

## Hillsborough Inquest Court

Complete	Area	Client	Architect
2014	UK England	Ministry of Justice	Hurd Rolland Architects

This project created one of the largest courtroom spaces in Europe to house inquests into the Hillsborough disaster.

By converting the ground floor of an open plan office shell at Birchwood Business Park, a high specification court was developed that has seating for 286 members of the public and 92 advocates. Totalling close to 5,000 sq. metres, the entire court facility incorporates a 1,300 sq. metre courtroom, 14 confidential consultation rooms, a public waiting area with a seating capacity of 72 and a 304 sq. metre court annex that provides an additional 99 seats.

The facility, which was designed to meet with HMCTS acoustic requirements, was named as the winner of the award for Innovation in Partnering from the PPC / TPC Annual Awards 2014. It was also shortlisted for the North West Regional Construction Awards in 2015.



## Services provided

Sandy Brown was employed by the contractor to provide acoustic design strategy and specifications in relation to:

- environmental noise ingress
- room acoustics
- internal airborne and impact sound insulation of partitions and floors
- building services noise and vibration.

## Special acoustic features

Due to the unprecedented size of the courtroom, reflective finishes were used over the central area to reinforce natural speech.

A number of enhancements were required to the existing building fabric to meet Court Service requirements. Secondary glazing was used to enhance the existing facades and control environmental noise ingress and help control flanking transmission. A new suspended ceiling system that incorporated sound absorbent pads and backing plates was used to areas of the courtroom to improve the existing sound insulation of the floor above and control reverberation.

Detailed advice was provided in relation to the routing of building services and crosstalk attenuation to ensure that the sound insulation performance of acoustically rated partitions was not degraded.



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