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Designing to live, learn & grow

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Responding to the needs of a dynamic university campus of undergraduates and a growing postgraduate population of local and international students, Architectus in Sydney worked with Campus Living Villages on the design of Village Student Housing at the University of New South Wales, a residential project that addresses diverse group dynamics, design sustainability and site heritage, and recently won the RAlA’s NSW Chapter Residential Architecture Award for Multiple Housing, and the UDIA NSW Sustainable Development award.

Safety, internet connection, energy efficiency and good affordable design with a range of services that cater to both physical and emotional needs on campus, are what students look for when choosing accommodation according to architect Amanda Bock of Campus Living Villages, the Project Manager of the UNSW Village Student Housing project.

“This is the biggest single build that Campus Living Villages has done anywhere in the world and it represents a stepping-stone between the private rental market and a fully catered college model, so students have a level of independence”, remarks Bock who has worked with Campus Living Villages for 18 years. “This project is fairly high density, the site was complex and probably one of the more difficult projects we have undertaken. We have managed to get the 240 apartments on a very tight site through clever planning. Apartments are predominantly for five to six students, the ideal sharing number so students can democratically manage themselves. We worked closely with Architectus to develop a new planning model that separates bedrooms and living areas – quiet zones and noisy zones – with a bathroom. We now use this model for all of our developments in Australia.”

Built by Watpac, the project required the careful weaving of old buildings and new. Heritage buildings including the Fig Theatre, the Old Tote Building and courtyard space, the White House, as well as the 100 year-old fig trees running along the edge of the site, have been connected to the new buildings and one another via courtyards and landscaping designed to foster community living. All buildings are designed in a clear, uncluttered manner, aimed at reducing visual bulk, complementing the architectural character of the campus, encouraging daylight and breezes, and increasing the connection to the surrounding landscape defined by the Morton Bay fig trees.

“Part of the university brief was to develop a project that was innovative, sustainable, cost effective, and quick to construct”, remarks project leader Rosemarie Gidaro of Architectus. “For the undergraduate population, that meant flexible spaces, with cafés and shops nearby, and their parents wanted a secure home environment. Postgraduate students needed their own space connected to others, while all saw sustainability as an important factor.”

Central to the project are passive design principles integrating cross ventilation and natural day lighting to all spaces, insulation in walls and roofs, solar hot water, grey water reuse for laundries, northern orientation and sun shading, vented floor slabs, and rainwater storage.

“We introduced composite thermomass walls of precast panels. In winter they absorb all the heat and in summer they keep the apartments cool,” explains Gidaro. A hollow core floor system was also used because it is lightweight and it allows cross ventilation even when doors are closed. There is no air-conditioning at all. Fans work maybe 10 days of the year. We recently had a site visit with the RAlA jurors on a brisk 13 degree morning and they couldn’t believe how warm each apartment was.”

The buildings are designed with a thin plan connecting inside to out, and includes single storey detached houses, two to four storey town houses and four, six and eight storey apartment buildings. The five and eight bedroom apartments are the most popular for undergraduates, with one, two and three for postgraduate students who require more privacy. All bedroom units have balconies and terraces off the living areas, upper floor units have either city or district views, and four storey High Street units contain larger bedroom units and short stay accommodation.

Facilities include an e-library, storage for 100 bikes, undercover parking for 74 cars, and amenities for both residents and the wider university community including a café and convenience store and licensed bar. The Fig Tree Theatre that has been retained is used for theatre sports, making a positive connection between old buildings and new and successfully underpinning the heart of the development.

“I think the gathering spaces create a real sense of community,” says Gidaro. “By integrating different courtyards and foyers we created large areas and smaller spaces that allow people to meet. There are both internal gathering spaces, where you can sit down and have a chat, and external courtyards that feel like a Surry Hills cul-de-sac. They are personal and community focused. Our brief responds to the university’s philosophy of living, learning and growing.”

