposed that this should be through the establishment of an 'Associateship of Wye College'
- There would be a full review of these academic arrangements in 2011
- The Senate had agreed in principle that the Paper's proposals would be taken to Council in December 2005

In March 2006, the partnership between Imperial at Wye and The University of Kent 15 May 2006 was signed, integrating the former AEBM research and teaching staff on the Imperial College at Wye campus into the Kent Business School, The former lecturers on the courses delivered at Wye were to lead and deliver the specialist

⁴¹ About Imperial Press Release 13.December 2005

programmes and would retain their titles (at present) as ‘Honorary Lecturer at Imperial College’.

The emergence of the Concordat

On Tuesday 6 December 2005 The Wye Concordat on the future of the campus at Wye was signed and a press release circulated which stated that Imperial, in partnership with Kent County Council (KCC) and Ashford Borough Council (ABC) was to develop a £1 billion world class science research facility on the Wye campus, creating jobs for 12,500. There had been no dialogue or consultation with the local community or staff at the College on the implications of the project. With no warning, the announcement was therefore received with some shock.

At a public meeting with the village at Withersdane on 9 January 2006, the Concordat partners emphasised that the project would be achieved through rural regeneration which was not about building houses on farmland, but about reviewing existing assets and looking at replacement of some of the existing buildings. This would be of benefit to the village and the area. Initially, there would be 100–150 principal investigators in laboratories, costing £150–£200m for ‘a few thousand square metres’ of floor space. After a further £300–£400m was spent ‘kick starting’ the development, a critical mass would be reached that would bring in business partners to build the rest. The project would run for 12 years from 2006–2018 with an investment of £80m a year, totalling £960m⁴².

The blueprint of the plan, presented to the Imperial Management Board within six months of this public meeting detailed the development of 4,000 homes in the fields on AONB land surrounding Withersdane, in and beyond the gardens. Office blocks and laboratories would be developed in front of Withersdane and across the road in the meadow leading to the Crown there would have been industrial and manufacturing facilities, among them a substantial refinery for bio-fuels. As the total costs of the first phase of development would be c. £300m, Imperial would need to sell part of its estate in Wye to fund any ‘gap’, which the Local Authorities understood.

The chronology of the Wye Park project

The chronology of events of the Wye Park proposal is set out in Table 12.

Table 12. The chronology of the Concordat predominantly evidenced from *Saved*

April 2002	Imperial appointed David Brooks Wilson as College Estates Director. He was former vice-chair of the SE England Regional Planning Committee and executive of the property arm of Eurotunnel, responsible for the development of large areas of commercial and industrial land around Ashford. Former Eurotunnel boss, Sir Alastair Morton was the Chairman of the Imperial Estates Committee
July 2003	Article published in <i>Property Week</i> on the Rector’s plans for

⁴² Hewson, David. 2007. *Saved*, Matador Troubador Publishing Ltd

	maximising Imperial's estate's value. Quotes 'that not all the estate is necessary for Imperial academic mission and the art will be to capitalise on that, while complementing the faculties that bring in Imperial funds' ⁴³
31 July 2003	Honorary Treasurer's Report section 2002/2003 Imperial audited accounts (Appendix 15) 'Need for capital'
2004	Memo on Wye Park, written in 2004 by Peter Raine, KCC Director of Environment and Regeneration, noted that Imperial needed £100m in profits from development land in the AONB ⁴⁴
November 2004	Meeting with Imperial and the KCC Leader to discuss Concordat plans
29 April 2005	First secret Concordat with attached detailed blueprint, signed by KCC Leader and Ashford Borough Council Leader, and Imperial Rector (on 19 May 2005): all parties committed to confidentiality
6 December 2005	Impromptu Official Concordat signing ceremony in Old Hall in College. Speeches by Imperial Rector, Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council, Paul Clokie, Leader of Ashford Borough Council, who signed document. Referred to as a 'vision, only, with no clear plan' to develop world-class science park at Wye. Two village representatives had been invited to ceremony but were unaware of what it was about. First mention of development on AONB land
9 January 2006	Public meeting at Withersdane on Concordat addressed by Professor Leszek Borysiewicz Imperial College, emphasising the concept of the Science Park, but no clear plan, although financial investment needed for development over 2006–2018 years was given
20/23 January 2006	Property consultants produced a briefing report for Imperial on 'key policy criteria and issues which the project must satisfy to justify development in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) for the research and commercial enterprise'
April 2006	Granting by KCC of outline planning permission for a road from the M20 motorway to feed Imperial's science park
Mid April 2006	Announcement by Imperial at KCC Environment Overview Committee that manufacture of bio-fuels, rather than just research of bio-fuels was their preferred land option. This would include a 2000 square metre bio-mass fermenter, effectively a small refinery
	It was discovered that the Countess Soudes, in consultation with KCC and the UN, had suggested an international centre for monitoring non-food crops and NOT the more ambitious production facility which would need backing from a large corporation (British Petroleum, BP), as put forward by Imperial.
May 23 2006	Imperial Rector at a working lunch briefing with the KCC Leader and other Local Government officials, stated that Imperial wished to maintain control of the project and would not be seeking EU funding to support development. The venture would be paid for by the construction of large-scale housing estates. Imperial had had no discussion about government funding for Wye Park
31 May 2006	Imperial costs for consultancy and advice for Wye Park

⁴³ *Property Week* article by Giles Barrie 4 July 2003. Full article held by Agricola Club

⁴⁴ Save-wye.org *They all knew about the housing back in 2004* p. 635 includes access to copy of memo note

	development rise to £0.75m. Imperial Property Advisory Committee investigate potential of selling off 'surplus' properties at Wye to cover costs. The Director of Estates at Imperial confirmed that several were available.
June/July 2006	Imperial contract Bell Pottinger, PR Group, to lobby regional and national government in support of the project
June 2006	Government of the South East and central government err on side of caution in giving support for planned development as it is against policy for AONB
June 2006	BP announced investment of \$500m setting up a bio-fuels institute attached to a UK or US university; Wye did not figure in bids for this
June 2006	BP awarded contract to University of California at Berkeley which is linked to the Wye equivalent in the US (University of Illinois at Urbana). Feasibility for science park at Wye became discredited
June 2006	Imperial College Building Projects Newsletter for July 2006 reported on David Brooks Wilson's move from Estates to work as Property Adviser on special projects, with direct responsibility to the Rector
June 12 2006	Blueprint obtained on Wye scheme which revealed true detail of Wye Plan with map, as known at signing of first Concordat. Plan showed the development of 250 acres of AONB land for housing from Olantigh Road to the Downs, past Withersdane to Silks Farm and Amage and around Coldharbour at the foot of the road to the Crown. Two new roads would feed into these estates from either side of the village. The proposed business park would have taken up 37 acres from Olantigh Road to the foot of the rise to the Crown, and the research institute would have amounted to 12 acres built either side of Scotton Street. With the knowledge that the business park and research institute would not materialise, this, in effect, left the land for housing only
June 16 2006	Imperial management board agreed to grant Wye Park an extra £100,000 to finish the masterplanning process, but one source said that it was extremely unlikely that any further money would be given to the project, effectively ending the process. The project had run out of money
Post June 2006	Imperial Estates Department focused on getting some mention of Wye Park into the Borough Local Development Framework (LDF) to preserve the potential for a future scheme that would involve housing development
August 2006	Wye residents letter writing campaign to ABC to request Wye Park be left out of the LDF
September 11 2006	LDF meeting rejected inclusion of the Imperial Plan for Wye Park in the LDF
December 2006	David Brooks Wilson left employment at Imperial

1 August 2006–31 July 2007

Imperial's exit strategy from the Wye Park project

The Save-Wye campaign revealed that Imperial had been discussing how to recover the costs of a 'failed' Wye Park Project as early as May 2006. The Imperial Property Advisory Committee had concerns that the Project was a massive gamble, with only a 50/50 chance of 'getting through'. The 'Save-Wye' website⁴⁵ shows e-mail correspondence between the Property Advisory Committee members that suggests that perhaps Imperial could recover its costs – which might rise to £4m if it went all the way to the High Court – by simply realising some of the assets:

E-mail 31 May 2006 between Imperial Property Advisory Committee members

'Following on from our telephone conversation yesterday, three ways of saying the same thing:

Is it fair to say the £3–4m in fees is not a punt, as we are bound to get at least that much back?

Is it more akin to investing in Premium Bonds than the Lottery?

I did ask ... some time ago, whether there are any surplus properties at Wye, which, if push came to shove, we could sell for £3–4m.

E-mail response 5 June 2006

'As ever you have hit the nail on the head. Were this to go 'belly up' there are several surplus properties at Wye which we could sell for £3–4m, whilst retaining the rest of the 'land bank' for future use. .In my view, that very seriously reduces the downside risk.'⁴⁶

The campaign and Imperial's decision to close Wye

The campaign in Wye against the Wye Park project was the combined effort of organisations such as the Parish Council, Wye Futures Group and local individuals, as well as the Save-Wye reporters. It was a difficult campaign that eventually led to the decision, by Ashford Borough Council Planning Committee on 11 September 2006, to exclude the Wye Park project in its entirety from the Local Development Plan. On 15 September 2006, Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Deputy Rector of Imperial College, sent an e-mail to David Hewson, author of *Saved*, with a draft statement which proclaimed that not only was Wye Park dead, but also that nothing would replace it. The 'scientific vision' would no longer be pursued, there would be no expansion of research and development, nor a search for a replacement for 'the vision project'. The campaign had been successful in blocking the Wye Park development; consequently, Imperial College closed the doors on Wye.

⁴⁵ <http://www.wave-wye.org/?p=377>

⁴⁶ <http://www.save-wye.org/?p=377>

Imperial withdrawal from science park vision

On 11 October 2006, the Imperial Management Board confirmed that the College would not proceed any further with its investigation into delivering a world class research centre, science hub, and associated housing at its campus in Wye. Having carefully considered all the issues involved, the project team had concluded that none of the scenarios for the vision would represent a wise, viable or desirable investment of public funds for Imperial and Wye. The Deputy Rector, Professor Borysiewicz said that the College remained committed to the high quality teaching that takes place at Wye and would continue to support academic teaching activity there. This included the highly successful Imperial College/University of Kent Applied Business Management (ABM) undergraduate degree, master's degrees, and the Distance Learning Programme. The College had no current plans to expand research and development at Wye.

Postscript by Save-Wye.org.

An article written by Justin Williams, dated 23 February 2007, and called 'Project Alchemy... the legacy' puts forward a retrospective view for the failed Imperial vision at Wye.⁴⁷

Imperial withdraw from the University of London on 8 July 2007

Imperial had decided that there was no reason to remain a member of University of London, due to the change in funding arrangements. Whereas previously funding came to the College via the University, since the middle of the last century Imperial has received this directly from the Government, making it a financially independent institution. There had also been less need to trade on the University of London name, as Imperial had become more well known and respected in its own right.

Transfer of the External Programme to SOAS

Because Imperial had withdrawn from the University of London to become an Independent Institution and as the Wye postgraduate distance learning programme was run under the auspices of London University, Imperial would no longer be able to continue to run the Programme and had made the decision not to continue with its administration. Preliminary discussions had taken place between Imperial and SOAS for a merger and transfer of the External Programme to SOAS. This was agreed and became effective from August 2007.

1 August 2007–31 July 2008

ABM course moved to the University of Kent

On the transfer of the ABM degree from an Imperial degree to a University of Kent Degree, applications for the course had dropped dramatically and the viability of continuing to run the course as planned at Wye was reviewed. The University of Kent decided that, for the 2008 student entry, the University of Kent Business School would transfer the teaching of undergraduate courses in Applied Business

⁴⁷ <http://www.save-wye.org/?p=657>

Management and postgraduate courses in Agricultural Economics, Applied Environmental Economics, and Food Chain Management from the campus at Wye to their main Canterbury campus. The former staff from Wye who led and delivered the courses would change location to be based at the Kent Business School.

Closure of the College

On 4 January 2008, meetings were held with Wye-based staff about the end of teaching at Wye. This preceded a press statement to staff dated 11 January, issued by Imperial College, confirming their withdrawal from the campus and that they would be 'seeking to identify the opportunities for activities which would fit well at the campus'. A later update on activity, issued on 4 March 2008 by Imperial, is given in Appendix 16.

Savills take over Wye campus property management

Savills commented to Ashford Borough Council (Issues and Options report for the future Tenterden & Rural Sites Development Plan) that Imperial College were undertaking an international marketing campaign through Savills (L&P) Ltd. aimed at securing a future educational user for the core college buildings at the Main Campus North. Former Wye College stand-alone properties used for students residences or other purposes, were to be considered for sale as general market housing on an individual merit basis. The Withersdane site would lend itself to specialist housing, even an Extra Care facility, which could be refined through a Supplementary Planning Document or Development Brief.

Savills advertised the core College buildings in July 2008 as follows:

'For let on FRI Terms, main Campus North provides an extensive range of buildings extending in total to 16,786 square metres and is set within grounds of 7.78 acres. In addition, the Sports Ground, situated a short distance to the south east of the Main Campus, includes a sports pavilion and extends to 11.18 acres.'

Following a review of the College premises, the Main Campus North has become 'surplus to requirements' and a tenant of appropriate standing is sought to maintain the contribution that the College has made to Wye over the centuries'.

College farm

On 1 October 2008, Savills issued a press release announcing that new tenants were selected following an open competitive tendering process managed by them on behalf of the landlord of Wye College Farm, Imperial College.

