

Centre for Ecology & Hydrology

Client: Natural Environment Research Council
Size: 3000m²
Value: £10.5m
Status: completed spring 2010

Situated on a sensitive site close to the River Thames in Oxfordshire, the new research facility for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology is one of only a handful of laboratories to achieve an 'Excellent' BREEAM environmental assessment rating.

The **rhp** design provides highly bespoke laboratory spaces for functions ranging from rough processing of soil samples to high containment molecular biology. Support spaces include a series of meeting rooms and offices, positioned to benefit from views over the meadowland to the River Thames. These areas can be passively cooled with night ventilation of exposed concrete soffits.

Our layout strategy gives the best possible work flow for activities, whilst our flexible design can be readily adapted to meet changing scientific requirements. A north-south orientation maximises daylight and minimises glare and solar gain. Internal glazed screens allow daylight to penetrate deep into the building core. Variable volume ventilation systems and low velocity fume cupboards economise on energy use without compromising safety.

rhp have also improved the fabric and performance of existing 1970s buildings on the site. This included the provision of additional social spaces in recognition of the importance placed by the client on knowledge transfer and interaction between users.

