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LowCarbon FireSafe

St Marys Catholic Voluntary Academy

STRUCTURAL TIMBER AWARDS
2024 **WINNER**
EDUCATION PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Construction is complete on the innovative eco-building for St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy in Derby, following a fire that destroyed the previous school. This biophilic school is part of a pilot scheme for the Department for Education. Biophilic design increases occupant connectivity to nature, promoting physical and mental health, and the building is net zero carbon in operation.

Innovaré Offsite supported the design, engineering, manufacture, and installation of the sustainable superstructure. The timber-constructed school uses Innovaré's Psi-FAST panels, designed for fire safety, thermal, and acoustic insulation, and loadbearing capabilities. Psi-FAST panels have an A1-rated non-combustible board and class 0 surface spread of flame rating, offering 60 minutes of standalone fire resistance.

The single-storey school includes a primary school and nursery with pavilions arranged along a central canopy. Each age group has a shared learning space, and the entrance building features a hall and communal areas. The buildings are naturally ventilated with solar panels and heated via air source heat pumps. Green roofs enhance biodiversity and local ecology.

Project	St Marys Catholic Voluntary Academy
Client	Department for Education
Contractor	Tilbury Douglas
Architect	Hawkins Brown Architects
Value	£12m
Location	Derby, Derbyshire.
Completion Date	June 2023
Innovare duration onsite	12 Weeks
GIFA	2300 m²
Framework	This is a DfE pathfinder project – the UKs first Biophilic school.
Sustainability	Net Zero Carbon in operation
Innovaré System	Psi-FAST

Matthew Ling Photography

Tilbury Douglas's Project Manager, Neil Holland, said:

"I have previously delivered six school projects for the DfE. This is the first time I have used a SIPs system, and it has been a real gamechanger.

The project is moving at considerable pace and the quality that is being delivered is excellent and complementary to our Tilbury Douglas 'Right-First Time' approach."

Hundven Clements Photography

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