The new tenants, who had been offered a 10 year Farm Business Tenancy were:

- Kevin Attwood*: College Farm, land and buildings, amounting to 655 acres (265 hectares)

- Martin Mackie* (Ripple Farm Organics): Farmland, partly organic, amounting to 104 acres (42 hectares) together with a Machinery Workshop
- The Wooden Spoon: Equine Unit, stable and land, 32 acres (13 hectares)
- Michael and Wendy Barnes*: The Crown Fields, farmland amounting to 28 acres (11 hectares)

*Former Wye College students

Government Department responses to the Wye College demise

During July, correspondence was sent by a 'concerned member of the village community' who has an academic background, to the then Department for Innovation, Universities, and Skills (DIUS), (now Department for Business Innovation and Skills, BIS), drawing attention to Imperial's management of Wye and questioning the use of public resources and assets:

The following responses were received from DIUS Public Communications Unit.

'The site of the former Wye College is owned by Imperial College, and it is therefore for the Institution to decide how to deploy the assets it owns as part of its overall strategy. Against that background, it would be inappropriate for the Government to express any opinion on the future of the former Wye College.'

'It would ultimately be for the Courts, rather than Government Departments, to decide any questions of law relating to the Act referred to (Imperial Act). This Department cannot see that Imperial College is in breach of any obligations, or that it is constrained from disposing of the former assets of Wye College.'

'The Government believes that the wider public interest is served by having a system of independent, world-class institutions, of which Imperial is one, who are free to decide for themselves on their future strategy and use of the assets they own.'

Response from Shadow Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills.

'There are often delicate issues about individual colleges and their reorganisation and I try not to get into them because I do not know enough about the circumstances. Our party's approach is very much to give colleges greater freedom to run their own affairs. I know that Damian Green is closely in touch with the whole issue.'*

* MP for Ashford

1 August 2008–31 March 2010

Programme of closure and dispersal

The last of the Wye campus undergraduate students were due to complete their courses at the end of the academic year in June 2009. A programme of dispersal of contents, document shredding, and mothballing of some buildings was commenced.

The Wye Treasures were moved, by degrees, to an Imperial Store in London. An inventory (dated 2001) of the Wye College Treasures handed over to Imperial at

merger, is held by the Agricola Club. The Treasures include approximately 270 portraits, oil paintings, water-colours, etchings, prints, reproductions, lithographs, and photographs by various artists, purchased by and donated to Wye College. Artists included Andrea G. Reid, Brian Festing, Edward Hall, Thomas Hennell, M. Noakes, John Sergeant, John Ward, K. Williams, and Norman Parkinson. Also included were 300 items of silver, trophies, antique furniture, rugs, clocks, porcelain, and other items of antiquity.

FOI query about the marketing of Wye Campus and search for tenants

A Freedom of Information (FOI) request was sent to Imperial College to provide documentation and communications from January 2007 to December 2009 pertaining to the search by Imperial for tenants of the land, site and buildings at Wye campus. This was requested 'in the public interest'. Details were specifically requested for copies of the relevant sections of the minutes of the College Fund Board. Imperial replied that there had been no search for tenants for Withersdane, the Savill's brochure and list of where the campus had been advertised was provided, and contacts with Government Departments for expressions of interest were listed. The request for the relevant sections of the minutes of the College Fund Board meetings was declined as the College believed these to be covered by Section 43(2) of the FOI Act (commercial sensitivity), and this outweighed the 'public interest'.

Imperial Treasures policy

As well as having a number of collections of items and artefacts itself, as a result of mergers, Imperial has inherited treasures from the medical schools in the 1980s and 1990s and from Wye College in 2000. These items are now considered to be Imperial College Treasures. Although most of the collections have a direct scientific or academic connection with the College, there are some artefacts where this connection is more tenuous. The future categorising of the College Treasures will be into 'core' and 'non core' items. The criteria are as follows:

- (1) Core items: core items will have a direct relationship with the academic work of the College and/or have a significant historical connection with the College
- (2) Non-core items: non-core items will have no significant association with the College and have no reputational interest

Core items will be retained by the College. Non-core items may be treated in two ways. Some items may be retained for stewardship by the College. Such items may be used by the College (e.g. paintings which may be displayed), or may be offered to another body such as a museum as a donation or under trust status. In certain cases, items may be returned to their original donors, in return for a charitable donation to, for example, the Student Opportunities Fund. Other non-core items will be offered to the College Fund for their exploitation or sale.

All items held in College Collections are considered to be 'core' unless and until a determination is made by the College Treasures Committee that an individual items should be categorised as 'non-core'. Where the College receives an expression of

interest in an individual item, that item will be assigned to a category in the first instance before any further discussion takes place with the person expressing the interest.

Portraits etc. of former Principals and Professors

Former Principals/Professors, or their relatives, approached Imperial about purchasing their respective portraits, as well as some items they had donated to College that were included in the Treasures, but they were referred to the Imperial Treasures policy. They were advised that a decision would be taken over their status by Christmas 2008 ('core' to be retained by College, or 'non core' with some possibility of acquisition). This decision is still pending at 31 March 2010.

Local Development Framework

The Tenterden and Rural Sites Development Plan Document (DPD) was presented to ABC's Executive on Thursday 25 June 2009 with a view to it going out for public consultation on 30 June for six weeks.

It allocates only 45 new houses to Wye for the period up to 2016

- 25 on the site between Abbots Walk and Poynter's Yard with access onto Churchfield Way (and with 35% of the dwellings being 'affordable' (ie social) housing).
- 20 on land at Luckley Field (rounding off Long's Acre and Little Chequers) with access via Long's Acre and Little Chequers **not** via Oxenturn Road (and with 35% of the dwellings being 'affordable' (social) housing)

It makes no housing allocation between 2017 and 2021 in Wye.

The Development Plan directs that Imperial College undertakes a viability and marketing exercise with a view to retaining a high quality educational facility if possible. The DPD says that, *'An innovative approach to exploring options is needed, working with the Borough Council and the local community. If, following a full marketing campaign targeting educational and related uses, alternative uses are justified in whole or in part, then a masterplan/development brief should be prepared to look comprehensively at the constraints and opportunities. The aim should be to generate a suitable long-term land use and development strategy that helps to generate confidence locally about the nature and quality of the proposals whilst being commercially sound.'*

The first review of the Core Strategy (to be completed by 2014) will embody the results of the exercise(s) although they may be completed earlier enabling development or re-development of the campus to be brought forward earlier than 2014.

The future of the College

The remaining activities at Wye are:

- Farming tenants

- Business tenants on Occupation Road, Coldharbour, and Sidelands
- The Centre for Development, Environment and Policy (the former External Programme pioneered by Wye College, now part of London University School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) based in Carruthers House)

There are a number of local and other interest groups putting forward different ideas and proposals for the Wye campus: Wye Futures, Phoenix Wye College, Morrisons South East Development and the University of Buckingham. These are not focused upon in this publication,.

The Imperial response to Ashford MP Damian Green's meeting with Dr Martin Knight, Imperial's Chief Operating Officer, in September 2009, was not encouraging. Damian Green put to him concerns about the future of the College buildings and the prospects of future academic activity at Wye; however, Dr Knight was adamant about Imperial's position on all the issues raised.

He said that Imperial had tried as hard as they could to find an academic solution. He was very insistent that they thought they had found a solution in the University of Kent and were disappointed that at the first available opportunity UKC pulled out, having taken money from Imperial for the student places. They had written to all Government Departments asking them to find a use for the College buildings, and had advertised them to US academic institutions. So far no-one had bitten, and he regards the chances of anyone doing so, as 'vanishingly remote'. Imperial has, therefore, come to the conclusion that those groups who are hoping to revive the College in one form or another are pursuing an unrealistic dream. Certainly, Imperial will not use any of its own resources to facilitate this. His overall attitude was that Imperial was now a significant landlord in Wye and as such wanted to be a good landlord. They will be talking to Ashford Borough Council Planners about the Development Strategy.⁴⁸

Imperial has now made a planning application (4 February, 2010) to convert the whole Withersdane site into a 'Care Village'. The area between ADAS and Occupation Road (excluding the Kempe Centre) has been put forward for mixed development (housing, employment and public amenity uses. Planning permission has been granted to convert Wolfson House, the Old Vicarage, the Old Veterinary Centre, the Old Flying Horse, and Coldharbour House for domestic housing and planning applications are being considered for Amage Farm and Sidelands (Old Poultry Unit) under various categories. Harwood House flats have been refurbished and are available for rent on the open market.⁴⁹

Recently published minutes of an Imperial Council meeting in November 2009 (Appendix 17) recorded that Imperial are considering transferring Wye Campus North (which includes the old College buildings) into the Imperial College Fund. It was agreed that Wye Campus North should become a non-core asset and should not be retained by Imperial. Whether or not the transfer should be subject to any restrictions was to be decided; if not the buildings could be sold off commercially. These minutes should be read within the context of this Record.

⁴⁸ E-mail from Damian Green to Michael Curtis on 20 September 2009 to report on meeting with Imperial College on Wye future

⁴⁹ Wye, Agricola Club Journal 2008/2009 p. 70

Conclusion and postscript

This concludes the record of the causes and consequences of the merger of Wye College, University of London, with Imperial College up until 2009, with the closure of Wye. The following statement draws attention to the potential academic opportunities that Imperial elected to abandon.

**Postscript on the loss of the academic mission of Wye
by
Professor David Leaver, President of the Agricola Club**

The merger of Imperial College and Wye College opened up great opportunities for Imperial College to become involved academically in the major issues relating to food, in particular the science and technology of food production and its links to human health and the environment. This was fully realised and understood by the Rector of Imperial College at the time, Lord Oxburgh, who indicated that this was a driving force for the merger. In addressing the Wye College governors in 1999 he said⁵⁰ ‘science has now reached the stage when it can actually make enormous contributions to health, the environment, and food production. This is why it is timely for Imperial to move into these areas’. He went on to say ‘...we also see in Wye enormous possibilities from the point of view of Imperial. Within our environmental spectrum we have many kinds of expertise but we did not have Agriculture and so to find an institution like Wye that was willing to contemplate joining us was an opportunity we could not turn down’.

Lord Oxburgh’s vision about the importance of agriculture, food, health, and the environment has turned out to be absolutely correct. Food and environmental security have risen in prominence over recent years. This is typified in the recent report by the Royal Society (2009)⁵¹. Here are some quotes from it:

‘Food security is one of this century’s key global challenges. By 2050 the world will require increased crop production in order to feed its predicted 9 billion people. This must be done in the face of changing consumption patterns, the impacts of climate change and the growing scarcity of water and land.’

‘There is a pressing need for the ‘sustainable intensification’ of global agriculture in which yields are increased without adverse environmental impact and without the cultivation of more land’

‘In addition to supporting high-quality science, the UK needs to maintain and build its capacity to innovate, in collaboration with international and national research centres. UK scientists and agronomists have in the past played a leading role in disciplines relevant to agriculture, but training in

⁵⁰ Appendix 4

⁵¹ Royal Society (2009) *Reaping the benefits: science and the sustainable intensification of global agriculture*. The Royal Society, London.

agricultural sciences and related topics has recently suffered from a lack of policy attention and support. Agricultural extension services, connecting farmers with new innovations, have been similarly neglected in the UK and elsewhere. There is a major need to review the support for and provision of extension services, particularly in developing countries.'

The Royal Society report also called for additional research funding of between £50m and £100m per year of new government money in addition to existing research spending to support research, research training, and technology transfer relating to the global problems of food production.

Wye College had internationally recognised teaching and research expertise in the science and practice of agriculture, horticulture, and the environment, in social science relating to the rural environment, in developing country agriculture, and in economics and management. It was, therefore, ideally placed to provide some of the much needed teaching and research capacity for the future. When combined with the breadth and depth of Imperial College expertise this would have made a formidable centre of excellence of international eminence.

It is a tragedy therefore that the incoming Rector, Sir Richard Sykes, who was appointed soon after the merger, did not possess the vision of his predecessor. He clearly viewed the physical assets of the College more highly than the academic mission. Not only was this a great opportunity missed, but the subsequent destruction of the Wye academic mission by the Imperial College leadership, and the associated loss of teaching programmes, research programmes, and staff expertise also ensured that the Oxburgh vision could never be fulfilled.

