

University of Kent

# CANTERBURY CAMPUS FRAMEWORK MASTERPLAN: SYNOPSIS

The University of Kent in the Garden of England

October 2019





This document represents a short summary of the Framework Masterplan, the full version and supporting appendices can be found on the University's web page.

“With the sector more competitive than ever, we know we must continuously adapt to meet the needs of future students and the city...”

# FOREWORD

We are rightly proud of our home at the heart of Kent. For more than fifty years, our original and largest campus has been a fundamental part of the historic City of Canterbury, bringing energy, investment and expertise to the area. Since our foundation and the original Holford Masterplan, the University has evolved into a modern, high achieving institution where academic excellence and sociability combine. As the UK's European university, we now have nearly 20,000 students at our centres in Canterbury, Medway, Athens, Brussels, Paris, Rome and Tonbridge.

The job of a university, however, is not to stand still but to look to the future. With the sector more competitive than ever, we know we must continuously adapt to meet the needs of future students and the city. We also know that the environment we work in is critical to this – from how our campus looks and feels to its impact on our neighbours around us. It is this sense of purpose that led us to produce a Framework Masterplan.

The Masterplan is not a strictly binding blueprint for future campus development but is rather a framework to guide long-term change. At its heart are a series of principles that allow us to evolve responsibly. Any future development is focussed in the existing core of the campus, while the University's unique setting overlooking Canterbury is celebrated and preserved. The natural environment is also cherished, connecting us with Kent's deserved status as 'the Garden of England'. Above all, we are determined that our Canterbury campus is a place where academic excellence is celebrated, while also making a positive contribution to the lives of our neighbours and the city we inhabit.

This has been an extensive and, crucially, collaborative process. Led by the foresight of independent masterplanner and urbanist John Letherland, we have consulted widely and taken expert advice from key bodies including Kent County Council (KCC), Canterbury City Council (CCC) and Highways England, plus the University's own staff and students. We have also worked closely with local stakeholders throughout as plans have taken shape, seeking advice from residents' associations, community groups, businesses and the wider public.

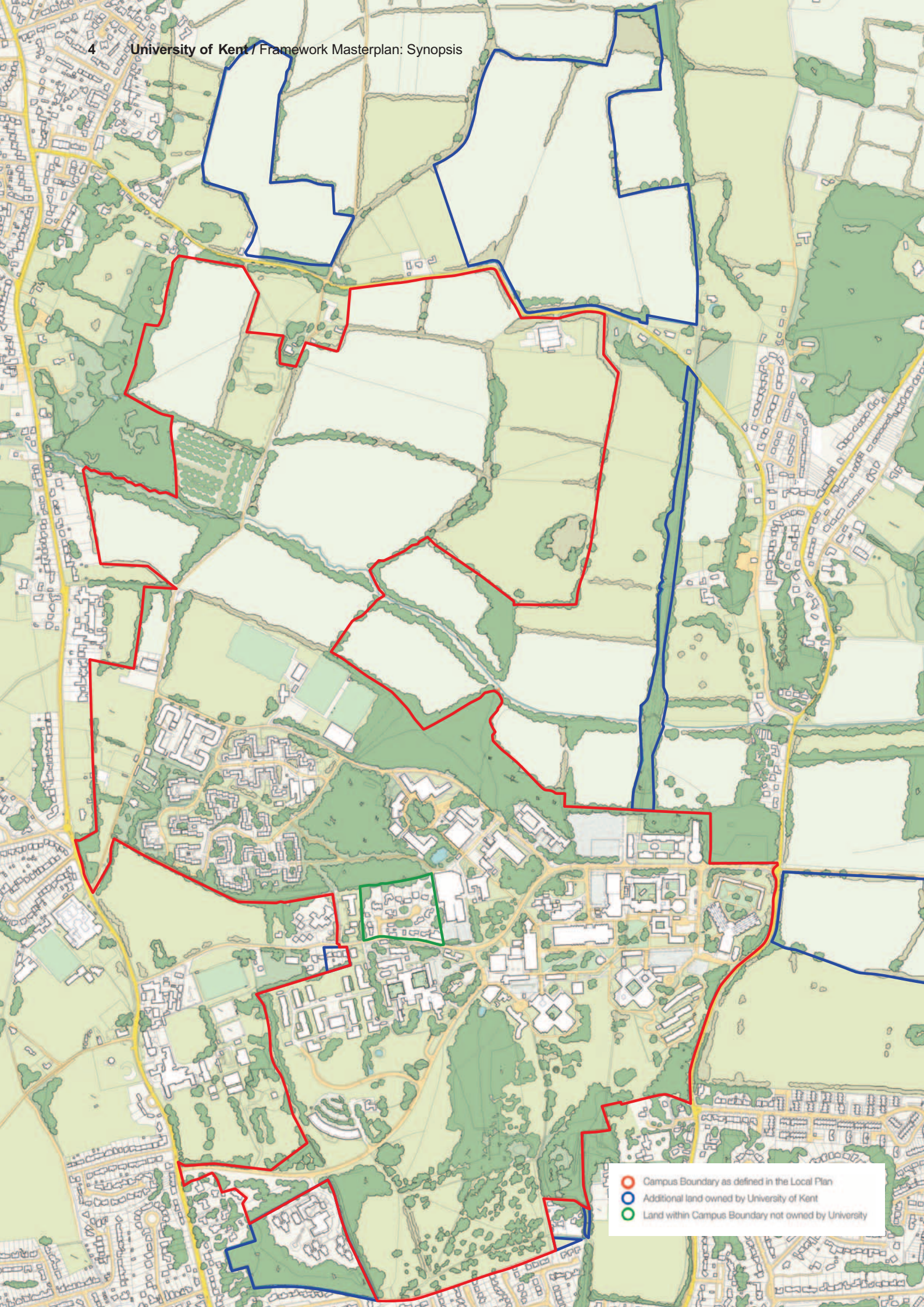
Thank you to all of those who fed in through the extensive consultation process, and to John and the Masterplan project team for steering its delivery.




The end result is a truly inspiring document, helping us to think deeply about the future role and presence of the University. Our aim for the years ahead is to be delivering one of the best education and student experiences, within an open environment at the heart of its community. The framework set out in this document will play a vital part in making this a reality. I hope you will join me in celebrating this pioneering work as we look ahead to the University of the future.



**Professor Karen Cox**  
Vice-Chancellor and President





-  Campus Boundary as defined in the Local Plan
-  Additional land owned by University of Kent
-  Land within Campus Boundary not owned by University

# A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

This Framework Masterplan has been prepared in support of the 'University of Kent Plan 2015-2020' and 'Kent 2025: Refreshing the University Strategy' to provide a framework to guide the future development of the University campus over the next fifty years. It offers a structure to accommodate sustainable change in the learning community as well as the flexibility to accommodate new development when the particular future building needs of the University become known.

