

# Wellcome Genome Campus Expansion

| An update from Urban&Civic

An illustration of the future expansion at the Wellcome Genome Campus



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## Who are Urban&Civic?



Urban&Civic (U&C) is the UK’s leading Master Developer of large scale strategic sites. Proud of the sustainable communities we craft, the quality of placemaking we deliver and the challenges that we overcome through shared innovation and passion.

Urban&Civic joined The Wellcome family in 2021. Following the acquisition, Urban&Civic was appointed as the Development Manager and Master Developer, responsible for delivering the Wellcome Genome Campus expansion on behalf of The Wellcome Trust.

Urban&Civic



**Caroline Foster**  
Development Director,  
Urban&Civic



**Varsha Patel**  
Communities, Communications  
& Partnerships Lead,  
Urban&Civic

**Hi** — I am pleased to join Caroline’s team as the Communities, Communications and Partnerships Lead for this project. I look forward to meeting you all in person soon as I start getting out and about.

In this newsletter we will update you on the progress to date including the design and evolution of the masterplan, the current works that are underway including planning submissions, archaeology and tree planting as well as upcoming projects for 2023.

If you have any questions, please email myself and the team at: [hinxton@urbanandcivic.com](mailto:hinxton@urbanandcivic.com)

Best wishes, Varsha

Welcome to the first newsletter from **Urban&Civic**, Master Developer for the **Wellcome Genome Campus** expansion.

The Campus expansion provides an unprecedented opportunity to develop a world-class facility within a vibrant science community: with prospects to live, work, learn and play in an exceptional, stimulating and sustainable environment. From staff working at the Campus, local residents, school pupils, community groups to our international visitors – we are committed to ensuring the Campus provides a sense of belonging to everyone.

Since becoming a part of the Wellcome family in 2021, the team has been busy reviewing the plans and the feedback to date; engaging with local stakeholders; and using these insights to reinvigorate the original masterplan. This will ensure extraordinary designs exemplify the world leading science and innovation, to achieve the aspirational vision for the Campus, whilst being sensitive to the local surroundings and community.

I am delighted to have met so many of you during our series of online and in-person engagement events and parish council meetings. I’ve really valued the feedback offered to help further enhance the masterplan. We’ll continue to host a series of engagement events across the year where you’ll be able to give your views as well as learn more about the project and meet the team.

I am also delighted to welcome Varsha, the newest member of the growing U&C team who has joined as the Communities, Communications and Partnerships Lead. A key part of her role will be to keep you informed and involved at every stage of the development.

Best wishes, Caroline

*Caroline*





# The Story So Far...

The Wellcome Genome Campus is home to some of the world's foremost institutes and organisations in genomics and biodata, committed to delivering life-changing science with the reach, scale, and imagination to solve some of humanity's greatest challenges.

The expansion of the Campus will continue to focus on genomics and biodata, providing enhanced opportunities for this research to be translated into real-world solutions for health challenges, transforming the lives and health of people around the world.

The Campus will create a new way of living and working, within a beautifully landscaped and high quality environment – where amenities are easily accessible and there is a greater sense of community.

The vision for the enlarged Campus is for a dynamic, amenity rich and highly sustainable environment that is a leading global centre for genomics and biodata, building on the unique expertise, critical mass, and vibrant ecosystem of Sanger and the EBI.

- In December 2020, outline planning consent was granted for the expansion, which included:
- Delivering up to 150,000m<sup>2</sup> of flexible spaces for research and development, laboratories and offices;
  - The creation of up to 1,500 new homes for Campus staff and their families;
  - New community facilities including a leisure facility
  - Investment in local infrastructure including improved cycleways, additional bus services; and crucial highway improvements at pinch points across the local road network.



# Rejuvenating the Approach

As the Master Developer for this world-leading project, our unparalleled reputation in the industry for creating high quality and sustainable neighbourhoods, means we are perfectly placed to deliver a new distinct model that brings together working and living, ground-breaking science and innovation, and health and wellbeing in one exceptional Campus environment.