UNSW Village Student Housing NSW

Client: Campus Living Villages
Location: Kensington, NSW
Value: \$90m
Completed: 2010

Project Team:
Kerry & Lindsay Clare, Rosemarie Gidaro, Kirstin Buehrich, Michael Simons, Berlin Ng, Justin Magness, Euckan Chan, Belinda Pajkovic, Farah Akbar, Jiunder Chung, Renee Farah, Philipp Fuending, Scott Hunter, Craig Shelsler, Felicity Hamzah, Richard Ollerhead, Heike Hessenberger, Kimberley Daveson, Reza Hafezi, Vanessa Pereira, Sascha Maruhn.

Awards:
2010 RAlA (NSW) Residential Architecture – Multiple Housing Award, 2010 UDIA (NSW) Sustainable Development Winner



View from High Street, Kensington

Approach taken to sustainability principles and technologies:

- Recycle and reuse existing buildings on site
- Thin buildings and unit layout enable effective use of natural cross ventilation to the units
- Flexible column free construction allows for future adaptation and uses for the buildings
- Creation of breezeways in site planning linking opposite facades allow cross ventilation
- Winter sun access to all living areas
- Cross ventilation to all living areas via operable windows on two opposite facades
- Primary cross ventilation to bedrooms via operable windows and doors and secondary operable hollow core-slab vents which can operate when doors are closed for visual or acoustic privacy
- Thermomass external wall panels provide a comfortable climate without air conditioning
- Majority of bathrooms located at external walls enabling natural ventilation and day lighting
- Natural daylight and cross ventilation to all lift foyers
- Passive ventilation for partially underground parking
- Solar hot water systems (gas boosted)
- Sun shading and weather protection to openings specific to orientation
- 200,000 litre rainwater storage, with grey water storage and reuse for centralised laundries
- Retained and new trees provide shade to courtyards and buildings
- Large areas of deep soil for planting
- Highly insulated roofs



Site Plan



Island life

Designed by Architectus Sydney, in conjunction with local Perth architects, Cameron Chisholm Nicol, the Islands residential project in South Beach is the first development of its kind along a rugged stretch of West Australian coastline. It recently received the 2010 RAIA (WA) Residential Architecture Commendation for Multiple Housing.

On the site of the old ANI foundry south of Fremantle – once large industrial, steel framed sheds built in the 1820s to support the local shipbuilding industry – the Islands residential project sits within a landscape that shifts between the watery expanse of the Indian Ocean to the west and the wild dunes and lush parklands to the east, with spectacular views to Garden, Carnac and Rottnest Island.

The proportion of the building is tempered in scale between the coastline, dunes and park, allowing all 48 apartments and beach house dwellings a view over the water. The project takes its cue from the original industrial sheds with their distinctive limestone base, incorporating the same local limestone for both cladding and ground level plinth. The building's orientation and the integration of natural ventilation are central to the success of the project, while the complexity of the varying standard floor plans gives each apartment a connection to nature and a level of privacy rare in large-scale developments.

The ability to give each of the apartments and beach houses a view is described by project architect Robert Ousey as the most successful characteristic of the building.

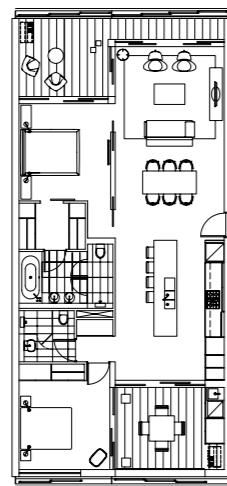
"We sited the building over 6 levels so there is not an abrupt jump from the dunes to the ocean. The plan is efficient and there is no

wasted space. Although the typical apartment is a standard 2-bedroom plan, it feels generous. You have three to 4-metre wide glazed sliding doors back and front opening onto external spaces so you have lots of light coming into both the back and front. There is a loggia at the back that's half the width of the apartment. On the front overlooking the ocean a full 8-metre wide balcony is connected to the living and master bedroom, while the kitchen and second bedroom open onto the loggia. The bathrooms are in the middle of the plan."