Table of Student Numbers per Department at Wye College
Undergraduate numbers

Field of study	88/89	89/90	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00
Agric.Hortic.Envir.												
Agriculture	55	59	55	66	71	55	42	34	24	23	19	18
Agriculture/Environment		4	8	14	22	32	22	21	25	19	12	10
Animal Agriculture								3	10	17	20	8
Horticulture	46	44	39	26	27	32	28	26	31	36	28	22
Rural Environment Stds.	104	96	79	70	74	81	73	52	35	21	10	11
Countryside Management		4	18	38	49	62	54	59	51	39	36	28
Sustain. Environ. Dev.												2
Dept. Sub total	205	207	199	214	243	262	219	195	176	155	125	99
Biological Sciences												
Plant Biotechnology		11	9	6	9							
Applied Plant Sciences	15					4	5	3	7	8	7	7
Animal Sciences	28	29	39	35	41	24	31	32	39	37	31	24
Biology					7	12	15	11	10	6	11	13
Environmental Biology							4	10	16	13	16	13
Biochemistry						2	4	9	10	10	11	5
Environmental Science			12	30	44	52	52	37	33	25	16	12
Equine Science									25	41	58	70
Soils/Plant Nutrition	2											
Dept. Sub total	45	40	60	71	101	94	111	102	140	140	150	144
Economics												
Agric Business Manage.	74	74	66	58	58	63	76	81	68	60	55	54
Business Studies			14	42	55	57	96	91	95	101	100	93
Equine Bus. Manage.										11	22	45
Hortic Business Manage.			6	11	19	21	18	17	14	13	5	
International Business										4	18	29
Agricultural Economics	54	53	44	41	30	23	10					
Business & Environment									3	9	10	10
Food Marketing												3
Dept. Sub total	128	127	130	152	162	164	200	189	180	198	210	234
Total undergraduates	378	374	389	437	506	520	530	486	496	493	485	477

Postgraduate numbers

Department	88/89	89/90	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00
<i>Research (Mphil/PhD)</i>												
Agriculture Horticulture and the Environment	49	33	38	38	50	64	61	79	53	67	93.5	64.5
Biochemistry and Biological Sciences	34	22	30	36	31	53	49	87	100	72.5	77.5	71.5
Agricultural Economics	15	16	9	14	17	19	20	28	27	26.5	33	28
<i>Sub total</i>												
<i>Taught Courses (MSc)</i>												
Agriculture Horticulture and the Environment	55	45	50	73	84	90	89	68	68	46	52	36
Biochemistry & Biological Sciences	22	18	13	15	8	25	23	23	14	24	19	20
Agricultural Economics	53	48	50	46	54	30	43	34	39	48	50	39
<i>Sub total</i>												
<i>Taught Courses (Diplomas)</i>												
Agricultural Economics	19	15	11	9	17	18	7	10	18	2	4	3
Biochemistry & Biological Sciences							5	5	4	6		2
<i>Sub total</i>	19	15	11	9	17	18	12	15	22	8	4	5
Total Postgraduates	247	197	201	231	261	299	297	334	323	292	329	264

Total student body

Summary	88/89	89/90	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00
Undergraduates	378	374	389	437	506	520	530	486	496	493	485	477
Postgraduates	247	197	201	231	261	299	297	334	323	292	329	264
Other students*	42	44	38	35	18	74	79	30	33	24	15	18
Grant total students	667	615	628	703	785	893	906	850	852	809	829	759

*Continuing students, ERASMUS, Special Attachments

Source: taken from *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body 1988/89–1999/2000*

Appendix 2

Expenditure on Research Contracts in Operation at Wye

Research expenditure	88/89	89/90	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/2000
Horticulture	283,021	203,075	186,313	225,425	348,062	359,141	304,605	379,103	146,477	172,870	78,857	124,723
Environment	16,429	74,693	142,694	162,046	228,554	327,885	209,683	109,720	180,482	227,838	131,333	96,125
Agriculture	149,893	185,404	172,997	206,838	208,996	245,822	446,460	391,663	230,912	225,326	226,811	76,903
Biological Sciences	463,616	732,478	592,179	811,008	649,871	576,476	703,943	701,288	1,039,808	910,858	1,073,330	1,042,767
Hop Research	75,342	147,719	120,987	140,302	152,863	107,459	60,474	97,109	84,728	79,056	94,349	77,000
Ag.Econ/Business Man.	315,124	148,574	104,641	249,582	300,307	172,520	333,123	506,229	364,010	282,838	759,955	151,880
Year totals	1,303,425	1,491,943	1,319,811	1,795,201	1,888,653	1,789,303	2,058,288	2,185,112	2,046,417	1,898,786	2,364,635	1,569,398
Technology Transfer, Business and Policy Development Projects Operational 1997-2000												
Technology Transfer exp.										97/98		
										£		
Biological Sciences										193,328	97,244	103,828
Ag.Econ/Business Man.										505,430	182,922	187,285

Source: taken from *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body 1988/89–1999/2000*

Appendix 3

Wye College, University of London, Consolidated Financial Results from 1989–1999

	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Operating surplus (deficit)	-300	-84	-66	-130	201	-182	-108	-346	-298	-150	-63
Depreciation charge							-352	-372	-511	-535	-508
Release of deferred capital grants							183	273	291	296	212
Interest to Imperial College											-88
Surplus (deficit) on sale of properties		539	119	343	133	329	21	44	-30	220	-5
Surplus on BES						542					
Other exceptional items	22	25	11	-43	-72						
Transfers from reserves	12	49	24	206							
Transfers to reserves	-29	-503	-129	-266	-133	-448					
Surplus/(deficit) after transfers	-295	26	-41	110	129	241	-256	-401	-548	-169	-452
Income and Expenditure reserve											
At start of year	-287	-498	-472	-513	-403	-144	229	2,679	3,003	2,763	3,072
Surplus/(deficit) for year	-295	26	-41	110	129	241	-256	-401	-548	-169	-452
Appreciation of special funds	84										
Transfer balance of capital reserve							2,617				
Realisation of property revaluation gains								649	236	406	111
Released from revaluation reserve							89	76	72	72	54
Adjustment for VAT recoverable					130	132					
Income and Expenditure reserve	-498	-472	-513	-403	-144	229	2,679	3,003	2,763	3,072	2,785

Other Income Reserve	196	172	240	42							
Capital Reserve	3,647	4,270	4,326	5,100	6,033	6,563					
Revaluation Reserve							6,170	5,446	5,143	4,665	4,500
Endowment Reserves	361	307	321	311	403	420	744	776	1,003	1,515	2,089
Unexpended Balances	45	207	567	604	387	395					
Total Reserves	3,751	4,484	4,941	5,654	6,679	7,607	9,593	9,225	8,909	9,252	9,374
Tangible Fixed Assets (cost/valuation)	4,113	4,479	4,659	5,599	6,900	7,654	14,458	15,776	15,885	15,564	15,285

Commentary on the financial results for the years to 1998/1999

- Changes in reporting requirements over the years makes some comparisons complicated
- The operating surplus(deficit) is a good indication of the College's viability
- Operating results over these years, have only once been reported a surplus
- Exceptional gains on property sales have enabled the College to continue as a going concern
- The College estate was re-valued to a fair value in 1994/95, increasing the total reserves, but also the depreciation charge
- Total reserves increased to £9.6m in 1994/95, and then decline
- Substantial bequests to endowment funds, together with high annual funds growth, contributed to College reserves
- Changes in accounting requirement 1994/95, precluded unexpended balances from being shown in reserves, and the Capital reserve had to be reallocated between revaluation reserve and the income and expenditure reserve

Source: Source: taken from *The Report of the Principal to the Governing Body 1988/89–1998/99*

Heads of Agreement

**Between
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine (Imperial)
and
Wye College, University of London (Wye)**

- 1) Imperial College of Science Technology and Medicine is a body established by Royal Charter, a college of the University of London and exempt charity. The principal objectives of Imperial are teaching and research in science, technology and medicine.
- 2) Wye College, University of London is a body established by Royal Charter, a college of the University of London and an exempt charity. The principal objectives of Wye are teaching and research in science, management and economics of food, agriculture, horticulture and the rural environment
- 3) The parties intend to merge with the objective being to maintain and improve the quality, range and scope of research and education. This Heads of Agreement, when duly signed, will be a legally binding document. Both Governing Bodies agree to submit by 20 November 1998, a private parliamentary bill, the (Imperial College 1999 Bill) to effect this merger
- 4) It is agreed as follows
- 5) The date for the merger shall be 1 August 2000 subject to the Bill receiving Royal Assent
- 6) Imperial will amend its Statutes to reflect the change set out in the Heads of Agreement, and through the enacting of the Bill, and with Her Majesty's consent, Wye's Royal Charter shall be revoked
- 7) It is recognised that until the final passage of the Bill, the two Colleges will be separate entities, even though their academic programmes and other matter may be operating in concert. Until merger, each shall be entitled to act independently of each other save to the extent set out in these Heads of Agreement.
- 8) The aim is to co-operate closely from the start of the 1998/99 academic session. The possibility of joint teaching will be considered and appropriate inputs invited to inform new developments and initiatives. The benefits of early integration of administrative and academic support services will be pursued.
- 9) The Colleges intend to make an application to the HEFCE to meet the costs of restructuring and the costs associated with the merger and to ensure that during the transition period Wye remains solvent and is able to comply with its Memorandum with the HEFCE.

Transition period

- 10) After the signature of these Heads of Agreement, there will be a transition period during which time Wye College will be affiliated to Imperial College up to and including the date of formal merger. The duties and responsibilities of Imperial and Wye during the period of affiliation are described in Annex 1.
- 11) Over the transition period, there will be a reciprocal observer status on both Governing Bodies of a named academic and a lay member of the respective Governing Body. Observers on other appropriate committees will be agreed.
- 12) A Wye/Imperial Integration Group comprising relevant senior staff of Imperial and Wye reporting to Rector's Management and Planning Group and Wye Academic Board and Governing Body will be set up to discuss progress, academic and other matters relating to Wye.
- 13) It is recognised that the development of appropriate academic structures requires further and continuing discussion. There will be changes both at Imperial and at Wye so that existing strengths in both colleges can be built upon and successful initiative entered into during the transition period.
- 14) During the transition period Wye will continue to operate its Departments; currently Biological Sciences; Agriculture and Horticulture: Environment; and Agricultural Economics and Business Management.

- 15) The potential to develop collaborative linkages with Departments and Centres within Imperial is a major academic advantage of merger and the opportunities to develop joint teaching and collaborative research will be progressed as rapidly as possible during this transition period as will further enhancement of academic support services, teaching and research resources, library and IT. The policies, processes and administrative systems in place at Wye will be reviewed to agree how they could be harmonised, if necessary, with those in use at Imperial.
- 16) Taking into account the mission and integrated nature of academic activities at Wye, it will be necessary to harmonise the arrangements for staff development and for academic quality assurance at Wye with those at Imperial.
- 17) The organisational and management structure of the academic work at Wye, taking account of relevant disciplines at Imperial are described in Annex A. The organisation of services that would support this structure is described in Annex B.
- 18) The Principal of Wye would be invited to join the Rector's Management and Planning Group during the period of transition.
- 19) During the period of transition, funding at Wye would remain the responsibility of Wye's Governing Body. Arrangements will be put in place to model the flow of funds to Wye using the agreed new academic structure and Imperial's allocation formulae.
- 20) Arrangements will be discussed that would permit, after merger, the continuation of the mission and integrated activities relating to food, agriculture and the rural environment in Imperial at Wye.
- 21) The setting up of a post-merger Advisory Group will be discussed during the transition period – see details in post-merger section.
- 22) During the transition phase, Wye will continue its restructuring in discussion with Imperial and appropriate staffing changes and staff development will be discussed between Wye and Imperial with the objective that teaching and research thrive at Wye.
- 23) During the transition period, appropriate arrangement will be made for the business, endowed, exchequer and non-exchequer assets of Wye, including its land, buildings and other funds to be assessed prior to transfer to Imperial on merger. After merger these assets will be administered under existing arrangement or constraints including those imposed by donors or the funding council or under an instrument specifying use.
- 24) Both parties will consult on all major policy matter and on any issue likely to affect materially the academic and/or financial strength of either.
- 25) Arrangements will be put in hand to give priority to staff from either college in filling all relevant posts that are created or become vacant. In discharging this undertaking there is not a requirement to appoint any member of staff, but to give full and detailed consideration to any suitable applicant prior to seeking or considering applications from elsewhere. It is not intended that this should delay the process of filling posts. If appointed, staff from the merging institutions will be deemed to have commenced their employment from the date that their continuous service with either institution first began.
- 26) Arrangements will be put in place to consider, in consultation with Imperial, all of the contracts and trading companies with which Wye is associated so that it may be agreed as to which will be passed over on merger with all their assets (including IPR) and liabilities, and which will be wound up, terminated or otherwise dealt with. Matters concerning banking, insurance and all other legal and financial matters including advisers will be considered during the transition period with a view to harmonisation at an appropriate stage.
- 27) During the transition period, discussions will proceed with Imperial in order to draw up a plan relating to capital developments and long-term maintenance of the estate at Wye.
- 28) During this time, arrangements will be put in place to appoint a person (title to be determined) who, after merger day will be the senior academic at Wye and who will have responsibility for co-ordinating all activity at Wye, enhancing its mission within Imperial and who will report directly to the Rector and participate in the management structure of Imperial at an appropriate senior level. Such a person could well service jointly as Head of a Wye based academic cost-centre and would have appropriate resources.
- 29) During this period, discussion will be held with individuals and departments at Wye in order the review the teaching programme and its load, especially in relation to the academic development of staff, their research programmes plus administrative and support services. This will be supported by appropriate staff development.

Arrangements will be put in place over the transition period for each individual member of staff to have their position and status post-merger clarified before the merger. Any unresolved issues are to be referred jointly to the Principal of Wye and the Rector of Imperial for resolution.

