

Attendees: Charles Naud (Action Sustainability), Ian Heptonstall (Action Sustainability), Jamie Parr (Buildoffsite), John Colvin (Stride Treglown), Mike Judd (Hawkins\Brown), Nick Cullen (Hoare Lea), Nick Whitehouse (Buildoffsite), Nigel Ostime (Hawkins\Brown), Rory Bergin (HTA), Tony Hall (Levitt Bernstein)

Apologies: Alfred Gilbert (Action Sustainability), David Miller (David Miller Architects), Elizabeth Kavanagh (Stride Treglown), George Poppe (Sheppard Robson), John Spence (Calford Seaden), Roger Holdsworth (Pollard Thomas Edwards), Tim Hall (Buildoffsite)

1. Introductions – 5 minutes

2. Review of notes from previous agenda – 40 minutes

- (a) The Innovate UK Industrial Strategy Challenge funding opportunity has closed.
- (b) Feedback on training sessions and diagnostic testing: a meeting is scheduled on 25th September to review feedback information. @Ian H will update the group, at the next meeting, on the outcomes of this activity.
- (c) Offsite cost information: the consensus is that limited understanding of costs, cashflow and financial benefits are major barriers to offsite uptake. It is particularly difficult for procurement/QS teams to model costs for hybrid projects. Encouragingly, several cost consulting organisations have joined Buildoffsite. This presents an opportunity to identify consultants with good knowledge of manufacturers and the procurement/QS considerations from whom we can learn.

The following cost-related considerations were discussed by the group:

- Time savings from offsite are highly valuable on commercial or rental projects because the businesses/rentals can operate sooner and consequently generate revenue sooner e.g. Travel Lodge hotels are built in 12 weeks.
- Time savings also allow to delay construction e.g. on residential projects, clients can delay construction until they have sold the units but still offer rapid delivery.
- Serial contracting is a way of reducing costs through economies of scale and improved efficiency over time. However, this approach requires behavioural change.
- The type and location of projects is a determinant factor when deciding whether to use offsite or traditional construction methods.
- Offsite manufacturers are in demand, so they have no pressure to reduce the price of products. The market dynamics may change, particularly with the adoption of new technologies and approaches e.g. DfMA, AR/VR, BIM, etc.

The [combicycle](#) tool developed by Bernard Williams is not ready for market adoption. It is also deemed too detailed to be used at the decision-making process. A more generic, simpler tool would suffice to support the decision-making based on project type and size.

Note: HTA have submitted a bid to develop a PAS with BSI to build a framework for offsite procurement.

3. Standardisation – 15 minutes

The group discussed industry-wide size standardisation of offsite products. The GLA are undertaking a research exercise to determine the most common and practical sizes of elements, with consideration of manufacturing capabilities. HTA and Hawkins Brown are participating in this research. The objectives of this project are to encourage the adoption of offsite by producing dimensional norms for offsite components and an accompanying web tool.

This project could lead to regulations in size standardisation, in line with existing government guidelines, such as the '[Nationally Described Space Standard](#)' (non-mandatory) and the '[London Housing Design Guide](#)'. Certain developers (e.g. Lendlease) are already imposing size standards on their supply chain.

4. Buildoffsite – 20 minutes

Buildoffsite presented the project of consolidating this group under a design hub at Buildoffsite. Listed below is a high-level summary of the advantages of Buildoffsite membership, as presented by @Jamie P and @Nick W:

- Buildoffsite is a non-profit that involves all stakeholders in the conversation around offsite and architect are a key element of that;
- Buildoffsite offers access to a network of decision-makers within construction;
- Buildoffsite's works closely with BOPAS to assure (with Lloyds) and insure (with BLP);
- Buildoffsite offers access to and engagement opportunities with a supply chain network;
- Buildoffsite members can drive the agenda of events and priorities, including Buildoffsite's lobbying.

@All members to discuss and make decision on joining Buildoffsite. Hawkins Brown are willing to join and encourage others to do so.

Note: other architectural firms are interested in joining the Design Offsite Practice Group.

5. CITB – Building offsite skills bid – 40 minutes

CITB have opened an invitation to bid for funds to improve learning materials and to upskill trainers in offsite construction. Through this project, CITB aim to build a network of trainers providing consistent training on offsite to students, apprentices and professionals. The project presents an opportunity to develop relevant material for the Offsite Management School and other training bodies within the industry. As such, the Supply Chain Sustainability School (SCSS) is seeking to submit a bid in collaboration with other partners. The MTC has been identified as a potential partner.

Note: since the meeting, SCSS have signed an MoU with [MTC](#) and [NOCN](#) to confirm their intention of submitting a joint bid.

General comments on the bid were provided by the group:

- The CITB requirements are very broad so it is preferred the SCSS bid focuses only on training for residential offsite builds, with considerations for sub-urban and urban projects;
- Many known professionals with high levels of offsite knowledge are at their retirement age so it is important their knowledge is kept within the industry: they are good trainer candidates;
- The research undertaken and tool developed by the GLA could be used as practical training material;
- The Mayor of London's office is launching a construction training program (the [Mayor's Construction Academy Programme](#)), which should be looked into for areas of collaboration;
- CITB can provide introductions to QS/Procurement groups for support on developing materials relating to costs;
- SCSS will develop a design module for architects and engineers, separately from a module for procurement professionals and QSs;

- It is important to consider what training material is suitable for online and for face-to-face;
- Case studies should be used for practical training.

The group listed the key learnings and outcomes to be achieved through the delivered training:

- Developing a common terminology for offsite;
- Understanding “what do I need to design and manage differently on my project?”;
- Understanding the considerations and available options based on the project, the site and the client;
- Knowing how to choose the correct architecture for offsite.

The group members agreed to support SCSS’s bid and, when possible, will participate by providing relevant material and case studies, as well as reviewing and piloting the training content. It was suggested that RIBA should be asked to support the bid.

6. AOB and date of next meeting

@Nigel O to ask **@Alfred G** to update list of invitees to only those who have been engaged with the group.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10am-12pm, on Thursday 16th November. Location is TBC so if anyone is willing to host this, please contact Alfred@supplychainschool.co.uk