Through a landscape-led design approach, we have been able to seamlessly connect up spaces across the existing and new Campus to allow community access and deliver the One Campus vision.

Key refinements to the masterplan include:

- Two new landscaped pedestrian and cycle bridges, located at the northern and southern gateways of the Campus will provide the Campus community, residents as well as the wider community with safe, direct and easy access to community amenities. The landscaping proposed will continue the naturalistic flow between the existing and expanded campus;
- Redesigning the existing landscape on both sides of the A1301 carriageway through the development, by setting the buildings back from the road and enhancing the woodland planting to provide a visual screen to soften the buildings whilst also enriching the ecology along the A1301;
- Creating a centralised focal point around a central 'Green' will bring science and the community together;
- Ensuring that at least 50% of the Campus expansion will be devoted to green space including new woodlands and recreation spaces, so that these spaces can be enjoyed by people and encourage local wildlife to thrive;



- Designing bespoke green corridors running through the existing and new green landscape to promote walking and cycling;
- Relocating the school closer to the homes whilst designing a car free zone, so children can walk, cycle and scoot safely to school, through the beautiful green accessible spaces we will be creating;
- Relocating the lit sports pitch to ensure that the light isn't impacted onto the local village.

The new approach is underpinned by the vast amount of technical work undertaken for the consented application, however, we will be going back into planning on a few aspects to reflect the evolved thinking.



# Prioritising Pedestrians and Cyclists

The pedestrian and cycle connections are fundamental to bringing together a sustainable and accessible Campus community. The original designs of six proposed crossings running along the length of the Campus frontage to the A1301 have been replaced with two landscaped pedestrian and cycle bridges. The bridges have been designed empathetically to their surroundings and will offer safer routes to new amenities and green spaces.

The bridges will improve connectivity between the two sides of the road; and allow seamless links to the centre point of the new Campus, The Green, home to several community facilities.

With the focus on safety and green travel, the school will feature a car free zone to promote safer access and active travel initiatives.

The impressive landscaped bridge designs (shown below and opposite) encourage all users to connect with nature and brings together the ambition of creating one Campus.





**Green space** for people also means habitats for local wildlife. Over 50% of the expansion site will be dedicated to green space. An action plan for key priority species locally, such as barn owls, badgers and bats, will also be put in place.



An illustration of how the Community Buildings will provide a backdrop to The Green.

## Bringing forward Community Facilities

The first phase of the development will bring forward community facilities.

The two new bridges will continue into cycle and walkways which will connect Campus staff and local residents to the first two buildings coming forward as part of the Campus expansion.

The first buildings will include a sports and leisure facility, cafe, co-working spaces complemented by beautiful landscaped gardens surrounding vast open and intimate spaces making up 'The Green'.

We will share information about the design of these buildings and the key facilities within them, later this year.

As part of the first phase of works – we will also create an area of agroforestry (tree planting that is deliberately combined with agriculture on the same piece of land) on the northern part of the site, to enhance the biodiversity of the Campus and soften the views from the village.

