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Consulting Engineers & Landscape Architects



PROJECT:

Medical Foundation

CLIENT:

The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture

ARCHITECTS:

Ryder HKS

BM SERVICES:

Services Engineering

VALUE:

£5.8million

DESIGN BRIEF

The Medical Foundation commissioned a new center for the care of victims of torture in north London. The building was designed as a low energy and sustainable building and to create a natural and 'friendly' environment for the users, patients & staff.

Medical, clinical and administration facilities are provided in a high quality and robust building that offers flexibility for future changes whilst being economical to maintain and run.

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DESIGN INITIATIVES/ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

The new Medical Foundation building combines the facilities previously housed in four separate locations. The building offers an increased capacity and opportunities for greater collaboration which will help the Foundation to council more people. It is also hoped that the building will act a beacon of international excellence and encourage support for the organisation.

Because of the sensitive nature of the foundation's work great care had to be taken in the detailed design of the building. Most important is that the building is welcoming and calming whilst offering a stable and professional environment.

Throughout passive colours and textures are used to avoid any distressing connotations and pattern or shape is avoided. Tranquil wall colours and timber flooring are used inside whilst limestone and lilac are used on the external facades. Internal corridors are curved and irregular to avoid any institutional associations and consultation rooms are unusually large and airy. Water is used both in the garden and the entrance lobby for it's universally understood calming and purifying qualities.

Architectural and services design was highly integrated for a simple and rapid construction program, culminating in the building opening in the summer of 2004.



The client waiting area overlooking the private garden



Particular attention was paid to acoustic and ventilation requirements with an emphasis on low energy solutions. Acoustic privacy and the control of noise from an adjacent road has impacted the ventilation strategy whilst specific acoustic treatment was required to sensitively maintain a comfortable acoustic environment.

The Centre is largely naturally ventilated with passively cooled mechanical ventilation provided where a quiet environment is required. Spaces with higher occupancy, such as meeting rooms, are mechanically ventilated by use of local air-to-air heat exchangers allowing full fresh air whilst reclaiming up to 70 per cent of the energy.

Cooling is provided by evaporative coolers to avoid the need for refrigeration plant. Heating for hotwater services is reduced by up to 70 per cent by roof mounted solar collectors and is supplemented by gas fired boilers. The building structure and exposed ceiling soffits are utilised in controlling internal temperature extremes.

Water consumption is greatly reduced by the recycling of rain water from an integral rain water harvesting system and the use of low consumption outlets

Daylight penetration and sense of the outside has been closely developed with the architects to provide a suitable environment for patients and medical staff.



Above: The use of simple building forms and materials and the extensive planting and water features add to the calming and welcoming atmosphere of the building both internally and externally.

Opposite: The building layout with consultation rooms on the upper floors and open welcoming spaces on the ground floor, connecting to the client garden.