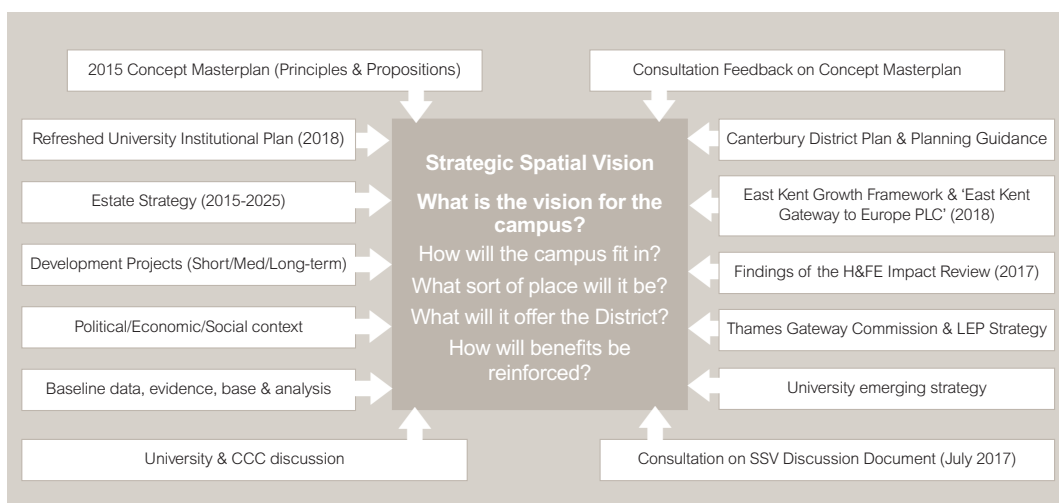
In describing a spatial plan for the future of 'The University of Kent in the Garden of England', the Masterplan's title specifically reflects the desire to renew a commitment to landscape-led planning principles. It also expresses the University's commitment to conservation and environmental sustainability, and to creating a campus that is open and welcoming to neighbouring communities, the City of Canterbury and to the people of Kent who are all actively invited to use the campus and its facilities.

Commissioned by the University of Kent as part of a big-picture review of the future of the institution, the plan as such remains a University document. It has been prepared in line with Policy EMP7 of the Local District Plan and in collaboration with Canterbury City Council and other stakeholders, and was consulted on widely in the surrounding communities.

Although remaining a University document, the City Council has confirmed that this Masterplan fulfils the local plan requirement for a masterplan to be prepared, and will provide a bridge between Policy EMP7 and planning applications, as well as a framework for Canterbury City Council when determining development proposals.

Time and again history shows us that periods like this present a window of opportunity to reflect on the direction we have been taking, and to take stock of the opportunities that lay before us. The Masterplan for the Canterbury campus is therefore an important step forward; one that provides a framework for future development that will enable the University of Kent to cope with change and evolve as an environment that allows it to continue to be a success.

**Peter Czarnomski**  
Director of Estates



Opposite: The University of Kent campus in Canterbury

The Masterplan is an important step forward



Aerial view of the existing campus from the north

# A NEW VISION FOR THE CAMPUS

**The University of Kent was founded in 1965 to a plan by architect Lord William Holford. The original expression of Holford's founding campus plan was one of widely-spaced buildings set in an expansive green landscape overlooking the Cathedral and the historic city in the valley below.**

Today the campus is very different from the one which opened in 1965, now reaching a tipping-point between continuing to fulfill the need for new buildings, balanced against the resulting loss of its green landscape. The need for a masterplan review was therefore recognised to be long overdue, and as a result supported by the Vice-Chancellor and Executive Group.

Since the inception of the Holford Masterplan, the University has experienced great success and has grown significantly as a result. During this period of growth and evolution, the planning of the campus has followed a very direct and pragmatic approach to development, spreading well beyond the confines of the original Holford Masterplan to satisfy the urgent demand for space.

Without an overall guiding plan, this policy has led to the gradual expansion of the built environment over time and the consequent erosion of the surrounding open landscape.

As a result, there has been a loss of coherence across the campus, as well as a consequent loss of a 'sense of place' that was offered by the original Masterplan. It is my belief that continuing to follow this approach will result in a gradual decline in the quality of campus facilities and experience.

The Framework Masterplan described in this document puts forward a more strategic, plan-based approach to the gradual evolution of the Canterbury campus, in order to ensure that all future developments result in an improvement to the campus environment as a whole.

Based upon the vision set by Sir Terry Farrell in his 2015 Concept Masterplan study for the future evolution of the campus, the plan follows a simple set of urban design principles to guide the desired evolution. This approach respects the built and landscape heritage, is environmentally sustainable and allows for gradual growth over the next few decades.

**John Letherland**  
Masterplanner & Urbanist



## The Canterbury campus will be approached differently in future

While new University buildings will provide an environment for new and enhanced learning and academic excellence, the places and spaces between the buildings will be the public 'living rooms' where all members of the University community can gather to exchange ideas, formal events can take place and informal encounters are made possible.

The Masterplan will deliver a wider diversity of landscaped spaces to help broaden interaction of the University community and allow opportunities for students to engage with spaces as part of their taught curriculum. Related academic disciplines will be co-located to encourage the sharing of spaces to foster communication and collaboration between schools.



Views of the campus today



## Sustainability and our response to climate change

Unsurprisingly, given the scale of the ecological crisis that our world is currently facing, the University has a strong commitment to sustainability and carbon management, as well as an ambition to address the problem of climate change.

The Framework Masterplan addresses the broader issues of environmental sustainability as a component part of its proposals, and a common-sense approach to wider sustainability is embedded in its thinking, following these and other University principles:

- Consolidate the Campus Heart and its environs to make best use of already-developed brownfield land
- Co-locate buildings to aid energy efficiency and limit heat waste and improve conditions for cogeneration of power
- Safeguard natural habitats and nurture biodiversity to enrich the campus and the surrounding area
- Rationalise car parking to make it more efficient, less reliant on fossil-fuels and reduce impacts on air quality and noise

- Promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles, including incorporating facilities into the landscape that encourage walking and cycling, sport and play
- Incorporate appropriate renewable energy technologies within specific developments where feasible and viable

In addition, the University will continue to invest in its own Travel Plan in response to a growing reliance upon public transport by environmentally conscious and financially sensitive students and staff. The targets to increase the use of public transport goes way beyond mere best practice in this field.

