



Global Centre for Scientific Excellence Hull, UK

Completion November 2019
Project Type Science
Client Reckitt Benckiser Group plc
Main Contractor Exyte Group
Value £100m
Area 15,000sqm

A renovation and extension to the central worldwide hub for Reckitt Benckiser’s healthcare research and development.

It creates a single location for expertise in formulation, analytical science and product innovation for all of Reckitt’s healthcare activities.

The development comprises a new laboratory and pilot plant developmental building, a new site security building and an energy centre.

In addition to the new build elements, two existing buildings were renovated, refurbished and extended. They now host a 700 desk office, a corporate meeting suite, a staff restaurant and catering facilities. One of the existing buildings was considered a heritage asset and therefore required sensitive restoration.



Retrofit Strategy

The entire facility was designed to achieve LEED Gold accreditation, and included a full strip out back to the original shell and core.





“This building is far more energy efficient than our previous facility. We’re on target to achieve LEED Gold accreditation, which we’re really excited about.”

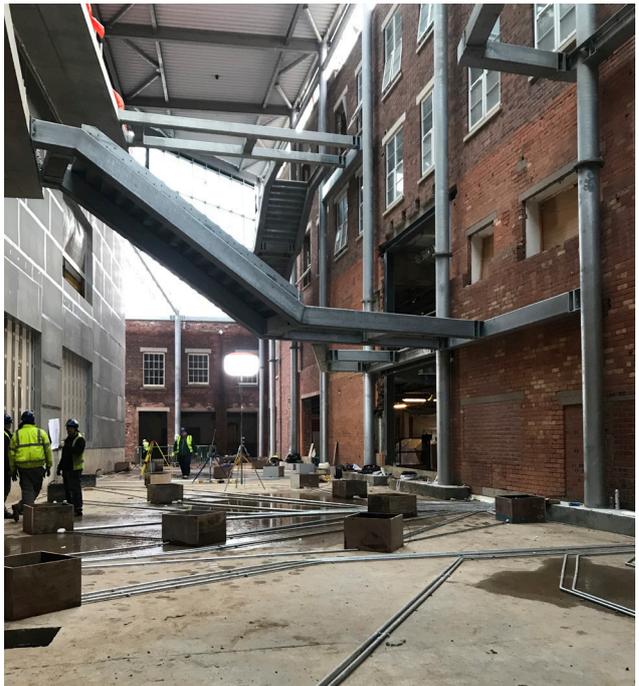
Tony Earl, R&D Facilities Manager, Reckitt Benckiser



The majority of the existing structure was retained, but some existing features were removed and infilled to provide a continuous floor level. To promote staff interaction, the existing buildings were connected to the new build laboratory by means of a new atrium and high level walkways.

To improve energy performance, the roof was reinsulated and refinished, and the windows were fully replaced. Solar panels were added to the roof and a rainwater harvesting system was installed to provide water for non process critical areas.

The site in Hull is susceptible to flooding. The external walls were therefore lined internally to ensure that any moisture within them did not impact the internal fit out. Flood resilient detailing was also used for the ground floor including hard floor finishes and dry lining.



The dry lining boards were installed horizontally to enable the replacement of the lower boards in the event of a flood. Servicing to the ground floor area was redistributed to be from a high level, providing further resilience.

A sprinkler system was installed across the entire facility, addressing fire safety concerns and enabling the heritage elements of the Humber suite to be retained. A wall mounted system was utilised in these areas to ensure the original plasterwork ceilings were not damaged.

Lessons Learnt

Working closely with the client’s insurers allowed details to be reviewed throughout the design and technical stages. This enabled their requirements to be met in advance of the construction phase, including the flood resilient design elements.

For example, large air plants were located at the end of each floor rather than centrally to allow the floor plates to adapt to whatever future configurations are required.

Innovative design decisions were required to make the new facility as adaptable and flexible as possible to reduce the need for future intervention.

Removable ceiling panels were also installed on the top floor so that new or out sized lab machinery can be lifted in or out directly from above, without compromising clean room protocols in the surrounding labs.