



Reshaping our Estate

# Introduction to Reshaping our Estate

2023



To find out more:

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This is our place. We hold the **keys** to the **buildings** that witnessed **history**. The desks and labs where **ideas** came, and **discoveries** that left the **world** forever changed.

We must **protect** this place. It is ours to **belong**, ours to **hold** and ours to **reinvent** for the **discoveries** yet to be found, and the **stories** yet to be told.

# 01 Introduction

Working together with the academic community, Reshaping our Estate will create an estate that is **more efficient, more effective, more environmentally sustainable, and fit-for-purpose** which **celebrates the past and looks to the future**.

In the Vice Chancellor's inaugural address, she articulated her ambitions to 'nurture academic excellence', to provide places where people can 'come together in contemplation, conversation and debate', creating 'environments in which our academics and students can be and do their best'.<sup>1</sup>

The outcome of this programme will be a 20-year estate capital plan that will enable the University of Cambridge mission statement, ensure the health and wellbeing of the University, and support the Vice Chancellor's ambitions. Any estate project that will turn into a reality needs to be included in this plan.

## Reshaping our Estate vision

Reshaping our Estate will create a place that will...

- enable our people to develop new thinking to produce breakthrough ideas and discoveries
- reflect University of Cambridge as a progressive global leader that has a profound impact in the wider world
- support Schools, Faculties and Departments to bring together thinking and create intellectual communities
- use our resources efficiently
- celebrate our past but looks to our future, where people are proud to live and work

**A place of which we can all be proud.**

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<sup>1</sup> Reference: <https://www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/how-the-university-and-colleges-work/people/vice-chancellor/speeches/inaugural-address-5-july-2023>

## 02 Our challenge

The University of Cambridge has an unusually diverse estate that is steeped in history. However, our estate currently fails to support the University as a top five worldwide university and, if left unchecked, will significantly hold back research and education in several academic disciplines as well as create a substantial annual financial liability.

The priority must be to focus our investment to improve the staff and student experience as well as support everyone's wellbeing to encourage collaborative breakthrough ideas.



### Operationally unsustainable

**25% of the estate is in a poor or very poor condition** and a large proportion of the remaining estate is also not fit for purpose to support modern ways of working, teaching and research.



### Environmentally unsustainable

The University has a commitment to achieve Zero Carbon by 2048 with an aspiration to achieve this by 2038. **The University emits double the amount of carbon per head than the average across the Russell Group (20% higher than the next worst, Oxford and second only to Imperial);** it has 20% more space per head than any other Russell Group university (50% more than the average). These figures exclude College space.<sup>1</sup>



### Financially unsustainable

The University is currently spending more than **£100m each year to operate** and maintain its estate with costs likely to continue to increase. Our investment funds are finite. We have a collective responsibility to contribute to the financial sustainability of the University.

