In the 1960s an affordable and quick building method was needed to meet the exceptional demands of educational expansion. SCOLA buildings were introduced because they meant many schools could be designed and built at the same time. However, with poor insulation and over glazing they are uncomfortable learning environments and give rise to high energy consumption.

The structure of the buildings is sound, allowing designers to improve through over-cladding. HCC Property Services chose two separate SCOLA blocks as pilot schemes to design and trial a new cladding system. The chosen projects, at Quilley School of Engineering and Fernhill School and Language College, were required to look like new builds, have an enhanced internal environment and extend the life of the buildings.

The new cladding system was designed to meet modern building standards, even taking into account different locations and building structures perhaps with different thermal performance levels. The proposals were thermally modelled to analyse anticipated improvements.

The cladding system was designed to be durable and low maintenance, for use at secondary school sites. The existing structural frame, ceilings and foundations were retained to reduce the build cost and programme. The carbon footprint of the buildings has been reduced and there have been added ‘future proofing’ measures including high-grade insulation, solar shading and passive ventilation.

The system is lightweight, to enable the existing structure to accommodate the new cladding, and the material finishes can be adapted for different environments.

Key Benefits

- Build costs reduced by re-investing in the school’s assets.
  Saving made through re-cladding rather than re-building.

- Educational environment improved - more comfortable temperatures and reduced glare.

- Carbon footprint reduced and savings in energy costs.

- Visually a modern new building for the school to be proud of.

- Life of the building significantly extended.

“The whole block has been completely transformed...Staff and students can now work in a modern, safe, energy and maintenance efficient building. The whole process was worth the minimal disruption caused.”

Business Manager, Quilley School

“This was without doubt the most successful project carried out by HCC on the Fernhill site in the last 20 years...The result is a re-clad that looks like a new-build and an overall effect that has transformed the school.”

Head Teacher, Fernhill School
SCOLA Re-Cladding at Fernhill and Quilley School