On merger

- 30) Wye will merge with Imperial and the Charter of Wye College will cease to exist. The Statutes of Imperial will be revised on merger as set out in Annex C (to follow).
- 31) All assets and liabilities of Wye will be subsumed within Imperial and all will be subject to the Charter, Statutes, Rules and Regulations of Imperial. On merger, Imperial College at Wye will be organised on the academic, administrative and service structures and system agreed during the transition period to merger and be subject to the same planning, data and systems requirements as the rest of college.
- 32) The arrangements listed below will take effect. Unless otherwise agreed below or by mutual consent, these arrangements will operate in the form stated for a minimum of *two* years, after which they will be subject to Imperial's normal review procedures.
- 33) It is recognised that substantively the Mission and the estate of Wye will remain intact at Wye as a developing part of the Mission of Imperial. However, it is also recognised that there will be continuing discussions on the teaching and research programmes at Wye.
- 34) All members of the academic and other staff of Wye, who as a consequence of the merger, become members of staff of Imperial shall be treated no less favourably than members of the staff of Imperial except insofar as they may choose to retain their existing terms and conditions of employment after merger (see below)
- 35) Wye staff transferring to Imperial shall be entitled to do so under the provisions of the Transfer of Undertaking Regulations and without detriment to their existing contracts of employment. Their length of service shall commence from the start of their period of continuous employment with Wye. All such staff shall be entitled, should they so wish, to maintain their previous conditions of service while their employment continues or to transfer to Imperial's terms and conditions, any transfer being irrevocable, except that staff who accept promotion to a higher grade or accept an alternative post within Imperial shall lose the option of retaining conditions of service and shall transfer to the terms and conditions in force for the relevant grade within Imperial. Over a period of time, it is intended to harmonise terms and conditions of employment, whilst recognising individual's rights to retain terms and conditions applicable to the posts held at Wye
- 36) The parties to the merger have issued an agreed joint statement to all staff dealing with the management of any change in staffing and this is attached at Annex D. Should there be any need for a reduction in staff numbers, it is anticipated that natural wastage will mainly be sufficient. Imperial has a policy for managing staff changes which states that compulsory redundancy will be considered only as a last resort. For a period of *three* years from the date of merger, in the event that early retirements/redundancies are proposed as a consequence of the merger, other than by expiry of fixed term contracts, then in addition to the full consultation of this part of Imperial policy on managing change, the (rector) and the Senior Academic at Wye (title to be agreed) will be fully consulted before any compulsory proposals affecting former Wye staff are put into effect. Appropriate consultations will be held with the recognised unions. Severance terms will be those offered by Imperial and will not be less than those that would have been offered by Wye prior to the transition period.
- 37) As from the time of formal merger, the Senior Academic at Wye would take up post for an initial period of not less than three years (renewable) to fulfil the functions described in paragraph 27.
- 38) The Senior Academic at Wye will be a member of the rector's Environment Committee and will have the right to attend meetings of the Management and Planning Group for all matters relating to Wye College
- 39) Immediately after merger, one place on the Imperial College Council would be filled by a person nominated by the Governing Body of Wye College prior to merger. Academic representation on the Council would contain at least one person with a responsibility which includes subject areas of special interest to Wye: food, agriculture and rural environment. Appropriate representation on other bodies both internal and external will be put in place.
- 40) It is recognised Wye College will be an important element in the work of the Rector's Environment Committee and that its terms or reference will require scrutiny and, if necessary amendment, to reflect this so that it could comment on and be consulted in relation to matters of the development of academic activities relating to food, agriculture and the rural environment and to the use of resources at Wye for research and teaching including the farm, the built and rural estate.

- 41) The Environment Committee would also advise the Rector from time to time on the most appropriate bodies for the Nominations Committee to consider as member of the Court of Imperial College, recognising that such persons may be appropriately experienced and willing to advise on food, agriculture and rural environment issues and, subject to availability, be appointed to various boards and committees in, and by, Imperial.
- 42) It is agreed that there is much to be gained by retaining a level of identity compatible with Wye's integration into Imperial, in order to benefit from Wye's international reputation in its specialist fields of interest world-wide in both teaching and research. The name 'Wye College' would be retained internationally for as long as it retains specific value as a brand-name for recruitment. For other purposes, notably for research and for undergraduate recruitment, a rapid transition to 'Imperial College at Wye' is recognised as likely to be advantageous. The formal name of the main academic unit or school to be based at Wye will reflect the outcome of discussions on academic structure and will be settled during the period of affiliation.
- 43) All students and alumni of Wye would, through Imperial's membership of the University of London, continue to enjoy benefits through the University of London (There will be a merger between the alumni associations on terms to be agreed between them and approved by Wye and Imperial).
- 44) A ceremony for the presentation of graduands/graduates would continue to be held, for those who wished it and subject to sufficient demand, at Wye
- 45) Appropriate arrangements would be put in place to merge the students' unions.
- 46) The academic staff working at Wye would have the facility to continue to meet on a regular basis as an academic forum under the chairmanship of the Senior Academic at Wye and to discuss matters of mutual concern.
- 47) Imperial's Board of Studies (Senate) and its committees shall have responsibility for the regulation of all academic matters that fall under its purview. Particular arrangements will be put in place to enhance and develop the External Programme (and a subcommittee of the Board of Studies shall have access to that Board on matters relating to the External Programme (to be revised in the light of Imperial's re-structuring))
- 48) Imperial recognises the importance of the Library, IT and other academic support services at Wye as fundamental academic resources necessary to ensure that the Mission of Wye in Imperial is sustained and developed. The support services will become part of Imperial's support services. No change of significance (as defined by the Rector and the Senior Academic at Wye) shall take place without mutual agreement. Imperial aims to provide a level of academic support services that is at least that which is enjoyed at Wye before merger.
- 49) Staff employed in academic and administrative support services will be integrated into the Imperial academic and administrative support service and will have equal opportunity be re recognised, promoted and contribute to those services.
- 50) Any proposals to transfer staff to and/or between Imperial and Wye in Imperial will be subject to Imperial's transfer arrangements. Any staff for whom it is proposed (*up to three years after merger*) that they be relocated from Wye shall have the opportunity to be fully consulted and, subject to the consultation and the involvement of the Senior Academic at Wye, shall be compensated for a period of two years, for any additional costs and disruption. In the event of dispute *the matter shall be referred to the Director of Personnel and, if necessary, the Rector or his deputy whose decision will be final.*
- 51) All Wye staff and students will in London enjoy the benefits, privileges and responsibilities available to other members of the College including the Library, Centre for Computing Services, sports facilities, student residences, academic visitor accommodation, facilities for recreation and artistic endeavour, student's union, health and dental practices, and child day care to the extent that these services are available, enjoyed by members of Imperial at the time of merger, and geographically accessible. Alumni of Wye College shall enjoy the same privileges as Alumni of Imperial.

Annex A

Affiliation

- During a period of affiliation the following shall apply as far as practicable. Each institution remains separate and independent under the control of its own governing body but seeking as far as possible to act together to common purpose. In particular:
- Wye would play a part in Imperial's planning process as a quasi-department - particularly with respect to decisions

- to incur capital expenditure
- to create or fill posts. Wye would involve Imperial in the advertising and selection process. Subject to clearance in advance, Imperial would be willing, if thought helpful, for its name to be used in Wye College advertisements during the period of affiliation.
- After consultation between Wye and Imperial and relevant staff representatives, staff recruited at Wye would be appointed on the agreed terms and conditions that apply to new staff appointed at Imperial
- Wye would consult Imperial on matters relating to promotions.
- These interactions can be overseen at a high level by the Wye/IC integration group, but at a practical level it is likely that the best approach will be for each Wye department to be specifically affiliated to a sister department at IC with a special relationship between the two Heads of Departments.
- Recognising the very long lead times that are necessary in any changes to undergraduate curriculum, a joint working group would start work as soon as possible with a view to having a new course structure available for discussion by summer 1999 and for firm agreement by January 2000. This would allow the first students to be recruited to the new course to arrive in October 2001.
- The post-merger academic structure for the present Wye departments will be addressed as a matter of urgency.
- It is expected that in the spring of 2000, Wye will formally participate in the IC “planning round” using the agreed academic and support organisation framework in preparation for the next academic year. Business plans and forward projections of income and expenditure will be needed for the elements of the new academic structure.
- Imperial would undertake to provide a “Wye room” in South Kensington which would have a telephone etc. and be available for use by members of the Wye staff when they had business in South Kensington.

Text in italics reflects final decisions agreed

The Imperial Vision

Address by the Rector of Imperial College, Lord Oxburgh, to the Governing Body of Wye College 18 June 1999

Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for your kind words of welcome and also thank you very much for inviting me here today to have the opportunity of meeting you for discussion.

It would be nice to pretend that what has come about has all been splendidly planned. But, of course, we all know that serendipity determines most of the important events of human life and indeed serendipity has played a significant part in the coming together of Wye with Imperial. I do not think it is any the less for that but I think we should recognise it.

Perhaps it would be worthwhile my just saying a few words about Imperial. Imperial was founded in 1907 bringing together three much older institutions, the City and Guilds College, the Royal College of Science, and the Royal School of Mines, each of which proudly maintains its traditions until this day. They each have their own alumni associations. Over the earlier part of this century the reputation of Imperial was built on its Physical Science and its Engineering with Biology playing a lesser role. But things changed. Nearly 25 years ago the Rector of the time, and particularly the Pro-Rector of the time, Professor John Sutton, saw that environmental matters were to become enormously important for the world as a whole, and that the economic, social and technological implications had to be worked through. And so at the time, a very novel, and indeed by the standards of the time, suspect initiative was started at Imperial. The Imperial College Centre for Environmental Technology (IC CET) was established as a small, postgraduate centre which over the years expanded and turned out to be a very far-sighted initiative indeed. The first Director of IC CET was Professor Gordon Conway, who is now President of the Rockefeller Foundation in New York. In this way, Imperial became formally engaged with environmental problems earlier than almost any institution in this country, and probably among the earliest in the world. In 1988 another important event happened when, as a result of a series of reports about health, hospital provision and medical education in London, Imperial merged with St Mary's Hospital Medical School.

Since that time, a number of other medical schools, some of them among the oldest in the country, have joined the College so that, in 1999, Imperial has half of its turnover related to medicine and it has, in terms of both turnover and numbers, probably the largest medical school in Europe. This was a major change for a medium-sized university specialising in engineering and science. Indeed, I was brought to Imperial nearly six years ago with the specific remit of bringing these mergers about. We were not, however, pushed into medical mergers; we could have resisted. However, when I had considered the proposition for a little while, in fact before I accepted the job of Rector, I convinced myself that indeed it was very important for the mergers to be accomplished. I concluded that the main problems which were facing the world in the next century relate to health, relate to natural resources, and relate to the environment; and tackling all of these problems is exceedingly difficult. And so I felt that it was entirely appropriate that Imperial should look hard at both medicine and environmental matters.

The human body is an extremely complex natural system. The environment and the organisms that live in it comprise an even more complex natural system. It is only very recently that traditional physics, chemistry, biology and mathematical modelling have become sufficiently sophisticated to make a genuinely useful contribution to the understanding of these natural phenomena. Until that time the best approach to complex natural phenomena was empirical. People examined the phenomena, recognised what worked, perhaps drew a few tentative conclusions, but that was all that could be done. That was true in my own subject, Geology; I am sure it was true in Agriculture; it is true in many other fields; it was certainly true in Medicine. The best doctor was the man who had seen the most cases and who had the most experience.

But times have changed. Science has now reached the stage when it can actually make enormous contributions to health, the environment and food production. This is why it is timely for Imperial to move into these areas. This does not actually mean abandoning the disciplines on which the College's reputation has been made. But it does mean looking for quite different areas of application of many traditional kinds of expertise. It is enormously encouraging within the College to see the collaborations which are already growing up between different parts of the Old College. When I find the Head of Mechanical Engineering

and the Head of Surgery putting in a joint research grant, I think something has actually happened. And indeed, I should say the same thing is already happening with Wye and that is very encouraging too. So this is our overall philosophy that underlies the merging of Wye and Imperial.

These advances must be underpinned by the information revolution. The acquisition of information, the storage of information, the retrieval of information, the manipulation of information, and its presentation in useful forms will facilitate important advances, and that is why IT is another of our priority areas.

A snapshot of Imperial as it is today shows around 9,000 students; a turnover of £325m a year (which is probably the largest turnover of any university in the UK); around about 6,000 employees and of these 3,000 are academic. These proportions are fairly unusual but reflect an important characteristic of the institution, that we are a very strongly research-driven organisation. That does not mean that we do not value our teaching. We do. Most of the people in the College want to do what they do as well as they possibly can, and that includes teaching. About a quarter of our income comes from teaching and most of the rest from research. Our theme is teaching of the very highest quality in a research environment.

Round about a third of the students of the College are women and we work hard to try to increase that proportion. We have had a boost of course associated with the medical mergers because they have a much better balance than traditionally science and engineering does. But we are working on that and we see the promotion of possibilities of technological careers, mathematical careers, scientific careers in general among girls at school as a very important part of what we do.

That is Imperial. You know Wye very well. But we see Wye as an institution which is senior to us with a long and proud tradition going back to the 15th and 16th centuries. We see, however, Wye as an institution which has become vulnerable through changes in the external environment in which it has operated so successfully over the years and those vulnerabilities are two-fold.

One is a less immediate vulnerability but relates to the need for progressing agriculture and for attacking complex rural environmental problems. This, of course, has been reflected in the expansion of your Environment Department and the Biological Department. But ultimately it seems to me that, from a scientific point of view, Wye probably had two choices. One was to expand very considerably to build more strength into these surrounding sciences or to link with an organisation where these disciplines were already strong. You have chosen the latter.

The other vulnerability, of course, is financial, and I regard this as an artefact of the present way of funding of higher education in this country, which is strongly geared against specialist institutions of your kind because one slip of one point in an RAE assessment can bring what was a perfectly viable, sensible well-run institution into real financial difficulties overnight. That is clearly not a comfortable position.

But we also see in Wye enormous possibilities from the point of view of Imperial. Within our environmental spectrum we have many kinds of expertise but we did not have Agriculture, and so to find an institution like Wye that was willing to contemplate jointing us was an opportunity that we could not turn down. We value enormously the expertise that is here. We also see in Wye facilities that we could never have dreamt of acquiring in-house. We have a small field station near Ascot, a place called Silwood Park, which is a charming country house and estate. It is fine for small-scale biological experiments but it really will not take us much further than that. For that reason we have many people who are keen to collaborate in the use of your farm facilities which offer enormous possibilities, as indeed do the glasshouses. So there are experimental facilities here which we could not have dreamt of replicating ourselves.

And finally, it is worth saying that there is one area of expertise in which you are pre-eminent and which we do not have at all, that is in your External Programme. The more I travel abroad, as I go to countries with interests in Agriculture, the more I hear about the Wye External Programme and the enormous contribution that it has made to other parts of the world. Clearly distance learning is something which is going to be very much part of 21st century higher education and we shall rely very much on the expertise that is here at Wye to guide us in this. We have almost no experience of our own. So we see this as an enormous gain from our point of view.

