



Aston University

BIRMINGHAM UK

CAMPUS VISION



1.0 OVERVIEW

Aston University's strategy communicates clearly our ambition, objectives and priorities; states what is most important to us and identifies our points of distinction.

This strategy and our Campus Vision are structured around the future success of Aston's beneficiaries:

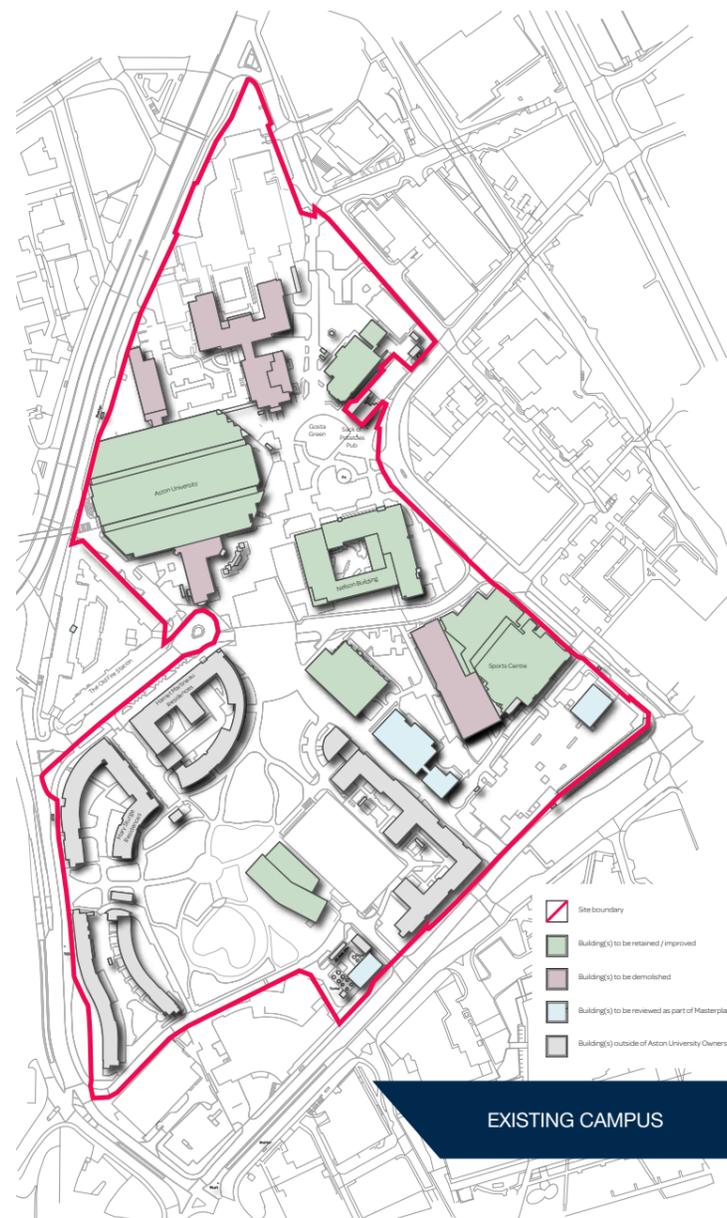
- **our students**, who become our graduates and alumni.
- **business and the professions**, who employ our students and engage with us on research and educational programmes.
- **our region and society**, and wider society whom we serve as a public university, with a strong sense of place.

Our Campus Vision is ambitious. It will see us create a campus that offers an outstanding experience for our staff and students, bring improvements to surrounding communities and to the people of Birmingham and utilise the opportunities presented by our proximity to HS2, Innovation Birmingham, Eastside and the city centre.

Our vision sets out our aspiration to invest significantly into the delivery of a **Destination Campus** to meet the changing demands and opportunities faced by universities. Aston's

future growth will embrace evolving trends such as on-line and remote learning, greater connectivity, the growth in international students and closer collaboration with commercial partners and the business community. Our campus will therefore need to adapt and evolve in response to these trends in order to secure Aston's future success.

The University intends to invest **£240 million** over 10 years, to deliver our campus vision.



