

# The Civil Justice Centre

## Media Information



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# **Manchester Courthouse Up for Top Architectural Prize**

## **1. Leading Regeneration and Sustainable Design Contender**

Allied London's new Civil Justice Centre in Spinningfields, Manchester has been shortlisted for the RIBA Stirling Prize 2008, UK's most prestigious architectural award given to "the building that has made the greatest contribution to British architecture in the past year".

The courthouse is one of six finalists for the Prize and the only one that is part of a major city centre regeneration project. It is also considered to be one of the most environmentally sustainable.

RIBA's various comments about the Centre state:

"The building is an elegant and beautifully executive response to a complex brief that has made a significant contribution to the regeneration of this part of Manchester."

"The architectural expression and resolution of the environmental design sets this building apart. Environmental sustainability has been integrated into the design from the start;"

The RIBA Stirling Prize jury will visit all six shortlisted buildings in September and then meet for a final time on the day of the presentation to pick the winner

## **2. Royal Seal of Approval**

The Civil Justice Centre (CJC) received the royal seal of approval in February this year when Her Majesty The Queen performed the official opening of what has since become one of the most celebrated of British buildings in the new millennium.

The Queen unveiled a plaque at a ceremony which was also attended by the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Jack Straw and Lord Chief Justice, Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers.

Jack Straw, Justice Secretary, said:

"This magnificent new court centre is testament to our commitment to the civil courts and to provide a first class civil and family justice system. It is part of the wider regeneration of the City of Manchester giving its people a court with a stunning design and superb facilities of which they can be proud. Businesses and consumers are already reaping the benefits when they come to court to resolve disputes. And in family cases the vulnerable are getting extra reassurance and confidence with modern witness suites and video link facilities."

### **3. Maintaining a Judicial Heritage**

The CJC is a key component of Manchester's city centre regeneration projects – Spinningfields. One of the largest of its kind in Europe this involves a 30 acre urban block, 427,350 sq m (4.6 m sq ft) of commercial, civic, residential, retail and open spaces and 20 signature buildings set within six acres of public realm.

The regeneration of Spinningfields has created a new identity for the area whilst still preserving an important part of Manchester's cultural and civic heritage. That heritage includes a longstanding association with the law and judicial process on a location that features the Crown Courts building, the New Magistrates Courts (completed in spring 2004) and now the spectacular CJC building.

### **4. Masterplan Debt**

The CJC commission was awarded in 2002 by the Ministry of Justice to Allied London Properties Limited, a major British property company specialising in complex city centre regeneration schemes and the developer behind Spinningfields. Following a competition Allied London subsequently appointed Australian architects Denton Corker Marshall who are responsible for the building's award winning design. The success of the design is due in no small part to the Spinningfields masterplan which largely dictated the building's shape and massing and also its sustainability credentials.

### **5. The Largest Court Building since the Royal Courts of Justice**

Sitting on a former multi-storey car park brownfield site next to the existing Crown Court building, the CJC is the largest court building to be constructed in the UK since the Royal Courts of Justice over 100 years ago.

The Centre cost £110 million, comprises some 34,000m<sup>2</sup> on 16 levels, 47 courtrooms, 75 consultation rooms and can accommodate up to 3000 people. Its function is to hear civil cases such as major commercial and mercantile cases, business disputes, family law and family care cases, consumer disputes, personal injury claims and to mediate in small claims cases.

### **6. The Filing Cabinet and Pianola Sheet**

The CJC has made a dramatic contribution to Manchester's skyline and one of its most striking features is the cantilevered court rooms or fingers that project from each end creating an impression of draws pulled from a filing cabinet. The building is divided by a spine wall running down the centre, to the west of which, is a massive public space within an 11 storey 60m high fully glazed atrium. A double skin external façade makes up Europe's largest hung glass wall, incorporating 6200 panes, covering 11000 m<sup>2</sup> and weighing some 1000 tonnes.

Meanwhile 'environmental veil' on the east elevation which is covered by a perforated grey painted steel screen to shade the offices and contain the air vents has been likened to a roll of pianola sheet music.