More detail on the University's work in the area of sustainability and carbon management, including successfully reaching targets and setting new targets for 2021-30, can be found on the Environmental Management System on the University of Kent website: [www.kent.ac.uk/estates/sustainability/ems/index.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/estates/sustainability/ems/index.html)

## A strong commitment to sustainability and carbon management







Aerial view of the campus heart

## A campus at a 'tipping point'

Holford's Masterplan set out a clear vision for the campus as a collection of discrete colleges in a parkland landscape, with common facilities shared centrally between them. Future growth was to be accommodated by the addition of more college buildings distributed along the hill top ridge and down University Road, with large landscape spaces in-between creating the college settings.

However, the campus has evolved in quite different ways for several important reasons:

- There has been a thirty-fold increase in academic areas and student numbers since 1965
- The original collegiate system has been replaced by a more subject-based School system
- The landscape has matured and developed; large areas of planting and maturing woodland now distinguish the formerly bleak and exposed ridgeline

- There has been a focus on developing buildings at the expense of the quality of the spaces between them, and the rise in 'car culture' has seen an expansion of large surface parking areas
- In the absence of an overall guiding plan, there has been a loss of coherence – or 'sense of place' – and a subsequent loss of identity offered by the original Masterplan; continuing to follow this approach will result in a gradual decline in the quality of campus facilities and experience

The campus has therefore arrived at a 'tipping-point' in its evolution.

Urbanists worldwide now recognise the positive and measurable impacts of good placemaking, including its relevance to productivity, economy, health, wellbeing and the desirability of a location. Future emphasis on campus planning must therefore be focussed on growth, balanced with flexibility and good placemaking.

**“Place is actually more important to the world's economy than ever before”**

**Professor Richard Florida, Urban Studies Theorist, University of Toronto**



## The area's social history informs the new Masterplan

### Continuity with the past

The land on which the campus has been developed over the last half century includes three former farms: Brotherhood, Beverley and Hothe Court. The names of these farms and some of the former farmhouses and other agricultural buildings remain embedded in the University Estate as a 'palimpsest' or memory of past use.

In addition, former field lines, tracks and paths, woodlands and evidence of agricultural workings can be seen in the open spaces of the campus. Beneath these layers of historic land use, the underlying topographical features of landform and watercourses shaped both the former agricultural use and the original campus plan, and they inform the new Masterplan too.



Farmer George Keir's 1963 monument to leaving Brotherhood Farm



The pre-university campus



# A UNIVERSITY IN A LANDSCAPE

### Learning from the landscape

Today the University Estate is well known as a very verdant campus with plenty of open space, located within a semi-rural landscape setting along a ridgeline overlooking Canterbury.

The origins of the estate are rooted in the geology, geography, topography and history of the landscape that it inhabits, so understanding and balancing the relationship between the built environment and the landscape in which it makes its home is key to the successful evolution of the University Estate in the future.

Settlement of the wider area generally began on the ridgelines rather than the valleys in the undulating landscape that characterises this part of Kent. This pattern remains very strong and clear today in the area north of Canterbury, emerging intact from the medieval period and changing little between the 19th century and the development of the University in the 1960's.

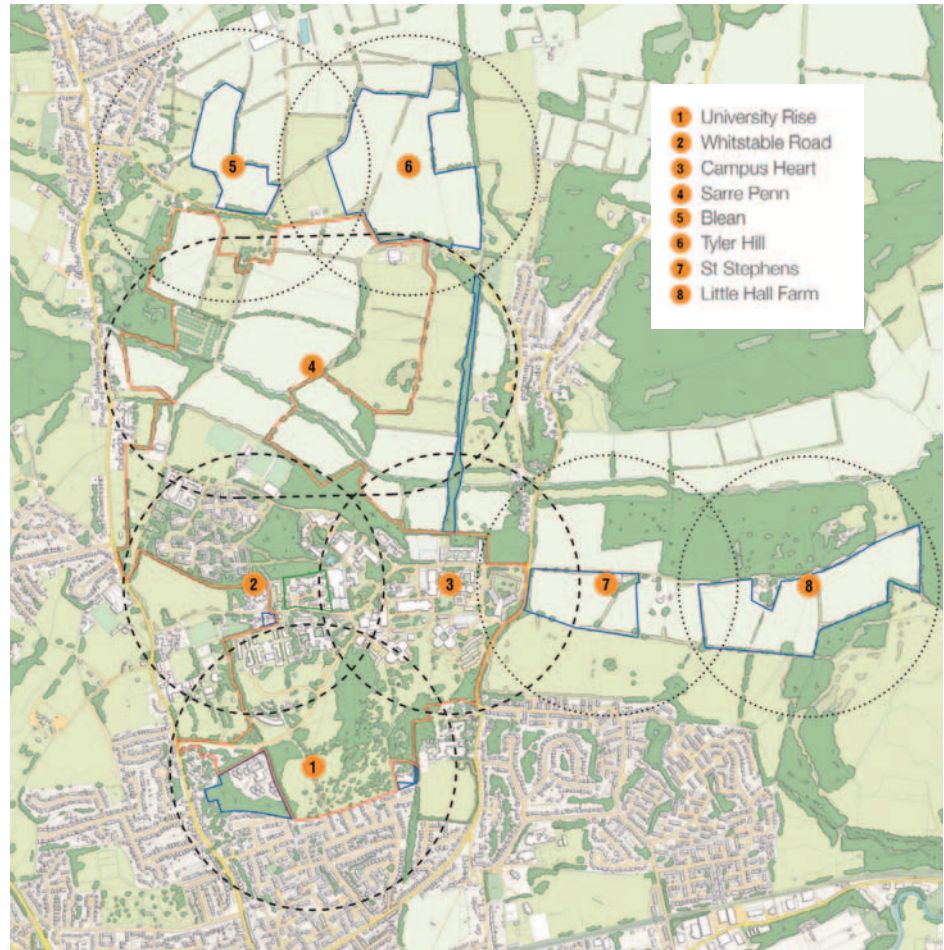
Studying the landscape character that shaped the campus in the first place and using that knowledge has guided and shaped the Framework Masterplan.



