

colne swimming pool

category Leisure
client Borough of Pendle
value £1.5m
date 1992
awards + Royal Fine Art Commission/
Sunday Times 'Building of the
Year' Award 1992
+ Civic Trust Commendation 1992
+ MSA Design Award 1993

The design comprises a main 25 x 13 m pool and a smaller teaching pool, a bar and cafeteria, a small health suite and associated facilities. It forms an extension to a Sports England Standardised Sports Hall.

Situated on a significant urban site the building seeks to make an effective contribution to the townscape of Colne by 'stitching' the existing sports hall with the wider context, and to generate a sense of place.

Its contextualism may be perceived at two levels. A plinth of stone offers a layer of memory – a familiar, tactile material in response to the local vernacular and which brings a human scale to the whole. Above

this is a highly insulated technological layer. Oversailing these horizontal layers is a cranked 'north light' roof which not only allows diffuse natural light to permeate the main pool hall but also evokes the imagery of the cascading roofscape of Northern Lancashire hill towns. The roof extends beyond the envelope as a canopy reinforcing the transparency of the east facing public space which mediates between the building and the street.

"From the water Stephen Hodder's new pool building is a stunner ... It is a fine tribute to Pendle Borough Council, which had the imagination and good sense to organise a competition and select such a striking design, that the building won the 1992 Royal Fine Art Commission/Sunday Times Building of the Year Award. Hodder's supreme achievement is to have harnessed all the grandeur of the natural and industrial landscape into the form of this small swimming pool building."

K Harden,
RIBA Journal
November 1992