OUR CITY CENTRE CAMPUS

- 15,000 students
- 1,500 staff
- 16.0 hectares (39.6 acres) of land
- 1 million square feet of built space
- 4.2 hectares (10.4 acres) of green space

2.0 ASTON UNIVERSITY

Aston was founded in 1895 by the employers of Birmingham who could not find the skilled employees and managers needed to serve the growing West Midlands economy. Awarded University title in 1966, Aston has stayed true to its history as an institution which is focussed on collaboration with business, the professions and the third sector teaching the skills and knowledge that organisations require to grow.

As an **'anchor institution'** Aston employs over **1,500 staff** and has over **15,000 students**, most of whom come from the West Midlands. We differentiate ourselves from other universities by the way in which we link businesses, the professions and other organisations to graduate employees and entrepreneurs. A key element of this is the student placement year. We also ensure that businesses and the region benefit from our translational research and knowledge exchange activities. Our contribution to the regional economy comes through the success of our students, 79.1% of whom go into a graduate level job within six months and many of whom remain in Birmingham. We are also particularly well known for our productive partnerships with local and global business.

Through widening participation in higher education and raising the aspirations of young people in the region, we create educational and career opportunities for students regardless of their backgrounds or circumstance.

Aston also builds partnerships and global connections through our research collaborators, alumni and students, who make a contribution to the diversity of the region. We believe in taking local success to the world and have many international partnerships with Global Pathway Providers and collaborations with universities in China and Oman.

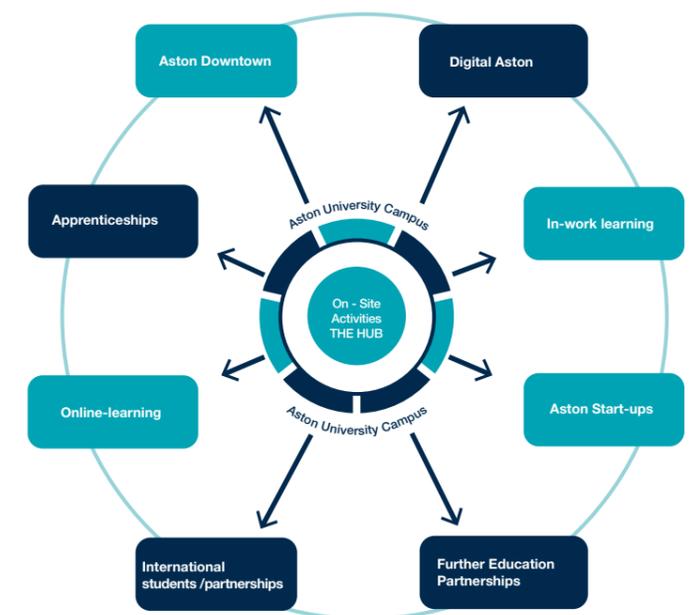
The University is proud to have received the highest possible accolade in the Teaching Excellence Framework, the Gold Award, reflecting outstanding outcomes and the high proportion of our students who progress into highly skilled employment and further study.

In the future we expect to see a diversification of our educational offer. Degree Apprenticeships - where students are full time employees of a business or public body - were pioneered at Aston and we expect programmes to grow. We will see an expansion of in-work learning for professionals. We will continue to pioneer new programmes such as cyber security and civil engineering which address regional and global skills gaps. Our research activities and engagement with business and industry will become more prominent and more collaborative.

Our campus will need to evolve to reflect new forms of delivery, including increases in distance learning and online interactions.

Our campus is a resource for bringing together students, partners and the community for increasingly high-quality collaboration and interaction. The campus must support our digital futures and be a resource for those working remotely as well as those working on site.

OUR DESTINATION CAMPUS



3.0 A CHANGING CONTEXT

The areas surrounding the campus are benefitting from significant investment and a number of planning policies and masterplans to help influence and shape their development over coming generations. There are also a number of developments currently being delivered which are likely to change the character of the area in the short term.

The Campus Vision will be mindful and proactive in responding to the changing character of the wider Eastside as it continues to evolve as a growing focus for investment and becomes a new vibrant quarter of the city centre.

A list of the major developments within the wider Eastside and their status are listed and mapped below:



1. Lancaster Circus (Under Construction)

24 storey student accommodation block containing 1,023 student bed spaces. Due for completion summer 2020.

2. International House (Under Construction)

14 storey student accommodation block containing 586 student bed spaces. Due for completion Summer 2019.

