

# architectus™

## 12.08

[www.architectus.com.au](http://www.architectus.com.au)  
[www.architectus.co.nz](http://www.architectus.co.nz)



**Project:** Queensland Emergency Operations Centre  
**Location:** Kedron Park, Queensland  
**Value:** \$40 million



The headquarters' flexible, light-filled, open work areas are configured for emergency planning and response and developed in close client consultation.

During emergencies the building is self-contained for up to five days. This has meant the provision of water storage, solar power and diesel-generated power. It has also meant the inclusion of such specific devices as an air filtration and air conditioning system, to a sealed internal environment in an event such as a volcanic eruption.

A simple portal frame structure allows a flexible open-plan and internal layout to the lower level. This flexibility accommodates various training and operational scenarios. It also supports the roof structure and offices located on the mezzanine floor, while resisting the loadings subjected to it by earthquake, wind, and ash loading. Robust materials, such as concrete block-work, steel sheet roofing and laminated glazing, are used to resist airborne debris in severe wind conditions.

The facility is solar powered and provides hot water and power for all of its requirements. In the year since its opening the building hasn't drawn power from the national grid. Two underground water tanks – a 7000 litre rainwater and 4500 litre mains water – also ensure independent secure and supply.

Architectus has interpreted the local scale and vernacular with its careful massing and use of low embodied energy materials. This composition of blockwork, timber, steel and laminated glazing delivers a secure, signature structure.

→ [patrick.clifford@architectus.co.nz](mailto:patrick.clifford@architectus.co.nz)

→ [malcolm.bowes@architectus.co.nz](mailto:malcolm.bowes@architectus.co.nz)

### Disaster Relief

Architectus is working with the Queensland Department of Emergency Services (DES) on the new \$40 million Queensland Emergency Operations Centre (QEOC) at Kedron Park.

QEOC is designed to be a world-class facility in line with best practice for a highly effective Communications Centre and Disaster Management Centre. An exemplary purpose-built and highly sustainable building, QEOC will accommodate the emergency communications centre for Fire and Ambulance Services, and two management centres for natural disaster events and major accidents.

In committing to a five-star Green Star outcome, DES and the project team demonstrate a concern for employee well-being and long-term environmental health. Government has a strong responsibility in this regard and DES has embraced the environmental opportunity presented by this project.

The environmental impact of construction and long-life operation is considered in every aspect of the QEOC project. Incorporated systems include full water recycling, grey-water treatment, on-site power generation, several energy reduction initiatives and extensive use of recycled materials.

QEOC will be equipped with cutting-edge communications technology and a very high level of reliability. Base power for this critical operation will be natural gas powered micro-turbines supplemented by normal grid supply. Back-up supply is provided by diesel generators.

With completion slated for 2010, the new QEOC is a simple, cost-effective and flexible solution that will effectively meet the department's long-term functional and operational needs.

→ [mark.jones@architectus.com.au](mailto:mark.jones@architectus.com.au)

01.

Project: Waitakere Civil Defence Headquarters

Location: Henderson, Auckland

Value: \$1.8 million



# ACUTE RESPONSE

Despite their separation and cultural, contextual and climatic differences, two projects – in Auckland and Brisbane – are designed to deliver community reassurance in the best of times and worst of times.

Natural disaster response planning is the focus of these distinctly different projects with similar aims. One large and the other relatively small, the overwhelming quality of both projects is the housing of appropriate technology and teams to deal with the unexpected.

The recently completed civil defence centre in Waitakere, Auckland and the work-in-progress at Kedron, Brisbane (due for completion in 2010) revealing an acute response to purpose and place. The temptation to create faceless masonry blocks has been successfully resisted where both projects reveal a systematic preparation of work areas in addition to a stylish amenity. This is an unexpected twist and departure from the more typical emphasis, where technologies can often dictate a bland, monochromatic result.

The Architectus signature of careful calibration of light and ESD principles is evident throughout and is proof that use by staff and visitors can be a daily pleasure.

