



Southend Pier

Development of historic pier

Sprunt collaborated with Swedish architects White Arkitekter, to take their winning concept design for the development of Southend Pier Culture Centre through the detailed design and completion.

Measuring 1.34 miles and featuring its own train line, Southend Pier is the world's longest pleasure pier. The new 376 sqm Southend Pier Cultural Centre is sited at the end of the Grade II listed pier. The challenge of the project was to construct a dynamic new building onto a listed and fragile structure in an offshore environment.

The building has sloping walls and a twisting hyperbolic paraboloid roof form built around a steel structure. The dynamic roof shape, which measures up to 9 metres from floor level, houses a large multi-purpose events space with floor to ceiling glazed elevations. Orientated South facing, the entrance façade is set back beneath the roof forming a sheltered entrance and café terrace from which to enjoy views out onto the water.

The roof and wall panels are built of

insulated marine plywood decking covered with a waterproof membrane. The walls are clad with Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) panels, whilst the roof is treated with a non-slip textured top coat which is colour matched to the GRP walls to give the building a unified expression.

Due to the challenging conditions of the site, the building was fabricated off site at Tilbury Docks and craned into place in one piece. The 170 tonne steel frame structure was transported from the docks on a barge along the Thames Estuary and craned in at high tide using a 200-tonne marine sheer leg crane.

Southend Pier is the winner of the Public Exterior Category of the Surface Design Awards 2013 and a RIBA regional award 2013.

Location:
Southend-on-Sea

Client:
Southend Borough Council

Project:
New culture centre

Value:
£3.3m

Status:
Complete 2012

“Despite a cash-strapped local council as client and the iconic nature of their brief’s subject, the architects have produced a remarkable sculptural object sitting at the end of the Grade II listed pier.”
- RIBA award citation