3. Innovation Birmingham (Pre-planning)

Innovation Birmingham Phase 2 anticipated to include 2x office buildings. Application expected late 2019.

4. Eastside Room (Under Construction)

Mixed-used development consisting of office space, new hotel and convention facilities up to 8 storeys. Due for completion Summer 2019.

5. Eastside Locks (Planning)

Residential-led development consisting of approx. 780 residential units in buildings up to 38 storeys. Application expected Spring 2019.

6. Belmont Works (Planning)

Detailed planning application submitted for office-led and educational development in 5 storey building.

7. Cardigan Street (Planning)

Outline planning application submitted for office-led and educational development in 8 storey building.

8. HS2 Curzon Street Station (Pre-planning)

Location of new HS2 Terminal Station in Birmingham City Centre. Enabling works underway, application expected Summer 2019.

9. One East Side (Pre-planning)

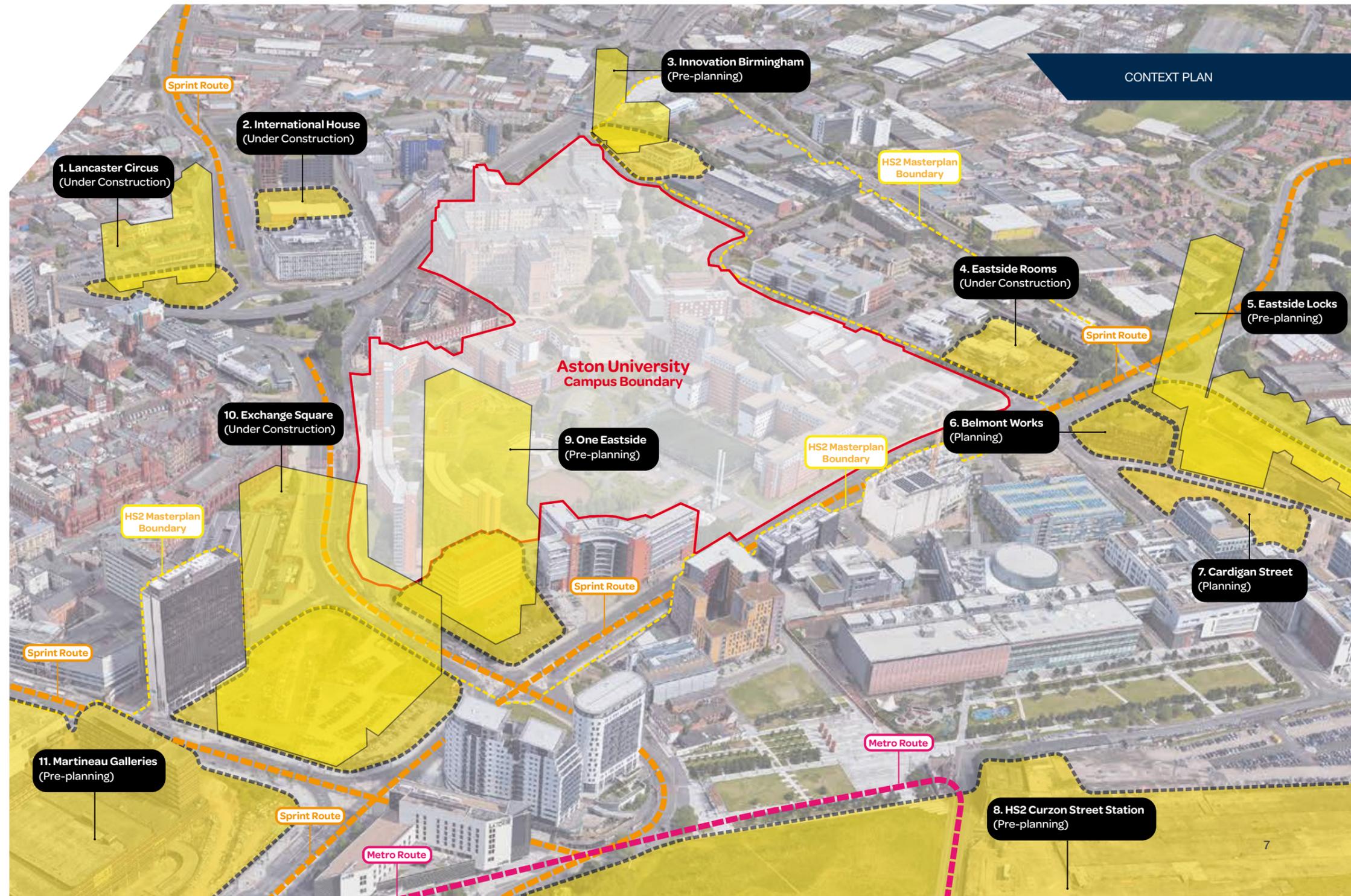
Residential-led development of two towers between 18-45 storeys and containing approx. 600 new dwellings. Application expected Spring 2019.