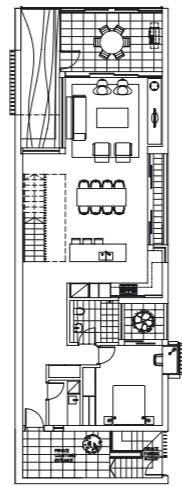
Utilising passive design principles, an integrated system of operable louvres harness breezes off the Indian Ocean to cool the building naturally while protecting it from heat build up and wild storms. This is a central part of the building's design that also became a very successful characteristic of the building.

"Balconies and louvres for shading protect the apartments from the Fremantle doctor", remarks Ousey. "Concrete with its high thermal mass captures heat during the day

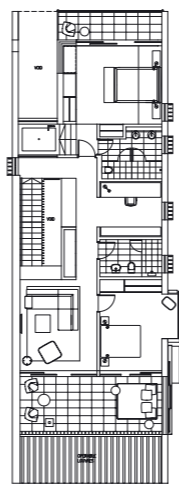
and dissipates it during the night. Stockland responded to our sustainable design approach, and these features became a very marketable aspect of the building."



Typical 2 bedroom apartment



Beach House Ground Floor



Beach House Level 1

Islands, South Beach

Client: Stockland
Location: South Beach, WA
Value: \$115m
Completed: Stage 1, December 2009

Project Team:
 Lindsay & Kerry Clare, Peter St Clair, Robert Ousey, Ivan Ip, Craig Earley

Awards:
 Stockland Design Competition Winner, 2009 UDIA (WA) Environmental Excellence, 2010 RAIA (WA) Residential Architecture Commendation – Multiple Residential

Architectus welcomes its new design principal James Jones

What are the projects that you are most proud of, and why?

JJ: An obvious highlight was the winning competition design by Architectus for the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) and its subsequent opening and operation to critical acclaim.

I was delighted to read remarks by the renowned photographer Douglas Kirkland, who has held major exhibitions in Europe and USA but maintains "he has never had the opportunity that the spaces of Queensland Art Gallery's Gallery of Modern Art are now offering." In the interview about his upcoming exhibition at GOMA, Kirkland comments on the gallery's "high level of sophistication" and says: "The city of Brisbane has something amazing here... It makes me feel like I'm in a cathedral..." (Review, *Weekend Australian* July 10–11, 2010).

Subsequent projects that I have been involved with include the redevelopment of the Henry Jones Art Hotel, the RACT state offices, significant logistics buildings for energy providers Aurora and Transend, and a residence at Trial Bay.

The Gallery (Architectus) and the Henry Jones Art Hotel (Morris-Nunn Associates) were projects the size of city blocks, with a high degree of public use and expectation. These projects have been very well received by clients, artists, curators, administrators and the general public.

Projects for Aurora and Transend (HBV) involved large-scale logistics facilities requiring tectonic solutions that delivered a high degree of spatial flexibility, repetition for economy, sophisticated environmental responses and innovation in structural expression and build-ability. Each has been awarded the RAIA

state Colorbond Award for Steel Architecture in 2008 and 2010 respectively, with the Aurora facility also being awarded nationally.

The Trial Bay house overlooking the D'Entrecasteaux Channel in southern Tasmania, albeit small, is the result of a very positive relationship between client, architect and builder and the combined effect received recognition from the RAIA with the inaugural Esmond Dorney state award for residential architecture in 2010.

What other architects, and examples of architecture inspire you?

JJ: An obvious motivation for our profession is the role in improvement of places and the meaning that the architect brings beyond mere building – the worth of architecture, perhaps. I am inspired by the public worth in architectural expression when it is combined with spatial intelligence and structural integrity.

Eero Saarinen's TWA airport terminal in Washington is a stand out project for me. The middle of the Twentieth Century was a time when the world was recovering from the Second World War and the optimism of the future was expressed through incredible architecture and engineering. The Sydney Opera House for example belongs to this era. Saarinen's airport terminal has a dual quality of lightness and strength, expressed so elegantly in its concrete structure, and in particular from the interior where the columns disappear through holes in the roof. This building appears to have no visible means of support.

