

News

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Morgan Sindall tops out at £8.9 million primary school scheme in Cambridgeshire

Morgan Sindall has held a topping out ceremony to celebrate a key milestone in the construction of the new £8.9 million Ermine Street Church Academy in Huntingdon.

The project for Cambridgeshire County Council is the first school in the new Alconbury Weald development, by Urban and Civic, which will establish a new community on the former airfield. The academy will occupy a key location in the first phase of the development which will also include the construction of 1,000 new homes.

The first phase of the single-storey school is due to open in September 2016 and will be run by the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust. The academy will eventually accommodate 630 pupils following the second phase of its construction.

Representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council, Urban and Civic, and the Morgan Sindall project team were joined by the Bishop of Huntingdon, David Thomson, to celebrate the development's progress.

Andrew Read, CEO of the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust (DEMAT), said: "I am delighted that, through the hard work of all stakeholders, we are all on target to open this flagship school on time. The effective partnership of all concerned has set a wonderful precedent for the future role of this school as a focus for the development of this new community. The Diocese of Ely and I are honoured to take a lead in the creation of this exciting new school, which will serve the whole community."

Nigel Hugill, Chairman of Urban and Civic said: "This is the third school for which we have been responsible and the first of what I hope will be a number to be run by the Church of England. Careful planning stands at the very core of Alconbury Weald and our intention is that the safe walking and "scoot to school" routes, alongside a wealth of community and sports facilities, will help make this a treasured resource for new residents and the local area."

Bob Ensich, area director at Morgan Sindall, said: "The Ermine Street Church Academy has an important role to play as the heart of the new community being built at Alconbury Weald. Today's ceremony was a proud moment for us and all the team associated with the development, who have worked extremely hard to get to this point."

"Topping out ceremonies are traditionally held to mark the completion of work on the main frame of a building. The completion of the super-structure of any new building is an exciting moment and it's great to mark the occasion with a ceremony enrooted in age-old customs."

The academy's innovative Y-shaped plan comprises three separate wings continuing the developer's masterplan to create distinct internal zones for different key stages.

A double-height vaulted roof assembly hall will form the central core area of the building. The school will house 17 classrooms initially with an additional six in phase two, along with a state-of-the-art learning resource centre. The assembly hall will also be available for the local community to use during out-of-school hours.

The new building will be partially powered by photovoltaic solar panels and is on track to achieve a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good'.

Morgan Sindall's Cambridge office has also been appointed by Anglia Ruskin University to build its new £25 million Science Centre. Located at Anglia Ruskin's Cambridge Campus, the Science Centre will be a major new 7,906 sq. m facility and will include a 300 seat lecture theatre; a 200-seat super-laboratory providing flexible teaching space for all science disciplines; staff offices and a range of specialist teaching space.

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