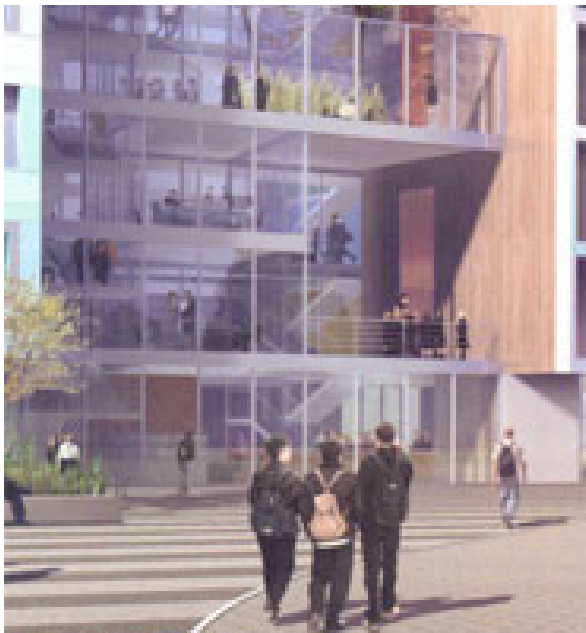


Carillion

South Tyneside & Gateshead BSF Project



South Tyneside and Gateshead are adjacent areas in the vicinity of Newcastle, on England's North East coast and they together form part of the Tyne and Wear urban conurbation. The existing schools serve almost 14,000 pupils but the demographic picture is one of decline, with a generally decreasing population and a disproportionate number of older people. Unemployment is high, as are levels of deprivation, and the perception is that the region has not yet made a successful transition from an industrial past to a modern technical and knowledge-based economy.

The aim of the STaG BSF project is to provide the local communities with schools which are modern, fit for purpose and well designed, with the overarching ambition of supporting the ongoing drive to raise educational standards and thus pupils' life chances, aspirations and contribution to the community as useful members of society. STaG's documentation refers to 'a radically improved environment for schools, an environment that will lead to transformational improvement in outcomes for learners'.

Summary

Novatia was employed by the construction firm Carillion to demonstrate educational ICT credibility and expertise in the new build environment, in support of their successful bid to build several new schools under the South Tyneside and Gateshead (STaG) Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

Carillion is a large and international construction firm, employing over 50,000 people and producing annual revenue of circa £4bn. The company works extensively in public services arenas such as health and education. The STaG BSF project is formed from two Local Authorities working in partnership, encompassing the rebuilding of 12 schools in total; 9 secondaries, 2 special and 1 Pupil Referral Unit, serving pupils from 11-19 years of age. A funding formula is applied to BSF schools, indicating that each institution will benefit from £1675 per pupil for ICT hardware and infrastructure.

Novatia helps Carillion to bid to successfully for the south Tyneside and Gateshead BSF project.

Building Schools for the Future is a national programme which envisages the eventual rebuilding of every secondary school in England to provide educational environments which reflect the needs of today's learners and curriculum. BSF is organised into Waves of funding, starting with the areas of the country whose schools were in most need of a step-change. South Tyneside and Gateshead were categorised as Wave 1.



Carillion plc recognised the need to utilise specialist knowledge and experience in the preparation of this bid and was able to draw upon novatia’s involvement with BSF which stretches back to the early Pathfinder projects. Preparation the bid involved a complex process of engagement with two sample schools which novatia could mediate. There was also a need to provide and educational liaison between the builders (Carillion) and their selected ICT providers (Morse) which novatia was able to facilitate.

Novatia benefits from a growing reputation nationally as a company with a history of quality delivery and the ability to engage quickly, form relationships and understand issues. Eddy Brady (Carillion’s partnering lead for the bid) feels that novatia’s proven record of delivery was vital in the decision to employ the company:

EB quote to be gathered by RSS here, indicating how novatia performed against objectives.

Eddy Brady of Carrillion

Novatia’s work to support Carillion’s bid took place in Spring/Summer 2007 and centred around leading the engagement with the schools, shaping the ICT solution to ensure it met the educational needs and providing Quality Assurance services between Carillion and Morse.

Seen as a whole, these activities afforded Carillion educational credibility with the Local Authorities. The work undertaken had a simple objective – to assist Carillion in achieving Preferred Bidder status; this was conferred in September 2007

Richard Sambrook Smith (who lead novatia’s involvement in the STaG project) describes the company’s raison d’etre as “making sure the ICT elements of any project are delivered within an educational context, that it isn’t just a technical solution which is installed”.

This provides a useful wider perspective from which to view novatia’s work with Carillion and STaG and illustrates why the company has a successful track record in the BSF arena; education is seen as the core task, ICT is the medium of delivery.

This approach was embodied in a continual conversation with Carillion and Morse, aimed at ensuring that the solution proposed was achievable, in line with national standards and met the wider ambitions of the BSF vision for the area.

Specific tasks were carried out to inform the bid, based on novatia’s engagement with two sample schools who were to be used as templates for the entire project;

- Bid response material was developed, aimed at couching the solution in the educational context.
- Ongoing engagement with the Authorities’ ICT advisors to support credibility and confidence in Carillion’s ICT solution.
- Design Guides were developed to demonstrate how the ICT solution would be implemented, e.g. for the cabling, teaching wall, et cetera. These visual and technical documents were aimed at an audience of architects and M&E consultants.
- Engagement with schools, preparing materials for presentations and drawing out the vision and aims of each institution.
- Oversight of Morse’s ICT solution and close liaison to embed educational needs within it.

Beside the satisfaction of Carillion’s designation as Preferred Bidder and the knowledge of the significant contribution novatia made to this, Richard Sambrook Smith (who led novatia’s involvement) feels a great deal of pride in the company’s agility and subsequent ability to deliver rapid responses and timely outcomes during this project, drawing on the corporate knowledge and experience developed over the last few years.

The end product of novatia’s involvement in the bid speaks for itself and naturally Carillion were delighted to be appointed as Preferred Bidder for the STaG project.