## **7. An Efficient Working Environment**

Notwithstanding its spectacular architectural statement., the CJC manages to both provide functionally efficient workspaces for court staff and unlike most other courthouses, an environment that is relaxed and informal for the public.

## **8. Sustainable Design**

Many of the CJC's prizes and plaudits have been for environmentally sustainable design. The Centre is a testimony to the holistic approach to sustainable urban development that Allied London has employed at Spinningfields which takes sustainable best practice into account at every stage of a building's design, construction and operation.

Indeed, one of the primary objectives from the outset was to make the CJC as environmentally sustainable as possible in terms of energy use and conservation. This is recognised in terms of the Centre's "BREEAM Excellent rating - an exclusive club for buildings which have achieved the very highest standard in sustainable design.

Great attention has been paid to the provision of natural ventilation and daylight and low energy use. The shape and orientation of the building is determined by the natural ventilation with external air being routed in from west to east (the prevailing wind direction) via twenty 7 m. long windscoops on the west façade.

Although most of the courts are internal spaces they are provided with natural light via angled light shelves in the "environmental veil" on the eastern elevation which reflect light into the buildings interior increasing its intensity and reducing the need for artificial lighting.

Light and air are routed via "light air ducts" a key architectural and engineering aspect of the building. Another major energy saving feature is the use of water drawn from two 100m deep boreholes for cooling.

## **9. Saving Carbon**

The combined result of all these measures is highly impressive. Carbon dioxide emissions are reduced by around 505 tonnes per annum and overall energy consumption reduced by around 20% producing a saving in energy costs

## 10. Prizes and Plaudits

The CJC is remarkable structure that sets bold new standards in public sector architecture. In a very short time it has become one of the most talked about of buildings among the design cognoscenti and has already collected a trophy cabinet of 15 awards to date for all associated with it.

<b>Civil Justice Centre Awards</b>
Best Design Led Project <b>North West Property Awards 2007</b>
Built-In Quality Award <b>In recognition of the environmentally sustainable construction at CJC – Manchester City Council 2007</b>
Green Construction Award <b>Construction News 2007</b>
Architecture Grand Prix Award <b>Roses Design Awards 2007</b>
Best Public Building Gold Award <b>Roses Design Awards 2007</b>
Architect of the Year Award <b>Denton Corker Marshall – Roses Design Award 2007</b>
Jorn Utzon Award for International Architecture <b>Royal Institute of Australian Architects 2007</b>
FPDC Plasterers Trophy <b>The Federation of Plastering and Drywall Contractors</b>
Best Design Led Project <b>North West Property Week Awards 2008</b>
Large Project Award <b>North West Regional Structural Awards 2008</b>
Building Project of the Year <b>Building Magazine 2008</b>
Project of the Year <b>Centre for Construction Innovation - North West Regional Construction Awards 2008</b>
Engineering Excellence <b>Associates for Consulting and Engineers - Large Projects &amp; Sustainability 2008</b>
Architecture Practice of the Year <b>Denton Corker Marshall - North West Insider Property Awards 2008</b>
Best New Building <b>Denton Corker Marshall – RIBA Awards 2008</b>
One of six shortlisted buildings <b>RIBA Sterling Prize 2008</b>
Shortlisted <b>World Architectural Festival Awards 2009</b>

### **11. The CJC by Numbers**

**100 metre** deep boreholes for cooling

**1000 tonnes** - the weight of Europe's largest hung glass wall, incorporating 6200 panes and covering 11000 m<sup>2</sup>

**15** major Awards for design and sustainability

**60m** high fully glazed atrium

**£110 million** cost to design and build

**16** floors

**34,000m<sup>2</sup>** floor space on 16 levels

**47** courtrooms

**75** consultation rooms

**30 acres** covers the Spinningfields regeneration project

**3000** people can be accommodated at one time

**20%** saving in energy costs

**100** years since the last major court house was built – The Royal Courts of Justice

### **12. A Winning Team**

The CJC commission was awarded by the Ministry of Justice to Allied London Properties Limited, the developer behind Manchester's Spinningfields. It was realised by an outstanding team from architects, Denton Corker Marshall, engineers Mott MacDonald and construction company Bovis Lend Lease.

