



A state-of-the-art, two-storey extension to St Patrick's Classical School, Navan

RODNEY BRADY CONTRACTING'S BUILDING EXCELLENCE ACKNOWLEDGED

A magnificent new extension to St Patrick's Classical School, Navan was shortlisted for not one but two prestigious Building & Architect of the Year Awards. These nominations represent fitting recognition of all the parties who were instrumental in delivering this fantastic facility, including main contractor Rodney Brady Contracting (RBC).



The magnificent new extension to St Patrick's Classical School, Navan



New offices in Bracetown Business Park, Clonée



330,000 ft². of warehousing in D15 for Hickwell Properties

A state-of-the-art, two-storey extension to St Patrick's Classical School, Navan, County Meath – which was officially opened in November 2024 – was in the running for two 2025 Building & Architect of the Year Awards.

This stunning construction project, carried out to the most exacting standards under the watchful eye of school principal Harry McGarry, was shortlisted in the 'Building of the Year – Public' and 'Building of the Year – Educational' categories at this year's annual awards gala which celebrated the cream of Ireland's building and architect industry at the InterContinental Dublin in early April.

The design team was led by David Cullivan of Gaffney & Cullivan Architects, while Cavan-headquartered Rodney

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Brady Contracting was main contractor on the works, which ran for 13 months in total, from July 2023 until August 2024. Eponymous founder and proprietor Rodney Brady is delighted with the awards nominations, which dovetail perfectly with his company's tenth-anniversary celebrations:

"We are absolutely delighted that the project has been shortlisted. We had a very dedicated construction team, led by David Cullivan, who co-ordinated it all together very well. I've worked on a few projects with David over the years, starting with smaller ones and building up a good working relationship which led to this one. He has offices in Cavan and

Navan and is very well resourced, with a brilliant team behind him. It's always a pleasure to work with David."

The contracts manager on the project was Aidan Elliott, for whom Rodney worked with prior to going out on his own in 2006.

Works at St Patrick's Classical School entailed the removal of an old staff car park and handball wall followed by the complete new build from the ground up of a two-storey structure comprising four new mainstream classrooms, a science laboratory, home economics room, textiles room, applied technology room, a technology preparation area, two new DCG rooms, administration offices and

a large locker room, allowing the school to welcome a number of new subjects such as applied technology and home economics, a €7m project in total.

"It's one we worked pretty hard to get, as Navan is within a one-hour drive of our home area," Rodney continues. "It's the closest large project we've had to home in five years. After Covid, there was a lot of travelling for work in Dublin, so it was nice to get this one closer to home."

For the duration of the project, it was all hands-on deck as RBC delivered the trademark high level of workmanship and attention to detail for which this outstanding Cavan-based contractor is renowned. "At the height of the project, between direct staff, suppliers and subcontractors, we'd have had up to 70 people on site. It was a large undertaking, working within a very compact site where there was limited space.

"For most of the work, we were operating in a live school environment, and shared access was one of the biggest obstacles. Health and safety are always a priority, and, with the help of some very conscientious and helpful neighbours, we were able to divert the pupils safely and in a controlled manner. Everybody pulled together and it was a huge team effort that got the project over the line." Rodney employs a direct team of 30,



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plus the same again in regular subcontractors. He is a firm believer that any contracting company is only as good as its staff: “We’re a relatively new company and would have started out in 2015 with three or four but have built it up slowly under the financial direction of my father Sean, who keeps a tight watch on all in the background. I’d put our growth down to the three S’s: staff, staff and staff. We have great staff, and they are loyal. Alongside the in-house team, we carry a good base of subcontractors and have a great purchasing team who look after deliveries etc. and that takes a lot of the hard work out of site management, supported by a dedicated head office team, who rarely see the site but are key to the whole operation.

Rodney has three decades of experience working in construction, having begun his career with Aidan Elliott in P Elliott and Co Ltd in 1996. “I grew up with a farming background and construction was always a seasonal thing in our house,” he recounts. “There was always a shed to be built or a yard to

be concreted. I went on to study Building Surveying at the old Dundalk RTC and then joined P Elliott, starting as a junior site engineer and working my way up to site foreman, site manager and then contracts manager with Aidan Elliott Construction.”

Today, the core of Rodney Brady Contracting’s work centres around educational projects for the Department of Education and warehousing projects. “The education work is just something we’ve naturally grown into,” the Cavan contractor reveals. “We started off doing small summer works during the holidays and then went on to do renovations and emergency works.


“From there, we moved into secondary school extensions and the first of those was St Peter’s College Dunboyne. We did another school in Whitehall, Santry and then worked simultaneously on St Patricks in Navan and St Oliver Plunkett’s NS, Balrothery, Balbriggan. We’re currently back near Navan working on Lismullen National School – a five-phase, two-year project. We started there in December and are in the pro-

cess of moving on to the second phase.”

The company has also built up to 330,000 ft². of warehousing in D 15 for Hickwell Properties and 40,000 ft² of offices for Axile properties over the past six years and was at the time of writing working on a private project at St Augustine’s Hall in Cavan town for Craft Studio Architects and Cavan Parish – extending and a restoration project converting an old protected building of over 200 years old into a new three-storey adult education centre for ETB, along with completing 150,000ft² of warehousing and offices in Cloness.

The versatility and high-quality workmanship consistently delivered by Rodney Brady Contracting is second to none.

The secret to his success? “Surrounding yourself with better people than yourself”. I learned that from my uncle Michael, who runs Michael Brady Ltd. in London. I used to go over and work with him during the summer and that was the best advice anyone ever gave me.”



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