

# £9m extension plan for training college

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A TRAINING college has announced plans for an ambitious £9million extension.

Prospects College, in Crompton Close, Basildon, which provides vocational courses for 16 to 18-year-olds, is hoping to create a centre of excellence on the site of a former pork processing factory.

The site, in Luckyn Lane, has been empty for nine years. Transformed it would create an extra 225 apprenticeships and 43 new staff positions.

The factory is already owned by the college and is next to the existing £5million site, which opened six months ago.

The proposed development would house two open-plan craft workshops, a series of lecture rooms, a student restaurant and a learning resource centre.

It would offer courses relating to the building industry, such as plumbing and bricklaying, as well as training for architects, quantity surveyors and construction project managers.

Neil Bates, chief executive of



■ Great prospects – Neil Bates outside Prospects College

Picture: PAUL WATSON EVH23-4

Prospects Learning Foundation, the charity that owns the college, said: "We are not intending to just slap paint on the walls. We want to create an environment where people will be proud to learn."

"Our plans are ambitious – to

create something that really is a centre of excellence."

As part of the plans, the college also hopes to educate people about eco-friendly building methods.

Mr Bates said: "We will provide training in the use and

applications of sustainable development and renewable energy, such as solar panels and ground source heat pumps."

The extension will be funded jointly by the Learning and Skills Council and the East of England Development Agency.

## Plans welcomed

THE PLANS to extend Prospects College have been welcomed by both the Basildon Renaissance Partnership and the town's MP.

Angela Smith, who opened the centre in November last year, said: "The fact the college is expanding in Basildon is great news."

"The quality of training they provide is first rate."

Adam Keating, Basildon Renaissance Partnership spokes-

man, said the green credentials of the proposal were a step forward.

He said: "As part of the regeneration we have to make sure we are part of the green agenda and obviously this is a positive contribution."

"We hope this will get Basildon recognised as a centre for renewable energy."

"We welcome the investment and the work the college has already done."

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