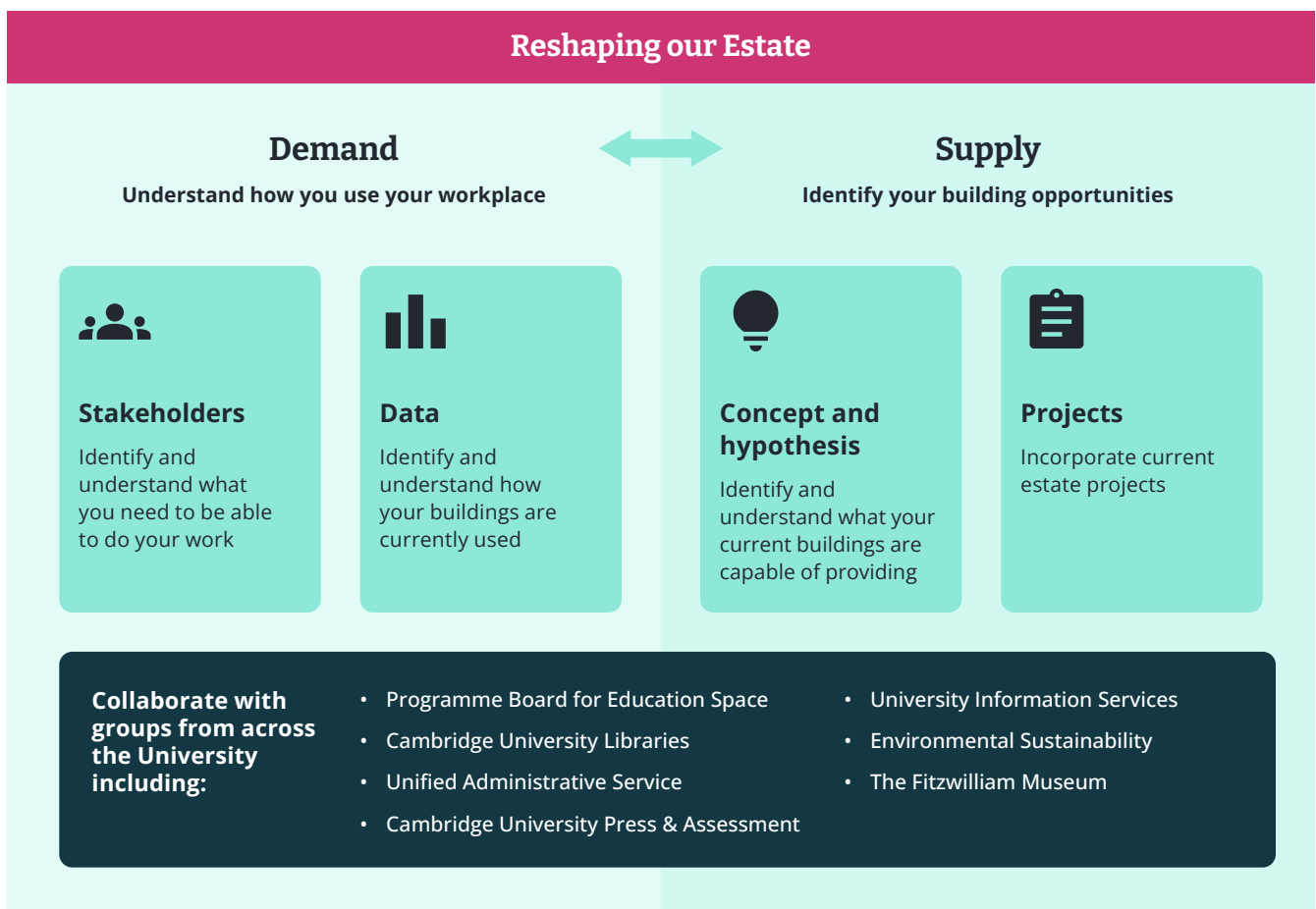
<sup>1</sup> Environmentally unsustainable: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/valuing-greenhouse-gas-emissions-in-policy-appraisal/valuation-of-greenhouse-gas-emissions-for-policy-appraisal-and-evaluation>, Central Series: 2022 £248 per carbon tonne CO<sub>2</sub>, Total UoC emissions: 54,870 t CO<sub>2</sub>e

# 03 Working with you and the wider academic community

Reshaping our Estate will work with the academic community to:

1. **establish the facts and present the opportunities**, that will,
2. over time, create a place which will **substantially improve the staff/student experience** and
3. **deliver a fit for purpose estate** that is environmentally sustainable and delivers value for money

Reshaping our Estate consists of four workstreams, supported by groups from across the University.