What about the future? The future is not going to be the same, for either Wye or for Imperial, and we should not pretend that it will be. I have absolutely no doubt that John Prescott and I will both be cursed by our successors from time to time, saying how did those two get us into this? There are going to be rocks on the way. There are going to be problems. There are going to be arguments. It would be quite unrealistic to imagine that there were not. On the other hand, what I can say is that there has been enormous good will on both sides in all our discussions and ready agreement on plans for the future. We are absolutely determined to make this thing work.

It seems to me the trick is going to be to retain the essential character of Wye and the traditions of Wye, but at the same time to gain the advantages of the association with a larger institution. Now everyone knows that larger institutions imply more bureaucracy. We try to run Imperial in a way that is not very bureaucratic. We try to get the advantages of being large, without the disadvantages, by devolving as much responsibility as possible. I have worked in seven or eight universities in different parts of the world and in the UK and I have to say that having come to Imperial nearly six years ago, I think Imperial is the least bureaucratic, least centralised of any in which I have every worked. I tend to say to people, if it is not against the law and it makes sense, and it is not going to bankrupt us you can probably do it.

The academic concept for the merger is that activities at Wye will become part of departments at Imperial. And the two main departments that will be involved will be our TH Huxley School (an interdisciplinary school that brings together environment science, geology and the exploitation of natural resources) and the Department of Biology. However, I do not rule out the possibility of other departments coming down here in due course. Indeed there will probably be a Biochemistry presence down here as well before long. But that is not part of the first agenda.

Additionally I expect that many of our students will have the experience of spending some of their time down here and some of their time in South Kensington, and probably all the students on both sites will receive some of their teaching, by telelearning. We plan to establish a fibre optic link between Wye and South Kensington so that where it is appropriate and convenient, the same class can be taught in two different places by the same person simultaneously. We do have some experience of this within the Medical School. We operate on a number of different hospital sites, and it is impressive to see a consultant examining a patient before a class with a battery of three or maybe even four screens beside him? On which he can see and communicate with individuals who are watching him on three or four different hospital sites.

At the same time I think it is going to be important to maintain collegiate community life here at Wye and my feeling, having thought about it a great deal, is that we are not going to be a million miles from the concept of an Oxbridge College based here at Wye.

It does seem to me that we have a genuine community here and I do think that it needs to be led and overseen by someone who would fulfil many of the functions of the head of an Oxbridge College. We will need someone who is actually going to represent the heart of College and make sure that things on this site work properly and who can come to me and say look, this is not good enough, and get appropriate action just as would happen in South Kensington or one of our other sites. So I see this person oiling the wheels internally but also being recognised by the local community 'The Head' of Wye. I think it is essential for that person to be able to interact with the local community and hopefully become a prominent local figure. This person, the Provost, will be able to draw on the support of a small advisory committee of people who know the College well and who are local and who can guide College policy in this area. It is going to be very important to make sure that local relations are properly maintained, local considerations are properly taken into account in anything that is done and that Wye is not seen as simply the outpost of some remote large organisation that has no local interest. We have to recognise that there will be problems, but the prize for getting it right is just too enormous to let any of these smaller things stand in our way. I think that the future is full of promise for both Wye and Imperial.

Imperial College Act 1999

An Act to unite Wye College with the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine; to transfer all rights, properties, assets and liabilities from Wye College to the said Imperial College; and for connected purposes.

[30th June 1999]

WHEREAS—

(1)The Imperial College of Science and Technology was established by Royal Charter in 1907, combining the Royal College of Science, the Royal School of Mines and the City and Guilds College, for the purpose of giving the highest specialised instruction, and providing the fullest equipment for the most advanced training and research in various branches of science, especially in its application to industry:

(2)The Imperial College of Science and Technology became a School of the University of London in 1908:

(3)On 22nd June 1988, the Royal Charter of the Imperial College of Science and Technology was amended by Order in Council to change the name of the body to the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine (“Imperial College”) with the purpose, inter alia, of carrying on the work of St. Mary’s Hospital Medical School:

(4)By the [1988 c.xxiv.] Imperial College Act 1988, which came into effect on 1st August 1988, St. Mary’s Hospital Medical School became united with Imperial College:

(5)By the [1997 c.ii.] Imperial College Act 1997, which came into effect on 1st August 1997, the Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School and the Royal Postgraduate Medical School became united with Imperial College:

(6)On 24th June 1998 the said Royal Charter of 1907 was replaced by a new Royal Charter making modern provision for the governance of Imperial College with effect from 1st October 1998:

(7)The College of St. Gregory and St. Martin at Wye was founded in 1447 as a religious house and was dissolved in 1545, after which the site continued to be used for educational purposes, becoming a grammar school in 1627:

(8)The Grammar School at Wye continued until 1894 when the South Eastern Agricultural College was established on the site:

(9)The South Eastern Agricultural College became a school of the University of London in 1898 and in 1946 the said College entered into association with the Horticultural College for Women, Swanley:

(10)On 13th September 1948 those associated bodies were incorporated by Royal Charter as The College of St. Gregory and St. Martin at Wye generally known as “Wye College” having the objects among others of providing for persons of both sexes instruction and means of research in all or any of the subjects relating to the practice and science of agriculture and horticulture comprised in the Faculty of Science of the University of London and in such other subjects of or cognate to a University Education in Agriculture and Horticulture as may be decided upon from time to time by the Governing Body of Wye College:

(11)The work of teaching and research carried on by Imperial College and Wye College respectively is in many respects complementary and it is desirable that that work should be enhanced by the unification of those bodies:

(12)Imperial College and Wye College have agreed that it is expedient that they should be united as one college in accordance with the provisions of this Act:

(13)It is expedient that the other provisions contained in this Act should be enacted:

(14)The objects of this Act cannot be attained without the authority of Parliament:

May it therefore please Your Majesty that it may be enacted, and be it enacted, by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Citation

This Act may be cited as the Imperial College Act 1999.

2 Interpretation

In this Act, except where the context otherwise requires, the following expressions have the following meanings:—

- “the appointed day” means such day as may be agreed by Imperial College and Wye College under section 3 (Appointed day) of this Act;
- “the charter” means the charter incorporating Wye College granted by His Late Majesty King George VI on 13th September 1948;
- “the Council” means the Council of Imperial College;
- “Imperial College” means the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine;
- “the registrar” has the meaning given in section 744 of the [1985 c. 6.] Companies Act 1985.

3 Appointed day

(1) Imperial College and Wye College may agree a day to be the appointed day for the purposes of this Act.

(2) Not less than 14 days before any such day as may be agreed under subsection (1) above, Imperial College shall—

(a) give notice to the Council of the University of London of the day so agreed; and

(b) publish in the London Gazette a notice stating the day so agreed.

4 Dissolution of Wye College

(1) On the appointed day Wye College shall be dissolved and the charter shall be revoked.

(2) Imperial College shall notify the registrar of the effect of section 10 (Restriction on use of certain names) of this Act within 14 days beginning with the date on which this Act is passed.

5 Transfer of property, etc

All property, real and personal, of every description (including things in action) and all rights and privileges of Wye College which immediately before the appointed day belonged to or were vested in or exercisable by Wye College shall on the appointed day, without any conveyance, transfer, assignment or other instrument, be transferred to and vested in, or be exercisable by, Imperial College for all the estate and interest therein of Wye College.

6 Transfer of obligations, etc

All debts and obligations of Wye College existing immediately before the appointed day shall, on the appointed day, be transferred and attached to Imperial College and shall thereafter be discharged and satisfied by Imperial College.

7 Saving for agreements, deeds, actions, etc

All agreements, appointments, awards, contracts, deeds and other instruments, and all actions and proceedings and causes of action which immediately before the appointed day were existing or pending in favour of, or against, Wye College shall on and after the appointed day continue and may be carried into effect, enforced and prosecuted by, or in favour of, or against, Imperial College to the same extent and in the like manner as if Imperial College instead of Wye College had been a party to, or interested in, the same.

8 Construction of bequests, etc

(1) Subject to subsection (2) below, any scheme, will, deed or other instrument, whether made or executed before, on or after the appointed day which contains any bequest, gift, trust or other benefit in favour of or connected with Wye College shall, on and after the appointed day, be read and have effect as if Imperial College were named therein instead of Wye College.

(2) Imperial College shall administer any bequest, gift, trust or other benefit referred to in subsection (1) above as nearly as may be for the purposes intended in the original scheme, will, deed or other instrument conferring such a benefit.

9 Transfer of powers to appoint or nominate

Any power or right of Wye College or of any officer or employee thereof to appoint or nominate a member of any education authority, or of the governing body of any educational, charitable or other institution, shall on the appointed day be transferred to, and may be exercised by, Imperial College or the officer or employee of Imperial College who in the opinion of the Council most nearly performs the functions formerly performed by the former officer or employee in question.

10 Restriction on use of certain names

(1) No person other than Imperial College shall, within a period of 25 years beginning with the date on which this Act is passed, use either of the names mentioned in subsection (2) below without the consent of Imperial College.

(2) The names referred to in subsection (1) above are—

(a) Wye College; and

(b) The College of St. Gregory and St. Martin at Wye.

Schedule of College Estate at Merger

Property/ facility/land	Name	Site reference	Location
Property	Old Flying Horse	Main Site South	High Street, Wye
	Bexley House	Main Site South	High Street, Wye
	Orwin House (Ag. Econ)	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Administration Offices	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Latin School	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Lecture Rooms	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Lecture Rooms (No.2)	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Old Agriculture	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Old Quad	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Dining Room	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Estates Building	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Stage 1 Laboratories	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Stage 11 Laboratories	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Stage 111 Labs. + Top Hat	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Bio Science Laboratories	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Guinness Laboratories	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Jubilee Building	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Russell Laboratories	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Student Union + Pool	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Mobile Classroom	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Bio Sciences Facility	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Mosquito House	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Boiler House	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Main Sub Station	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Ian Carruthers House	Main Site South	High Street, Wye
	Ian Carruthers Annex	Main Site South	High Street, Wye
	Wolfson Lecture Room	Main Site South	High Street, Wye
	Kempe Centre Library/IT	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	EP Rollalong Building	Main Site North	High Street, Wye
	Families Room	Main Site South	Upper Bridge St.
	Wolfson House	Main Site South	Upper Bridge St.
	Old Vic Laundry	Main Site South	Upper Bridge St.
	Squires Hall	Main Site North	Olantigh Rd Wye
	ADAS Building Block A	ADAS	Olantigh Rd Wye
	ADAS Building Block B	ADAS	Olantigh Rd Wye
	ADAS Building Block C	ADAS	Olantigh Rd Wye
	ADAS Building Block D	ADAS	Olantigh Rd Wye
	3 The Green	Main Site South	The Green Wye
	5 The Green	Main Site South	The Green Wye
	Old Vicarage	Main Site South	The Green Wye
	Harwood House	Main Site South	Oxenturn Rd Wye
	Harwood House Annex	Main Site South	Oxenturn Rd Wye
	63 Scotton Street	Scotton Street	Scotton St. Wye
	Stage 1 Withersdane Hall	Withersdane	Withersdane
		Withersdane	Withersdane
		Withersdane	Withersdane
Property cont.	Stage 2 Withersdane Hall	Withersdane	Withersdane
	Stage 3 Withersdane Hall	Withersdane	Withersdane
	Withersdane Hall Old House	Withersdane	Withersdane
	CEAS	Withersdane	Withersdane

	Lloyds Bank Hall	Withersdane	Withersdane
	Dunstan Skilbeck Hall	Withersdane	Withersdane
	Bernard Sunley Hall	Withersdane	Withersdane
	Garden Hall	Withersdane	Withersdane
	Garden Office rest room	Withersdane	Withersdane
	1 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	2 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	3 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	4 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	5 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	6 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	7 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	8 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	9 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	10 Withersdane Hall Cotts	Withersdane	Withersdane
	Withersdane Hall Garages	Withersdane	Withersdane
	BCP Portacabin	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	1 Orchard Cottages	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	2 Orchard Cottages	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	3 Orchard Cottages	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	4 Orchard Cottages	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Wyesplan Labs	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Apple Grading Store	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Garden Dept	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Open Front Store	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Boiler House	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Hortic Mess Room	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Potting Store	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Conservatory	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	BCP Packing Shed	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Hop Chemical Store	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Hop Department Labs	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Hop Dept. Workshop	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Hortic Header House	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Hortic Annex	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Compost Store	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Shed	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Rd
	Coldharbour House	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	Coldharbour Office	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	Coldharbour Equestrian centre	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	Coldharbour Oast	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	Coldharbour Implement Store	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	Coldharbour Stables	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	Coldharbour jam factory	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	Timber Stable block	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	The Kennels	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	Coldharbour bungalow	Coldharbour Farm	Coldharbour Farm
	1 Amage Road Cottages	Coldharbour Farm	Amage Road
	2 Amage Road Cottages	Coldharbour Farm	Amage Road
	3 Amage Road Cottages	Coldharbour Farm	Amage Road
	4 Amage Road Cottages	Coldharbour Farm	Amage Road
	5 Amage Road Cottages	Coldharbour Farm	Amage Road
	6 Amage Road Cottages	Coldharbour Farm	Amage Road
	7 Amage Road Cottages	Coldharbour Farm	Amage Road
	Amage Bungalow	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Fattening House 2	Pig Unit	Amage Road