New Zealand's exposure to natural disaster from volcanic eruption and earthquake is foremost in the minds of civil defence planners. The country has nine active volcanoes and regular seismic activity, all potentially hazardous to life and property.

A proactive civil defence policy has been forged since local natural disasters that include the Napier/Hastings earthquake of 1931 that claimed 256 lives and the Ruapehu eruption of 1953 that killed another 150 people. Avalanches and storms have added to the potential for calamities and the need for NZ to prepare for the unexpected.

Waitakere City Council's new Civil Defence Headquarters located in Auckland's west is further evidence of the determination to keep emergency services running 24/7. Designed by Architectus Auckland, the building can host up to 40 civil defence staff, including regional police and fire officers.

City Mayor Bob Harvey, who helped to officially open the facility noted, "This emergency operations centre acknowledges that this isn't a game – this is a purpose-built civil defence centre of excellence that people can trust and believe in."

"As Mayor of this city I have always felt an enormous responsibility to be prepared for a natural disaster and I feel that this is a centre where events can be controlled from."

Mayor Harvey also said that the new coastal warning system, which is being rolled out throughout the country and recently installed on Waitakere's West Coast, would allow the city, for the first time, to have a mass public warning system.

For Architectus, the design challenge was to create a facility to perform seamlessly in times of calm – and storm. The temptation to adopt an anonymous cell-block has been resisted in preference for a building of understated modernity and operational efficiency in this quiet, suburban streetscape of predominantly Californian bungalow-styled housing.

Despite its understatement, the facility features state-of-the-art communications, elaborate computer networks, and is purposely situated in Glendene – one of the highest elevations possible in urban Waitakere.

## 02.

1. Luther College, Croydon, Victoria
2. Star of the Sea, Melbourne, Victoria
3. Clonard College, Geelong, Victoria
4. RMIT Bundoora Campus, Victoria

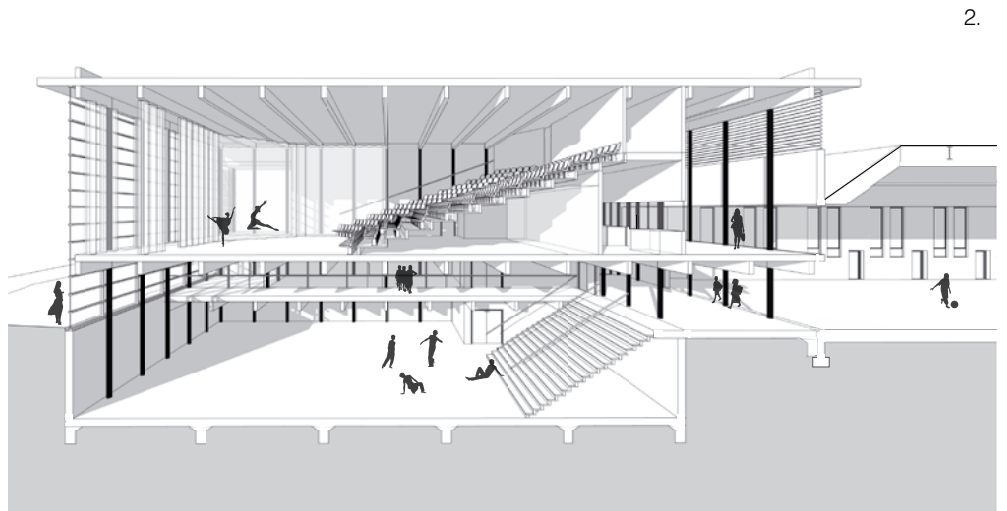
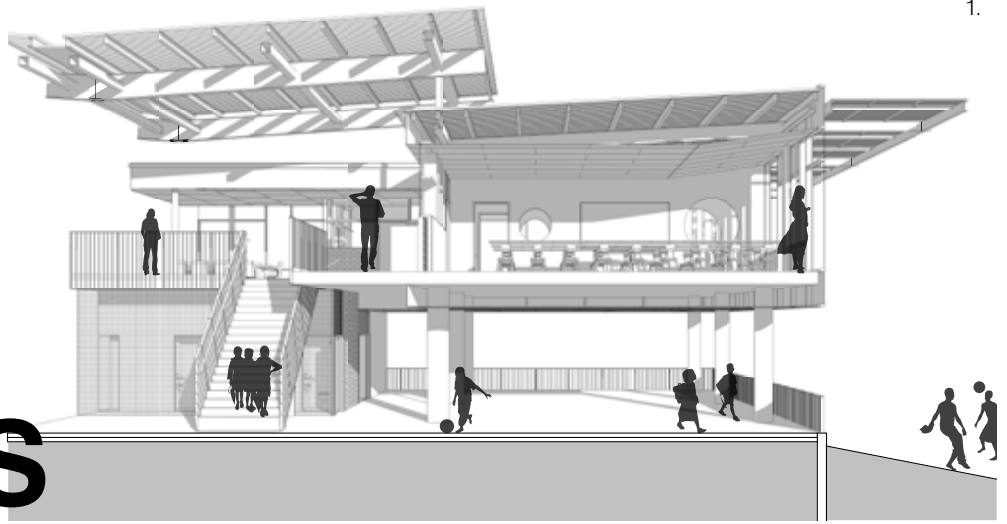
# COOL SCHOOLS

