

VISION



Guiding Light

Austinmer Beach House
on the NSW south-coast

Imaginarium

Camberwell Library
Melbourne



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design freedom
with smarter
windows.

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Viridian™ manufactures some of the most innovative glass products in Australia today delivering lifelong energy savings and year round comfort – even in our most demanding climates.

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Congratulations to those shortlisted in the Sustainability category.

Austinmer Beach House – Alexander Symes Architect in association with g+v architecture.

House in a Warehouse – Splinter Society Architecture P/L

Mihaus Studio – Sue Harper Architects.

Stead Street Residence – K20 Architecture.

Waverley House – Anderson Architecture.

Viridian™
New World Glass

EDITORIAL



Twitter



Blog

Welcome to the July issue of Viridian's Vision Magazine. This month's case studies include a spectacular NSW south-coast home and an energised suburban council office and library where glass has been used in extraordinary ways. Enjoy Viridian's Vision.

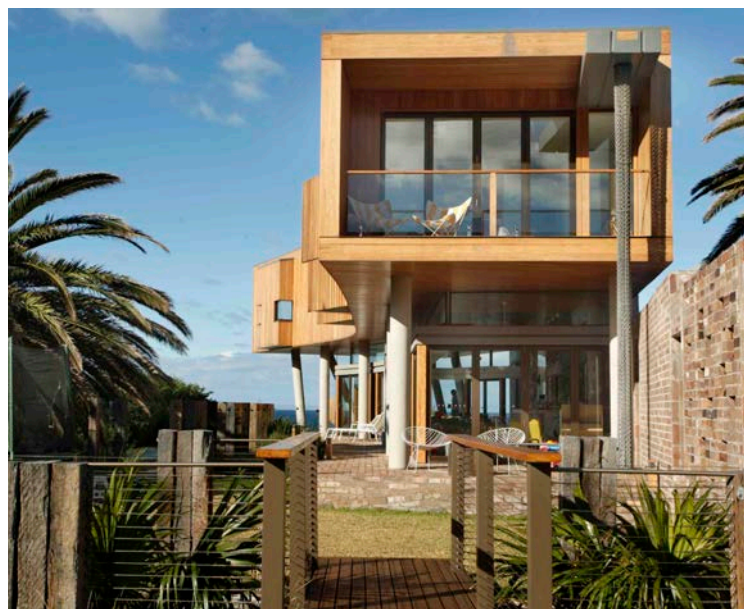
Cameron Hook

Marketing Communications Manager

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The Austinmer Beach House. A highly sustainable agenda delivers delight rather than enforced, regulation-driven necessity. Tuned for optimum performance and bristling with energy saving features, the project utilises Viridian's brilliant double-glazing to contribute an abiding sense of place.





The emerging Sydney architect Alex Symes could claim to have embraced the dark side in his latest role as facade engineer. Quickly dispelling such ideas, the creator of the Austinmer Beach House on the NSW south-coast reveals a thoroughly illuminated mind.

His ability to fuse the freehand of architecture with complex mathematical modelling results in a house sparkling with light and fully connected to its environment. Legible and adaptable, the house is a new take on the beloved beach shack. Symes' version is a world away from the ground-hogging box packed onto site without regard to place.

Sixty-five kilometres south of Sydney, the one-time fishing and coal-mining township of Austinmer is being re-discovered for its extraordinary beauty. Symes' cliff top house, at the base of the towering Illawarra Escarpment, is one of the few that appears so in tune with its setting.

"Many architects believe they need to find every solution, but it's really an integrated, cross-disciplinary challenge," observes Symes whose design brings into alignment such artful form, precise engineering and skilful construction.

On three levels with underground parking and accommodation it is the ground plane and upper level with a J-curve plan that helps generate a cinematic relationship with the ocean.

