PROJECT CASE STUDY

King John School, Benfleet

Flat Roof Refurbishment & Safety Upgrades

BACKGROUND

King John School in Benfleet, Essex, needed a comprehensive programme of roof refurbishment works to address the deterioration of the existing felt roof coverings and improve the long-term performance of the building envelope. The project also presented an opportunity to remove redundant rooftop structures and equipment, creating a more streamlined roof layout while introducing upgraded insulation, waterproofing and permanent safety systems.

Inspire Contract Services were appointed by Zenith Multi Academy Trust as Principal Contractor to deliver the refurbishment, with Senior Contracts Manager Chris Finch overseeing the programme. A key requirement was to complete the works before the start of the new academic year, with the Trust keen for the project to commence during term time to maximise the available programme and ensure the building was ready for returning students.

The refurbishment involved stripping the existing roof coverings back to the structural deck, removing the redundant rooftop tank house and installing a new Garland StressPly Flex Plus built-up felt roofing system incorporating tapered insulation. Additional improvements included new permanent roof edge protection, upgraded access arrangements, lightning protection works and the installation of Hardie VL Plank fibre cement cladding to external elevations.

Given the tight programme and the need to undertake the initial works within an operational school environment, careful planning, effective coordination and robust health and safety measures were essential throughout.

CLIENT	Zenith Multi Academy Trust
SECTOR	Education
LOCATION	Benfleet, Essex
SOLUTION PROVIDED	Built-Up Felt Roof Refurbishment & Cladding

BEFORE

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THE WORKS

Works involved refurbishment of the existing flat roof, together with the removal of redundant rooftop structures, access improvements & external cladding works:

Roof Refurbishment:

- Removal of the existing failed felt roof coverings down to the structural deck.
- Demolition and removal of the redundant rooftop tank house, including water tanks and associated steelwork.
- Removal and boarding over of the existing roof access hatch within the tank house.
- Installation of a new Garland StressPly Flex Plus built-up felt roofing system, incorporating tapered insulation.
- Formation of one continuous waterproofed roof area following removal of the tank house.

Access & Building Improvements:

- Installation of a permanent Edgeguard freestanding guardrail system around the roof perimeter.
- Installation of a new insulated aluminium roof access hatch.
- Reinstatement and extension of the lightning protection system to incorporate the new guardrails, including testing and commissioning.
- Installation of new Hardie VL Plank fibre cement cladding to external brickwork elevations.
- Provision of access scaffolding through Inspire's specialist subcontractor.

THE RESULT

The completed refurbishment has provided King John School with a durable, high-performance roofing solution designed to deliver long-term waterproofing protection and improved thermal efficiency. The new Garland StressPly Flex Plus system, incorporating tapered insulation, provides an upgraded roof construction backed by a 25-year guarantee, offering reassurance over the long-term performance of the building envelope.

The removal of the redundant tank house, water tanks and associated steelwork has simplified the roof layout, creating one continuous waterproofed area. The installation of a new insulated access hatch and permanent Edgeguard guardrail system has also improved safety and accessibility for future inspection and maintenance.

Further improvements included the reinstatement and extension of the lightning protection system, which was tested and commissioned on completion. The new Hardie VL Plank fibre cement cladding has enhanced the external elevations, providing a durable, low-maintenance finish that complements the wider refurbishment.

A key achievement was the successful delivery of the project within the school's challenging programme. With Inspire acting as Principal Contractor and its Senior Contracts Manager overseeing the works, careful planning and coordination of specialist subcontractors ensured that all activities progressed safely and efficiently.

Despite commencing during term time, the project was completed on schedule and handed back before students returned for the new academic year. This demonstrates Inspire's ability to deliver complex refurbishment programmes within educational environments, combining quality workmanship, effective project management and an understanding of the client's operational requirements.

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