

**University of Oxford's new data institute gets the go ahead**

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The University of Oxford received planning this week for the latest addition to its Old Road Campus, the Big Data Institute (BDI).

Located between two of Make's recently completed laboratory buildings – the Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology and the NDM Research Building – the BDI will accommodate 552 staff and bring together world-leading researchers into the prevention and treatment of diseases. The pioneering data centre will store, analyse and process vast amounts of health-related digital data with the aim of providing new insights into illnesses and treatments worldwide. It is part of the wider decade-long capital masterplan which the university began implementing this year.

The building complements the neighbouring Make buildings through the use of the same underlying design principles, namely a masonry plinth, four storeys of accommodation, a single-storey height main entrance and set back roof top plant.

The composition of the facade expresses three key elements of the building: orientation, entrance and internal function. This results in a facade which appears more open along the north, and more solid along the south and west elevations to respond to solar gain. A veil of horizontal aluminium bands forms the basis of the main facade design, ensuring the building reads as a sibling to the adjacent NDM Research Building.

A new external public space is formed as part of the entrance sequence, in addition to enhancing the spaces outside the NDM and Kennedy Institute. A blend of hard and soft landscaping provides a balance of both formal and informal public spaces for people to meet and socialise. As part of the sustainability strategy for the building, a labyrinth is located beneath the lower ground floor which draws in air through the light well and uses the thermal mass of the ground to cool it, before circulating it to the main roof top plant room. This air is then distributed via floor plenums as part of an assisted natural ventilation strategy and extracted via the atrium using the stack effect.

The top-lit covered atrium allows natural light deep into the building and provides both visual and physical connections to the seminar rooms, data storage facilities and server area, in addition to its primary function as a reading room space.

The interior features an exciting, innovative approach to academic buildings with a predominantly open plan layout supplemented with cellular offices and a mixture of differing break-out spaces, each with their own character and ambience.

Justin Nicholls, Make partner and lead project architect said: "We are excited to have gained planning for our fifth building for the University of Oxford. Part of the Park Hospital masterplan, the project will deliver a brand new public space for the campus and will allow people to gather, socialise and relax. Internally the innovative open plan spaces, lecture theatres and large expressed high-powered computing hall are gathered around a grand reading space forming the ultimate heart of the building."

Make has designed a number of buildings for the university to date. Besides the Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology and the NDM Research Building, Make also completed the Oxford Molecular Pathology Institute in 2011 and the Old Road Campus Research Building in 2007.

**Ends**

For further information please contact:

Ratna Blackburn or Kyly Bird at Make

+44 (0)20 7636 5151

[press@makearchitects.com](mailto:press@makearchitects.com)

**About Make**

Make is a studio of architects and designers committed to designing buildings, spaces and places which are as striking and innovative as they are socially, economically and environmentally responsible. Founded by Ken Shuttleworth in 2004, the practice has established itself as one of the UK's foremost architectural firms with studios based in London, Hong Kong and Beijing. Current projects range in scale from private houses, residential towers and office developments to sports facilities, hospitals and urban masterplans.

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