



Award Category: Design Excellence sponsored by Salus

Project: Lawes Open Innovation Hub
Harpenden

Client: Rothamsted Centre for Research and Enterprise

Project Team: Archial NORR, Ernest Pasterfield and Partners, Cunnington Clark, Scott White and Hookins, SDC



The Rothamsted Centre for Research and Enterprise (RoCRE) provides an international focus for leading agri-tech science and innovation. Building on this international brand, the Lawes Open Innovation Hub provides 2229m² of research and business facilities designed to promote new types of cross-discipline and cross-sector collaboration, by creating close links between academic resources and expertise.

The Lawes Hub lies at the heart of the RoCRE campus, alongside the new conference centre it provides a focal point for the campus reinforced with new landscaping and pedestrian routes.

The design approach ensures visual unity and cohesion between the Hub and the existing buildings, in particular it reflects the strong form of the adjoining Centenary Building (1999) whilst accounting for the intervening 3 metre steep bank and height limitations. The design makes reference to existing materials used across the Campus, however applied in a modern style. Materials include red brick, aluminium cladding and roofing, and curtain walling.

The Lawes Hub and Centenary Building are linked by a raised internal walkway; this is both a metaphorical and physical bridge between the business focused and the academic orientated research activities. This opens into a large break-out and interaction space overlooking the external landscaped areas. The theme of creating linkages continues, flexible office and laboratory space is arranged around an internal 'street' with seating areas for informal meetings between tenants and scientists.

BuildingFutures Awards | Case Study

A site wide Building Management System allows control and monitoring of energy use and the building features high levels of insulation.

Judges comments:

“The latest addition to this attractive campus of research buildings has been designed to attract innovative companies to work in a collaborative environment. What impressed the judges was how this has been translated into a relaxed and comfortable working environment, naturally ventilated with great views to the surrounding countryside.”