

**Event Title:** Reference Visit

**Event Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Location:** University of Warwick



## **Introduction**

Our second physical reference visit after recent lockdowns due to covid-19 restrictions was to the University of Warwick, a visit that was postponed from 2020 and we owe a great vote of thanks to the Estates Department at the University in supporting and facilitating this visit.

## **Presentations and Visits**

The day started with an overview of the University and of its future strategy from James Breckon, Director of Estates, followed by presentations and discussions on two recent projects which were the focus of the day: the Lord Bhattacharyya Building (National Automotive Innovation Centre) from the Richard Seago on the client side and Roddy Langmuir from the architects, Cullinan Studio – a high quality building to support the university’s ambitions to support the future of engineering and manufacturing in the UK through partnerships between companies, large and small, and the academic research expertise in the University; and the Sports and Wellness Facility with presentations and discussion from Lisa Dodd Mayne, Director of Sport and Active Communities at the University, Andy Myton from David Morley Architects and Nick Preedy from Willmott Dixon and Alastair MacIntosh, the University’s project manager on the delivery challenges and successes.

We were then able to visit each of the project – very different in their focus, but two high-quality buildings that reflect the changing nature of universities, one supporting manufacturing innovation and enterprise; the other supporting wellbeing and sporting activities at different levels, both of which have risen in importance with the events of recent years.

## **The Lord Bhattacharyya Building (National Automotive Innovation Centre)**

Developed in partnership with Jaguar Land Rover and Tata Motors (UK), the NAIC’s ambitions were big and bold – to bring leading-edge entrepreneurial research together in one location on a university campus and enable creativity between different research groups which previously had been scattered and isolated in different locations.

Key project successes are the connection between the inside and the natural world outside, bringing nature to the researchers through the large glazed façade and rooflights – perhaps ahead of its time, given that the building was completed before COP 26 – and providing spaces for meetings and for contemplation in the natural landscape outside, the collaboration hub under the impressive timber roof which aims to bring different researchers together to have those accidental conversations that create great ideas.

## **Sports and Wellness Facilities: Sports Hub**

The ambition was serious – to create a building that would enable the University to be the most active campus in the UK, with a brief that investigated the whole campus. The new building provides a hub for the sport and wellbeing across the University: with immense new spaces such as the gym that houses 16 badminton courts and a 25m long swimming pool with 12 lanes, plus other facilities such as the climbing wall, fitness and gym suites, combat court and squash courts.

As with the NAIC, connections flow between inside and the outside landscape and the building is connected physically to a network of walking paths, cycling routes and other outdoor activity spaces.

One of the most impressive aspects was the active programme of user engagement that contributed to the final design.

### **Thanks**

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to make this a successful visit, in particular to Sharon Smith at the University of Warwick and to her colleagues in the Estates Department who contributed to the day. Thanks to Helen Groves who chaired the event from HEDQF, to all the speakers and to Willmott Dixon who sponsored the refreshments.

A selection of images from the event can be seen [here](#).

### **Event Sponsor**

