Welcome to this exhibition which shows development proposals being brought forward by the University of Bristol to extend the existing Queen's Building in order to provide much needed additional teaching and research space for the Engineering Faculty.

Have your say

The University and its project team would like to hear the views of those living and working in the area and also feedback from University staff and students before working up the final scheme. The date for occupation is set for Autumn 2016.

Please make any comments or suggestions and post your completed form in the box provided or return to ABC at the address shown.

The consultation material is also available online.

If you have any further queries please contact:
ABC, consultation co-ordinator
Tel: 0117 977 2002 or email: info@abc-pr.co.uk
The Requirement

The Faculty of Engineering wishes to develop as a world leader with the ability to offer significant opportunities to enhance research collaborations, industrial partnerships and to promote greater recruitment of female and overseas students, whilst creating innovative learning spaces and enhancing the student experience.

Future growth is currently inhibited by the physical environment of their building including the quality and quantity of the Faculty’s core space. The existing Queen’s Building, completed in the 1950s, no longer meets the needs of current teaching methods and offers little scope to develop the existing internal spaces to meet these needs.

The Faculty of Engineering require:

- A large, reconfigurable flexible teaching space to accommodate cohorts of up to 200 that is suitable and flexible enough to support open day activities, exams, summer schools, conferences and industry events etc.

- A reconfigurable undergraduate laboratory for heavy engineering work with built-in demonstration areas and associated open plan office space.

- Locally bookable student meeting spaces.

- Research offices to enable effective grouping of research collaborators and more appropriate use of existing spaces.

- An entrance to the new teaching spaces directly from Woodland Road to provide a valuable link between the Merchant Venturers Building and the Queen’s Building.

- New landscaping to enhance and improve the usability of the public realm.
Site and Surrounding Area

The Queen’s Building is a large four storey 1950s building that lies between University Walk, Cantocks Close and Woodlands Road within the defined University Precinct. The Royal Fort Gardens lie to the north of the existing building with the chemistry department to the south. The site slopes away from the Queen’s Building down to Woodlands Road. The slope is laid mainly to grass and contains a number of mature trees and shrubs. In policy terms it could be defined as green infrastructure in part, however it is not utilised as a public open space or by students due to its gradient.

The site lies within the Tyndall’s Park Conservation Area. To the north of the Queen’s Building is the Bristol Baptist College, currently the graduate school for International Business and is Grade II listed.

To the north west of the site is the University Fry Building that has recently been the subject of planning and listed building applications to refurbish and extend the Department of Mathematics. This included the creation of a new area of public realm previously used for car parking.

To the south of the site lies the Merchant Venturers Building that is used by the Faculty of Engineering. There are key pedestrian links between this and the Queen’s Building that could be improved by these proposals.

To the south of the site are two semi-detached Victorian villas. One is occupied by the University and the other is used as offices but not in the University’s ownership.
The Proposal

The proposal is to extend the west wing of the Queen’s Building southwards towards Woodlands Road.

The basement is to be extended to create an interactive teaching space as well as providing a new point of access from Woodlands Road.

Above the basement the new extension steps back in tiers and accommodates new teaching laboratory space at the lower ground floor level with office and research space above.

The tiered nature of the extension offers the opportunity to create green roofs above the lower levels.

The proposed extension sits on a portion of the land between the Queen’s Building and Woodlands Road that currently contains some existing trees and includes some footpaths and hardstanding.

The extension necessitates the removal of a number of trees that will be replaced within the immediate area of the University Precinct. The line of mature trees running along the boundary of Woodlands Road will be retained.

To enhance the pedestrian links to, from and around the Queen’s Building:

- A new pedestrian crossing across Woodlands Road is proposed to link the Queen’s Building with the Merchant Venturers Building.
- The stairs to the north west of the Queen’s Building between Woodlands Road and University Walk are to be enhanced.
- The route from Cantocks Close, behind the two Victorian Villas and to the rear of the Queen’s Building, is to be maintained.

Landscape

The area between Woodlands Road and the existing building is currently underused and does not address the road. The proposal will reverse this, allowing the new frontage to open onto the street, provide informal congregation areas and strengthen the pedestrian linkages between buildings and departments.

In combination with the new Fry building plaza, Woodland Road will begin to serve as a focal point between faculties, connected by a linked series of welcoming and usable spaces.

Development here provides an opportunity to create spaces where students can meet or sit in the sun on terraced grass banks which together with a new pedestrian crossing and removal of the railings to enable sitting on the wall will increase activity on this frontage.

In addition to the improvements to the site landscape, the new green roofs to the building extensions will further enhance the green infrastructure and biodiversity in the locality.
The Proposals

The Queen’s Building was extended to the south of the east wing in 2008. An extension to the south of the west wing maintains the fundamental symmetry of the original building.

Woodlands Road is a major road within the University Precinct and the new extension provides the opportunity to create an improved presence and increase the activity along this key route.

There will be no direct overlooking from the extension to the villas and the amount of daylight penetrating their rear gardens will be improved by the removal of a substantial tree canopy.

Archaeology

Bristol Archaeological Services have carried out an evaluation of the site with the purpose of identifying remains of structures shown on the 1940s survey drawing and any other archaeological remains.

Their investigation encountered some structural remains but nothing pre-dating the mid 20th century.

Sustainability

- Solar panels will contribute to the 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions.
- Planted roofs will assist in the reduction of the Urban Heat Island.
- Cycle parking fully integrated within the design of the existing and external realm is to be provided.
- The proposals will be fully assessed under the Building Research Establishment’s Environmental Assessment Method - BREEAM.

Ecology

An extended Phase 1 survey has been carried out by Wessex Ecological Consultants in June 2014. The survey recorded no signs of any protected species and concluded that the habitats were of low ecological value. New landscaping proposals will provide the opportunity for higher value habitat to be created.
Benefits

- The proposed extension allows the Faculty to continue its sustained and measured growth and develop as a world leader.

- The Faculty of Engineering will be provided with much needed additional modern teaching and laboratory space.

- Improved research and office space will be provided.

- The facility to host summer schools, conferences and industry events will be provided.

- A new entrance to the Queen’s Building will be created from Woodlands Road.

- Links to, from and around the Queen’s Building will be much improved enhancing connectivity across the University Precinct.

- An existing ‘sterile’ external green space will be brought into use.

- The relationship between the Queen’s Building and Woodlands Road will be improved.

- The public realm experience of Woodlands Road will be greatly enhanced.