

7.2 Interface with Natural Areas and Features

The Symons Campus boasts a diverse environment and values ecosystem health and biodiversity in its planning approach. Sensitive transitions will be integrated into development sites to ensure the preservation or enhancement of adjacent features (as determined through future Environmental Impact Study).

General Guidelines

- Showcase the University's natural setting in a wide valley along the banks of the Otonabee River, with unique landforms (i.e. drumlins) that are indicative of geological processes dating back some 12,000 years.
- Site-specific studies (e.g., Environmental Impact Study, Nature Area Management Plan) will be used to confirm or refine feature boundaries, identify constraints and opportunities, and collect information on features and functions present to inform the protection, management, and/or design.
- Provide appropriate buffers between built and significant naturalized elements of the campus to protect biodiversity, habitat, and Species at Risk, as determined through an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Seek opportunities to study, restore, and enhance the rich landscape and its ecology through future development opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for proximity and interaction with the environment, where appropriate, to foster an appreciation for the landscape.
- Design built elements to respond to adjacent natural conditions, i.e. architectural form and siting to avoid where possible, and minimize impact on the existing natural context, while maximizing views to natural features, where feasible.
- Establish views, and sensitive physical connections to the Otonabee River and drumlins, i.e. through built form siting and orientation; physical access for swimming, hiking, and observation; and connections across the river.
- Encourage creative designs that incorporate an interplay of nature within built form elements, showcasing the beauty of natural features on the lands, and pulling natural elements into the design of the proposed built form. Designs are encouraged to consider how buildings and urbanized spaces grow out of the landscape, a continued approach from the original Ron Thom vision. Designs may incorporate an educational element that furthers our understanding and appreciation of the function and beauty of the physical environment.



Residence Integrated with Ravine, Iowa. Source: BNIM



The following are two sample cross sections that illustrate potential interface combinations between natural features and development areas. The ultimate ecological buffer configurations will be determined through Site-specific studies (e.g., Environmental Impact Study, Nature Area Management Plan) at the site planning stage.

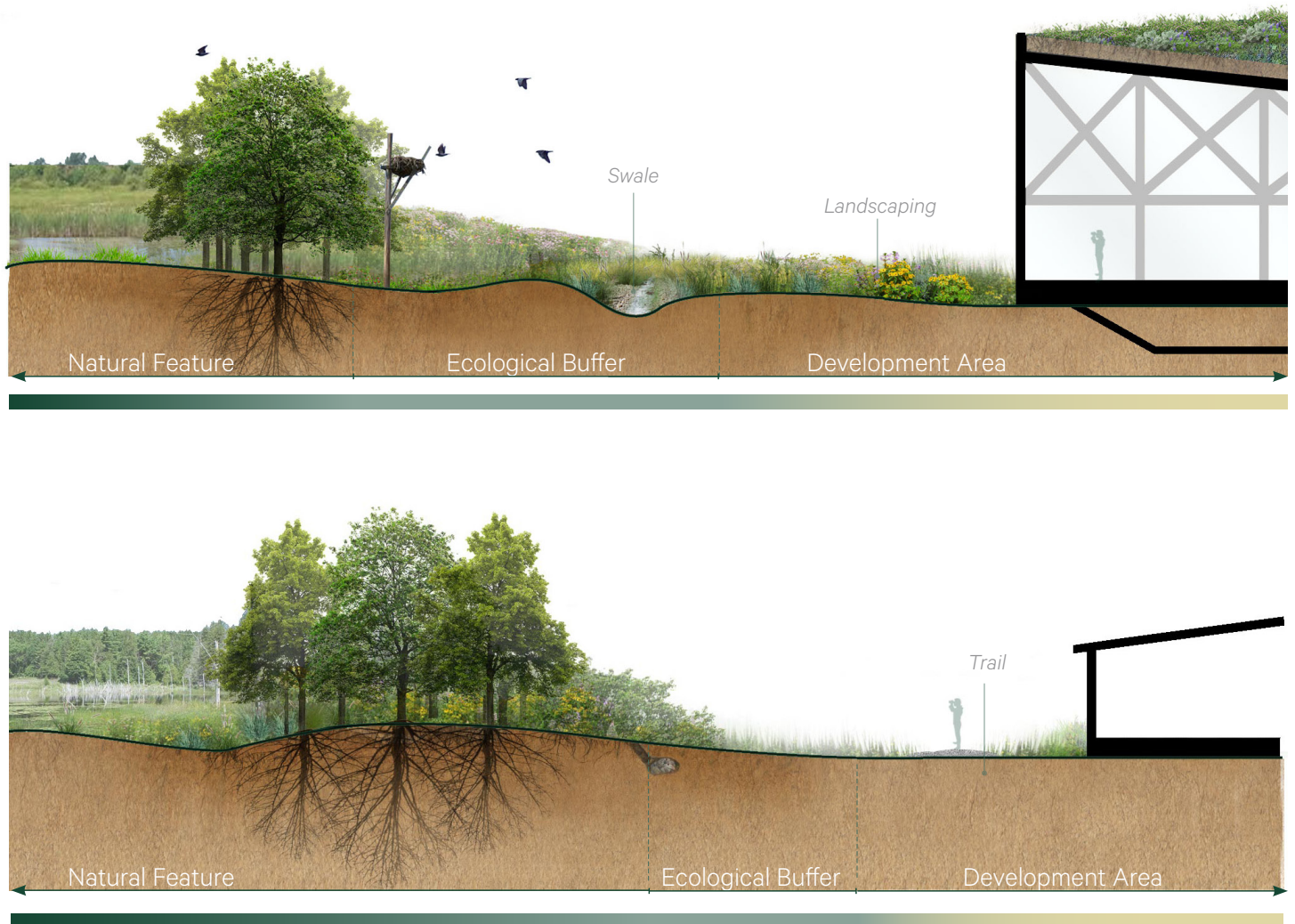


Figure 23: Examples of the Built-Natural Interface