Reinforcing the client's hopes and ambitions, Symes says he encouraged a bold environmental strategy. The result is a model of flexibility open and permeable with a series of sliding edges on the ground floor made possible with retractable glass walls. The upper floor is a *tour de force* of detailing animated by gill-like windows that provide valuable shade and scoop ocean views.

Following the sound dictum of not being everything to everyone, Symes employed a project engineer rather than 'do it all' himself. "You want to avoid a tug-of-war," he argues. "The best results occur when we all work together." He says the two disciplines often exist as parallel strands rather than entwine as one.

His current role at Arup has Symes immersed in the technical complexities of tower façade systems and energy modelling. While these complexities and dizzy heights appear a world away from his







GLASS IS AN AMAZING MATERIAL.
THE BETTER INFORMED YOU ARE,
THE MORE POSSIBILITIES TO CREATE
SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS.

Alexander

Above

Main living room draws winter sunlight. View through void.

Guiding Light

“My clients love the beach. They wanted a robust house that would allow them to walk directly from the beach with the sand between their toes. They also wanted to visually connect with the floral diversity to the west. The answer of a permeable ground floor plane to the beach and hooded windows to the north ensure a strong link to these natural features. Glass is such a critical part of that strategy of pulling in maximum daylight and views while keeping out the worst of the weather.

“With that love of surfing and a young family I wanted to really articulate elements of the project that might invite conversation and discussion. An important issue for me is that the house might stimulate awareness of the natural world.” He describes the exposed downpipe on the western elevation that feeds a rainwater tank that in turn feeds the washing machine, toilets and garden.

“There’s a certain celebration about water collection and conservation. If such processes and operational systems remain completely hidden then there’s less chance to develop a respect for how we operate and achieve a better understanding of nature. Ultimately we can ensure a stewardship of these life-cycle aspects.”

Symes admits to inexperience with façade systems before working at Arup. “My technical knowledge of materials was very limited as a result of my architectural education. I knew very little about glass facades whereas I’ve learned so much and am putting that knowledge into practise. Glass is an amazing material. The better informed

you are, the greater the possibilities to create more enriched, sustainable environments. “In many ways we only now seem to be learning how to make better use of glass. Industry, designers and engineers are pushing one another. The constant striving for better visual clarity and thermal performance is accelerating results.”

“Apart from the specific performance efficiency of Viridian’s glass range, the whole embodied energy impact came into calculations,” A small environmental footprint is definitely my preference so imported product wasn’t really a consideration.

According to Symes “.....the social, environmental and economic sustainability drivers need to work together to create a delightful, fulfilling existence.

“We need to encourage smaller, better quality housing. My interest isn’t really the vast construction of lesser quality, so much as the highest quality, compact, solution.” It’s a design philosophy powered by material restraint and spatial generosity.

The result is a rare connection worthy of its epic setting.

AMAZING MATERIAL.
 YOU ARE, THE GREATER THE
 WE CAN CREATE MORE ENRICHED,
 SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS.

Symes

Credits

Project

Austinmer House,
South Coast. NSW

Architect

Alex Symes with
G&V Architects

Builder

Matt Jolley

Structural engineering

Detom Design

Landscaping

Melissa Wilson

Principal glazing contractor:

Hanlon Windows

Principal glazing resource

Viridian ThermoTech™ IGUs

Frame

Thermally improved AWS
aluminium window suite.

Principal glazing

Viridian ThermoTech™ IGU
4/12/4mm

Argon-filled, clear.

Floor area

750m² (site)
250m² (floor)

The City of Boroondara's investment in thoughtful design results in a makeover worthy of an intelligent adult television audience.



Energised workplaces and suburban councils are not always considered in the same breath. An old-world mindset can deny a new-world aspiration. The Melbourne architectural practice Nicholas and Alexander were fortunate to find a client willing to explore the possibilities.

The City of Boroondara's investment in thoughtful design results in a makeover worthy of an intelligent adult television audience.

Twelve kms south-east of the CBD, the shire offices and library in leafy Camberwell are a revelation of connections. Nineteenth century civic offices and a bland, 1970s black-box theatre, are home to a vibrant new workplace and community library.