Small to medium scale education building projects offer fertile ground for young architects and graduates to make their first foray into the more exacting aspects of architectural practice and discipline.

They are large enough to be complex and have briefs that compare with the sensitivity required of domestic practice projects.

At Architectus the group of young architects and recent graduates represented here have been exploring several educational projects under the guidance of experienced practice Directors. An added value of this is the utilisation of the new 'Revit' software package that permits 3D from an early stage. This information can also be exported into other programs to allow a more sophisticated analysis of ESD principles.

These are early days in these architects' professional careers and important times for Architectus in its pursuit of sustainable architectural solutions suited to contemporary needs.



### Luther College Middle School

The site for this new middle school building rests between the Good Shepherd Primary School and Luther College. Connecting the campuses on Plymouth Road, Croydon Hills, the new building reflects the arrangement of the original 1960s primary and senior school buildings that comprise built forms wrapped around central courtyard spaces.

The strong, unified character of the 1960s campus will be enhanced by the use of similar materials and colours in the new building. Furthermore, the rectilinear forms of the existing buildings are reinforced by the geometry of the new design.

The building will be set back from the existing ones to allow for daylight penetration and good ventilation. The modular building form is open on the ground floor to allow for future expansion. Landscaping will flow into the ground floor courtyard and be accessible from and connected to the new symbolic walkway.

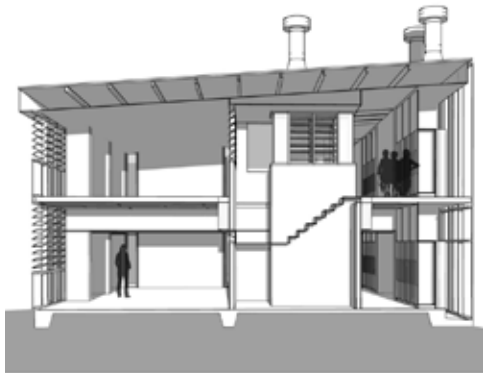
The concept behind the design is to create a courtyard which will act both metaphorically and physically as the heart of the school, and which will become a play area and meeting point. It will also highlight views of the surrounding ranges, giving a strong sense of place.

### Star of the Sea New Performing Arts Centre

A new concept design for the Performing Arts Centre at Star of the Sea College in Gardenvale, Victoria is a move away from the traditional "black-box" theatre.

The multi-level design comprises music/drama facilities and informal performance and practice spaces with a more formal "theatre-like" space. In addition, it can be completely naturally lit and ventilated. The fully glazed south facade services all levels right down to the basement and, in its opened state, ventilates them all.

Because of the historic convent and surrounding campus, it was decided to defer to the existing context through a basement space with the capacity to connect to a future underground car park. This innovation ensures a contemporary fit and contemporary image.

