

PROJECT



BANKSTOWN LIBRARY AND KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

Bankstown, NSW

Product
Stratopanel



Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre - Photo by Christian Mushenko

Innovative reuse and salvage transforms history into a modern icon

As part of Bankstown City Council's Library and Knowledge Centre upgrade program, the decision to convert the old Bankstown Town Hall building into a state of the art Library and Knowledge Centre has resulted in an award-winning urban hub that has breathed new life into aging community facilities, and turned the space into a vibrant iconic building that is both stunning in design and practical in its use.

Notably, one of the greatest achievements of this project lies in the salvage and recycling aspect of the design, and this was given full focus when following the original brief from Bankstown City Council, which was to create a sustainable building of distinctive architectural character, bringing the community together.

"By giving careful consideration to how we could salvage and reuse materials from the original building we were able to create a design that easily met the environmental aspects

of the brief and kept the project within budget," says Simon Barr, Senior Associate at fjmt.

Throughout the extensive salvage and reuse program the optimum use of existing materials in the new building was identified, for example, salvaged floor boards as new flooring and salvaged timber wall lining reused in new joinery. As a result, the program has seen the building set a new benchmark for the use of recycled materials in future public building projects.

But, the success of this project and the reason that it has achieved the objectives so well lies in the hybrid approach that fjmt adopted. Rather than simply opting for an adaptive reuse of the existing building or a complete knock down and rebuild, they chose to meet the environmental brief by combining recycling with sensitively chosen new materials to enhance both the aesthetic quality of the finished build, the practical use and the environmental considerations.

"The main design feature of the building was to create a space for the new library that was like gathering under the canopy of two great trees,"

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Market Sector

Community

Date of completion

April 2014

Client

Bankstown City Council

Project Value

\$20 million

Architect

Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp (fjmt)

Product

Stratopanel

PROJECT

Case Study



says Simon. "This area is subject to a lot of ambient noise that is expected with libraries and public spaces of this nature. We needed a material to line the ceiling that would reduce the reverberant aspect of the space."

Simon consulted with the Knauf sales and technical teams to discuss the option of specifying Stratopanel on this ceiling.

"Their advice was invaluable," says Simon. **"We needed to understand how the product moved materially and structurally, and they explained the performance in terms of examples of other precedents where it had been used."**

"The continuous perforation of Stratopanel and its sheet size were the main reasons for specifying it for this aspect of the design," advised Simon. "Normally on a ceiling you have a resulting grid form because of the boundary on the panels. Stratopanel overcomes this because the perforations go all the way to the edge and the result is one seamless surface."

As this was the main feature ceiling of the whole design, the aesthetic

quality of the materials specified was as important as their functional noise-reducing capabilities.

Laura Vallentine, Senior Architect on the project, echoes this sentiment.

"We wanted a product that would provide a completely continuous finish, not just in the pattern on the panels itself, but also one that provided capability to detail seamless connection of individual panels," she says. **"After researching what was available, Stratopanel was the only product that met that need."**

In addition to the continuous perforations on the panels, Stratopanel also met another key criterion. Where necessary, the architects were able to specify infill sections to enhance the design because Stratopanel doesn't tie you to following the perforation design.

"It's an amazing building," says Simon. "The primary feature of the building is its quite curvaceous feature ceiling and this was where Stratopanel met both design and performance needs."

And the benefits of Stratopanel don't just end with noise reduction and

aesthetics, with the product also reducing the levels of VOCs and air pollutants in the space by significant amounts thanks to its CLEANEO Technology derived from a natural volcanic rock called Zeolite.

The \$20 million project, which was opened in April 2014 to outstanding accolades from both the community and the industry, has received a multitude of nominations and awards, including being shortlisted at the World Architecture Festival and highly commended for its quality and achievements. It was also shortlisted in the NSW Architecture Awards for Interior Architecture, Public Architecture and Sustainable Architecture and won the National Design Award for lighting and structure.

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