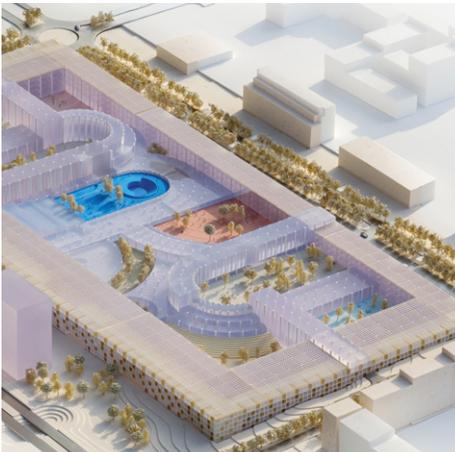


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMPETING MASTERPLAN VISIONS FOR MK:U REVEALED



MK:U International Design Competition

Top row, left to right: **Co:MK:U; Hawkins\Brown; Hopkins Architects**. Bottom row, left to right: **OMA; Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands**. Images are © Malcolm Reading Consultants (the competition organiser) / the respective teams.



Milton Keynes Council (MKC), Cranfield University and MK:U International Design Competition organisers, Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC), posted online today [4 July 2019] alternative masterplan visions for MK:U, a proposed new model university in the Oxford to Cambridge innovation arc.

Five finalist teams are vying to win the competition and their masterplans are now available to view on the competition website at: competitions.malcolmreading.com/mku/shortlist

The proposed new university, which is due to open to its first undergraduates in 2023, will focus on digital economy skills and practical, business-oriented courses; it also plans to offer fast-track two-year degrees. MK:U, a partnership between MKC and Cranfield University, will use the new University Quarter and the wider city as a 'living lab' to test out new concepts and ideas, and inspire Milton Keynes' students and citizens. Benefitting from the last major undeveloped site in the city centre, and mixing university facilities with public spaces, MK:U will also be a destination open 24/7, welcoming the wider community.

MK:U recently announced a £30m boost from Santander, one of the biggest corporate gifts to British higher education in recent years. And MK:U's focus on technology skills is timely — research published this month by the government's Digital Economy Council found Britain to be creating more \$1 billion technology companies than any other country apart from the US and China.

The first stage of the competition, which launched in January 2019, attracted 53 team submissions comprising 257 individual firms from across the globe. The five finalist design teams who reached the second stage were asked to submit concept designs for phase one (construction budget approximately £188 m), including a masterplan and key buildings for the 10-hectare city centre site, and for 61,120 sqm of built area.

The designs, along with physical models and videos, will also go on display in a free exhibition, *Milton Keynes: A Journey to 2050*, between 4-7 July 2019 in Middleton Hall, thecentre:mk, Milton Keynes. MKC is encouraging public feedback on the concepts, either by comment card or email to mku@malcolmreading.com. Feedback will be passed to the twelve competition jurors who will meet to interview the teams and select the winner later in the month.



Professor Lynette Ryals OBE, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Cranfield University and Chief Executive, MK:U, said:

“MK:U is going to be an economic asset to the whole UK, not just Milton Keynes, creating the graduates that businesses say they desperately need and addressing the national and international skills shortages in fast-growing new technologies and industries. Seeing the designs by our five shortlisted teams for the first time is a major boost for the project and for the city.

“MK:U will be something that MK should be really proud of; it’s a hugely ambitious and forward-thinking plan. We want every MK resident to visit the competition website and give us their views on the designs.”

Councillor Pete Marland, Leader of Milton Keynes Council, said:

“The competition has produced five thought-provoking pieces of design for our jury to review, and it’s now our task to pick the right team to work with. We’ll be looking in close detail at the submissions as well as listening to local feedback. The University Quarter is the last major undeveloped site in our city centre and an opportunity to create new energy in our public spaces through exceptional design.”

Malcolm Reading, Competition Director, said:

“This is a competition focused on placemaking at both the city and institutional scale, and all five teams have answered the brief with sophisticated propositions.

“These concept designs all complement MK’s emblematic urban grid pattern but offer five different identities for MK:U. They respond to the context, environment and history of MK with diverse strategies to give the new University powerful civic presence, to connect it to the wider city, and mix green public space with academic and student residential space.”

MK:U is one of the flagship projects of the strategic MK Futures 2050 Programme, which was set up to enable the city to grow and flourish — MK being the fastest-growing city in the UK and expected to support a population of half a million by 2050.



