



NEWSLETTER 1 – April 2026

Springburn Campus – Cladding Panel Replacement

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide staff with an update relating to our Springburn Campus and the external cladding panels on the building. I wish to set out a brief overview of the history of this situation:

Background

During a routine inspection and cleaning programme, a number of cladding panels were observed to have developed hairline cracks. Given the unusual and potentially concerning nature of these findings, further detailed technical inspections were commissioned. The results of these inspections confirmed that the cladding panels had been incorrectly installed at the time of construction. In particular, insufficient allowance was made for thermal expansion and contraction during temperature fluctuations, which would normally be expected in standard building design.

The College sought legal advice on this matter and reported extensively to the Risk Management Committee, the Board of Management, auditors, the then Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board and the Scottish Funding Council.

It was concluded that, despite the building being only approximately 16 years old, all cladding panels at the Springburn Campus will require removal and replacement. The existing panels were supplied by a single manufacturer based in France and are no longer readily available. Engagement with this supplier has proved extremely challenging and, in any event, more modern and improved materials are now available which better meet current standards.

Given the passage of time, the College has no legal re-course.

Present Situation

Senior staff at the College have been working closely with the Scottish Funding Council, and to support delivery of the replacement programme a Project Management and Design consultancy, Mott MacDonald, has been appointed. Mott MacDonald will prepare the full tender documentation and oversee the appointed contractor following completion of the procurement process. Watts have been appointed to act as Service Manager and liaison between Mott MacDonald and the College.

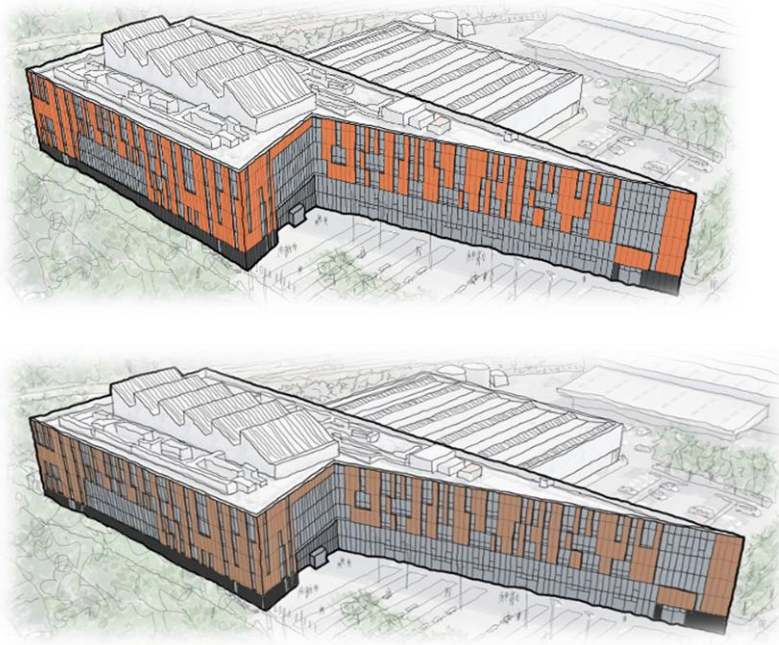
Until a full tender document is prepared and returns are made, we do not fully know how much this entire project will cost, however, the estimated figure we have been given is £8.2m. The College are engaging with the Scottish Funding Council and the Board of Management in this regard.

Two site visits have taken place to observe cladding panels being removed and replaced. On both occasions there was minimal noise evident, however, we will explore various options to address any possible future concerns.



In March 2026, the College, via Mott MacDonald, has formally advised Glasgow City Council of the requirement to replace the cladding panels, and a pre-planning application has been submitted.

Staff and students have been involved in considering potential materials and colour options to ensure that the refreshed Springburn Campus complements surrounding buildings. The current preferred option is a faux corten (reddish-brown metal) finish to the upper elevations, with a black or dark grey concrete or brick base. This will be subject to advice and approval from Glasgow City Council's Planning Department. An artist's impression is supplied below to provide a visual for how the Springburn Campus could look:



It is felt that the reddish colours will work extremely well in Flemington Street as neighbouring properties are of similar colours.

It is anticipated that construction work will commence in early 2027 and will continue for approximately 2.5 years. Inevitably, there will be some disruption during this period, as existing panels are removed and new panels installed. This will involve deliveries and uplift operations using large vehicles, and mast climbers (rather than scaffolding) will be used by contractor staff.

Photo below:



Works will be undertaken one elevation at a time and during normal working hours, with the aim of minimising disruption to local residents and stakeholders as far as reasonably practicable.

A letter has been prepared which will shortly be sent to all stakeholders alerting them to this substantial project.

The Principal and CEO, (both Derek Smeall and now Joanna Campbell) have sought to ensure staff are up to date with the situation at regular Principal Update sessions.

Regular newsletters will be provided and placed on the College Intranet to keep staff advised of progress as the project moves forward. These will be placed in the following location:

<https://glasgowkelvin.sharepoint.com/sites/Estate/SitePages/Springburn%20Cladding%20Updates.aspx>

Staff will be alerted via a communication when future newsletters are uploaded.

If staff have any questions, suggestions or comments can these please be directed to a multi-staff monitored email address that has been set up for this purpose i.e.:

cladding@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk.

Thank you.

Lisa Clark
Assistant Principal Estates, Corporate Planning and Governance
April 2026