An important quality of contemporary architecture is the integrity of the use of materials, and there has never been a time more pressing than now to conserve materials. Building 'more with less' was a mantra of

early Modernism that appears to have been forgotten, but should be a central plank in any architect's design strategy if a level of sustainability is to be achieved beyond fashion.

In terms of architectural design, what is your design philosophy, and what will you bring to Architectus?

JJ: An approach to architecture that I like to explore is to unlock projects from their stereotype. This requires insight into and redefinition of the building type, and a clear response to the physical location and cultural context. For me, the sketch drawing is the agent or medium for the architectural idea, and the role of the sketch drawing is crucial in its ability to tap into and unlock the project, and to communicate complex ideas and propositions very simply.

An example of a project where I applied this design method was the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art, where art gallery was redefined as 'chest-of-drawers' or gallery as 'public pavilion', returning enclosed public space to the city for the common good. The sketches that were produced by the Architectus team for the Stage 1 Competition were free-hand yet explicit, and the narrative was compelling enough that the project was selected from 180 entries world-wide.

The central design principle that I uphold and can share with Architectus is to do with tectonics – the whole art of producing useful and well composed buildings. There is an inherent and irrefutable quality when the relation between the form of a building, its use, its parts, how they are produced and put together, and their role as a sum, is greater. The value of tectonics as a definitive, holistic approach is best demonstrated through built work, but can also be taught by precedent.

Retiring but not shy Dr Andrew Bunting

After 25 years as a Director of Architectus Melbourne, Dr Andrew Bunting officially retired on 30 June 2010. A former teacher and university lecturer, Andrew is Chair of Big Picture Learning and a Senior Fellow within the Education Faculty of The University of Melbourne and currently serves on the committee of the Victorian Branch of The Australian Council for Education Leaders (ACEL).

Andrew is the former member of the Steering Committee for the Victorian Schools Innovation Commission and former President and Treasurer of the Australasian Region of the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI). He has played a distinguished role over many years in the promotion of education projects within the practice, and he shares a few parting thoughts with Peter Salhani, editor of Architecture Bulletin.

Where did your passion for educational architecture come from?

AB: Probably from the fact that I was a teacher and lecturer for a couple of years in the early 1970s, so I understood about these environments a little.

To what degree is the architecture of schools etc influenced by the nature vs nurture paradigm of developmental psychology?

This is hard to answer here. It would fit under nurture though. Nature is what you are born with – nurture is what gets developed in you and buildings can affect you at a number of levels. When done well, they can really inspire you and make you feel like you 'just want to be there' because the environment is so good.

What are the most significant changes you've seen in your 25 years in the field of education?

AB: The influence of technology, the greater understanding of the variety of ways that students learn and the desire to make schools integrate more with their communities.

What have been some of your most rewarding moments in practice?

AB: Presenting at architecture conferences – the ability that has to influence students and teachers – and being part of the role that Architectus has played in this sector. And my involvement with CEFPI has also been very rewarding and beneficial for the practice.

Patrick Clifford President NZIA

Patrick Clifford, Director of Architectus Auckland, began his two-year term as President of the New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA) in May 2010. Patrick speaks briefly about his new role and as an ambassador for architecture.

"I'd like to think my professional life to date has been a commitment to the pursuit of the fundamental objectives of the Institute, namely: to promote excellence in architecture; ethical conduct in practice, the acquisition and sharing of knowledge relating to architecture (both in New Zealand and overseas), and to advance the study and practice of architecture.

"Now as NZIA President, my task is to pursue and promote these objectives on behalf of my colleagues and peers, which is indeed an honour. The fundamental cause we are seeking to advance, I believe, is buy-in by the wider community to the idea that architecture is important.

"Architecture contributes to our sense of identity, and to economic and social well-being. Good housing enhances people's lives, well-designed hospitals help them heal, good quality school buildings contribute to quality education, well designed workplaces underpin gains in productivity, and vibrant, amenable cities help attract people to live and work in our towns and cities.

What will you be doing in retirement – that is, life after Architectus?

