Chester zoo unveils first phase of UK's largest ever zoo construction project

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- First phase of a world-class attraction opens today with the assistance of our bespoke project management services
- £40M 'Islands at Chester Zoo' will increase zoo's visitor numbers by 150,000
- The attraction will feature a relaxing boat trip, six islands, and an indoor rainforest - the largest indoor zoo exhibit in the UK

Chester Zoo, the UK's leading wildlife attraction, has opened the first phase of the landmark £40m 'Islands' project - the largest scheme ever undertaken by a British zoo.

On completion, the attraction will feature a manmade river, six islands recreating habitats from South East Asia*, and a 3500m2 indoor rainforest. The structure - which will create the largest indoor exhibit of any UK zoo - will house species such as Sumatran orang-utans, 30,000 different types of fish and Sulawesi macaques.

The scheme also boasts a relaxing 450m-boat trip linking the different island habitats. The new development will also contain education facilities and an outdoor café.

We have supported the world-class development in the heart of Cheshire by providing bespoke project management services to Chester Zoo.

The project is set to increase the zoo's visitor numbers by 150,000, and generate extra revenue that will allow increased support for conservation projects.

David Williams, Regional Managing Director commented: "Islands at Chester Zoo sets a new benchmark for any zoo attraction in the world. The design is stunning, and the immersive experience for visitors will be breathtaking.

"The project is a reflection of the strong alliance and teamwork between Chester Zoo and Turner & Townsend. Having worked closely with the zoo since 2011, we recognised this was far more than a construction project - and we maintained constant dialogue with all stakeholders, including curators and zookeepers, from the outset.

"The combination of our global expertise and local understanding helped us overcome the complexity of working with living plants and animals, and create truly authentic habitats for the attraction's inhabitants."

Simon Mann, Development Director at Chester Zoo added: "Turner & Townsend was a key member of the team throughout this iconic project, having been involved from concept through to completion.

"The complexity of design and attention to detail is an attempt to create a truly authentic snapshot of the various island habitats of South East Asia.

"To achieve our goals, the project team worked together effectively and collaboratively, allowing us to maintain tight control and to the highest standards."

- ENDS -

* From 13 July visitors can explore the island habitats of Panay, Papua, Bali, Sumba and Sulawesi, with Sumatra and Monsoon Forest opening later in the summer.
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