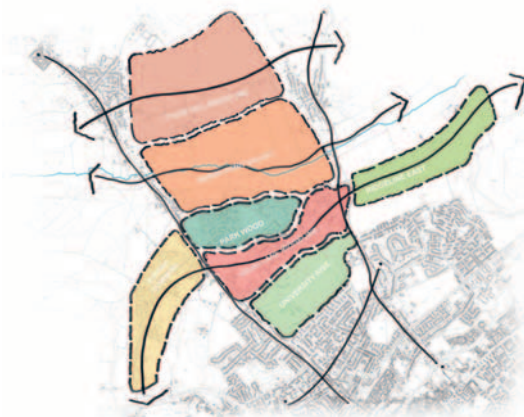
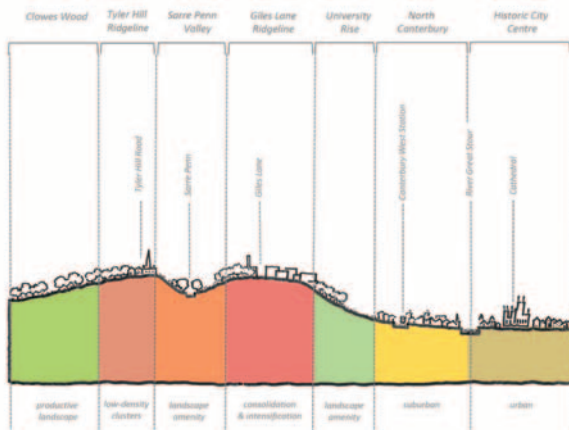
The green and biodiverse campus landscape



Extract from William Mudge Survey 1801



The landscape context of the campus with the character areas denoted by circles



Landscape character areas defined in plan and section

## An holistic concept

The Estate is not one environment, but several, and is composed of a complex collage of land parcels. The Masterplan celebrates their variety and distinctiveness and explores what each area is capable of becoming.

Using this approach, the landscape infrastructure of the campus is at the heart of the Masterplan concept as a way of uniting the various disparate elements of the campus.

In considering the big-picture and the particular at the same time, the overall plan integrates (and differentiates between) several mini-masterplans, each with their own individual character. They show how the landscape, built environment and the biodiversity will work harmoniously together in each individual area.

This drawing not only sets the template for the future Masterplan, it provides a brief for each of the individual areas and the role they must play in delivering the overall composition.

## The landscape, built environment and the biodiversity will work harmoniously together



# ENHANCING THE CHARACTER OF INDIVIDUAL AREAS



Views of the campus today



University Rise today retains hedgerows and farm tracks from the former Brotherhood Farm

## University Rise

This open 'parklands' character area must continue to play a role in providing a green setting to the south of the campus as well as a landscape demarcation from the city. New built development is limited to the area to the south of the Turing College student hub building, modest infill development along Giles Lane and some larger new buildings framing the south and west side of a new, central 'University Square'. A location for a new hotel with conference facilities is also identified, thus taking the opportunity to diversify uses and to broaden commercial activity within the campus.



- |                     |                                  |                     |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 University Gate   | 5 Turing Walk                    | 9 Labyrinth         |
| 2 University Avenue | 6 Keynes College                 | 10 Open Air Theatre |
| 3 Beverly Farm      | 7 University Square              | 11 Hospital Wood    |
| 4 Turing College    | 8 Crab & Winkle Foot/ Cycle Path | 12 Beverley Court   |

University Rise proposed Masterplan layout

# The landscape setting dominates the University campus and our understanding of the variety of distinct but connected landscape characters offers a clear direction to the Masterplan proposals

## Whitstable Road

The unique woodlands character of this part of the campus, along with the fragments of the former agrarian use of the land including Hothe Court, presents opportunities for landscape and biodiversity enhancements and more clearly defined and legible routes. Significantly, public realm proposals provide the key to a wider initiative to create a unified, connected campus along the ridgeline.

While it is vital that the remaining Ancient Woodland is protected from major development, there is still significant potential to improve both the natural and cultural dimensions of this character area.



Grade II listed Hothe Court from the 15th or 16th century



- 1 Beverley Court
- 2 Turing College
- 3 Park Wood Circle
- 4 Hothe Court Community Garden
- 5 Old Salt Road
- 6 Sports Hub
- 7 Brotherhood Square
- 8 The Wetlands
- 9 Giles Circus
- 10 Holford Walk
- 11 University Square
- 12 Keynes College

Whitstable Road proposed Masterplan layout



Existing footpath in Brotherhood Wood



Campus Heart proposed Masterplan layout

## The Campus Heart

Over time, as the demand for space and size of budgets have allowed, the heart of the campus with its important civic component (the Templeman Library) has grown. Subsidiary academic buildings have been arranged less formally within this area but without a clear hierarchy to the architecture or order in the public realm.

Creating more coherently defined spaces between buildings, to further reinforce the overall landscape qualities of the University is proposed, along with a new linked network of civic spaces and high-quality squares, gardens, courts and quads adding a greater degree of shelter provided by carefully located surrounding buildings. New green and hard-landscaped areas will bring a greater variety of user-experience. The reconfigured public realm will include spaces from formal to informal, for recreation and performance, for peace and quiet, as well as avenues of trees and fruit blossom, along with more open wildflower meadows.



Top: Jarman School of Arts Building  
 Bottom: Extension to the Templeman Library



- 1 Brotherhood Wood
- 2 Sports Hub
- 3 Blean Primary School
- 4 Wetlands Walk
- 5 Arboretum
- 6 Roman Villa Remains
- 7 St. Cosmus & St. Damian Church
- 8 Hothe Court Farm
- 9 Crab & Winkle Foot/ Cycle Path
- 10 Tyler Hill Court
- 11 Sarre Penn Way
- 12 Sarre Penn Court

Sarre Pen Valley proposed Masterplan layout

## Sarre Penn Valley

Providing a green setting to the north of the University as well as a more rural landscape character, this area is a major attraction to students, academic staff and visitors.

Many opportunities exist here to enhance biodiversity and showcase the principles of sustainable land management, as part of the University's offer of a green campus. These include preserving the connectivity of the bankside vegetation along the Valley as an eco-highway for fauna in the area, and linking ponds and wetlands to better reconnect the stream to its floodplain. As well as diversifying the wetland environment, this will provide a reservoir for irrigation of the sports pitches during summer months, reducing the requirements for mains water.

Restoring the historic hedgerows to create wildlife corridors and managing existing woodland pockets will also diversify habitats and promote biodiversity.

*For a more detailed description of the individual character areas, as well as the proposals for each of them, please refer to the main Masterplan document.*

Top: St Cosmus & St Damian Church, Blean  
 Bottom: The Old Salt Road (NCR 1) crossing the Sarre Penn Stream



Templeman Gardens: Sketch view of one the public spaces enhanced by the Masterplan

# THE MASTERPLAN EMERGES

**Each of the mini-masterplans for the individual character areas were conceived as a component part of the overall Masterplan composition.**

Schemes for the various parts of the campus were developed separately and a range of ideas and options were generated, prepared for assessment and tested. This was a highly intensive and inclusive stage in the process, where all members of the client team, the University community, stakeholders from the city, the county and the members of the public who attended the community consultation events, contributed ideas and opinions.