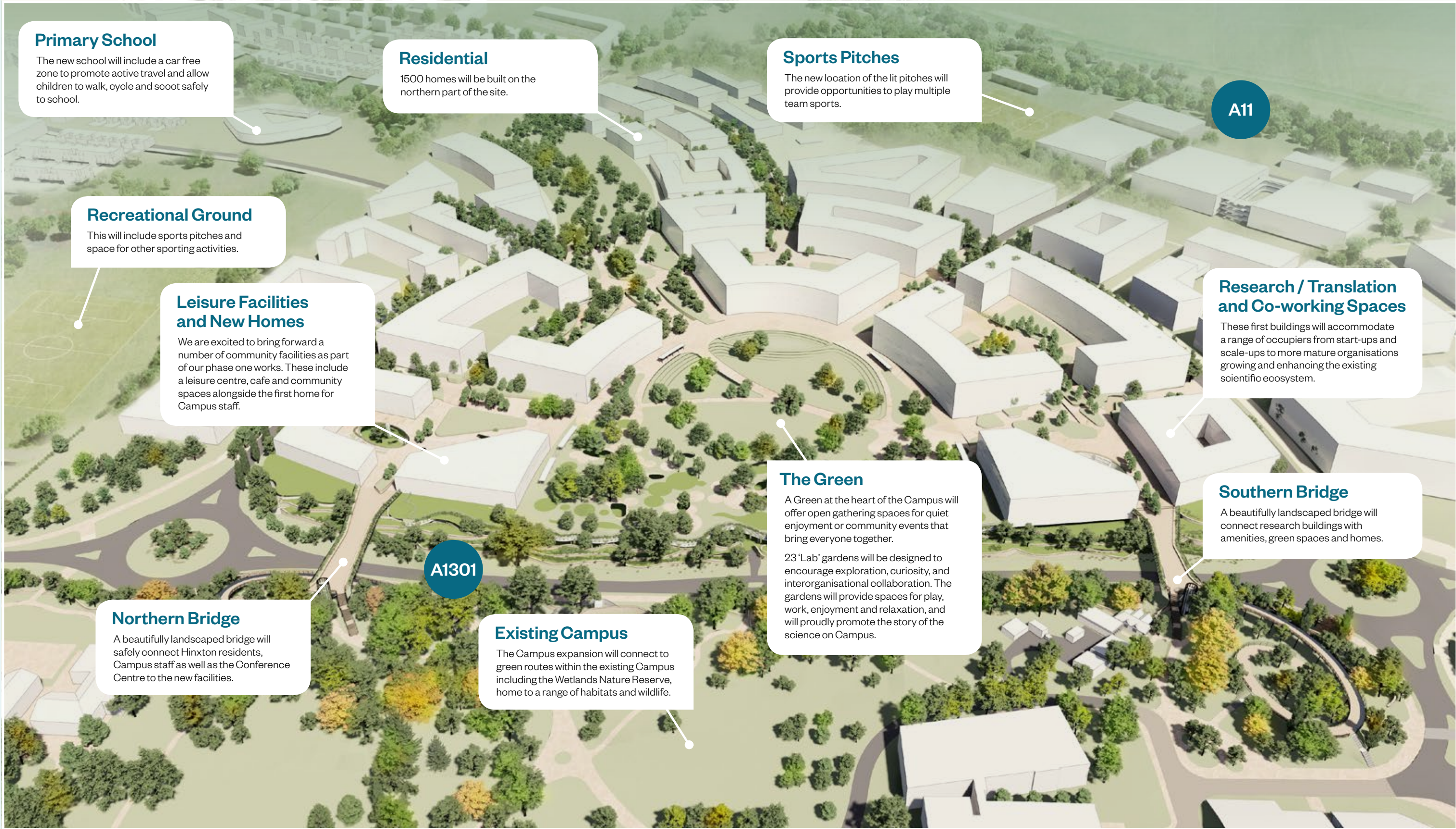


An illustration of how the community, campus staff and visitors will enjoy The Green.



# An Evolving Campus

An illustration of how the existing Campus and the expansion site will evolve to become one thriving Campus. Inclusive amenities, beautiful green spaces and active travel routes will be weaved in to offer quick and easy access to Campus staff and the local community.





# Works underway

The team has been engaging with local stakeholders and working with the local transport and planning authorities (the County and District Council) to submit a number of planning applications. We will continue to work closely with key stakeholders, partners and continue to keep Campus staff and the local community updated as we progress the project.

## PLANNING

To date the planning submissions have focused on addressing all necessary Outline Planning Conditions (as set out in the table opposite) that have to be discharged ahead of reserved matters applications (RMAs) being submitted and development starting. RMAs are the detailed applications that follow after an outline planning permission has been granted.