10. Exchange Square (Under Construction and Pre-planning)

Residential-led development of circa 600 dwellings under construction in 3 buildings up to 26 storeys. Phase 2 to include 400 residential dwellings in a 46 storey tower. Application expected Spring 2019.

11. Martineau Galleries (Pre-planning)

Mixed-use development consisting primarily of commercial and residential space, likely to consist of a number of tall buildings. Updated masterplan and outline application expected Autumn/Winter 2019.



4.0 THE CAMPUS VISION

Aston University and the Aston campus exist primarily to meet the needs of our key beneficiaries:

OUR STUDENTS

who become our graduates and alumni.

BUSINESS AND THE PROFESSIONS

who employ our students, and also engage with us directly on research and educational programmes.

THE REGION AND SOCIETY

of Birmingham and the West Midlands whom we serve as a public University.

The campus is visibly part of a vibrant city and is welcoming and engaging for visitors from the wider community we serve. The University campus reflects the engagement of a civic institution with the wider community across Birmingham. It occupies a strategic site; connecting and complementing adjacent developments to enhance the cityscape and sense of place. The environment is well-designed to encourage active use; public art and cultural activities are curated in a connected set of public spaces.

The well-defined gateways to the campus are welcoming and designed to attract and guide beneficiaries, visitors and the community to their ultimate destination be that department, library, event, service or amenity. Access to the campus is increasingly user-friendly and sustainable encouraging visitors to make use of public transport options and to walk and cycle whenever possible.

Our buildings are flexible and designed to reflect evolving teaching and research activities. Not all our buildings are located at the Aston Triangle but all our sites and buildings share a distinctive, welcoming and flexible character and are actively engaged with our neighbours and with adjacent facilities.

Part of the campus will create opportunities for a mixed-use development including residential accommodation and there will be footfall and activities throughout the day to create a vibrant, safe and successful community.

We will not build or support developments which do not deliver or endorse this Vision.

OUR PRINCIPLES

A number of key principles underpin the Vision. These will form the foundations on which the future masterplan is developed. We expect the masterplanning process to draw lessons from the best examples of campus design nationally and internationally:

- The campus is for collaboration
- Fit for digital purpose
- Will support innovation in delivery
- Containing flexible spaces
- An oasis in the city
- Land is Aston's endowment

OUR CONCEPTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This is a vision which will create a legacy for decades to come. In order to strike a balance between short-term priorities and longer-term aspirations and ambitions, a masterplanning process will explore the following concepts and opportunities.

1. A destination campus

The University and its community will benefit from enhancements to the campus which encourage people to dwell in and around the site during the day. This concept is referred to as the “**sticky campus**”; spaces internal and external are designed in such a way that people who visit for one purpose stay because of the amenities, ambience, character and quality of the environment.

2. A safe, secure and welcoming environment

Safety and security of all campus users is paramount – it is important to recognise that the masterplan needs to promote active use throughout the day and to prevent unwanted behaviours and inappropriate use of spaces. This is a characteristic which all users value but it is increasingly important in a globally, and digitally connected world to recognise that reputations and perceptions can be formed from relatively modest incidents. The University seeks to be a place where students and staff from across the world will wish to live, work and study.

3. A Knowledge Quarter

The campus is an asset for the city and the proximity of multiple institutions presents an opportunity to create a Knowledge Quarter. The key questions will include the degree to which the concept of the Knowledge Quarter is greater than the sum of its parts.

4. Spheres of influence

The University needs to consider its place within the wider developments in an around HS2, Eastside and the Gun Quarter. The potential impact of University-related developments will become increasingly significant to the overall vibrancy of this section of the city and provide a much stronger physical connection to the campus.