At the culmination of this process, a 'plan of preferred mini-master plans' was assembled to provide a draft Masterplan for the future of the campus and a powerful expression of the academic, cultural and civic life of the University, as well as an enduring expression of the University's aspirations and achievements.

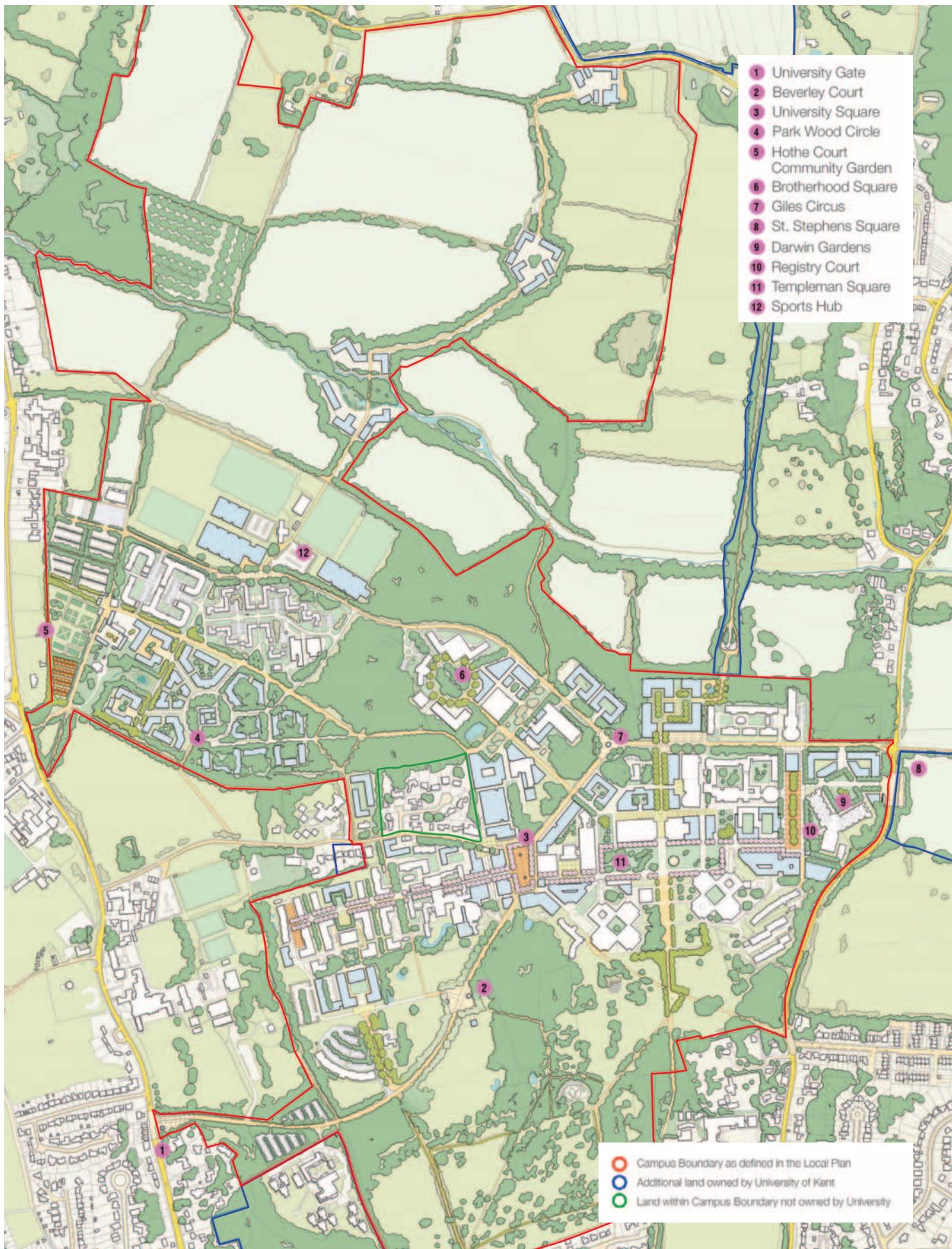
This overall plan was gradually refined and tested against the aspirations of the concept drawing, ultimately resulting in the final Framework Masterplan drawing.



The contemporary campus has spectacular views over historic Canterbury



The plan is a powerful expression of the academic, cultural and civic life of the University



The proposed Masterplan for the University of Kent in Canterbury

# INSPIRING A GREAT CIVIC UNIVERSITY

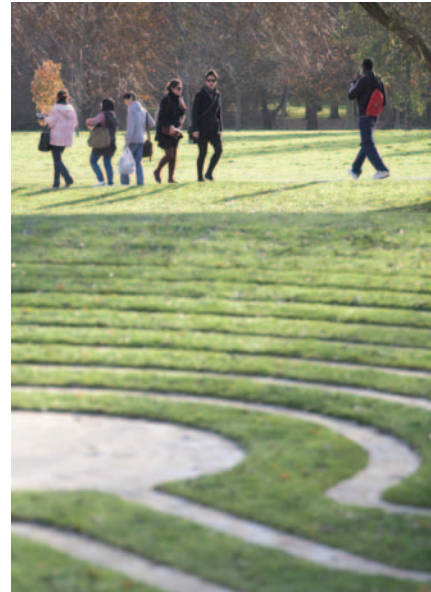
## Evolving for academic excellence

The recent University document entitled: 'Kent 2025: Refreshing the University Strategy' itemises the challenges facing the Higher Education sector in relation to the University of Kent and why it needs to respond.