RMAs have been submitted and approved for the Thornton Building, the Southfield Landscape Works and a new car park on the existing Campus by SCDC with works well underway. The RMA for the A1301 highway improvements and footpath along New Road was approved earlier this year, and a full planning application for two new pedestrian and cycle bridges across the A1301 has recently been submitted.

### Bridges

Following engagement with the Council, stakeholders and the local communities, the application for the two pedestrian and cycle bridges across the A1301 was submitted in February 2023. We anticipate that the application will be presented to the Planning Committee in the summer.



### A1301 improvement works

A planning application was submitted for a series of improvement works along the A1301 and was approved by SCDC in February 2023. There is further work to do on discharging the planning conditions and to secure the necessary technical approvals from Cambridgeshire County Council before works can commence. Campus staff and local residents will be notified of the timeline of works in advance.



New pedestrian and cycle routes enriched by enhanced landscaping.

## Planning conditions

Below is a list of the main conditions (it isn't a full list of the Outline Planning conditions) that we have to satisfy and the trigger by which we have to do this. The red, amber and green relates to the status of the condition.

Not yet discharged (*conditions not yet required but work is underway*)

Submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) but not yet approved

Discharged

Condition number	Summary of condition requirement	Status	Current position
<b>Prior to / concurrent with first reserved matters (overarching – applies to whole site)</b>			
24	Site-wide lighting strategy to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA)		
38	Site-wide Climate Resilience Strategy to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
45	Strategic Surface Water Drainage Strategy to be approved by the LPA		
<b>Pre-Commencement (including enabling works)</b>			
7	No enabling works or associated works shall commence until details of the works have been submitted and approved by the LPA		
51	Outline CEMP*/Outline CTMP*/Outline CWMP* method statement, as necessary (for individual areas) to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
52	Details of Community Liaison Group to be approved and group also established		
63	Programme of archaeology works to be undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation that has been submitted and approved by LPA – archaeology works will be undertaken on a phased basis and discharged in full once reporting and archiving is complete		
<b>Pre-commencement within DA1 or DA3 (excluding enabling works)</b>			
13	Details of the permanent access points to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
28	Early landscape works to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
30	Restorative Sustainability and Soil Health Strategy to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
47	Strategic Foul Water Scheme to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
<b>Pre-commencement of development within a reserved matters area</b>			
17	Development Brief for the Development Area or Sub-area to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
20	Development Area Phasing Plan to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
21	Design Guide for Expansion Land, Development Area or Sub-Area to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
29	Topographical Plan to be included with a Development Brief		
31	Landscape Ecological Management Plan to be included with a Development Brief		
64	Site-wide Car and Cycle Parking Strategy to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
<b>Pre-commencement within a Development Area or Reserved Matters Area (will be separately discharged for each RMA area, where relevant)</b>			
49	Waste Recycling Collection Strategy for the RMA Area to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
51	Detailed CEMP*/Dust Management Plan/Piling Method Statement for the RMA Area to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
<b>Pre-occupation (expansion land only)</b>			
14	Provision of new shared cycle/pedestrian connection between existing campus and the existing cycle route on A1303		
15	Provision of a new pedestrian connection along New Road		
58	Completion of earth bund (pre-residential occupation)		
<b>Pre-occupation (overarching)</b>			
37	Site-wide circular Economic Strategy or Development Area Circular Economic Strategy to be submitted to and approved by the LPA		
<i>* CEMP: Construction Environmental Management Plan CTMP: Construction Traffic Management Plan CWMP: Construction Waste Management Plan</i>			





## ARCHAEOLOGY

The Wellcome Genome Campus has been the subject of nearly 30 years of archaeological investigation, which has identified extensive use of the land by people living and working in the area thousands of years ago.

In 2018, archaeologists from Oxford Archaeology (OA) undertook desk-based assessments, geophysical surveys and trial trenches to locate potential areas of buried archaeological remains across the proposed development site.