OUR EMERGING THEMES

The following themes will be further explored in the formal development of the Masterplan:

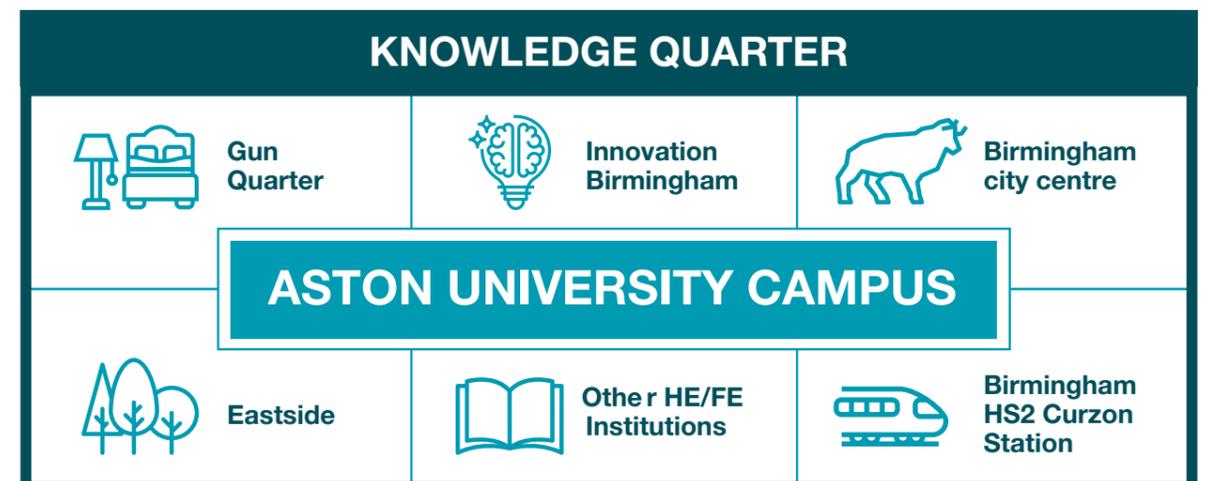
- Access and permeability
- Sustainable transportation
- Environment and public realm
- A smart campus: fit for digital purpose
- A living lab

The Living Lab embraces the use of technology and its practical impact, it spans across the needs of beneficiaries, it creates the potential for synergy across academic and commercial endeavours; and it promotes the campus as a venue for collaboration and a flexible environment to promote creativity, enterprise and innovation in all forms.

EMBRACING OUR CONTEXT

In order to maximise the potential of the campus and to meet the needs of our beneficiaries, this vision needs to be sensitive and responsive to the wider aspirations of the surrounding city.

Benefitting from its close proximity to Birmingham city centre and hosting a number of educational, science and innovation establishments, the area around the University campus will evolve to become the Knowledge Quarter. This will continue with the arrival of the Birmingham HS2 Curzon Station.



THE CAMPUS SPATIAL VISION

The future of universities is changing, and the roles that University campuses play needs to evolve in response. Aston University needs to approach its campus not only as a place to learn and a place for students, but as an asset to the city as a whole. A place to innovate and a place to work, live and relax. A vibrant mixed activity campus with learning at its core and a key part of a Knowledge Quarter for Birmingham.

The adjacent plan offers an indication of how such neighbourhoods could be composed and how they may interact with each other.

