The University was established in Reading in the late nineteenth century and became an extension college of Christ Church, Oxford, before becoming the only university to be formally established between the two world wars.

The land for the University’s London Road campus was donated by the Palmer family of the famous Reading biscuit manufacturer, Huntley & Palmers, and the University has continued its strong local ties ever since.

The University reaps significant benefits from its location, the supporting infrastructure, the business environment and the regional synergies with its research strengths. As an organisation founded on knowledge exchange, the University works in partnership with the many businesses and business groups that have made the area one of the most economically buoyant sub-regions of England for over 50 years.

The University’s research expertise, knowledge exchange programmes, work placement schemes and, ultimately, graduate job opportunities are closely linked to the success of the regional economy.

Employment prospects in and around what is recognised as one of the five most recession-resilient ‘cities’ in the UK is attractive to our students as is the preponderance of international blue chip investment from corporations such as Verizon Business, Cisco, Prudential, Symantec, Microsoft, Oracle and LogicaCMG.

The University itself is playing a part in business development, not least through the creation of enterprise hubs. Support from Wokingham Borough Council for the development of a new Science and Innovation Park will ensure that the University further contributes to the region’s economic success with a new facility for innovative, technology-based businesses linked into the University’s research expertise.

Many of the University’s areas of research strength have strong regional connectivity and partnerships, from the University’s leading role as the home to the National Centre for Earth Observation and the link with the International Space Innovation Centre at Harwell, to research in our Institute for Cardiovascular and Metabolic Health and support for the region’s pharmaceutical industry or connectivity between computer science research and the informational technology industry. The local community also has an important role to play in research at Reading. The University’s work around food and nutrition, for example, is heavily reliant on the role played by volunteers in clinical trials.

The supporting infrastructure, developed by local authorities and national government, also plays a key role in making the University attractive. Excellent transport links to London, Oxford and all points north, south east and west, as well as first-class transport within Reading itself, ensures the University is seen as well connected to other key parts of the UK, an important factor when recruiting international staff and students.

While the area, and the University, is increasingly attracting skilled international staff, the skill set of the local labour market also plays a hugely important part in making the University a success, either as direct employees of the University itself or in the many businesses that support the University.

The University makes much of its location within the most economically successful part of the UK. In conjunction with the attractiveness of the beautiful surrounding countryside, the University of Reading’s location is of paramount importance in continuing its success.

Reading Station redevelopment CGI, courtesy of Network Rail