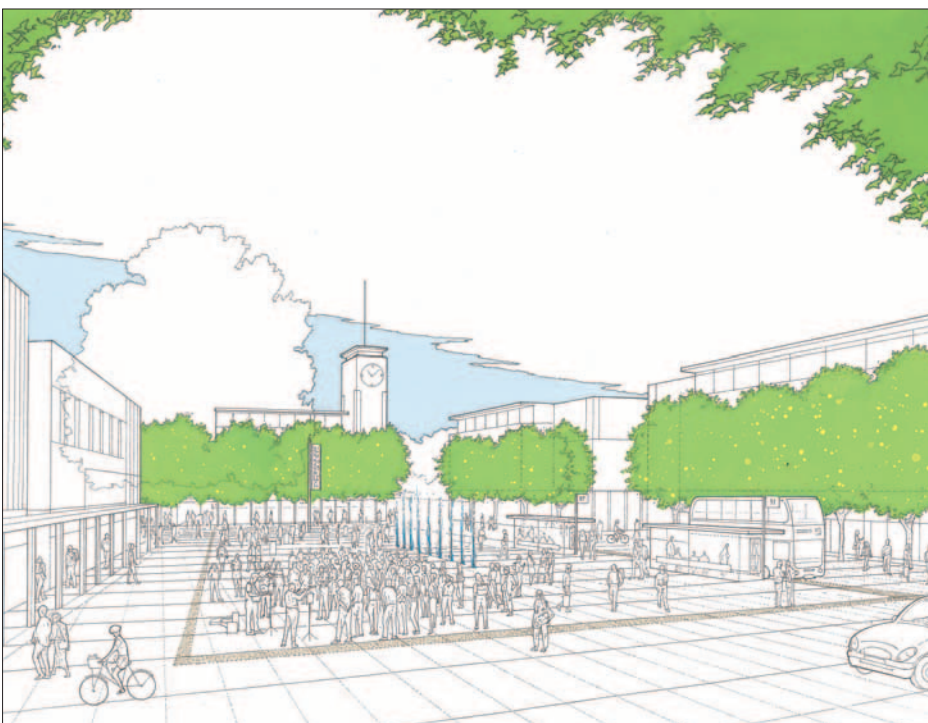
This reaffirms a commitment to the founding mission to become a great civic university, with a distinctive and fresh approach to high calibre teaching, learning, inclusion and inter-disciplinary in a modern, collegial environment. It sets out an inspirational vision for 2025 to support education and research as well as social, economic, cultural, intellectual and public life.

For the Framework Masterplan to be successful therefore, the University campus must evolve to become the expression of these commitments and values, ensuring that the entire academic community, as well as those who visit the campus, are inspired by the high ideals and values of the University of Kent.

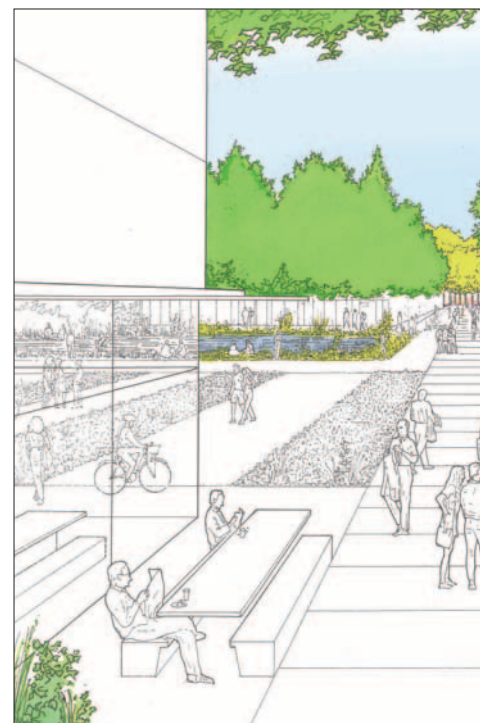
Importantly, the campus must be considered as more than merely the sum of the buildings and the spaces between them.



Quality spaces will be created between buildings



New University Square, an important new arrival square and gathering space within the campus



Sketch view of Jennison Square and Jennison Pond,

## A great variety of new spaces will be created between the buildings

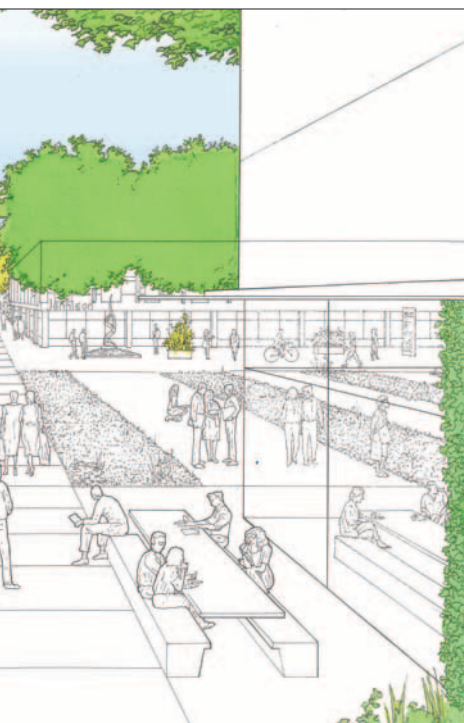


## A rich mix of spaces and uses

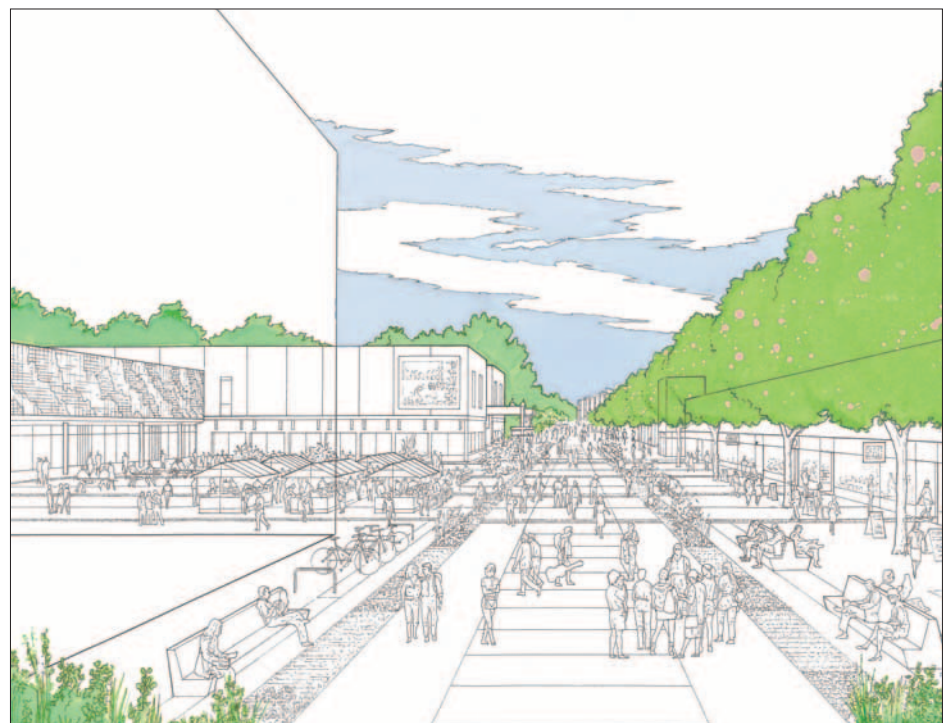
The Masterplan provides a clear 'framework' or 'template' within which buildings and open spaces can be developed and the right balance between the two can be struck at every stage. It delivers a structured and coherent campus layout, guiding the creation of a great variety of new spaces and places between the buildings for the enjoyment and productivity of the whole University community.