A MIXED-USE DESTINATION

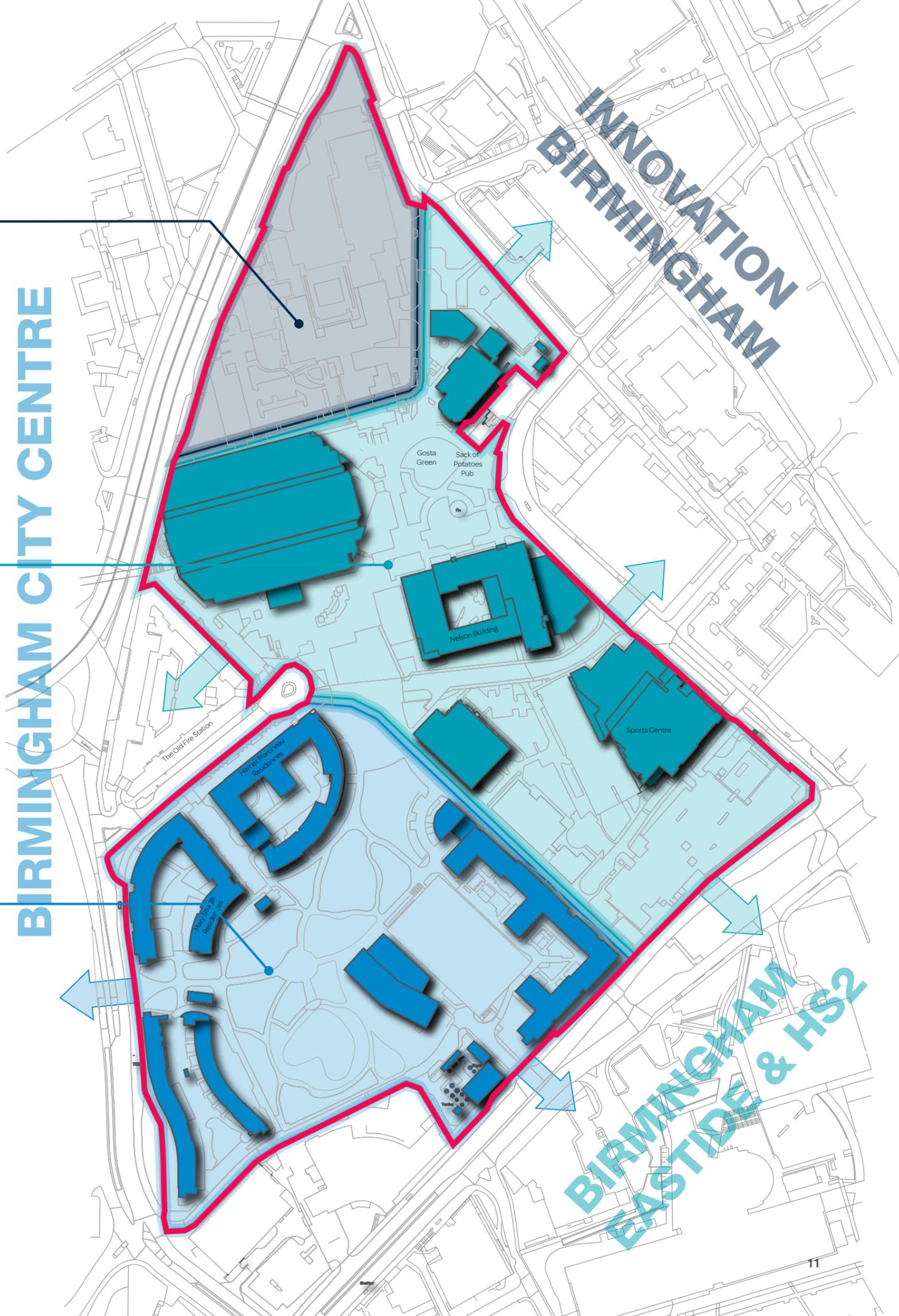
Utilising the sites prominence near the A38(M) and Innovation Birmingham, creation of a new mixed-use commercial gateway including a range of flexible uses from office residential to commercial to provide an active and vibrant destination.

THE DESTINATION CAMPUS

A University campus located at the core of the masterplan. Jennens Road provides an additional "front door" to the University and provides an outward looking campus overlooking HS2, Eastside, Curzon Station and Innovation Birmingham.

THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

Supplementing the existing student residential community with new leisure uses to provide an active and safe parkland environment acting as an attractive gateway into the campus to those entering from the city centre.



5.0 OUR FUTURE PLANS

The Campus Vision represents the first stage of the production and delivery of a bold and exciting masterplan for our campus. The vision is not exhaustive. It does however, set our clear commitment to redevelop our campus to create a network of new, high-quality and innovative neighbourhoods that will not only meet the future needs of the University and our students, but also help support the development of a wider Knowledge Quarter.

Having recognised buildings which are to be retained and buildings to be removed, the adjacent Opportunities Plan starts to identify the key areas of change across the University campus and discuss how they could be used.

Having put our thoughts on paper, the next stage of this process is to engage with our key stakeholders within and outside the University to build support for our vision. This will then allow a detailed masterplanning exercise to explore a range of options for the campus to identify how best to deliver our vision.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and working with our partners in the coming months.

