

Heslington East expansion set to open next term



By [Oscar Bentley](#), Editor (2018)
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Image: Oscar Bentley

The brand new teaching and retail developments on Heslington East are set to open next term. The £25m Piazza Learning Centre is set to open for the start of next term in January, while the retail development is set to open in early 2018.

Construction on the three-storey Piazza building, which is located to the south of Langwith College, began in August 2016 by company Interserve. The building will contain “a range of high quality learning spaces”, including a 350-seat lecture theatre; a 350-seat restaurant, allowing Hes East students to be catered for the first time; over 30 high quality, flexible learning spaces; and a new library. The building will also house both the teaching and administrative services of the International Pathway College, which provides pathway courses to prepare international students for a university degree, and is currently located in Biology.

The retail development, which does not have a precise opening date and began construction in February 2017, will be located at the far end of Hes East, towards Field Lane and Badger Hill. The facilities occupying the retail units, which will provide much needed services to Hes East students who currently have to come to Hes West or walk to the Inner Space Service Station near Tranby Avenue, were announced by YUSU at the beginning of the academic year. Franchises Papa Johns, Greggs, and Subway, along with an independent gelateria, Indian Restaurant, and barbers are set to open, along with campus supermarket Nisa, which A pharmacy is planned, while campus GP surgery Unity Health is also set to relocate there.

One former Hes East resident commented that “Hopefully the new shops will give the campus more of a sense of community, rather than just a place where you live and study. Also, it will allow the campus to be

more self-sufficient as opposed to having to make a trek just to get some food.”

However, the building works are not universally approved of. Hes East residents were left angry in March due to repeated 24 hour concrete pouring for the Piazza building preventing them from sleeping, while the works have also kept the Ron Cooke Hub bus stop out of order since the beginning of term. One second year TFTV student commented that: “I understand why [the bus stop is] closed because of the building work, but having to choose between the Constantine bus stop and the TFTV one isn’t really much of a choice. They’re both a bit of a trek and quite limiting.”

YUSU President Alex Urquhart, himself a former TFTV student, made a significant manifesto pledge to create more of a community on Hes East, and has been working for on an accommodation package that will include a “college dinner” every Friday in the Piazza building. Urquhart commented that: “I’m really looking forward to Hes East Campus getting some exciting new services. With the retail park and new teaching building, the campus is about to experience some very welcome, if a little overdue, investment. I hope these new buildings encourage students that don’t live on that side of campus to pay it a visit, if these services are well used it will only encourage more development on that campus.

“An area of my manifesto focused on improving the atmosphere for Hes East students. I am currently planning a consultation with the aim of understanding how the student experience differs from students on Hes West. I’m interested to see how these developments influence student life.”

A University spokesperson confirmed to *Nouse* that the building works are on track with no significant issues occurring, and also commented that “The Piazza Building is almost complete with a firm expectation of being fully ready for occupation by January. We are extremely pleased with the development, which will be a welcome addition to our campus.”



One comment

David Burgess

26 Nov '17 at 9:07 am

Is the health centre only for campus residents or will it be available for anybody?

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