The key will be to create a green campus of great variety and diversity, some of which might include:

- Planting that frames views of Canterbury and the Cathedral
- A tree-lined avenue of shops and cafes linking across the whole campus
- Informal, relaxed spaces, quiet quadrangles and spaces for social interaction and debate
- Spaces for outdoor festivals, markets and entertainment
- Spaces for outdoor study and teaching spaces
- Planting that changes with the seasons



and route north to Brotherhood Square



New Marlowe Square and the route east along Holford Walk toward Rutherford College



Views of the built heritage, including the Grade II listed 'Father Courage' sculpture by FE McWilliam

## Building on a heritage of quality

The current Framework Masterplan takes a big-picture overview of the Canterbury campus, including what is of value in the original Masterplan, projections for future growth, appropriate use of the larger land ownership, and the quality of the campus as a place:

- Holford's proposal for the Campus Heart (with Templeman Library at its centre) as the working 'core' surrounded by independent college buildings remains the core idea
- Holford's overall organisational structure of a simple grid of streets, spaces and places at the heart of the campus is also retained, supporting a very legible and pedestrian-dominant public realm
- The grouping of Templeman Library, the Marlowe Building and Eliot and Rutherford Colleges is retained as the core of the Campus Heart

- The large green space defined and enclosed by this grouping of buildings – Templeman Gardens – will become a space where public events and gatherings can take place in Spring, and where students and staff can continue to take advantage of the incredible views over historic Canterbury
- A tiered and more formal landscape is introduced to the sloping land between Eliot College and Rutherford College to create a transitional space between the more formal garden layout of the Campus Heart and the parklands to the south
- The open spaces to the south of the Campus Heart are retained in the Masterplan to provide a green setting to the University as well as a landscape demarcation from the City
- University Road will be transformed to respond more sympathetically to the parkland character of University Rise in its approach to the Campus Heart along the renamed 'University Avenue'
- Beverley Farmhouse will continue to enjoy an open aspect of green landscape to the south

- At Hothe Court, the Masterplan proposes the development of a new 'Centre of Excellence' in order to create a new sense of place and distinct purpose to this part of the campus
- The northern part of the historic Crab and Winkle rail line will be re-opened as a pedestrian and cycle route

In addition, the Masterplan proposals include a major new 'Heritage Trail' connecting east-west along the ridgeline to create a more unified and connected campus. This promenade will be emphasised by an avenue of blossom trees that will celebrate Spring and the approach of the conclusion of the academic year. It will also form part of a circular network of pedestrian and cycle routes that will link the heritage assets and celebrate the landscape and built heritage of the campus.



The campus opens, 1965





Proposed Heritage Trail around the campus

- 1 Templeman Library & Gardens
- 2 Chaucer Fields Double Hedgerow
- 3 Beverley Farmhouse
- 4 Holford Walk
- 5 Park Wood Ancient Woodlands
- 6 Hothe Court Farm & Garden
- 7 Old Salt Road & Sarre Penn Stream
- 8 Blean Church & Scheduled Monument
- 9 Crab & Winkle Nature Trail
- 10 Crab & Winkle Tunnel North Portal
- 11 'Father Courage' Sculpture by FE McWilliam
- 12 Tyler Hill Medieval Pottery and Tile Industry

A big-picture overview of the Canterbury campus

## Movement and transport: moving forward

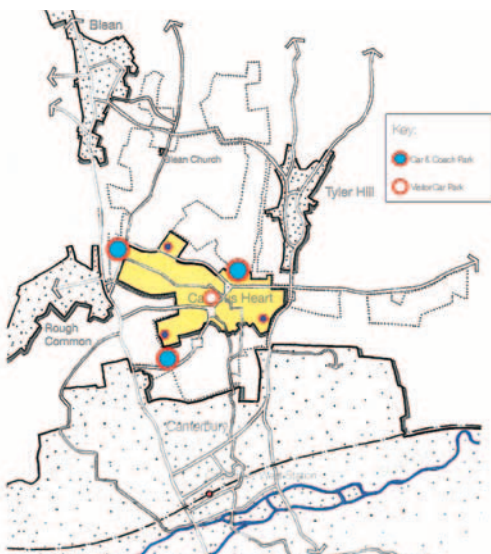
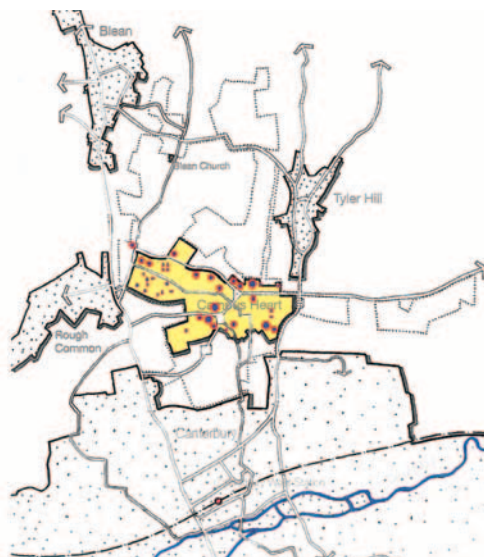
Reducing dependency on private cars, minimising the impact of road traffic on the campus, and promoting forms of movement that are less constrained by the environmental, spatial and capacity limitations of road transport are major University objectives moving forward.

To address them, the Masterplan proposes a number of improvements to the University movement network, which better connected will make it easier to navigate for visitors to the campus and give greater emphasis and status to walking, cycling and small-scale, slow-speed vehicles, with less reliance on conventionally powered cars and lorries.

The plan also builds upon the long-established and considered University Travel Plan that places sustainable travel firmly at the top of the travel hierarchy in shifting staff, student and visitor travel towards non-car modes of transport.