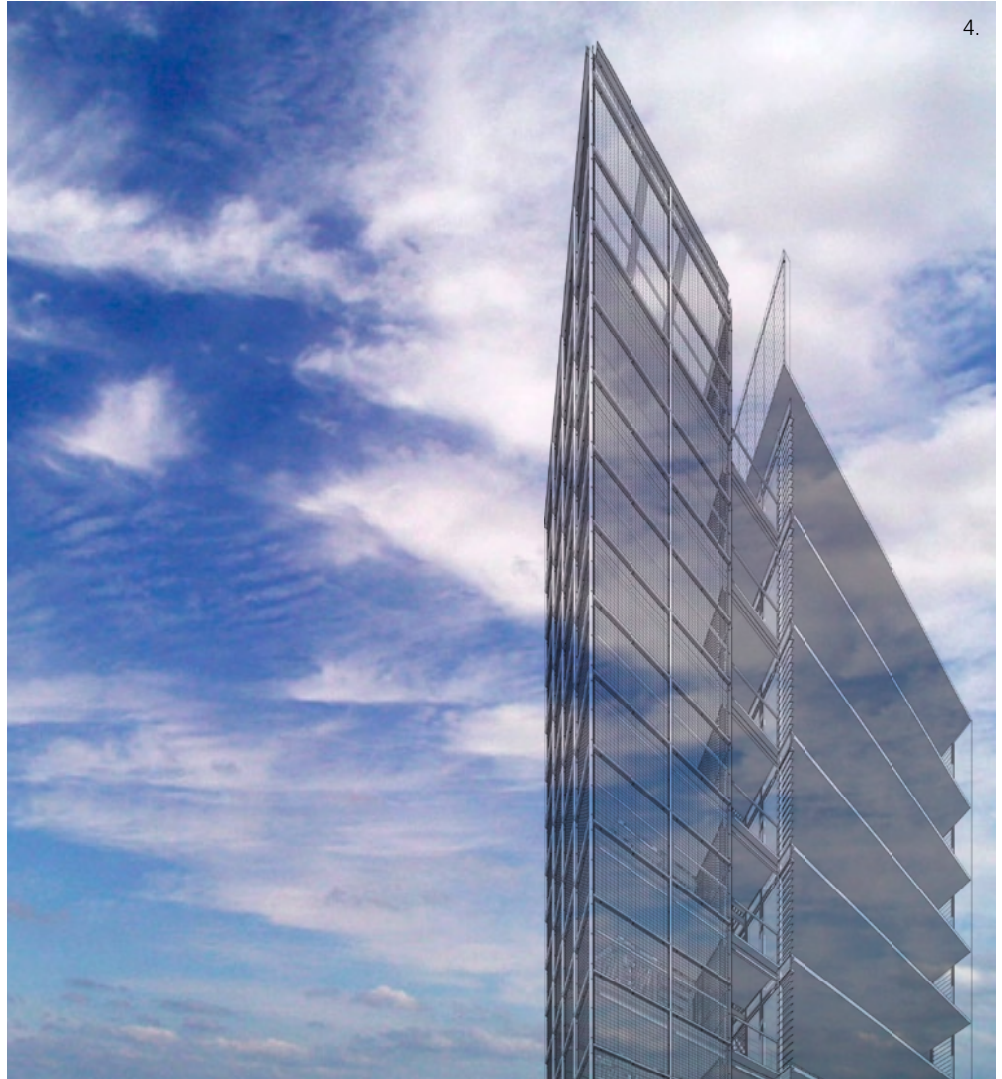


### Clonard College Year 7 Centre

Sustainable architecture is a major focus in the design of Clonard College's Year 7 facility. This is the second free-standing building by Architectus on the school's West Geelong campus. The two-level building is naturally ventilated using louvred glazing to the south facade to draw in cool air and eight thermal chimneys along the north facade to expel warm air. Thermo-mass concrete panels to the east and west facades maximise efficiency in the north-south ventilation.

Another major focus was the integration of educational tools to explain the mechanics behind its sustainable design. This was simply achieved by exposing, rather than concealing the environmental elements designed to make the building perform.