	Fattening House 1	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Farrowing House	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	BST	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Guilt Line	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Fattening House 3	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Old Barn	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Straw Barn	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Farrowing House	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Danish House	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Mobile Offices/mess room	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Sow House	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Weaner House	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Fattening House 4	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Mobile Offices	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Roadside Barn	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Single Storey Barn	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Open Barn 1	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Open Barn 2	Pig Unit	Amage Road
	Dairy Farm Offices	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Dairy Isolation Pens	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Dairy Open Cattle Barn	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Dairy Covered Cattle Barn	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Dairy Animal House	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Dairy Cattle Barn	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Grain Store	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Hop Machinery Store	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Hop Open Machine Store	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
	Enclosed Workshop	Dairy Farm	Silks Lane
Facilities	Squash Courts	Main Site North	High Street Wye
	Swimming Pool	Main Site North	High Street Wye
	Glass House	Main Site North	High Street Wye
	BCP Glass houses	Main Site Hortic.	Ashford
	GM Glasshouses	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	Glasshouses 3	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	Glasshouse	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	Containers by 103	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	Containers by 105	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	East Block Glasshouse	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	West Block Glasshouse	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	Garden Dept. Glasshouse 1	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	Garden Dept. Glasshouse 2	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	Large Polytunnel	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	Small Polytunnel	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	BCP Polytunnel 9	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
	BCP Polytunnels	Main Site Hortic	Occupation Road
Land	Barn Field		
	Big Tuckinge Garland Files		
	Blacklands		
	Boggs		
	Booth Paddock		
	Brices		
	Burgate		
	Bushy Westons		
	Coldharbour Paddock		
	Coopers Field		

	Crabbs		
	Crown Field		
	Dunstan		
	Forstal		
	Goldups		
	Gore		
	Great Capers Harrow Pound		
	Home and Shorter		
	John Acres		
	King-Hall		
	Lucas		
	Middlefield		
	N.Sidelands		
	Oaks		
	Olantigh		
	Orwin		
	Paddock		
	Park Field		
	Pickersdane		
	Pond Field		
	Russell Wilson		
	S.Sidelands		
	Sankey		
	Sharbrooks		
	Silks Hop Garden		
	Skilbecks		
	Sparks-Long		
	Sports Field		
	Sturdes Pound		
	The Crown		
	Upper Barn		
	Walloways		
	Warren		
	Well Field		
	Withersdane Hop Garden		
	Woodfield 4		
	Woodfield 5		

GCE 'A'-level points of Student Intake at Wye

U/G course	'A'-level points						U/G student intake					
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Animal Sciences	15.5	15.3	17.9	17.7	21.7	24.0	22	13	12	8	6	8
Equine Science	16.8	17.6	18.0	20.7	21.5	21.0	8	18	18	18	28	9
Environmental Biology	11.5	17.0	14.0	18.0	19.0	23.0	5	4	7	4	3	3
Environmental Science	17.9	19.0	10.0	-	N/A	N/A	10	6	3	1	N/A	N/A
Plant Science	19.0	19.7	14.0	-	23.0	30.0	4	3	2	2	2	2
Biology	15.0	14.7	15.7	18.0	N/A	N/A	3	6	8	3	N/A	N/A
Biochemistry	15.0	12.0	10.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	4	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Agriculture (2001 Agric. Sciences)	17.0	19.5	24.9	24.2	26.4	24.0	7	11	8	5	7	1
Animal Agriculture	21.0	20.0	23.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	4	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Agriculture and the Environment	14.0	24/0	8.0	26.0	N/A	N/A	3	6	2	4	N/A	N/A
Horticulture (2001 Hortic. Sciences)	9.0	18.0	14.5	18.0	19.0	30.0	11	14	9	6	3	1
Agricultural Business Management	14.7	17.1	15.9	18.0	22.0	20.0	16	19	21	15	12	3
Equine Business Management	N/A	16.5	17.4	18.7	20.9	23.2	N/A	110	10	24	10	3
Horticultural Business Management	15.3	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Countryside Management	16.0	21.1	20.4	18.0	18.0	N/A	16	14	11	4	7	N/A
Rural Environmental Studies	14.0	9.0	18.0	18.7	N/A	N/A	8	8	5	3	N/A	N/A
Sustainable Environ. Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	18.0	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1	N/A
Environmental Management	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6

Applied Environmental Sciences	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
U/G course	'A'-level points						U/G student intake					
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Business Studies	12.4	12.2	14.9	16.8	20.4	N/A	28	35	28	21	6	N/A
Business and the Environment	10.5	-	12.0	15.0	24.0	N/A	2	5	2	2	4	N/A
International Business	N/A	13.3	17.5	16.0	20.7	N/A	N/A	3	15	12	5	N/A
Food Marketing	N/A	N/A	22.0	19.0	22.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	2	1	N/A
Business Manage. for Food Chain	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4
All degrees	15.0	15.5	17.3	18.9	21.4	23.5	153	185	170	135	95	42
Non 'A' Level (i.e. EC equivalent)							10	26	17	21	20	1
Mature students							32	38	20	22	10	3
Non UK students							13	15	11	9	8	4

Source: Data provided by the Department of Agricultural Sciences, Imperial College, 25 January 2002

Imperial Final Report to HEFCE for £2.5 million Restructuring Fund 21 October 2002

1. Project background

Project Title:	The merger of Wye College of Agriculture with Imperial College London
Start date:	March 1998
Completion:	July 2002
Cost:	The project has been supported by funding of £2.5M from the HEFCE Restructuring Fund, representing 50% of the cost in the timeframe of the bid
R&CF criterion:	Major constitutional change, particularly merger
Contact:	Dr Rodney Eastwood, Director of Planning & Information, Imperial College

2. Aims and Objectives

The aim of the project was the merger of Wye College with Imperial College London. It was founded on a vision of academic synergy between the two institutions which would maintain and improve the quality, range and scope of research and education available nationally and internationally. Wye's academic strengths in agriculture, terrestrial renewable natural resources, the food industry and rural development would be brought together with Imperial's strengths in science, technology and medicine, particularly in the areas of biological and environmental sciences. The objectives were to define and maintain the very highest quality of teaching and research in these areas on the Wye campus, whilst securing financial viability and stability.

It was recognised at the outset that there were major issues to be addressed:

- i) Wye College was struggling financially and in receipt of moderation funding from HEFCE
- ii) Student numbers were in decline due to the agricultural depression in the UK and the high value of sterling
- iii) Wye College had been graded 3a in the 1996 RAE and its research income was falling.

The strategy for the merger was re-draw the academic profile at Wye to reflect Imperial's teaching and research ethos and levels of activity, and to 'add-value' to all provision at Wye. Administrative and academic support services would be restructured within existing departments at Imperial College

3. Programme of work

March 1998: Commencement of formal merger discussions
October 1998: Signing of Memorandum of Understanding
October 1998 to August 2000: Restructuring prior to merger
June 1999: Passing of Act of Parliament
July 1999 – July 2002: Harmonisation and upgrading of facilities
August 2000: Merger
July 2002: Completion of works to support first stage of merger strategy

The last four years have seen the project completed successfully as detailed below, although as explained in Section 4, this represents only the first stage of the strategy for development of the academic activity at Wye and work is ongoing. The merger of Imperial College and Wye College of Agriculture took place on 1 August, 2000. The key activities underpinning the merger and supported by funding from the Restructuring and Collaboration Fund were as follows:

- i) The first undertaking of the merger was for Imperial College to make several substantial loans to Wye College to secure its financial viability in the immediate future, whilst the merger was progressed. The interest lost as a result of these loans is shown as item 3 on the payment schedule.

- ii) Secondly, an essential restructuring exercise took place as part of the merger involving a total of 16 academic and senior administrative posts and 21 other posts, the costs of which are shown as items 2i and 2ii. Academic activity at Wye was incorporated into the two existing departments of Biological Sciences and the TH Huxley School of Environment, Earth Sciences and Engineering. The administrative and academic services were integrated into the existing department at Imperial College with consequent savings in senior management.
- iii) Work took place to harmonise and link the administrative and academic services between the Wye and South Kensington Campuses. This expenditure was essential to the smooth-running of these administrative services and to achieving value for money, a key aim of the merger. The Wye and South Kensington campuses are 60 miles apart so a compatible, efficient means of electronic communication was essential. These costs are shown under items 2iv, 2vi, 6,7,9 and 11.
- iv) At the Wye campus, a small amount of essential work was undertaken to upgrade teaching and laboratory facilities to a standard consistent with those at Imperial College's south Kensington campus. This was integral to the merger strategy of re-orienting the academic provision at Wye. It supports proposals being developed by the new Faculty of Life Sciences (see below) for undergraduate options in plant science and environmental management to be offered at the Wye campus for students from the South Kensington campus. For research, it will support the development of work in molecular biology and biotechnology. These costs are shown under item 13.
- v) In addition, funding was used to support the essential legal and administrative costs of the merger as indicated under items 2iii, 2v, 2vii, 10 and 14.

This programme has supported the successful merger of Wye College with Imperial College, London.

4. Project Outcomes and Further Developments

Since merger, the 2001 RAE exercise has taken place and the submission for Agricultural Sciences was rated at 4, an improvement on its 3a in 1996, but still below the College average (5 on a 7-point scale compared with the College average of 6.68). The undergraduate courses in Agricultural Science have been re-designed and re-branded as Imperial Degree programmes. The A-level entry requirements have been increased since merger from an average of 16 points to over 20 points.

However, despite good progress, since the submission of the bid to the Restructuring Fund, several factors have led to a review and revision of the strategy for the area of Agricultural Sciences and the Wye campus:

- i) The state of agriculture in the UK has worsened under the cumulative impact of BSE, foot and mouth disease and controversy over GM crops. This has had a major impact on student numbers and research income
- ii) Imperial College has undergone a re-organisation into four faculties under a new Rector, Sir Richard Sykes.

In response to this, with effect from 1 August, 2001, the College established a new Department of Agricultural Sciences, based at the Wye campus, within the Faculty of Life Sciences. The other departments within the Faculty are those of Biological Sciences and Environmental Sciences. A new Head of Department was appointed, Prof. Jeff Waage, who was previously Chief Executive of CABI Bioscience. This change in structure and key appointment form part of a strategy to provide strong leadership in this area to deal with the very real difficulties being encountered. A further restructuring exercise is taking place during 2002 and a full review of academic activity has been carried out.

In teaching, the aim is to continue to promote the profile of Imperial College degrees at Wye and to build up student numbers. Following merger, numbers of both undergraduate and postgraduate students entering Wye decline by over 50%. The aim is to recover these numbers over the next four years.

In research, the Department will focus on several key areas in order to create depth and critical mass. In addition, the Department is working to exploit the new opportunities for interdisciplinary research within the Faculty and the wider College, in accordance with the aims of the merger. Within the Faculty of Life Sciences, these are in agro-ecological research, bio-security, molecular evolution, pest

and disease management and environmental quality. In addition, particular opportunities are being identified with the Faculty of Medicine for example, in the area of improving health and nutrition through agriculture and in identifying and reducing environmental health risks.

5. Conclusion

The funding from the Restructuring and Collaboration Fund has been essential to the successful outcome of this project which has laid down the foundations for the full realisation of the vision for merger.

Restructuring and Collaboration Fund – Merger of Wye College with Imperial College Payment Profile by Financial Year

	Capital or Recurrent	Pre merger			Post merger		Total	Total for heading
		1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02		
1. Deficit for Wye in 1999/2000							excluded	
2. Cost to 1999/2000 of redundancies/early retirements and other merger costs:	Recurrent							
i) 16 academic/academic related staff				430,976	148,969		579,945	
ii) Non-academic staff				266,425	35,501		301,926	
iii) Wye legal and professional fees of merger		2,447	92,562	36,132			131,141	
iv) Provision of flat for Provost: refurbishment costs				17,395			17,395	
v) Travel, subsistence and meetings costs		1,959	9,251	11,722			22,932	
vi) Communications and equipment			4,136	2,206			6,342	
vii) Other		354	988	30,413			31,755	1,091,436
3. Loans not repaid and interest foregone on loans made to Wye pre-merger for 98/99 and 99/2000	Recurrent		2,688,000	936,005			3,624,005	3,624,005
4. Further Wye-committed restructuring costs 99/2000	Recurrent						See 2i, 2ii	
5. Forecast deficit for Wye Activity period 2000-03							Excluded	
6. Additional costs for library;	Recurrent							
i) Migration of Wye library to Imperial system and upgrading of PCs in Wye library					20,247	18,748	38,995	
ii) Additional licences					6,795	2,364	9,159	48,154
7. IT infrastructure at Wye:								
i-iii) Rest of college replacement of servers at Wye, replacement of obsolete PCs	Capital			94,363	96,732		191,095	
iv) rental of 2Mbps link to Wye on temporary basis	Recurrent				35,165		35,165	
v) New administrative computing server for Wye	Recurrent			3,500			3,500	
vi) Upgrade of IT infrastructure in lecture rooms	Recurrent					34,072	34,072	263,831
8. Integration of voice communications systems – capital costs at Wye for new switch and handsets							withdrawn	
9. MISD charges – extension from Aug 2000-Jan 2001	Recurrent				35,000		withdrawn	
10. IC's professional and VFM fees	Recurrent	2,761	17,529		2,717		23,007	23,007
11. Security/facilities costs:	Recurrent							
i) New signage at Wye campus				14,856			14,856	
ii) Cost of extending IC security arrangement to Wye				23,150			23,150	
iii) Additional occupational health costs				2,500	2,650	2,650	7,800	45,806
12. Basic AV link between sites and facilities	Recurrent						withdrawn	
13. Upgrade of teaching rooms and laboratory	Recurrent					59,476	59,476	59,476
14. Audit of Expenditure against bid	Recurrent					1,000	1,000	1,000
15. Total							5,156,714	5,156,714

**Statement on the Future of Teaching and Research at Imperial College,
London Wye Campus**

To: Imperial College Staff at the Wye Campus

From: Deputy Rector (Designate) Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz

5 August 2004

Imperial College London has today announced the beginning of a consultation exercise involving staff in its Faculty of Life Sciences. The Faculty includes the Department of Agricultural Sciences, which is wholly based at the College's Wye campus, near Ashford, Kent.

The College's Management Board has been considering the future of teaching and research in Faculty following the 2004 internal planning process conducted in April and May this year.