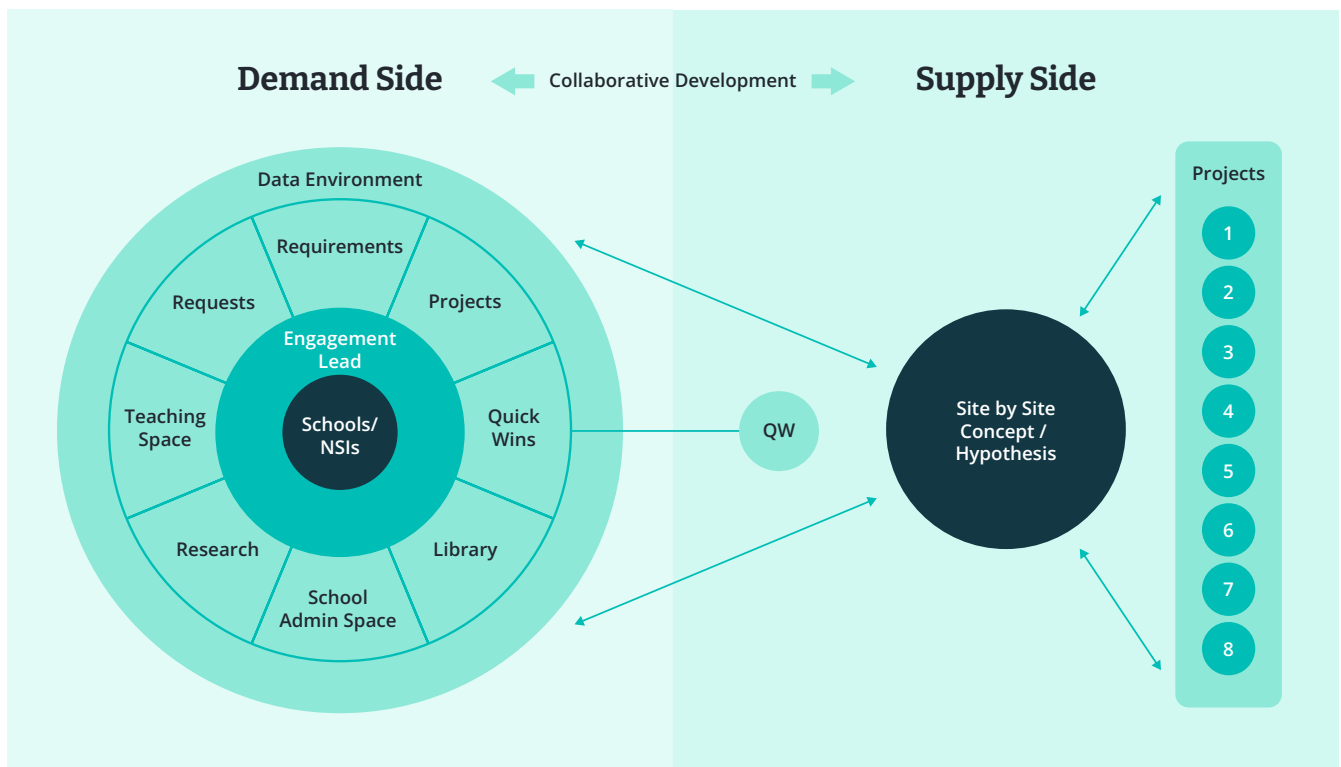
# 04 Establish the facts and present the opportunities

Reshaping Our Estate is more than just property. It is about creating a place which we can all be proud of – a place that will attract the best and, as a result, is the envy of other institutions.

We need to look at how we use our space today and ask ourselves the question: what needs to change over the next 20 years? This will require some difficult decisions, particularly decisions to set the University up for success for future generations rather than directly benefiting some of us today.

The programme is supported by the General Board and University Council. The Reshaping our Estate team will establish the facts about how we use the estate and then present opportunities to consider. This will be a highly collaborative process that must, and will, challenge the way we think about space.

## How will it work in practice?



## 05 Reshaping our Estate principles



### **Create high quality spaces that support staff and students to do their best work**

Our estate should create a positive and productive working and learning environment for our staff and students and support excellence in teaching and research, and our public-facing activities.



### **Support teams across the University to adopt new ways of working**

Our physical estate should enable the University to adopt flexible working practices and allow staff to work in spaces that support their style and meet their needs.



### **Develop a smaller estate with more shared spaces**

We should reduce the size of our estate, identify opportunities to monetise parts of our estate which are not needed and encourage space sharing to make better use of our existing spaces, avoid unnecessary costs and reduce our carbon footprint.



### **Develop a financially and environmentally sustainable estate**

We should be seeking all opportunities to reduce carbon emissions in our estate as part of the University's aspirations for a zero-carbon future. The operation of our estate must be affordable, and there must be full transparency on how much it costs to manage our estate.



### **Consider how to make the most of existing spaces before building new ones**

Wherever possible, we should meet our space needs using existing buildings rather than building new ones to help manage our estate in a more affordable way, while minimising the environmental costs of construction.



### **Protect and promote our built and cultural heritage**

Our estate strategy should protect our architectural and cultural heritage and develop high quality public spaces for staff, students, residents and visitors to enjoy.

## 06 What you will see next

Our Engagement Leads will start to work with your School or Non-School Institution to understand your work and how your working environment can support you to achieve your academic mission. The team will be on hand to work collaboratively with you and support you to deliver a fit for purpose estate that will improve the staff and student experience.

### Find out more and get involved

If you have a question about the Reshaping our Estate programme email the team via [ReshapingourEstate@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ReshapingourEstate@admin.cam.ac.uk)