An example is the exposed chimneys enclosed in clear, double glazing with ventilator cowls penetrating the roof, and which are visible from the school's street frontage. This philosophy aims to help students gain an appreciation of the simple ways in which we can dramatically cut high energy usage.



### Building 201, RMIT Bundoora Campus

This upgrade project at RMIT's Bundoora West campus involves the addition of a lift lobby and three new high speed lifts and a suspended steel escape stair to serve 11 storeys of the existing Building 201.

A keen environmental strategy is proposed to ensure that the essential qualities of the building provide the efficient thermal comfort and daylight control.

The building will be oriented to provide the maximum shading from the north and harsh western sun. Lobby and foyer areas will be naturally ventilated with operable glass louvres that respond to changing environmental conditions. Simple, and yet often overlooked strategies will ensure maximum visual connection throughout and accommodate air movement.

This passive environmental strategy coupled with exposed thermal mass and night purging will ensure that occupant comfort is achieved with minimum energy input.

The brick veneer cladding of the existing building is echoed in a terracotta rain-screen cladding to the lift shafts. This fully recyclable cladding provides a rear-ventilated cavity to minimise thermal transfer to the building structure and improve occupant comfort. The rain-screen panels are low maintenance and make an ideal material choice for this university campus application.

The external steel escape stairway is cantilevered from a central support tower of the lightest vertical tie members to its perimeter and wrapped in a mesh of woven, stainless steel wire.

→ [lindsay.holland@architectus.com.au](mailto:lindsay.holland@architectus.com.au)



# ANNE SUTHERLAND

Anne Sutherland recently joined Architectus Sydney as an Associate and is an urban designer and registered architect. With over 18 years experience in the industry, Anne has worked in private consultancy as well as with developers and government agencies.



**What's the most interesting moment you have had in architecture?**

Understanding that architecture exists as part of a much wider context that involves finance, demographics etc. Initially I considered only the design of the building, but with experience I'm now more interested in the broader context and social impact of good design. That's been a pretty important awakening.

**What did your experience with Landcom teach you?**

I definitely think it's about leading and educating. My recent work with the Landcom Guidelines – something I've worked on for three years and completed as a consultant since I've been at Architectus – has just won a Commendation in the Australia Award for Urban Design. Those guidelines are concerned with suburban development and it's really an education tool that sets out best practice.

**You also helped shape the Landcom Guidelines?**

I was responsible for the Landcom Guidelines for Built Form Design, Street Design, Open Spaces Design and Street Tree Design. Understanding all the components that make up the built environment gives an ability to maximise the amenity and quality of those places through new design.

**How important is curiosity and research?**

I love the challenge of the puzzle. In some ways the more constraints there are, the more intriguing the challenge becomes to find a solution that benefits the most people.

**What work experiences have been of the greatest value in your present role?**

I have been involved in projects at both the strategic planning stage right down to the details such as street verge and house design. I think this macro to micro level of work experience also contributes to my understanding of the development industry as a whole. I've worked with government where high level policy is being developed to improve housing affordability, or how to successfully develop along busy roads. I've also worked with diverse teams of consultants on new town centres where issues such as infrastructure roll out, school strategies, and staging over 20 years to make a meaningful and viable place right from the beginning.

**So do you see a broader application for these Guidelines?**

Guidelines are useful to the wider development industry. In order for the documents to be robust and realistic it was important to gain a good understanding of the project home builders, for example, as they play a key role in shaping particularly our new suburban areas. This involves considering their business needs as well as the market and its drivers.

**What cities represent the great urban design model for you?**

Well there are lots of great cities around the world and I particularly enjoy those which are unpredictable, like many of the older, medieval era European cities. These are the places that have evolved over time and that's the challenge when creating new suburbs; how to incorporate these elusive qualities in ways that are relevant today and for the future.

**Which three locations impress you and have altered the way you view the world?**

Parts of India and the Scandinavian countries, with cities such as Copenhagen, are impressive, but three of my favourite places would be Venice, Kathmandu and Santorini.

