

Rethinking Campus, Student Value and Business Change

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Three questions

- Do you believe that estates decisions should be central to institutional strategy, financial resilience and future competitiveness ?
- How does the campus support student expectations and experience, delivery models and university business models change ?
- How can space, infrastructure and place support service redesign, partnership, income ?

Why is the campus important and therefore central to institutional decision making, financial resilience and competitiveness ?

- Student and staff experience – better outcomes for both – fundamentally how to we create a campus that people want come to
- Supports both recruitment and retention
- Infrastructure critical for research facilities and can be an inspiring place that sparks new ideas
- It can be a differentiator in a digital focused environment
- Major source of income and value base on balance sheet
- A critical partner in regional economic growth



What are the challenges for Universities?

- Expensive – between 8 and 10% of total costs and will continue to demand capital investment – how do you prioritise the campus
- Under utilised – utilisation of offices across the university sector around 20%, but to use space differently demands cultural change at a time when Universities are going through significant change already
- Allocation of space between workspace/ research and teaching and learning may be out of balance; why do we devote so much space to underutilised space
- Data usage in understanding the estate limited
- Significant back log maintenance, cost of maintenance increasing and the big building spree of the 1960s and 70s now needing replacement, revisioning
- Greater opportunities to maximise income returns could be developed



Increased focus on reuse and revisioning

Lasdun Wall, University of East Anglia



Shared spaces and buildings

Keystone Building, University of Glasgow

HE Sector estates – one snapshot

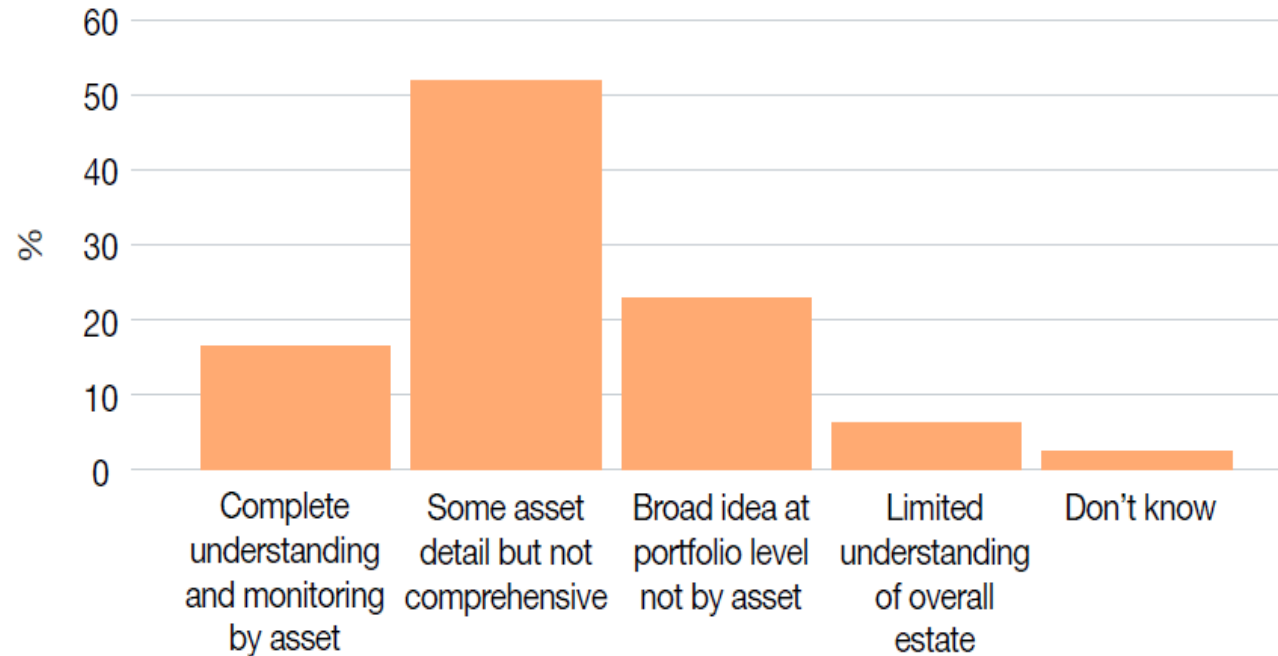
c.85%

of participants do not have a comprehensive understanding of their estates at a building level.

