University proposes £175m transformation of historic Edgbaston campus to include a new sports centre

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The University of Birmingham is announcing a five year investment in facilities that will transform the University's famous Edgbaston campus, reinterpreting founder Joseph Chamberlain's vision for the estate for the 21st century and extending the services available to the local community. The key developments include a new sports centre and a new library, to join the new Music building currently nearing completion.

The plans for the sports centre include a (50m) swimming pool which will be the only one in Birmingham as well as sports halls and training needs designed to meet the needs of students and staff as well as the many regional amateur sports clubs that currently use the University's facilities.

The University's Director of Sport Zena Wooldridge comments: "*Birmingham is city with a proud sporting heritage and sport plays a huge part in the life of our campus. In less than a year the city will be hosting the Jamaican and US Olympic teams for their pre London 2012 training campus and athletes from Birmingham will be starring at the London games.*

Although the new centre will not be open for 2012 we believe it will provide fitting facilities for the UK's second ranked sporting University and a perfect base to train and develop future Olympians."

The University has appointed a team of Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands and S&P to oversee the development of these plans.

The proposed library development will provide outstanding facilities for a new generation of students and researchers, as well as an open access cultural hub for the University and the city, with services available to the public.

The University will be running pre-view drop-in events for local residents over the summer and a detailed consultation on the proposed developments in the autumn.

The University's Director of Estates Ian Barker comments: *"Although we are very proud of the Edgbaston campus these are significant and exciting projects that will benefit students, staff and the local area. The University was founded to be an asset for the city and these plans have that aim in mind.*

"For that reason, a number of developments, like the proposed new sports centre, swimming pool and the cultural hub, focus on facilities that will benefit the community as well as staff and students. We hope that extending student accommodation and improving transport and parking measures will help to relieve pressure on Selly Oak
Our plans also envisage a reduction in the University's environmental impact and carbon footprint. We hope that local people will work with us in shaping these plans over the next few months."

Drop-in events for local residents will take place in the Beale Room, Aston Webb on 19 August, 11.30am–7.00pm and 16 September, 11.30am–7.00pm and staff are welcome to attend to hear more about the planned developments. A detailed consultation will take place during the autumn. If you have queries regarding the development contact campusdevelopments@contacts.bham.ac.uk (mailto:campusdevelopments@contacts.bham.ac.uk?subject=enews%20enquiry) .

ENDS

For further information contact: Ben Hill, PR Manager, University of Birmingham, Tel 0121 4145134, Mobile 07789 921163.

Visuals of some of the proposed developments are available on request.

The University of Birmingham:

• The University of Birmingham is a truly vibrant, global community and an internationally-renowned institution. Its work brings people from across the world to Birmingham, including researchers and teachers and more than 4,000 international students from nearly 150 different countries.

• The University is the eighth largest employer in the Birmingham/Solihull sub-region and plays an integral role in the economic, social and cultural growth of local and regional communities; working closely with businesses and organisations, employing approximately 6,000 staff and providing 10,000 graduates annually.

• The University contributes £662 million to the City of Birmingham and £779 million to the West Midlands region, with an annual income of more than £462 million.

Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands

Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands is an award-winning architecture and design studio based in London. The practice has an international portfolio of projects including the recently completed Teenage Cancer Trust Building at Birmingham's famous children's hospital, which won an RIBA Award in 2011. The new ward provides a six-bed extension to the existing oncology ward in the form of a striking linear 'pod', whilst meeting stringent NHS requirements.

The practice is responsible for the long-standing work on the regeneration of the South Bank, and for landmarks such as the Hungerford Footbridge and Oxo Tower Wharf. The studio is currently working on the Jewish Community Centre in North London and the Doon Street development adjacent to the National Theatre.

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