**As a general rule, do you favour tighter or more relaxed planning regulations?**

I think we may be able to relax some red tape with individual houses but where we are talking about the overall framework and structure of a city it needs to be robust. Highlighting the importance of place and how that should affect design should lead to something more meaningful than simply jumping in and creating something unrelated. Appropriateness and context are really important, whether it is a building or a master plan.

**How important is it to know the difference between being self-opinionated and finding your own voice?**

Having your own voice is valuable if you have something to say. For me it's as much about listening and being in discussion, rather than holding forth.

**What is the principal lesson you have learned from urban design?**

Patience is important. Things we are working on today can often take many years to eventuate. Also, there is no single answer and that solutions can come in many different forms.

**Are you optimistic about the next decade?**

I am. I think there is a lot of energy and effort being put into Sydney from government policy through to private endeavour.

**How do you try to reconcile the natural world with the built environment?**

It's such a constant and key issue because every decision you make has to consider how it will impact the natural world and whether it can be justified or how we can have minimal impact.

**Do you lead by example with your own house?**

Well I live in a medium density situation and I must say I love the community nature of that. I live in a block of four where we share the garden space and it works really well. A lot of people are fearful of sharing space, but it's generally a healthy, stimulating way to use resources and develop a real sense of community.

→ [anne.sutherland@architectus.com.au](mailto:anne.sutherland@architectus.com.au)



### Award Reward

Architectus Auckland featured in the November 2008 NZ Institute of Architects Awards with success in four categories.

Patrick Clifford, Director of Architectus Auckland said that the success validated the practice culture to treat architecture not as disconnected separate projects but linked to the wider environment.

"We want our work to be relevant to the broadest possible community and these awards hopefully reflect that commitment," said Clifford.

#### Auckland Architecture Award for Public Architecture

Auckland Grammar School – Old Boys' Pavilion, Epsom

#### Auckland Architecture Award for Public Architecture

Waitakere Civil Defence Headquarters, Henderson

#### Auckland Architecture Award for Urban Design

Auckland City CBD Streetscapes – Queen Street

#### Auckland Architecture Award for Sustainable Architecture

Waitakere Civil Defence Headquarters, Henderson

→ [patrick.clifford@architectus.co.nz](mailto:patrick.clifford@architectus.co.nz)

### Peru Challenge

Architectus Melbourne Director John Wood has been selected to take part in 'Peru's Challenge' sponsored by leading engineers Irwin Consult. The month long visit in late-2009 will combine travel and volunteering to assist disadvantaged indigenous villages. The program invites selected skilled professionals to participate and live among the local community to assist with vital village improvement works.

"It is a chance to use the skills of architects and engineers to overcome some of the environmental problems that local Peruvians face, such as diminishing quality and reliability of water from glacial melt affected by Global Warming," says Wood.

He hopes to utilise his extensive architectural and carpentry skills to contribute to the initiative that aims to improve the harsh life faced by local people.

Volunteers work in indigenous mountain villages in Peru on projects including building and renovating classrooms and community facilities, improving water supply and plumbing systems, and environmental initiatives.

"I hope to gain a deeper understanding of issues... and help in the formulation of strategies towards future work," says Wood. But it shouldn't be all work and no play. An enthusiastic surfer, he plans to pack his surfboard and ride the world's longest wave at Chicama. "Surfing is environmentally sustainable," he says. "You leave the ocean exactly as you found it."

→ [john.wood@architectus.com.au](mailto:john.wood@architectus.com.au)



### Brisbane Supreme Court and District Court Sod Turning

Architectus welcomed the official start of construction on the new \$600 million Queensland Supreme Court and District Court complex in Brisbane's legal precinct on 6 October 2008. The Architectus designed project is scheduled for completion by the end of 2011, which will coincide with the 150th anniversary of the Supreme Court's establishment in Queensland.

From the left, The Honourable Robert Swarten (Qld Minister for Public Works, Housing and Information and Communication Technology); The Honourable Anna Bligh (Qld Premier); The Honourable Kerry Shine (Attorney General and Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Premier in Western Queensland); and Mal Grierson (Director General, Qld Department of Public Works) marked the start of construction of the complex at the corner of George, Roma and Herschel Streets in Brisbane.