29%

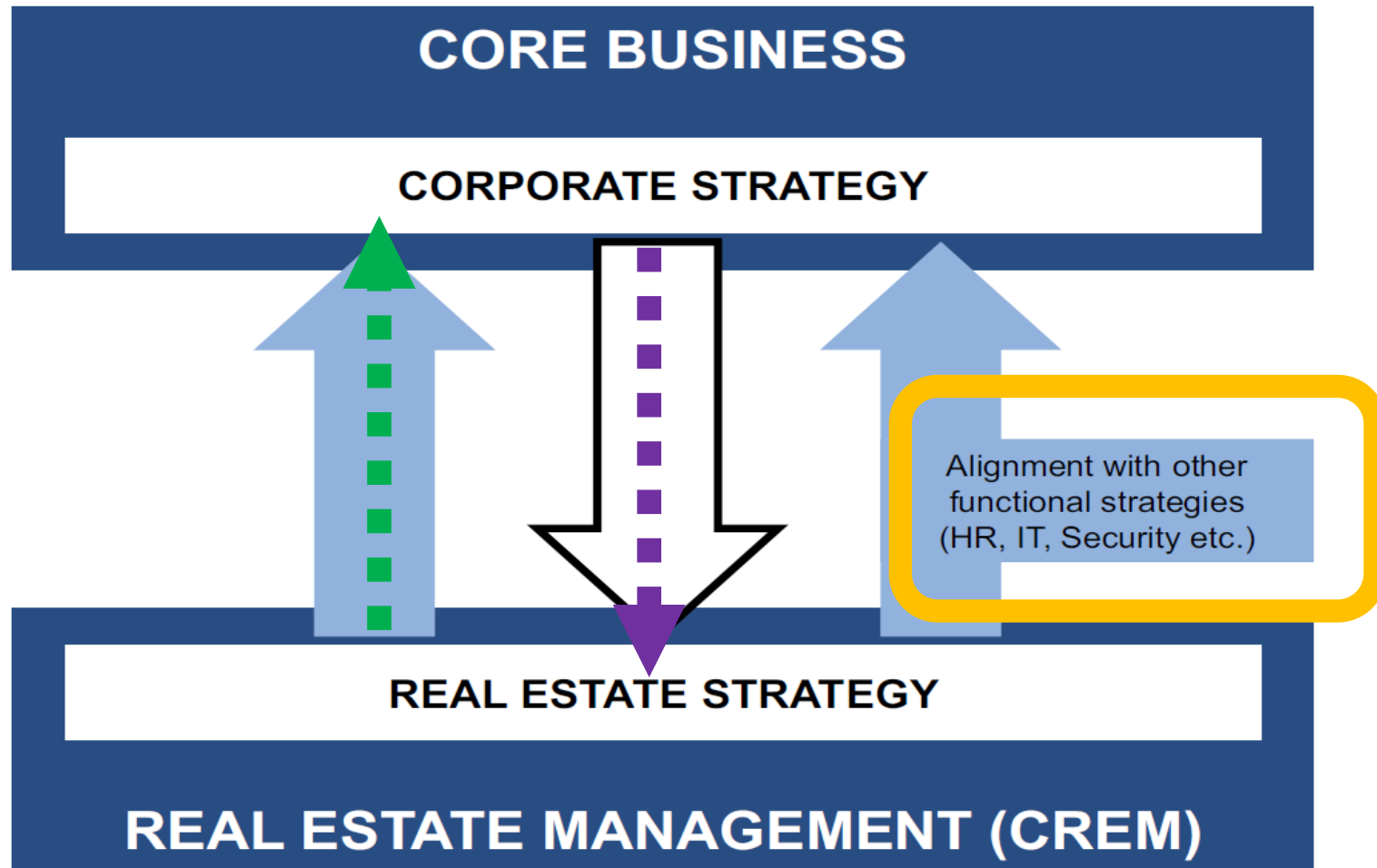
of participants stated that their institution had commenced data gathering to inform optimisation.

How well do you understand how your estates are currently utilised and how much they cost?



Source: PwC – Transformation and Efficiency in HE Sector, 2025

How does the campus enable driving change?



Source: Thomas Glatte

University of Aberdeen

Vision: To deliver an efficient, effective, sustainable and digitally enabled estate means:

- Challenging ourselves on current use of all spaces
- Reconfiguring our patterns of work and use to be less wasteful
- Divesting of property interests we no longer need to retain
- Re-shaping the campuses around what is beneficial for our future needs for education, research, innovation, collaboration, administration, social, sports and external engagement uses; and
- Creating place that give students, staff and external communities a compelling reason to come to and spend time on our campuses.

Which means: Consolidate, Commercialise, Decarbonise



At University of Leeds – Campus reimaged

Vision

A vibrant, welcoming and sustainable campus, connected by our shared purposes and ambitions.

- Student-centred: an outstanding campus experience for everyone that's always worth the journey
- A research powerhouse: an inspiring place that sparks new ideas
- Financial sustainability and environmental stewardship: ready for future generations

What does this mean

- Masterplanning framework
- Creating a more compact vibrant campus
- Invest in more efficient buildings and bring facilities together
- Reshaping use of space – major university cultural change programme
- Reducing cost of operations
- Reshaping delivery of services – looking across sector and internationally to support thinking



Three discussion points

- Are estates decisions central to institutional strategy, financial resilience and future competitiveness and if not how do we make them ?
- Is your campus supporting student experience, is the campus supporting change and is there an understanding of the scale of cultural change which it will support ?
- Is space, infrastructure and place support service redesign, partnership, income ?