Nicholas Daviotis of Nicholas and Alexander Architects provided Peter Hyatt a tour of the new council facilities.

He explains how he helped his client realise a more prismatic, technicolour world:

Greetings Nick. It's a rather unexpected, atypical result for most municipal councils.

Nicholas Daviotis: Yes it is, but they were ready and willing to go well beyond the basic plot.

The envelope has a vitality we're unaccustomed to, or expect, with such civic buildings.

I'm pleased you say that because that was one of our major aims.

What were some of the other objectives?

The existing theatre was an austere black box. In the conversion we explored what this could become. Could it provide really generous connections and create a wonderful library? In that sort of space you try to embrace light and create vitality to draw people into what is essentially a public lounge-room.

What message do you hope the project sends to ratepayers, visitors and passers-by?

Hopefully it reveals a certain aspiration for the community of Boroondara and affirms a strong sense of place and identity.

What is its single biggest achievement?

The creation of a great place the community can call its own. It's not a display of council power or wealth.

How difficult is it to create a convincing relationship by grafting on new work without overwhelming the old building?

We basically added layers. We are respectful of the old and those differences are made very clear. There's a homage, valuing and counterpoint of its history rather than fudging.

Isn't there a loss of relevance about libraries? Aren't they heading the way of the mega-shopping centre eroded by the on-line world?

People still love to gather and meet socially. A library is also this conduit of knowledge and recognition of the numerous forms of knowledge. Books are specific and contain a depth of knowledge and opinion whereas the Web is a broad, sweeping information base. The library is the 'real world' and recognises the joys of holding a book and making conversation. There is also the pleasure of a live presentation by a notable speaker for instance, the pleasure of reading and sharing with children and as a portal to cyber space. It's a very multi-media experience.

Was there any conflict of your 'house style' versus client fingerprints?

It's very symbiotic. One relies on the other. They come together here and don't stand apart.

Are you ever tempted to franchise your designs?

It's not an object to mass-produce. It's a reflection of the process and place in time and of the people involved and the budgetary forces and everything else that comes with assembling a building.





The ground-floor library features a large central void providing daylight and fresh air circulation.

Isn't there an often overly simplified architecture as an expression of inside versus outside? What are some of the other tasks you set yourself?

The municipal function contains all of the administrative and civic elements. It operates within a democratic context with transparency and good governance to fulfil community aspirations. We tried to express this context by improving links between public spaces and 'staff only' administrative spaces.

With transparency?

Yes. Openness permeates much of the building and reflects council as inclusive of community rather than exclusive.

It's not just a building you absorb in one breath, or a single visit. It has various architectural layers.

The layering reflects the complexity of this type of project. It relates on various levels and isn't simply some abstract form.

You have to go beyond elegance don't you? There's an ephemeral art to create buildings that touch and effect people for the better.

As architects it's wonderful that we can have that effect. That's when you're successful, when people refer to the architecture in some way. It doesn't have to be 'in your face' but if it touches the visitor and user as you describe, then that's a pretty successful result.

Credits

Project

City of Boroondara Council
Offices and Library

Architect

Nicholas and Alexander

Builder

Abigroup

Principal glazing contractor:

IND Window Fabrications P/L

Principal glazing resource

Viridian

Frame

Thermally improved AWS
aluminium window suite.

Ground Floor library

6mm EVantage™ grey
tough+12mm air + 6mm
clear toughened.

Library windows

6mm EVantage™
SuperGreen toughened
+12mm air+ 6mm clear
toughened.

Spandrel Panels

6mm EVantage™
SuperGreen seraphic

Feature coloured screen

10.76mm DécorColour™
laminated. Sahara Sun',
'Tangerine', 'Deep Red',
'True Blue', 'Green'.
Clear glass to back face.

Clerestory

13.52mm EnviroShield
Performance™ ITO Grey 33
heat strengthened +
laminated glass (skylights)

Balustrades (internal)

12mm clear toughened glass.

