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Brent Birth Centre, Central Middlesex Hospital

A finalist in the Prime Minister's 'Better Public Building Award 2005', Brent Birth Centre has welcomed over 250 babies in its first year and is hailed as an exemplar facility due to the non-institutional environment created and the attention to detail accorded to all design aspects.

The building combines antenatal services with a dedicated midwife-led birthing unit, aiming to provide a safe haven and relaxing environment for women who, through personal conviction or cultural traditions, choose to have a non-clinical delivery. Whilst remaining very private, the building is strongly defined architecturally, wrapping around a sheltered landscaped garden.

The building form reflects its two functions, offering easy reading of its layout. Antenatal facilities are housed in a rectangular structure clad in warm yellow brick, while birthing rooms are accommodated in a linear wing overlooking the garden.

The masonry walls wrapping around the building are punctuated by projecting rendered bays adjacent to the entrance, highlighting the public areas and along the north elevation, containing staff and functional rooms. Large composite windows have projecting surrounds, emphasising the building's relationship with its external environment.

Architect:
Barbara Weiss Architects

Client:
The North West London
Hospitals NHS Trust

Main Contractor:
The Buxton Group

Photography:
Gareth Gardner



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