

rhs bridgewater worsley

category Cultural
client The Royal Horticultural Society
value £16m
date 2016

The RHS is the world's leading gardening charity, inspiring passion and excellence in the science, art and practice of horticulture.

In 2015 the RHS announced a ten year, £160 million investment programme. As part of the programme the RHS pledged to find and develop a site for a fifth Garden in the north west of England and in November 2015 the RHS announced the vision to create the new Garden at the site of the former Worsley New Hall. RHS Garden Bridgewater will be a major new tourism and horticultural destination which aspires to welcome and inspire up to 700,000 people a year within a decade.

Won in competition, the project entails the conservation and conversion of the former stables and potting shed into a restaurant and retail space respectively, together with a new visitor centre or 'welcome building', within a

masterplan by landscape architect Tom Stuart Smith.

The welcome building is a horizontal composition which seeks to respond to a commanding horizon defined by the elevated Bridgewater Canal. It is the culmination of our long standing interest in architecture in the landscape. Structural trees support an overarching timber diagrid roof beneath which the primary components of the brief; ticketing, retail area, indoor plant sales and café, can flex in response to seasonal demands. The roof extends beyond the enclosure to the north and south, blurring the edge between building and landscape. Servant areas such as classrooms, offices, kitchen and plant room are contained within prescribed 'boxes' that sit beneath the roof. Natural light permeates the building either by louvred curtain walling, or filters through the diagrid via a rooflight that extends

centrally along its full length.

Rainwater harvesting, a green roof and ground source heat pumps are integral to the sustainable strategy.

