

Centre for Emerging, Endemic and Exotic Diseases, RVC Hawkshead
Completion Date 2009
Contract Value £3.3m
Client Royal Veterinary College

The Centre for Emerging, Endemic and Exotic Diseases (CEEED) was created from a series of dilapidated and poorly performing offices and storerooms, within a 1960s concrete framed building on the Royal Veterinary College (RVC)'s Hawkshead Campus. The challenge presented to ArchitecturePLB was not only to create new laboratory spaces to supplement the existing facilities within the clinical block, but to do so in such a way to lift this part of the campus whilst engendering a new and distinct identity for the centre.

The vision was for a fresh, new and professional home for public health researchers who had previously been housed disparately among many departments. Its agenda was to bring together the laboratory and desk-based researchers into one centre, becoming one of the first centres internationally to do so. New researchers and students will be able to utilise the category 3 laboratories, open plan office area and attend seminars and meetings all under one roof and within a space that cleverly claims an existing stair core to open up the centre to interaction.

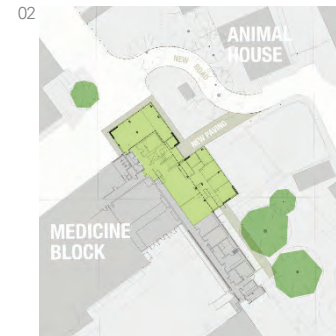
This research 'hub' combines state-of-the-art facilities, including high-biosecurity laboratories

for infection and immunity research, alongside offices and meeting rooms equipped with teleconferencing facilities to support and encourage the dialogue between researchers, linking the Camden campus-based researchers and beyond to the Centre.

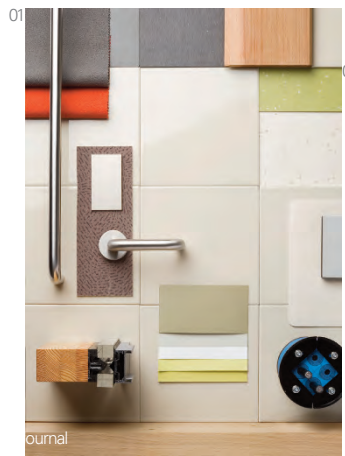
From regular consultations with the Royal Veterinary College's senior management team and client representatives, to engagement with the end user, ArchitecturePLB ensured a fully collaborative process from inception through to completion of the project.

The height and composition of the elevations give the building its firm presence - a statement which truly expands inside with restrained, but at times vibrant, use of detailing and colour. The double-height, glazed entry space joining the north and south wings is a key feature of the scheme.

This naturally-lit, airy entrance acts as a circulation route, break out space and opens out onto the reception foyer. Externally the western red cedar cladding wraps around the front of the two wings and is held together by a strip of near triple-height timber composite curtain walling, where the building is entered.

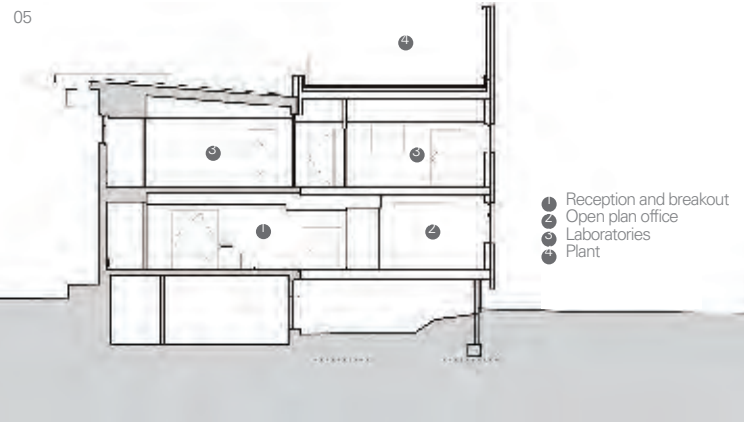


01 Category-3 laboratories
02 Site plan
03 CEEED building exterior



The interior is light and airy in contrast to the existing building, and employs a palette of yellow to green with orange tones for the oak doors and furniture upholstery. For the laboratories, the stringent ACDP requirements on cleanability and maintaining a sealable environment meant that careful selection of materials was paramount. The building and wider campus now also enjoy an accessible passenger lift to all floors, which not only provides step-free access to the Centre, but also to the previously inaccessible clinical block as a whole.

The sequencing of the build was crucial to obtain a sealed environment and ensure the safety of the laboratories in accordance with health and safety guidelines of the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens (ACDP). Rather than relying solely on the workmanship of the construction, sealable penetration units were employed, which also allow for future-proofing.



- 01 CEEED materials board
- 02 Reception and breakout space
- 03 External timber façade
- 04 Open plan office interior
- 05 Section