



Friday 5 April 2024

Dear neighbour,

### **An update from Universal Destinations & Experiences**

In December 2023, we shared the news that Universal Destinations & Experiences, a U.S. based company that is part of Comcast Corporation, purchased an approximately 476-acre parcel of land just south of Bedford, with the goal of exploring a potential new theme park and resort project at this site.

We have spent the last several months undertaking feasibility and due diligence work as well as discussing the project with local and national stakeholders. It will still be some time before any decisions are made on whether or not to proceed with the project.

### **Why we are exploring this site**

We selected the Bedford site, which includes the former Kempston Hardwick brickworks, as an ideally suitable location. It has been identified for development by Bedford Borough Council for some time and it has the size and flat topography that is important for a large-scale theme park resort.

Bedford and the site are also well connected for travel from all parts of the UK – and are well-served by fast rail links into London and to Luton Airport.

More broadly, the UK is a very attractive market for a new theme park experience with its large population, creative industries, strong tourism, transportation infrastructure, and links to Europe.

### **Our public engagement**

Our project would have wide-ranging economic, social and cultural benefits both for, and well beyond, the local area (including for the wider region, and country).

The Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has agreed to act as the sponsor of a potential special development order application for the project within Government. This means the planning decision maker would be the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities.

To prepare for a planning application submission and to secure the necessary planning approvals, we are holding a period of public engagement. This period is the best opportunity for you to engage as it

### **The key takeaways:**

- Universal Destinations & Experiences is exploring a potential theme park and resort project just south of Bedford.
- We are currently undertaking feasibility and due diligence work and no decisions have been made about whether or not to proceed with the potential project.
- We are beginning a period of public engagement. Please visit the project website for further information:  
[www.universalukproject.co.uk](http://www.universalukproject.co.uk)

represents an important milestone in our feasibility and due diligence work and is a key part of the planning process; it does not mean we have made a final decision on this potential project.

Our public engagement period will run for 28 days from today (Friday 5 April 2024) and **will close on Friday 3 May 2024.**

Our project website [www.universalukproject.co.uk](http://www.universalukproject.co.uk) includes information specific to this period as well as a short survey for people to provide their feedback. This is the best opportunity to share feedback about our potential proposal and influence the project.

We will also be hosting two exhibition events specifically for local residents, businesses, and the wider community where we will share the same information that is on our website. We are publicising the dates and locations for these extensively and have enclosed a flyer with more information should you wish to attend.

Collaboration and community engagement remain at the core of how we do business around the world. We appreciate everyone who has engaged with us so far and look forward to hearing your feedback.

Yours sincerely,

Universal Destinations & Experiences