The masterplan promotes walking, cycling and the use of public transport and will reduce car-dependency



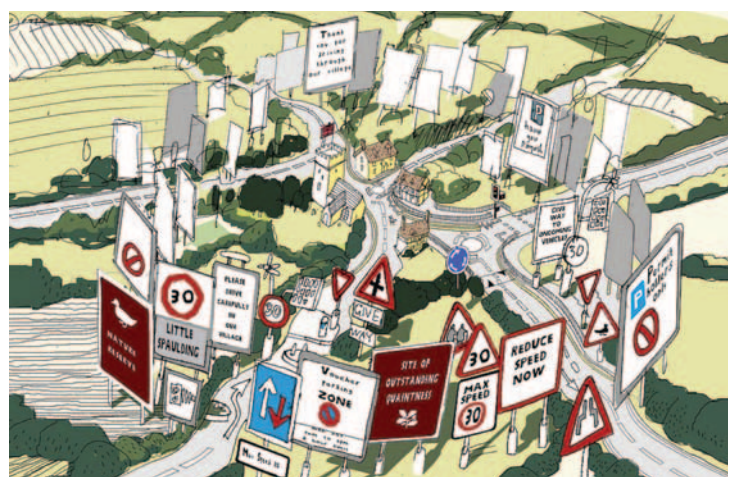
The Masterplan will reduce the number of campus car parks and relocates them to the edge of the Campus Heart

## Addressing a legacy of car-dominance

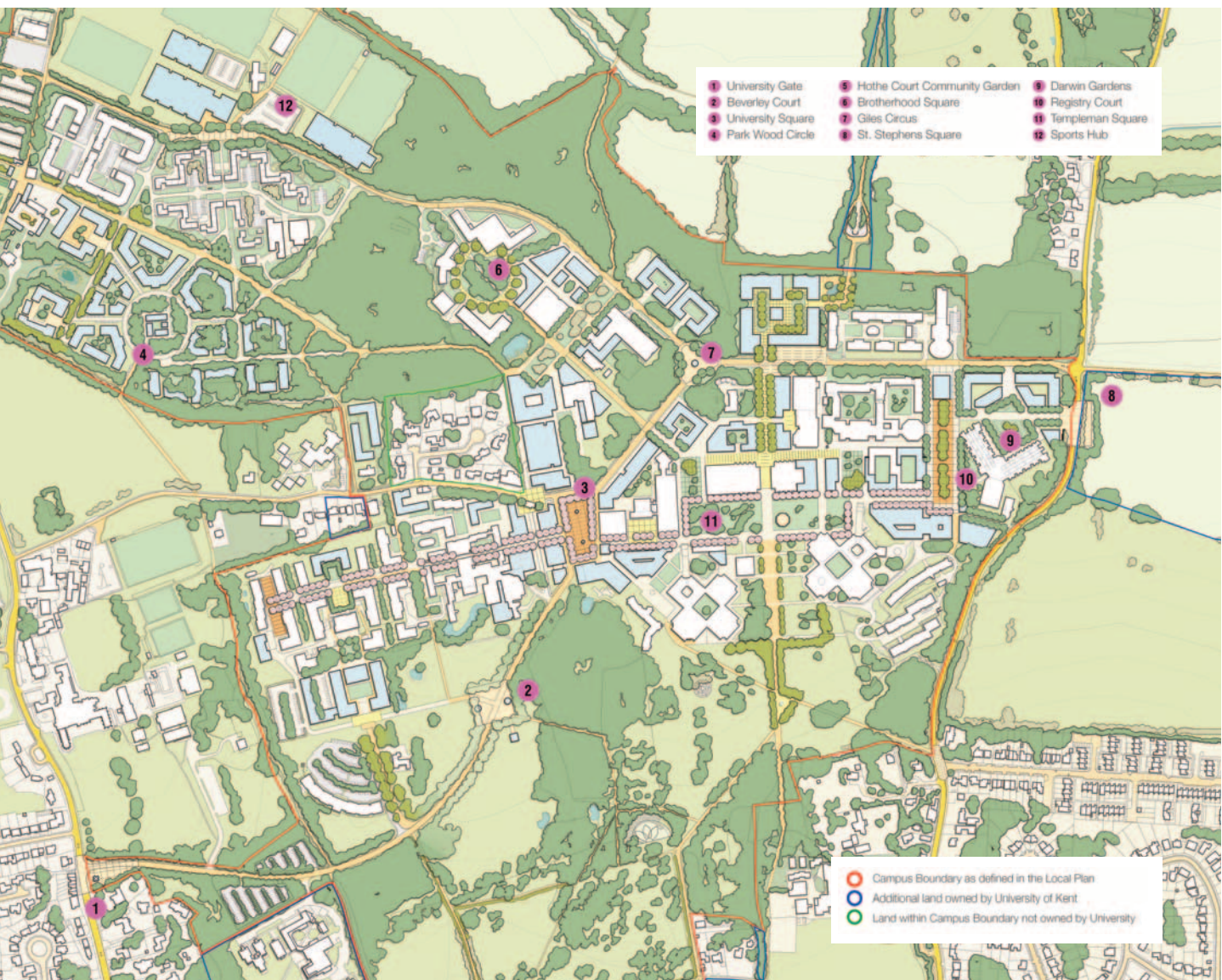
Car parks infiltrate into the very heart of the campus, a legacy of the 1965 Holford Masterplan created in an era when the private motor car was seen to be the answer to our transport needs and growth in car ownership increased dramatically.

However, the large number and wide distribution of different car parks mean that today's journeys are often extended by searching for a parking space, causing driver frustration, higher speeds, greater fuel consumption and a reduction in air quality.

The University has already made changes to parking systems, and is also developing a Parking Management Strategy that will support the Travel Plan, while the Framework Masterplan proposes to rebalance growth with good placemaking by introducing measures to limit car use and to deter people from driving short-distance journeys.



This Masterplan is dedicated to the memory of Ben Hamilton-Baillie (4 July 1955 – 3 March 2019) who was a highly creative architect, transport thinker and street designer and an enthusiastic member of the team.



The proposed Masterplan for the University of Kent in Canterbury

## The way forward and delivery

The gradual evolution and implementation of the Masterplan proposals in each landscape character area is likely to take place over an extended period of time as demand for space dictates and funding becomes available; consequently, development of the campus is unlikely to follow a logical and sequential pattern.

The Masterplan has therefore been specifically composed to provide a framework for this to happen gradually and in no particular order. Buildings and the public realm will be implemented in a way that is sensitive to the individual character areas, and development will gradually enrich the individual parts of the campus.

By following these Framework proposals, the Masterplan will deliver a wide diversity of places and spaces, thereby helping the future University campus adapt and evolve in order to satisfy a range of contemporary expectations including:

- The imperative for a more sustainable attitude toward our planet
- Greater competition between universities and therefore greater demand for 'placemaking' in university environments
- The academic and business worlds moving towards shared flexible, inclusive and inspiring working environments
- A growing reliance upon public transport by environmentally-conscious and financially-sensitive millennial students and staff
- The evolution of retail and other commercial activities leading to a growing interest to co-locate with the University

Development will gradually enrich the individual parts of the campus



Concept Sketch

*This document represents a short summary of the Framework Masterplan,  
the full version and supporting appendices can be found on the University web page.*