

News

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Full steam ahead for Wintringham Primary School

Planning permission has been granted for a new primary school for St Neots which is set to open in September 2020.

The £14.2million school forms part of the Wintringham development, which alongside Loves Farm, is part of the eastern expansion of St Neots. The school will be managed by Diamond Learning Partnership Trust which also runs the nearby Round House Primary Academy, on Loves Farm, and will provide places for just over 700 pupils aged 3-11.

The school will sit at the heart of the first phase of Urban&Civic's 162 hectare development which will be a sustainable new development with 2,800 homes and a range of community and sports facilities, health and green space. The primary school's location was designed to ensure it played a central role for new families within the first phase of the development. A second primary school is planned for later in the development.

Designed by Stirling Prize-winning architects dRMM, the elegant timber school will provide an inspirational learning environment surrounded by nature, both inside and outside. At the centre of the building is a woodland grove, providing a learning resource that embodies the ethos of the academy. The distinctive character of the new academy will contribute to the vibrancy of the new civic square at the heart of the development.

A slender, curved roof offers shade and protection to the outdoor learning spaces beneath. Wrapping the elliptical form is a façade which draws inspiration from the seasonal colours found within the surrounding landscape.

Cambridgeshire County Council has secured funding from Urban&Civic (via a S106 agreement) of £9 million which covers the cost of two of the three classes in each year group including the pre-school. The size of the school was increased to three form entry to meet local demand for places and the costs of this additional capacity is being directly funded by the County Council.

Councillor Simon Bywater, Chairman of the Children and Young People Committee at Cambridgeshire County Council, said, "Today marks a significant milestone in the building of a much-needed new primary school for St Neots and is the culmination of many years of working together in partnership to get where we are today."

Tracy Bryden, Executive Headteacher for the Wintringham and the Round House Primary Academies said: "This is fantastic news for Loves Farm and the community of St Neots. I have been excited to be involved in the development process of the new school and look forward to this continuing during the building phase. The new school promises to be an inspirational learning area and a focal point for the community."

Susannah Connell, Chief Executive Officer of the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust said "We are delighted the planning permission has been granted for the permanent school building. This is fantastic news for the children of Wintringham Primary Academy.

We have been fortunate enough to work with the whole design team who have deliberated long and hard over the proposals for the new school. Together we will provide a first class learning experience to enrich the children's lives and educational opportunities."

Tim Leathes, Development Director for Urban&Civic, said: "We are really pleased with the strong partnership and shared vision which has gone into creating the plans for this inspiring school. It will be a centrepiece within the first phase of development, with safe walk and scoot to school routes through the green corridors coming forward, and playing a huge role in defining the public realm and civic square which will be the heart of the new community. We look forward to working with all the partners to bring these plans into reality for our first residents next year."

Bob Ensich, Area Director at Morgan Sindall Construction, said: "This is an incredibly exciting project and we're very much looking forward to continuing our close working relationship with Cambridgeshire County Council and Urban&Civic during the development of the new school. We hope the legacy of this project will leave a lasting and significant impact on the Wintringham community, creating hundreds of new primary school places and providing long-term benefits for the wider area."

Patrick Usborne, Associate at dRMM and Project Lead for the school, said: "We're delighted that Wintringham Primary School has been granted planning permission. The new school will create a healthy learning environment for the children and brings nature right into the classroom. The use of engineered timber improves well-being, with studies* showing that children who learn in a timber classroom have a lower heart rate (8,600 times less a day!) than those in a standard room."

For further information:

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