At its meeting on 23 July 2004 the Management Board agreed that it would launch a consultation process over the implementation of an approved restructuring of the Faculty of Life Sciences, accepting that its current financial position is unsustainable.

The Faculty's projected deficit by the end of the 2006/07 financial year is £11.6million. The Department of Agricultural Sciences contributes £1.8million per year to these deficits.

The principal aim of the restructuring is to maintain the College as a world class institution for teaching and research in life sciences, investing in only the best staff and facilities, guided by a sustainable long-term strategy.

The recommendations specific to the Wye campus that have been agreed by the College's Management Board are:

- The Faculty of Life Sciences transfers its activities (except U/G courses in applied business management) from the Wye campus in a managed timely way
- The closure of the Department of Agricultural Sciences
- Create a new Department of Environmental Sciences which will become a new strategic focus for the College, spanning across all faculties
- Some staff will move from the Department of Agricultural Sciences into other departments of the Faculty
- Options for the future of the Wye campus will be considered by the College under a separate review

Across the Faculty, the loss of around 30 academic staff posts and a corresponding number of support staff.

'The financial position of the Faculty of Life Sciences is unsustainable and cannot be allowed to continue. We must move quickly to stabilise its position', said Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Deputy Rector designate. 'The restructuring is necessary for the long term viability of world class teaching and research in life sciences at Imperial College London.'

'The Faculty's presence at the Wye campus in its current configuration is not economically viable. However, the focus of our restructuring is the performance of individual staff in the Faculty. The College will take forward options for the Wye campus under a separate review.'

There will be no impact on course provision for current or prospective (2005 entry) students on taught undergraduate or postgraduate courses. PhD research students should likewise not be affected by the proposed restructuring. The partial withdrawal of teaching, and the withdrawal of research from the Wye campus will be planned in detail after the consultation exercise.

This consultation process will begin with immediate effect. A road show for academic staff at the Wye campus will take place this week.

The College has consulted representatives from the Amicus-MSF, AUT and Unison unions from the outset and will continue to do so throughout the process. College expects to conclude the consultation with staff during the autumn.

The announcement of the new structure and the heads of departments within the Faculty will take place following discussions with science leaders and once appointments have been agreed, with individuals.

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Deputy Rector-designate will serve as interim Principal of the Faculty of Life Sciences with effect from 1 August.

Press statement on the restructuring of the Faculty of Life Sciences

Imperial College London today announces the beginning of a consultation exercise over the restructuring of its Faculty of Life Sciences, investing in only the best staff and facilities, guided by a sustainable long-term strategy.

The College's Management Board has been considering the future of teaching and research in the Faculty following the 2004 internal planning process conducted in April and May this year.

At its meeting on 23 July 2004 the Management Board agreed that it would launch a consultation process over the implementation of an approved restructuring of the Faculty of Life Sciences, accepting that its current financial position was unsustainable.

The Faculty's projected deficit by the end of the 2006/07 financial year is £11.6 million. The Department of Agricultural Sciences based at the Wye campus contributes £1.8 million per year to these deficits. In the current financial year the Faculty will receive additional support from the College central funds amounting to £3 million.

In coming to its decision to reconfigure the Faculty, the Management Board has recognised that it will require:

- A new Faculty structure
- A financial commitment from the College to support the Faculty in the new strategy over the next five years
- The loss of around 30 academic staff posts and a corresponding number of support staff

It has also accepted specific recommendations that:

- The Faculty of Life Sciences transfers its activities (except U/G courses in applied business management) from the Wye campus in a managed and timely way
- The Department of Agricultural Sciences is closed
- Options for the future of the Wye campus will be considered by the College under a separate review
- That Environmental Sciences become a new strategic focus for the College, spanning across all faculties
- The Division of Biomedical Sciences, currently a division of the Faculty of Medicine, moves into the Faculty of Life Sciences

‘The financial position of the Faculty of Life Sciences is unsustainable and cannot be allowed to continue. We must move quickly to stabilise its position’ said Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Deputy Rector designate. ‘The restructuring is necessary for the long term viability of world class teaching and research in life science at Imperial College London.’

‘The Faculty’s presence at the Wye campus in its current configuration is not economically viable. However, the focus of our restructuring is the performance of individuals in the Faculty not the campus, and the College will take forward options for the Wye campus under a separate review.’

There will be no impact on course provision for current or prospective (2005 entry) students on taught undergraduate or postgraduate courses. PhD research students should likewise not be affected by the proposed restructuring. The partial withdrawal of teaching, and the withdrawal of research, from the Wye campus will be planned in detail after the consultation exercise.

This consultation process will begin with immediate effect. The College has consulted representatives from the Amicus-MSF, AUT and Unison unions from the outset and will continue to do so throughout the process.

Road shows for Life Sciences academic staff at each campus will take place this week. The College expects to conclude the consultation with staff this autumn.

The announcement of the new structure and the heads of departments within the Faculty will take place following discussions with science leaders and once appointment have been agreed with individuals.

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Deputy Rector-designate will serve as interim Principal of the Faculty of Life Sciences with effect from 1 August 2004. Professor Mike Hassell FRS, former Principal of the Faculty of Life Sciences will become Campus Dean of Silwood Park.

The Faculty currently comprises 156 academic staff, 252 research (contracted) and 250 support staff, based across three campuses in south east England: South Kensington in London; Wye near Ashford in Kent; and Silwood Park near Ascot in Berkshire.

Notes to Editors:

The Management Board is the College’s senior decision making body.

Agricola Club 2004 AGM Emergency Resolution, 18 September 2004

‘This Annual General Meeting of the **Wye College Agricola Club**, mindful of the mutual benefits and increased opportunities for excellence in teaching and research offered by Imperial College at the time of merger with Wye only four years ago, and of apparent success meanwhile in the achievement of significant improvements in performance at all levels, **expresses its profound disappointment** at Imperial’s failure to ensure that his original expectations were realised, and its serious concern about the potential consequence for the future, implicit in the recent decision to close the Department of Agricultural Sciences and to review the future of the Wye campus.

The Meeting calls upon the governing authorities of Imperial College to

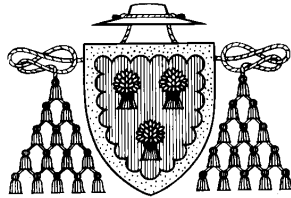
consider its review with the utmost care, and to take no action that will or could prevent Wye remaining a vibrant and successful centre of academic achievement, fully able to continue its important contribution to teaching and research, especially in those areas for which it is world-renowned and best suited.

If such an aim is demonstrable, also that of Imperial College, **the Agricola Club wishes to offer its total support** in the months and years to come’

Professor Berkeley Hill Letter to Imperial Court, 1 April 2005

Berkeley Hill
Professor of Policy Analysis, University of London

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Lord Kerr of Kinlochard
Chairman of the Court of Imperial College
Faculty Building
Imperial College London
South Kensington campus
LONDON SW7 2AZ
UK

Monday, 14 March 2005

Dear Lord Kerr

I wish to have an item included on the agenda for the forthcoming meeting of Court (1st April) relating to the merger activities of Imperial College and their consequences. I am an elected member of the Court representing the academic staff. Before the merger between Imperial College and Wye College in 2000 I was a Governor of Wye College and took part in the decision-taking that led to that merger.

The statutes of Imperial College enable the Court to “discuss any matters relating to the College and convey its opinion thereon to the Council”. I wish the Court to use this facility to recommend to the Council that it puts in motion a review of the Imperial-Wye merger and how it has been managed. This should cover the impacts on the institutions, on the careers of their staff and on the academic subject areas in which their staff have established reputations. In view of the close association between the Council and College management, some input from independent observers would be essential.

My reasons for proposing this review are, in brief, as follows.

- As a former governor of Wye College, it is evident to me that the merger has turned out very differently from what was expected in the light of the assurances given by Imperial in the period during which the decision to merge was taken. The Heads of Agreement between the two Colleges specifically mentioned (para 33) that “It is recognised that substantively the Mission and the estate of Wye will remain intact at Wye as a developing part of the Mission of Imperial”. This has manifestly not

happened post merger. Several exchanges of correspondence have taken place on this issue between former staff governors (co-ordinated by Dr Dorward) and the acting chairman (Dr Buttle) to which you no doubt have access, without a satisfactory resolution of the concerns raised. Bluntly, had Wye's governing body known how the merger was to affect the staff at Wye, it is unlikely that a majority for it could have been achieved. The reasons for the gap between expectations and outcomes require explanation.

- As a current member of Court, I am concerned that the reputation that Imperial College is earning from its behaviour following merger and from its current management style is likely to reduce its standing within the university sector. At a time when institutional change and further mergers are in prospect, this may put Imperial at a disadvantage in attempting to maintain its international status. Potential collaborators may be wary of Imperial because of its track record.
- As a staff representative, it is my duty to bring to the Court's attention the particular problems of the employees that Imperial College took over from Wye College. Several rounds of restructuring have had major impacts on their careers. The management of change by senior Imperial staff has been less than satisfactory. For at least some people at Wye (including a substantial group of social scientists) the outcome of the restructuring announced last August has still not been clarified, resulting in stress that is both unwelcome and unnecessary. As a result, the performance of Imperial is also likely to be sub-optimal as the remaining Wye staff are bound to be affected by their current unsatisfactory working environment

Despite the problems that have led to this request for a review, I am sure that such an exercise could have a positive effect by pointing to lessons that could be learned in the way that future mergers could be managed.

I shall be leaving Court at the end of this academic year. I have agreed to take early retirement.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Berkeley Hill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line to the left of the first few letters.

Berkeley Hill

Imperial Court response to Professor Berkeley Hill's letter

1 April 2005, Minutes of the Proceedings at the Eighth meeting of the Court of the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine

Any other business

Wye College merger

24. Professor Berkeley Hill, an elected staff member of the Court and a former staff Governor of Wye College had written to the Chairman to request that this issue be discussed by the Court.(1) Introducing the item, Professor Hill hoped that the Court would ask the Council to institute a review of the merger of Imperial with Wye College in 2000 and how it had been managed. He was doing this because, he said, the merger had turned out very differently from what had been expected by Wye College's Governing Body prior to merger. In his view undertakings given in the Heads of Agreement had not been met. In particular, he cited a sentence in Paragraph 33 of the Heads of Agreement, which stated that *'it is recognised that substantively the Mission and the estate of Wye will remain intact at Wye as a developing part of the Mission of Imperial'*. This had not turned out to be the case post-merger. Had Wye's Governing Body known that things would turn out as they had, he doubted that they would have voted for the merger. Professor Hill then said that he was also concerned that Imperial's treatment of Wye was likely to reduce its standing within the University sector. He believed that he had a duty, as a staff representative, to bring to the Court's attention the problems the staff were experiencing at Wye, with several rounds of restructuring and uncertainty about their jobs. Finally, Professor Hill said, the purpose of such a review would not be to assign blame for any past failings, but to learn any lessons from this merger that might be applicable to future mergers.

25. The Chairman said that, procedurally, Professor Hill had been absolutely correct to write to him and to raise this matter with the Court. But he had been concerned about the implicit suggestion that Imperial might have acted in bad faith. He had therefore reviewed the files. These showed that Professor Hill's quotation from the Heads of Agreement was a little selective. Paragraph 33 went on to say that "it is also recognised that there will be continuing discussions on the teaching and research programmes at Wye". Moreover all the undertakings in the Heads of Agreement were governed by Paragraph 32, which stated that "unless otherwise agreed below or by mutual consent, these arrangements will operate in the form stated for a minimum of 2 years, after which they will be subject to Imperial's normal review procedures". The Chairman said that his research had uncovered no evidence to support any bad faith, or non-compliance with the terms of the Heads of Agreement. As to the other issues raised, he said that he would be visiting the Wye Campus in the following week with the Deputy Rector, when he hoped to learn more about these matters.

26. The Deputy Rector, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, responded to the other issues raised by Professor Hill. As Deputy Rector he was also having to act as the Principal of the Faculty of Life Sciences, which was the Faculty in which all of Wye's activities sat. 1 A copy of Professor Hill's letter of 14th March 2004 to the Chairman is attached at Annex C to these Minutes. There were two contexts within which these issues should be

considered: the first was the restructuring of scientific activity at the Wye Campus, which was a Faculty issue; and the second was the future of the Wye Campus itself, which was a College-wide issue.

27. With regard to the Faculty, the Deputy Rector said that it had an income of £16M *per annum*, but was generating an annual deficit of £4.4M, nearly half of which was directly attributable to the Department of Agricultural Sciences at Wye. Clearly this could not continue and the College had decided to take immediate action to address this annual deficit. In August the Faculty had reviewed its scientific activity and decided that its current academic structure was untenable. It had therefore been re-organised into a set of new Divisions that would allow it to develop its strengths and address its financial weaknesses. The academic activity at Wye had also been reviewed. Most of its undergraduate courses were not successful. Indeed, only a single course, the Applied Business Management Course, recruited well. The seven other undergraduate degrees recruited a total of 30 students between them, with six only recruiting a total of 15 students. It had therefore been agreed to close these seven courses forthwith.

28. With regard to other scientific activity at Wye, the Deputy Rector said that there was some excellent research work being done there, but it lacked a critical mass in its current location. It was therefore being linked to other cognate groups in College to provide it with the necessary support structure. The one other area which was still being considered was environmental sciences, which was being reviewed by Professor Waage. It had quickly become clear that this was an issue of importance for the whole College and that a Faculty-based solution would be insufficient. Professor Waage was therefore working with the other Faculties to determine a College-wide solution. Unfortunately, this meant there would be a delay in resolving the position of staff in this area; however, they had been involved in these discussions and were aware of the reasons for this. As the Chairman had indicated, he and the Chairman would be visiting Wye in the following week, and there would be further discussions with staff involved in this area.