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The five finalist teams are:

- **Co:MK:U** – WilkinsonEyre and AECOM with Spaces that Work, Mecanoo, dRMM, Publica, Contemporary Art Society and Tricon
- **Hawkins\Brown** with KCAP, Grant Associates, BuroHappold Engineering and Sam Jacob Studio
- **Hopkins Architects** with Prior + Partners, Expedition Engineering, Atelier Ten, GROSS. MAX., Buro 4, RLB Schumann, GRFN, Caneparo Associates, QCIC, Nick Perry Associates, Access=Design, Cordless Consultants, Sandy Brown Associates, FMDC and Tricon
- **Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands** with Architecture 00, Heyne Tillett Steel, Hoare Lea, Bradley-Hole Schoenaich Landscape Architects, Ken Baker, Steer, Icen, Abell Nepp, Mark London, FMDC, People Friendly Design, PFB Construction Management and FiD
- **OMA** with BuroHappold Engineering, Planit-IE, Nicholas Hare Architects, Carmody Groarke, Galmstrup, Approved Consultant Services and Russell Partnership

An honorarium of £30,000 will be paid to each finalist team for their competition work; a technical panel report will be supplied to the jury. The competition is being run under EU procurement rules and to current UK legislation.

MK:U will be delivered in three phases and will complete within 15 years, when the fully-fledged university will serve 15,000 students.

Located at the heart of the Oxford to Cambridge innovation arc and just 30 minutes from London by train, MK, now known as a Smart City, has excellent connectivity; its proximity to the M1 motorway and rail network means twenty million people can reach it within 60 minutes.

ENDS

COMPETITION MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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IMAGES

Images can be downloaded here:

dropbox.com/sh/m5zvuv51g34rzht/AABY9XZdHhudME27ecO8GNqNa?dl=0

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About MK:U

MK:U will be a “new model” university, designed to meet urgent technological and societal challenges head on.

It represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop a university with business, for business, equipping students for future careers in emerging fields. Subjects such as robotics, artificial intelligence, cyber and analytics will ensure that students at MK:U are equipped for the 21st century workplace. Its learning model will focus on the practical knowledge and skills needed by business to solve problems and generate new growth in a digital age.

MK:U’s ambition is to transform how we think about higher education.

cranfield.ac.uk/mku

About the Jury

Detailed juror biographies can be found on the competition website at competitions.

competitions.malcolmreading.com/mku/jury

About Milton Keynes Council

Established in 1967 as the most successful product of the new towns movement and a cultural artefact in its own right, MK has been the fastest-growing city and economy in the UK for the past 30 years. Milton Keynes Council is its unitary authority, delivering more than 250 services to 270,000 diverse citizens.

The MK Futures 2050 Commission was initiated by the council in 2015 as a project to explore the long-term futures for MK as it emerges as a UK city and economy of increasing significance. Big projects for the city’s future include the creation of MK:U, improving the city centre, and leading the way on smart, shared, sustainable mobility.

milton-keynes.gov.uk



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About Cranfield University

Cranfield is a specialist postgraduate university that is a global leader for education and transformational research in technology and management.

We are focused on the specialist themes of aerospace, defence and security, energy and power, environment and agrifood, manufacturing, transport systems, and water. Cranfield School of Management is a world leader in management education and research.

We are home to many world-class, large-scale facilities which enhance our teaching and research. We are the only university in Europe to own and run an airport and to have airline status.

Cranfield teaches over 4,500 postgraduate students each year and employs 1,500 academic and support staff. We have the largest number of engineering master's students in the UK. Our staff-to-student ratio is one of the best for any university in the UK (one member of academic staff to every seven students).

We work closely with business, industry and government across the world. Through our industry partnerships, applied research projects and our executive education and professional development programmes, we currently work with over 1,500 companies and organisations.

We are ranked number one in the UK for research income from industry per academic, with 81% of our research classed as world-leading or internationally-excellent by REF (Research Excellence Framework, 2014).

cranfield.ac.uk

About Malcolm Reading Consultants

Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) is a strategic consultancy that helps clients to imagine and define contemporary environments, both built and natural. MRC is the leading specialist in devising and managing design competitions internationally. MRC believes in the power of design to create new perceptions and act as an inspiration.

Recent work includes competitions for Houston Endowment (US); the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (Sydney); the Cambridge to Oxford Connection (UK); University College Dublin (Ireland); Gallaudet University (Washington, D.C., US); Kaunas M.K. Čiurlionis Concert Centre (Lithuania); the Royal College of Art (UK); the V&A (UK); the Mumbai City Museum (India); and new buildings for the UK's New College, Oxford and Homerton College, Cambridge.

Malcolm Reading currently advises the Royal Household; the British Library; Exeter College, Oxford; and Transport for London.

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