

# Immagine 2000 Studios and Resource Centre, Immingham

As part of a long-term commitment by North-East Lincolnshire Council, the multimedia studios are the third phase of a continuing programme of works in and around a group of redundant 1970's school buildings with the aim of producing a cultural and community resource centre. A close working relationship has been maintained with our client and end users, along with a common understanding that lost pride and enthusiasm in the community had to be regained. A clearly stated aim was to touch the proposed buildings with a design quality that is relevant to the communities needs and differing levels of understanding.

The council and a consortium of local businessmen and educationists with expertise in key areas collaborated to set the brief for the facility. This committee was our client. It had differing and divergent priorities, so we were often required to be the main arbitrator for the content and direction of the scheme.

Our approach to any regeneration project is one of reassessment and intervention. The multi-media studios are a refurbishment and extension of a former drama and dining hall positioned between the main school buildings and open playing fields. The existing building was a double-height box (the main hall) surrounded on three sides by a collection of single-story rooms (kitchen, practice areas and offices) and circulation spaces. A happy coincidence of the separate requirements of brief and context enabled us to place the building extension in response to the logical access points and against the exposed external wall to the main hall, thereby completing the ideal acoustic separation of the 'black box' studio. The footprint of the new building is modest in relation to the total floor area; its impact and influence, however, is maximised by being in the right place.

The centre, which was partially funded by European Union and National Lottery grants, provides television and video production equipment, a sound studio, television conference facilities and a learning resource centre. All are used by an increasingly overlapping mix of business, community and educational organisations. A condition attached to the scheme by the funding bodies was the requirement for a 'community access arrangement' for all parts of the building. A clear hierarchical split of accommodation between public and private was therefore necessary to protect the recording areas and equipment from circulation spaces. The main public foyer is used as a holding area and is deliberately isolated from both the first floor and the 'guts' of the building on the ground floor. Access is controlled in a loop of circulation around the main studio. This prescribed route links the accommodation together and allows for viewing and interaction with facilities at certain points.

The activities and requirements of the studio are necessarily fluid and evolving, the design is therefore a looser-fitting garment in some areas which allows for change, flexibility and extendibility. The extension is a relatively simple framed structure reliant on a flitched support beam and secondary universal steel beams to create a clear double height foyer space. The roof has deep overhangs to protect the skin of the building and a simple folded form to enable rainwater to discharge more efficiently.

**Completed – November 1996**  
**Value - £750,000**  
**Awards – Civic Trust Award Commendation 1999**