29. Turning to the future of the Campus, the Deputy Rector said that it was recognised that this was a College-wide issue and could not be solved by the Faculty alone. Consequently, his predecessor as Deputy Rector, Professor Peter Bearman, had been asked to conduct a separate review of the Wye Campus. He would report in due course, but was discussing possible options with various interested parties, including some of Wye College's former Governors. Concluding his response, the Deputy Rector said that he was sympathetic with some of the views expressed, but that the College had had to address the considerable annual deficit the Faculty of Life Sciences had been generating. He also agreed with the Chairman's view that the College had acted in good faith and had complied fully with the Heads of Agreement.

30. The Chairman then said, on Professor Hill's specific proposal, that he did not believe that the time was right for a retrospective review. The most important issue now was to secure the future of the Wye Campus. The key prospective review was being conducted by Professor Bearman. He was also concerned that holding another separate review at the present time might divert energy away from Professor Bearman's work.

31. Professor Hill thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to raise the issue and said that it had not been his intention to suggest that Imperial had acted in bad faith. But he hoped that it would still be possible to conduct a review of the merger at some point.

32. The Rector said that he had joined the College shortly after the merger: the College had been very committed to making a success of Wye. Professor Waage had been brought in as the Head of Agricultural Sciences and had worked extremely hard to increase its profile and to bring in new research projects. However, the intervening years had seen the continuing problems of BSE and a devastating outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease across the Country. In the same period the HEFCE had decided to stop funding Departments with an RAE score of 4. All of these factors could not have been foreseen at the time of the merger and all had greatly reduced the funding available for the activities at Wye. Although there was still considerable enthusiasm for Wye, the College had to deal with the situation it found itself in now: it was necessary to address the considerable annual deficit being generated by the Faculty of Life Sciences and by Agricultural Sciences.

33. The Chairman thanked Professor Hill for raising the issue, and looked forward to his visit to Wye on 6th April.

**Section of 'Report from Honorary Treasurer'
Imperial College Audited Accounts 2002/2003**

Preparing for the future

In preparing the College for the future, the fundamental challenge remains to manage the reconciliation of the need to fund a major capital expenditure programme (over £150m spent in the last three years), whilst at the same time building up the amount of capital freely disposable by the College itself. This is essential if the College is to set its own agenda on how to retain and enhance its worldwide position in science, medicine and technology.

To meet this challenge, the College entered into two major borrowing facilities during the year, both unsecured:

- a £50m 30-year private placement drawn down in March 2003, with interest fixed at 5.39% p.a. and no repayment requirement during its term;
- a £23.2m 15-year loan facility from the European Investment Bank, as yet undrawn, with no repayments required for the first three years.

The decision to enter into these facilities was explicitly designed to provide the College with the time and financial flexibility to continue with its capital expenditure programme without being forced into disposing non-core assets when the timing might be suboptimal. The borrowing programme is an entirely capital account matter: none of the borrowings are to be used to fund current account needs. During the course of the year, the College spent £75m on capital expenditure programmes, of which £37m was funded from the College's own resources. The College was very successful in obtaining funds under the Government's first Scientific Research Investment Fund (SRIF) programme and has been even more successful in the second SRIF round, winning approximately £63m of such grants against expenditure proposals totalling £70m. As noted in the previous year, to the cost of this capital programme must be added a long-term maintenance backlog, which cost £6.2m in the last year.

But it should also be noted that this backlog is being reduced as the new building programme modernises the College estate. In this context, it is a matter of comfort that none of the major capital projects carried out during the year ran noticeably behind schedule or over budget. With a capital programme of the magnitude being undertaken, that is no mean achievement and the College is keenly aware that vigilance on this front must be maintained.

Imperial update on withdrawal from teaching and research from Wye

Imperial College London – Wye Campus Update on Activity – 4 March 2008

Partnership with University of Kent

On 11 January 2008, we stated that following changes to the joint agreement between the University of Kent and Imperial College London, the teaching of Applied Business Management students at the Wye Campus would end by 30 September 2009. Imperial College students on the Campus (c. 110 in total) are also due to complete their degree courses by summer 2009.

During the current academic year there are about 350 students at the Campus. From September 2008 there will be Imperial students (c 110) and those students who are registered with the University of Kent. By the summer of 2009 the vast majority of Imperial's students will have completed their courses. A few (who, for example, have taken a year out) may not have done so, but arrangements to meet their individual needs will be put in place. It is possible that the University of Kent students may leave the campus earlier than the summer of 2009.

Current arrangements whereby students at the Wye Campus have access to University of Kent leisure facilities will continue. A bus runs between the two campuses three times a week for this purpose.

The decrease in student numbers obviously has a knock-on effect with regard to staffing requirements at the Campus. All the time there are students on the site, support staff will be retained at the requisite level.

Plant Sciences Academic Staff

Our academics in Plant Sciences will be moving to other Imperial College campuses – in South Kensington and Silwood Park, near Ascot – by the end of April 2008. This results from the ending of natural sciences research and teaching at Wye and will give the academics concerned the chance to be part of much larger and active research communities.

The move has been planned for some time. Fewer than twenty staff are affected and include academics, research assistants, technicians and PhD students. The only academic staff left at the Campus will be those belonging to the University of Kent who are teaching the remaining Applied Business Management students. Academic oversight still rests with Professor Mike Jaeger and academic pastoral care is provided by Dr Ian Lean.

Use of the Main Wye Campus

Following the changes to our agreement with Kent (above) and the move of plant scientists to other campuses, the College has begun exploring a range of possible alternative uses for the Wye Campus after summer 2009. The College has approached a number of government bodies, seeking suggestions for an alternative public interest use. It has also recently instructed its professional advisers Savills – who managed the appointment of new long-term lease-holders for the College Farm last year. Savills will begin a marketing drive from April onwards and will be seeking expressions of interest for possible use.

Imperial's preferred option is to retain an educational use for the site. The intention is to lease the site not to sell it

Extract from Imperial Council Minutes November 2009**Wye Campus (Paper H)⁵²**

47. Introducing Paper H, Dr Knight said that the Council had asked for a report on the future of the Wye Campus now that all academic activity at the Campus had come to an end. In doing so, he said it was necessary to give members a history of the College's involvement in Wye, its various attempts to resolve the continuing and serious financial problems there and also its strategy for managing the remaining assets at Wye. Much of the information contained in the Report was now and would remain commercially sensitive. For this reason, Dr Knight asked members to keep the full report confidential. The history of the College's involvement with Wye was not a great one and, with hindsight, it was difficult to see why the College had agreed to the merger in the first place. If there was a lesson from this, [said] it was that the College should be much more cautious in the future about succumbing to external pressure in order to help a failing institution in severe financial difficulty. He suggested that the College should in future be much firmer in resisting any such mergers.

48. Although Imperial had persevered in trying to resolve the problems at Wye for longer than might reasonably have been expected and had continued to subsidise its serious financial deficits, this position was not sustainable and the College had had to close the Wye Campus. During this time considerable local opposition to Imperial's involvement at Wye had built up. There were many strands to this opposition, some of which were contradictory, but when taken together meant that it was unlikely that any action taken by the College at Wye would now be viewed positively. In these circumstances, and following the recognition that there was not a viable academic future for the Wye Campus, the College was trying to find other uses for the assets there and was maintaining its position as a responsible landlord at Wye.

49. Continuing, Dr Knight said that despite best efforts, the College had been unable to find an alternative academic use for the site. It had been in contact with other educational establishments in the UK and in the US and had also been in contact with Government departments, all to no avail. Most significantly, the University of Kent, the most obvious likely partner for Wye, had been given the opportunity to take over the one reasonably successful course at Wye, but had signally failed to attract any students and had walked away from the deal after just one year. As there was currently no academic activity at Wye and no likelihood of any academic activity being resurrected there in the foreseeable future, Dr Knight said the Wye Campus North should now be classified as a non-core asset and transferred to the College Fund, as had been done with the College's other non-core assets. However, Dr. Knight suggested that the Fund should only be asked to take on the Campus North if this was unencumbered. If the Council decided to declare Wye Campus North to be a strategic asset or otherwise sought to constrain the options open to the Fund for developing these assets, he believed that this would reduce the value of the asset for the Fund to such an extent that it would refuse to accept it, in which case the Campus North would remain as a liability for the College.

50. Before closing his report, Dr Knight said that the College Fund was applying for planning consent to turn the Withersdane Centre, which had previously been transferred to the Fund, into a Care Home. There had been full engagement with the local community and with the Parish Council on this proposal. However, if planning consent was given, this would be the

⁵² The contents of Paper H are commercially sensitive and confidential. Paper H has therefore been excluded from these published Minutes

final confirmation for many locals that there was no viable academic future for Wye. Because of this, the application was likely to stir up feelings at Wye. Finally, Dr Knight set out the issues for the Council:

- a. Although the Wye Campus North was clearly now a non-core asset, was there a reputational risk involved in declaring it so and transferring it to the College Fund?
- b. Should the Council impose any conditions on the transfer of the Wye Camus North to the Fund, recognising that if it did so, the Fund might then refuse to accept the asset on those terms?
- c. Was the College's strategy of low-key engagement with Wye still valid?

51. Mr Newton said that, as the Chairman of the College Fund, he was apprehensive about taking on the Wye Campus North. The reality was that currently this was a liability and not an asset and this would especially be the case if any restrictions were imposed. In his view, the College Fund had to operate commercially and should not therefore take on liabilities as these would undermine its ability to meet its investment objectives. Having said that, he recognised that there was an argument that, if it was unencumbered, it could potentially have an asset value. In such circumstances, the Fund Board might be persuaded to take it on.

52. Baroness Manningham-Buller asked what the reputational risks now were. The courses had now closed and academic activity had ceased at Wye. Although there was local opposition, it was clear the College had explored every available option and had tried very hard to come up with a viable solution. It was difficult in these circumstances to see what additional harm could now be caused. The Chairman said that he believed there was still a risk of damage to the College's reputation. The earlier Science Park proposal had, he said, been badly handled and had helped to sour relations between the local community and the College. In the end, the outcome sought by the local community – the return to a vibrant College in the village – was clearly impossible, but their failure to recognise this did not diminish the reputational problem for the College. He suggested that an alternative tactic might be to try and work with the community to identify a different use for some of the buildings on the site. But in doing so, the community would have to recognise the wider issue, that there could be no return to large scale academic activity at the Campus.

53. Sir David Cooksey noted that the new Javelin train service between London and Ashford was due to start shortly. This would, he said, reinvigorate the area around Ashford, although this would take some time. Mr Newton was right to be cautious about the current value of the Wye Campus, but in due time it might move from being an effective liability to a real asset. Mrs Couttie said she too thought the additional reputational risk was slight and that the time was not right for the College to take decisive action.

54. Mr Newsum said that the public would not recognise the distinction between the College and the College Fund, so the reputational risk of effecting this transfer was, in his view, limited. There was also much to be said for having control of all of the Wye assets (most of which were already in the College Fund) in the same place. Transferring the Wye Campus North would also enable the Fund to make decisions about the Wye assets in the context of the whole estate, rather than just part of it.

55. The Chairman said that he regularly received letters from members of the local community at Wye. The perception there was that the College's only interest in Wye had been the opportunity to obtain the land and other assets and that it had not been interested in maintaining academic activity there. This was clearly untrue, but was still a view that prevailed with some. He believed that, because of this, the reputational risk was still a real one and that the College should therefore exercise caution in relation to the Wye Campus

North. He agreed that the Campus was, by the College's own definition, now a non-core asset, but suggested that the concomitant transfer to the College Fund should not be undertaken without full consideration of these risks. Professor Sir Keith O'Nions said that the reputational risks had matured early on in the College's relationships with Wye; the real reputational damage had already occurred and this was unlikely to be further exacerbated by the transfer of the Campus to the Fund. He suggested rather that the reputational risks would remain while the College failed to find a resolution to the Wye issues. If the College was able to find a sensible way forward and make a clear and final decision, it would then have to deal with the consequences of that decision, but once that was done, he thought the risks would decline. Professor Begg agreed and said that although making a clear decision on the future of the Wye Campus might cause some short term problems, these would be outweighed by the long term benefits. Professor Sir Peter Knight also agreed and said that he believed the longer the site was left vacant, the worse the reputational risk to the College. Transferring it to the Fund for it to find an alternative use for the site would enable this risk to be managed.

56. Mr Newton reminded members that the real issue was the restrictions to be placed on the transfer, if any. If the Campus was transferred unencumbered to the Fund, it would manage the asset on a commercial basis, as it managed all the College's other non-core assets. However, if any restrictions were placed on the Fund or if it was required to return to the Council to confirm its decisions, then the transfer would be considerably less attractive to the Fund. Without restrictions, the Fund could take a view on the value of the property and then respond to any opportunities as and when they arose. To have to bring such decisions back to the Council could result in those opportunities being lost. Realistically, he said, the Fund Board would be sensible and sensitive in managing all the assets at Wye, but its decisions in the end would have to be commercial.

57. Ms Lomax said she was shocked at the large amount of money that had been expended in subsidising activities at Wye since the merger. If the College had been acting on a purely commercial basis, a decision to close the Wye Campus would have been taken long before now. She recognised why this had not been done, but agreed with the other members that the time was not right to make a decision and move forward.

58. The Chairman thanked members for their comments; it was clear that all members agreed that the Wye Campus North was a non-core asset and that it should not be retained by the College. It was also clear that most members believed the reputational risks involved in transferring the Campus North to the College Fund were manageable. As Mr Newton had confirmed, the real issue was whether that transfer should be subject to any restrictions, or if the Fund should be given free rein in managing the asset. He noted that the Paper did not propose any restrictions or consider what form these might take. He therefore suggested that the Council return to this issue at its next Meeting, but with a clearer picture of what these possible restrictions might be.