If you would like to comment, please contact us at:

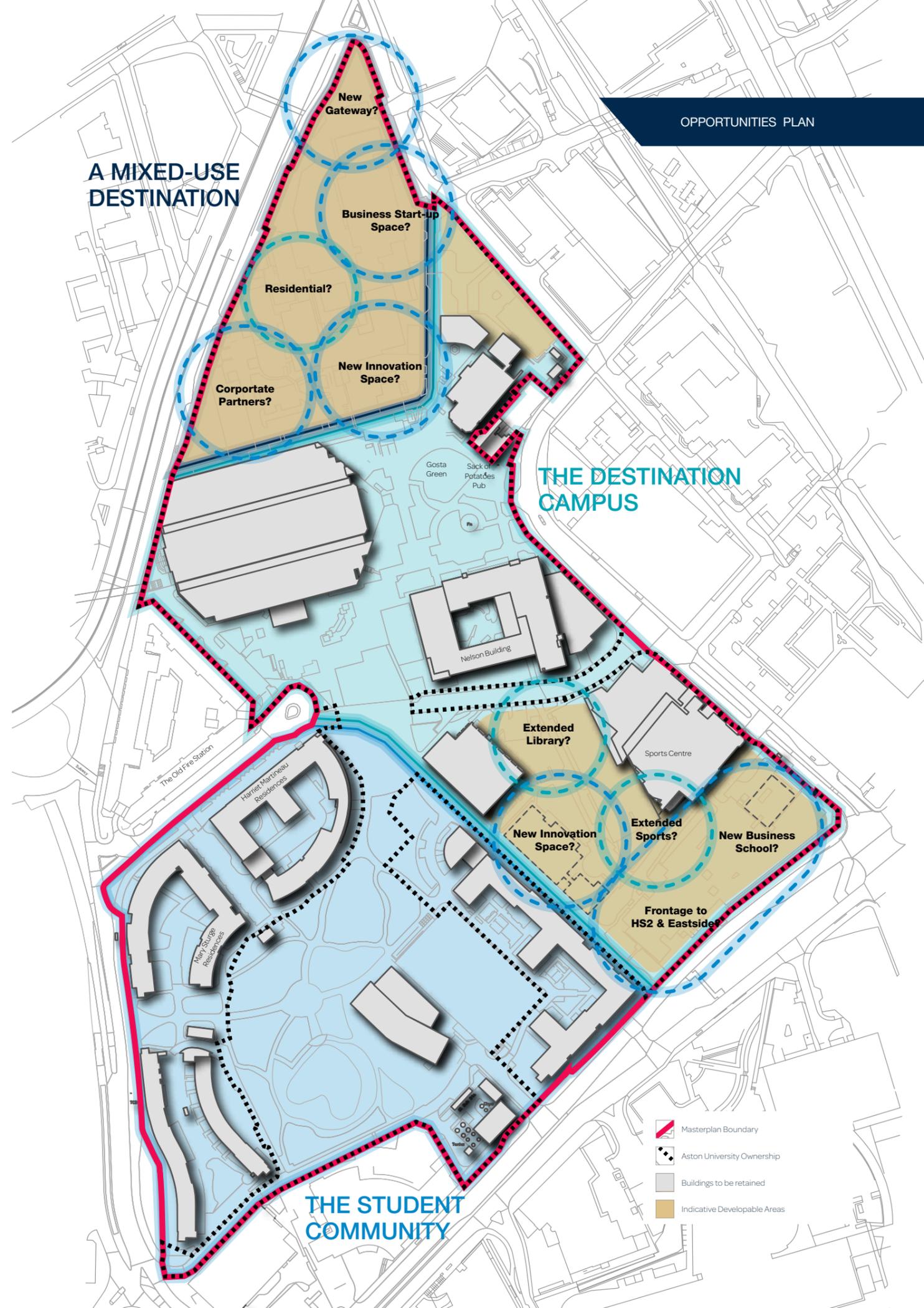
campus.vision@aston.ac.uk

EXISTING CAMPUS



A MIXED-USE DESTINATION

THE DESTINATION CAMPUS





BIRMINGHAM UK

If you would like to know more about our vision please contact us at:

campus.vision@aston.ac.uk

Alternatively you can find out more about Aston University and our strategy here:

www.aston.ac.uk/about/strategy

www.aston.ac.uk