This work revealed late Iron Age and Roman pits and ditches at the south end of the Campus expansion land, while a light scattering of earlier Neolithic and Bronze Age flint was found in the fields to the north. Further digging in trial trenches suggested the site was farmed in the late prehistoric and Roman periods.

In autumn/winter 2022, the OA team returned to carry out further investigations ahead of development work starting onsite.

Before Christmas, the team uncovered a barrow – a monument feature dating to the Bronze Age, almost 4,000 years ago. As the team dug further down into the barrow, another two burials were discovered: one of an adult and one of a child, both buried in a crouched position, with the arms folded in and knees tucked up, which is typical for Bronze Age barrows. The bodies found were treated with the utmost respect at all stages of the excavations.

Campus staff and the local community were invited to an archaeological fieldwalking exercise (above). The group recovered and plotted artefacts brought to the surface and found Prehistoric flint, post Medieval tiles and Medieval nails. Residents from the local Great Chesterford Archaeology Society also visited the site to learn about the live investigations whilst getting their questions answered by the OA team.

The archaeologists have finished on site and have begun the lengthy process of assessing, recording and analysing the finds. The work will then be shared in a full report, which will be submitted to the county's Historic Environment Record. Key findings will be incorporated into the development's heritage strategy to commemorate the site's rich history.

To learn more about our findings, read the team's blogs here: <https://blog.oxfordarchaeology.com/project-hinxton/>

**“With evidence of human activity spanning from late prehistory to the Roman occupation of Britain, there is a lot more work to do to fully analyse what we found here. The findings are already revealing unexpected secrets as we find hidden items like glasswork earrings.”**

**Andrew Greef**, Oxford Archaeology

## Works underway



### TRANSLOCATING TREES

920 trees have been thinned out from an existing woodland plantation to create a new woodland belt designed to screen and soften the views from Hinxton village towards the future development. The trees would have required removal as part of future thinning management works but this approach has not only saved them but also enabled early delivery of the new woodland area. The transplanted trees will be supplemented by 1,150 younger trees to complete the woodland.

The landscape team has taken a sustainable approach to getting the ground ready for the new trees using compost tea – a highly concentrated solution with a wide variety of beneficial soil microorganisms which improve soil structure, water percolation and nutrient uptake – creating healthy roots in healthy soil so the trees establish more quickly.

Surrounding these areas are new meadows created around new sustainable drainage basins, which will capture rainwater and gradually release it back into the watercourse.

**“We know that protecting views from homes that overlook the expansion area has been really important to local residents and I am so pleased we have been able to bring forward this work. Not only does this approach create instant impact in shielding the views, but through this approach we have both saved trees that otherwise would have been lost and in planting them alongside younger trees we will be creating attractive and evolving natural woodland.”**

**Caroline Foster**

Development Director for Urban&Civic







## WORK STARTS ON THE NEW THORNTON BUILDING

Work has started on the new building for EMBL's European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI). This is to accommodate growing staff numbers and support partnerships within the industry.

The building, funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), and Wellcome, will be called the Thornton Building after the Institute's Director Emeritus and esteemed scientist, Professor Dame Janet Thornton.

Professor Thornton is one of the world's pioneers in structural bioinformatics, and one of the first scientists to use computational methods to understand protein structure and function. She currently leads a research group at the institute, focusing on proteins and ageing, whilst being

a vocal advocate for open data and a lifelong supporter of women in science.

The building will accommodate 250 staff and provide space for new collaborations, enabling EMBL-EBI to translate its data management expertise into practical solutions to solve global challenges.



## Works underway

### Design

Designed around the key principles of collaboration, accessibility and sustainability, construction work started in autumn 2022 and the new Thornton Building is expected to open early Spring 2024.