AB: I have quite a few interests. I am currently mentoring a couple of students at a local primary school, and I will do more at our Anglican Church in the area of pastoral care. Also, we are rebuilding our beach house at the moment, which will mean more peripheral work for me around the site. Professionally, I will still be involved with CEFPI and ACEL and will still pop into Architectus from time to time as a consultant. I'm also writing a book about 'Schools and Community' which was meant to be finished by the end of September – though I may need to ask for a fourth extension of the deadline.

"We need to boost understanding of this across the broader community – which is where examples of quality work, as seen through Awards programme are so important.

The relationship of the legislative environment to our work is also fundamental: without an appropriate framework, our work to build a better environment is much harder. The NZIA has a significant role to play in influencing Government thinking around legislative issues such as the Building Act and the Resource Management Act. It's an opportunity for us to collectively take responsibility and action towards positive change."

Auckland renewal

While the Brisbane Supreme Court and District Courts building by Architectus provides a clear model for dealing with the demands of the various parties involved in Jury trials, at the other end of the scale, in Auckland, Architectus has created an elegant and refined setting for two non-criminal jurisdictions, with their lesser demands.

Auckland's "Specialist Courts and Tribunal Centre" accommodates the Employment and Environment Courts in an existing building adjacent to the Auckland District Court forming part of the larger "Justice Precinct".

"...in Auckland, Architectus has created an elegant and refined setting for the Specialist Courts and Tribunal Centre organised around a timber lined internal street"

The Employment Court deals, obviously, with employment issues while the Environment Court is a specialist court for planning and environmental issues under the Resource Management Act. The brief called, simply, for two purpose-built courts, a smaller multifunction courtroom and associated registries, Judges Chambers and Commissioners rooms. While negotiating the requirements of the two jurisdictions took some time, ultimately a straightforward bi-partite plan was developed. Besides the public entry only one secure access route to these courts is required, in contrast to the demands of criminal courts where four or more separate access routes are needed. The plan therefore provides a public zone with the waiting area, interview rooms and the courts and a secure, back of house zone, containing the other functions.

The existing building with a large floor plate and access at one end helped shape the plan diagram which creates an internal "street" to connect the three courtrooms with waiting areas formed as bays off the main thoroughfare. These public areas are wrapped in timber wall panelling, New Zealand Beech sourced from FSC certified sustainable forests, with lighting washing the walls asymmetrically highlighting the texture and grain of the timber. An abstract pattern in the carpet enlivens the main circulation routes and the New Zealand Beech is used again in the courtrooms, where it combines with frosted glass panels as a backdrop to the Judges bench.

Linoleum is used for the purpose-built courtroom tables, desks and fittings in the Judges Chambers, again combined with the New Zealand Beech.

While back of house spaces have simpler finishes, the chambers, and in particular the Judges' common room and library, achieve a dignified gravitas through careful design, use of colour and selection of furnishings.

Specialist Courts and Tribunal Centre

Client: Ministry of Justice

Location: Auckland CBD

Value: \$2m

Completed: July 2010

Project Team:

Patrick Clifford, Michael Thomson, Severin Soder, John Baker, Julian O'Neal, Hilary Kitt, James Craig



Employment Court



Public "Internal Street"



Judges Common Room



Library

Entry Fins

New Appointments

Architectus fosters talented teams of architects and designers who are committed to design and the process of making award winning buildings. We support and strengthen team leadership by promoting our best performers, and we are always looking for outstanding people who can bring their knowledge and experience to the group. We are pleased to announce the most recent promotions and appointments at Architectus...

Ian Davidson, Associate Director Melbourne
Colin Odbert, Associate Director Sydney
Kevin Carrucan, Associate Director Sydney
James Mooney, Associate Director Auckland

Peter Dawson, Senior Associate Brisbane
Jim Gall, Senior Associate Brisbane

Chris Aucott, Associate Sydney
Joanne King, Associate Melbourne
Agatha Lawden, Associate Melbourne
David Strachan, Associate Melbourne
Dr Stephen Long, Associate Brisbane
Severin Soder, Associate Auckland



High Street courtyard



East-west pedestrian link



View to courtyard between dwellings

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