### **13. Contact Details**

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## 14. Image Library



View of the “wind scoops” capturing natural ventilation on the west elevation





**View of East Façade – cantilevered “fingers” and the environmental vents**

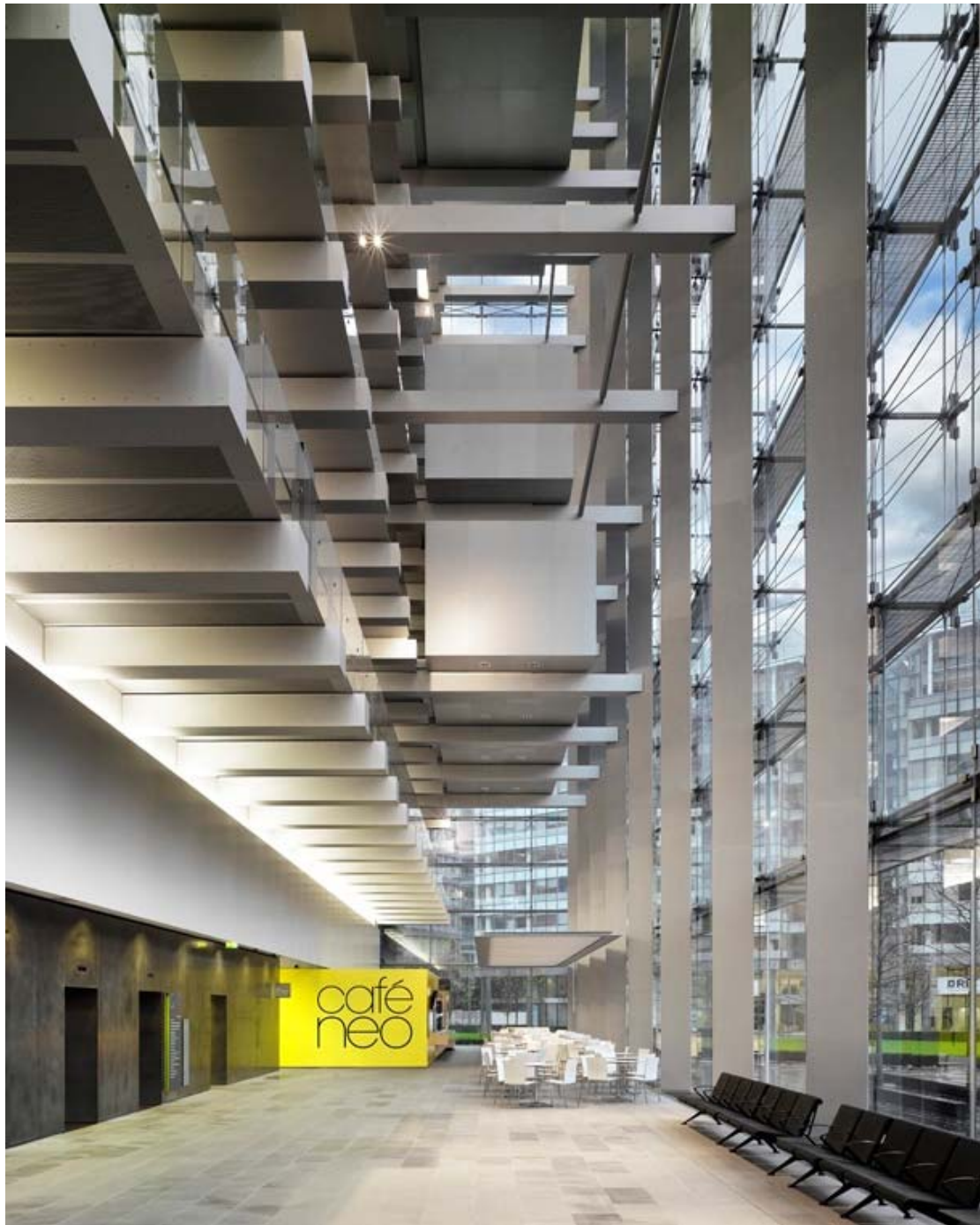


**View from the North**





**View out from the Atrium looking west**



**Public concourse at base of the Atrium and meeting room pods above**





**View of Atrium space with waiting/consultation pods**