A Biophilic approach has inspired the design of the building to further promote well-being in the workplace using nature. 'Biophilia' is the innate and genetically determined affinity of human beings with the natural world, popularised by biologist E.O. Wilson.

A new upper deck to an existing Campus car park will include dedicated spaces for car sharing and electric vehicle charging spaces incorporated at ground level.

### Progress on Site

Works on site are progressing well and on schedule. Kier, the building contractor responsible for the construction, have now completed the foundations and retaining wall for the Thornton building and have quickly moved onto erecting the Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT) frame. Panel sections and columns are being lifted into position and bolted together to form the building structure. A bespoke CLT staircase leading from the ground floor to the collaborative working space on the lower ground level has also been installed. On completion, elements of the CLT structure will be unwrapped from the protective film currently covering them to reveal finished timber surfaces.



## THORNTON'S NEW GREEN HAVEN

New landscaping to the south of the Thornton Building will soon become a relaxing green haven, with a series of mounds, spiralling pathways and rest areas set amongst semi-mature trees. The approach will provide an attractive and interesting recreation space for Campus staff, residents and visitors while also increasing biodiversity.

The existing mound will be reshaped with accessible new paths providing views across the Campus and towards the wetlands and chalk hills. On the route up to the viewpoint to the south, radial seating will be constructed over a stacked stone wall base which will offer refuge for reptiles and other invertebrates. At the top, simple curved seating will provide an opportunity to enjoy the view and get close to nature all around you. The landscape design will be inspired by the Tree of Life programme. The landscape will be ready by the summer of 2024.





# Coming up in 2023

With site preparation for the Campus expansion progressing well, the project team will be focusing on a range of planning submissions and detailed Reserved Matters Applications (RMAs) in the coming months. We'll also be consulting on the Bridges Submission, Strategic Design Guide and First Phase of Infrastructure works.

### Improvement Works to A1301

The planned improvement works will fundamentally enhance the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The cycling route from the A505 roundabout will be extended to the Campus. We are working with the County Council to further implement speed restrictions and significant planting to soften the views. The next stage of the process involves carrying out safety and technical audits to ensure the works are delivered efficiently. These will form part of the delivery strategy, which we'll communicate prior to the works commencing.

### Bridges

Following extensive consultation with Historic England, other partners, and local communities the planning submission for the two landscaped pedestrian and cycle bridges which will connect the new and existing Campus has been submitted. A decision is expected by South Cambridgeshire District Council over the summer.



### Strategic Design Guide

The Strategic Design Guide establishes a set of guidelines for how the new development, its open space and public realm will come forward. The guide ensures a consistent, distinctive and exceptionally high-quality environment and future proofs the quality of design in years to come.

Consultation on the design guide will take place in May.

In the summer edition of our newsletter we will set out a programme of how the future projects and programmes will come together for 2023-4.

### First Phase of Infrastructure

The first phase of infrastructure works are essential for the first development coming forward. As well as the primary streets, utilities (such as water, electricity and telecoms) we'll also embed sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) as part of our commitment to extending and bringing forward the scale of green space through the creation of beautiful green spaces.

We are creating a place from day one to ensure that our staff, residents and visitors have access to beautiful green spaces and amenities.





Coming up in 2023



### Local engagement

The team will continue hosting our engagement events with the local community, parish councils and Campus staff. It has been really useful to hear your feedback and given us an opportunity to meet many of you in person.

Alongside our engagement events, we will be publishing future editions of this newsletter quarterly to share the latest developments on site, upcoming works to keep you informed of progress. A new project website will also be launched later this year to further enhance our communication with Campus staff and the wider community.

**“We hope you found our first newsletter informative. I look forward to meeting many of you in the upcoming months as I get out and about both on Campus and in the Community.”**

### Varsha Patel

Communities, Communications  
& Partnerships Lead, Urban&Civic

## Any questions

If you have a question you would like to ask, please email:  
[Hinxton@urbanandcivic.com](mailto:Hinxton@urbanandcivic.com)



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