Project Cost

\$23 million

OPENNESS PERMEATES MUCH OF
THE BUILDING AND REFLECTS COUNCIL
AS INCLUSIVE OF COMMUNITY
RATHER THAN EXCLUSIVE.

Nicholas Daviotis



IMAGINA

VIRIDIAN'S HIGH PERFORMANCE
EVANTAGE™ LOW E AND DÉCORCOLOUR™
GLASS COMBINE TO ENERGISE THESE
SUBURBAN COUNCIL OFFICES AND LIBRARY.
THE RESULT BRINGS INTO SHARP FOCUS
PREMISES RELEVANT FOR THE
21ST CENTURY.

City of Boroondara
Council Offices and Library

Principal glazing resource:
6mm EVantage™

Architect: Nicholas and Alexander

Text, Images: Peter Hyatt



RIUM



CORE PRODUCTS



ENERGY



NOISE



CLEAR VISION



DECORATIVE



BUSHFIRE



STRUCTURAL



STORM



SECURITY

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Below

A giant multi-coloured screen comprising Viridian's DécorColour™ glass provides an iconic billboard for the new council library and offices.









The ground-floor library features a large central void providing daylight and fresh air circulation.

Glass provides an unusually expressive force here. It really stamps a surprise personality... and dimension.

In the curtain walling system and the strong coloured glazing element that forms the façade it's almost a means of expressing our place in time which is very different from say, the '60s. I wanted the transparency and filtered light rather than a solid surface texture. Glass provides an experience from all dimensions; from within the building and from outside. There is an excitement at night when lit up and in many ways it's like a painting. I hope it's a very successful use of glass.

Viridian's DécorColour™ glass range adds a tremendous vibrancy. Was there any hesitation about the jelly-bean colours?

No, council was willing to go on that journey. It's playful in a serious way. If an alien landed in Melbourne they would see so many toned down and neutral developments. It's as if we're scared of colour and this project is a response to that. It is offered as a counterpoint and contrast and transforming element to herald the new council emerging from its past.

Yet the library is quite subdued.

The podium and steps really reference the former theatre and so we turned the building inside out in a sense to make the whole project a stage. Glass creates the metamorphosis from dreary function centre to a jewel-like result inside and out.

Preservation of the old almost provides this springboard of the new.

The building had an auditorium, a proscenium and a stage. We gutted those and put in two additional levels to meet the functional requirements of the council offices and converted the ground floor into a large library. It's much more than a refurbishment. It's reclaimed. It's the ultimate in material and building recycling.

GLASS PROVIDES AN FROM ALL DIMENSIONS; FROM BUILDING AND FROM

Nicholas Daviotis

Any concerns about meeting energy ratings?

We had ESD consultants on board from the outset. Our glass choice provides a wonderful shade for the building. It's certified and has a 5-star green energy rating. That selection was critical in achieving that performance.

What assistance did Viridian's technical team provide throughout the process?

There is some wonderful technical information available on their website including specifications, colour range and information to assist in meeting Section J compliance. They were efficient in providing various colour and product samples.

Did you select local sourced glass for a specific reason or philosophy?

We have confidence in their products. In our experience they stand by them. You select a glass from China and you don't know if that supplier will be around next year, or the year after. Viridian has been part of the scene here for many years and that reliability is very compelling.

Is there anything you can add about the other principal performance glazing type Low-E?

We wanted a high transparency glass on the ground floor but were mindful that while this is a static component of the project it can also be dynamic whereby passers-by can see that the building is alive with people using the building. Clear glass provides that visual interest but unlike the older clear glass there aren't the same problems of heat loss and gain.

EXPERIENCE
FROM WITHIN THE
M OUTSIDE.



Right

Performance roof glazing
unobtrusively defines the
old and new.

Below

Enlivened communal spaces



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Nicholas Daviotis



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New World Glass

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