The Francis Crick Institute (formerly UKCMRI) update for the House of Commons Science & Technology Committee

September 2012

A Joint Venture involving MRC, Cancer Research UK, the Wellcome Trust, UCL (University College London), Imperial College London and King’s College London.

Location: Central London (adjacent to the British Library and St. Pancras International)

Total Construction Budget: £541m (all parties)
Total Land Acquisition Cost: £85m (all parties)
MRC Construction Budget: £253m
MRC Transition Budget: £30.7m
MRC Portion of Land Cost: £47m

Forecast Completion: 3Q 2015

The Francis Crick Institute:
Since the previous report advising of a name change, Companies House has confirmed the name of the institute to be The Francis Crick Institute Limited (abbreviated to 'The Crick') with effect from 4th July 2012. The Crick is named after the British scientist, Francis Crick, the co-discoverer of the structure of DNA.

Funding:
In February 2011 the Government approved the MRC Final Full Business Case. The approval is limited to MRC expenditure of £253m on construction costs and £30.7m on transition costs. £220m of this funding will be provided by the Department of Health. The MRC’s receipts from the sale of the National Temperance Hospital and Mill Hill (National Institute for Medical Research, NIMR) sites will be used towards the capital costs of this project. Current projections are that the construction will be completed within budget. HMRC has agreed that VAT is not payable on the building.

Major Projects Review Group (MPRG):
In January 2011 UKCMRI was subjected to a Project Assessment Review (PAR). The resulting PAR report concluded a delivery confidence of 'amber-green' for the project. A further PAR took place in May 2012, and this review also resulted in an Amber/Green Delivery Confidence Assessment. This PAR report stated that due to the attainment of two consecutive Amber/Green ratings and the high degree of confidence in the Construction project further reviews would be via the MPA gateway process. The next review is proposed to be a gate zero review, to take place no later than October 2013.

Governance Arrangements:
A Joint Venture Agreement is in place, which binds the parties together for the construction of the new facility and in operation. The Crick is governed by a Board with Director representation from each of the partners as well as independent Directors. The construction project is overseen by a Construction Project Board (CPB) which meets monthly. Members of the CPB include representatives from the partner organisations and BIS.
The MRC has a Monitoring Committee consisting of representatives from all directorates, key staff from NIMR and representation from BIS, which meets monthly to review progress, issues and risks on both Construction and Transition aspects of the project.

The Building:
Following an extensive tendering and evaluation process and approval of the MRC Final Full Business Case, a contract was signed with the contractors Laing O'Rourke in March 2011 to undertake pre-construction services and initial construction works as part of a two-stage contract. The final stage of the construction contract is planned to be executed in Autumn 2012.

Currently site works are progressing in accordance with the Project programme. The basement structure is complete and construction of the first general laboratory floor has commenced. Practical completion of the construction works is scheduled for mid-2015.

Planning and Public Relations:
The London Borough of Camden (LBC) gave planning consent in December 2010, and the ‘section 106’ agreement was concluded in March 2011. The judicial review period was completed in June 2011 with no objections raised.

Public relations are a key component of the construction contractor’s duties. Laing O’Rourke and the Crick have both engaged staff to address community relations, and joint working parties with the local community have been established. Initiatives to support community relations include the development of a permanent ‘living centre’ at the western side of the new building and the provision of a public visitor centre on site during the construction period. The Contractor has recently been awarded a national ‘gold award’ by the Considerate Constructors Scheme for the quality of the Construction project and relationships with the local community.

Programme Planning:
A comprehensive programme plan for the transition from the existing institutes to the new one is being prepared. This plan will seek to ensure integration of the closure of NIMR and Cancer Research UK’s London premises with the opening of the new Francis Crick Institute. A Steering Group that includes representatives from the Crick, Cancer Research UK and MRC has been formed to assist in the management of the integrated transition plan.

Risk Management:
Major risks are covered in detail in risk registers that are regularly reviewed by the MRC Monitoring Committee for the project. In addition, MRC provides support and input to the Crick’s risk management process. Two risks are currently classified as ‘red’ within the MRC Risk Register; the potential to lose key staff during the transition period and keeping transition costs within the approved envelope. Both risks are being actively managed.

Sir John Savill
Chief Executive, Medical Research Council
12th September 2012