

# Universal Destinations & Experiences Announces Multi-Billion Pound Theme Park Resort in Bedfordshire, Creating Thousands of Jobs

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**Universal Destinations & Experiences, a division of Comcast Corporation, today announced a landmark agreement with the UK government and Bedford Borough Council to develop a multi-billion-pound theme park and resort in Bedfordshire. This marks Universal's first branded resort in Europe and is expected to generate 20,000 construction jobs in the lead-up to its anticipated opening in 2031.**

The expansive resort will be located on a 476-acre site at the former Kempston Hardwick brickworks and is poised to become the UK's largest visitor attraction. Plans for the development include a world-class theme park featuring multiple immersive "lands" showcasing Universal's renowned storytelling and advanced ride technologies. The resort will also feature a 500-room hotel, a dedicated leisure and entertainment district, and extensive retail and dining options.

Universal anticipates the destination will attract approximately 8.5 million visitors in its first year of operation, projecting a significant economic impact of up to £50 billion for the UK economy by 2055. Once operational, the resort is forecast to create an additional 8,000 permanent jobs across the hospitality and creative sectors.

While specific construction partners and architect details are yet to be announced, the development will be subject to a planning decision by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Universal

has committed to local recruitment, with 80 per cent of operational staff expected to be hired from the surrounding area. The company also pledged to collaborate with local colleges and universities to offer training and apprenticeship opportunities throughout the construction and operational phases.

The UK government has committed to investing in infrastructure around the site to support the ambitious project, with further details to be released. This development aligns with the government's Plan for Change, which aims to bolster economic growth across key sectors including tourism and the creative industries.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer hailed the deal, stating it would bring "around 28,000 jobs across construction, AI and tourism" and would "firmly put Bedford on the global stage."

Comcast Corporation President Mike Cavanagh emphasized the strategic importance of the UK scheme, noting it would "expand our footprint into Europe" and commended the government's support for what he described as a "landmark destination."

This announcement follows recent government approval for the expansion of nearby Luton Airport, indicating a broader strategy to enhance the economic potential of the Oxford-Cambridge corridor.