→ [john.hockings@architectus.com.au](mailto:john.hockings@architectus.com.au)

1. Auckland Grammar Sports Pavilion
2. Queen Street Urban Design, Auckland
3. John Wood
4. Brisbane Supreme and District Courts



03.  
Project: Le Royal Meridien Hotel  
Location: Chennai, India



# LE MERIDIEN GETS MODERN



Architectus has been engaged by Appu Hotels Ltd to design the complete refurbishment of the 5-Star Le Royal Meridien Hotel in Chennai, India. The refurbishment will ensure the hotel becomes a highly competitive part of India's burgeoning premium hotel market.

Tony Masters of Architectus reports that Chennai is a highly built-up city of 6.5 million residents, and one that has evolved in an unplanned, organic way from its 17th Century European settlement. "What it lacks in high-rise is compensated for with high urban density. A city like Delhi for instance really has grand boulevards and a more structured civic plan. Chennai has grown into, on top of, and around itself," says Masters.

Re-named Chennai in 1996 (formerly known as Madras), the city is located on India's east coast and is rapidly developing into one of the nation's busiest sea, rail and road freight hubs. "A stark reminder of the emerging India," says Masters, "is a freeway flyover under construction immediately in front of the hotel re-development."

"The hotel's upgrade will make it extremely competitive," says Masters, who reports that the population density, proximity to the coast and humidity make travel to Chennai a unique experience. "It's a city where spices are traded along with cars and computers." World-wide, the trend is to move away from bland hotels for a fresh experience of history, character and luxury for the traveller.

Architectus' design concept is a modern interpretation of the Le Meridien brand and aims to make the hotel more elegant and prestigious, and to project the aspirations of the modern traveller. The major refurbishment includes 255 guest rooms and executive suites, atrium lobby,

four premium restaurants and bars, executive club, ballroom and pre-function space, conference rooms and spa and health club in addition to administration and retail spaces.

"The new design focus reflects the contemporary Le Meridien brand values and introduces design longevity," says Masters. Local arts and crafts from various parts of India are incorporated into the design to develop and interpret heritage and cultural values.

Simplicity and elegance make the king-size and double-double guest rooms a strong feature of the new Le Meridien Chennai Hotel. Suites are designed to cater for the high-end corporate market with a chic and sophisticated character. The Presidential Suite is about refined classicism.

The Royal Club and business centre is designed to cater for executive breakfasts in the morning, conferences mid-morning and afternoons, and cocktail functions of an evening.

The new Spa and Health Club includes gymnasium, lounge, treatment and steam rooms, spa and swimming pool to complete the luxury experience. The existing ballroom and pre-function spaces are elegant and contemporary, in keeping with the hotel's new confidence and place in the market.

→ [tony.masters@architectus.com.au](mailto:tony.masters@architectus.com.au)

→ [ray.brown@architectus.com.au](mailto:ray.brown@architectus.com.au)

**architectus™**

**Auckland**  
Phone +64 9 307 5970  
Fax +64 9 307 5972  
[auckland@architectus.co.nz](mailto:auckland@architectus.co.nz)

**Brisbane**  
Phone +61 7 3221 6077  
Fax +61 7 3221 1645  
[brisbane@architectus.com.au](mailto:brisbane@architectus.com.au)

**Dubai**  
Phone +971 4 295 9065  
Fax +971 4 295 9066  
[dubai@architectus.com.au](mailto:dubai@architectus.com.au)

**Melbourne**  
Phone +61 3 9429 5733  
Fax +61 3 9429 8480  
[melbourne@architectus.com.au](mailto:melbourne@architectus.com.au)

**Sydney**  
Phone +61 2 8252 8400  
Fax +61 2 8252 8600  
[sydney@architectus.com.au](mailto:sydney@architectus.com.au)

**Shanghai**  
Phone +86 21 6255 7373  
Fax +86 21 6255 7575  
[shanghai@architectus.com.au](mailto:shanghai@architectus.com.au)