

VISION

ISSUE 45

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Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria

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THE FOREVER HOUSE

Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria

Coastal bush forms the canvas for this beach beauty a hop, skip and jump from Victoria's surf-coast. Dense natural bush is part of the area's attraction but with it comes bushfire risk. The 'Forever House' was built to be the house of a lifetime for its owners. Not only enduring in lifestyle terms, but also enduring against the elements, the architects used Viridian PyroGuard™ 40 bushfire BAL40 rated glazing on the exposed south elevation and performance Low-E glass on the north. The result is a house of exceptional comfort and sense of place.

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24 INTENSIVE CARE

St. John of God Hospital, Berwick, Melbourne

Hospitals can appear formidable and unfriendly, but the St. John of God Hospital in Melbourne's outer-suburban Berwick displays a friendly presence and scale. A light, sky reflecting envelope of Viridian's EVantage™ SuperBlue™ glazing offers a landmark presence and flowing interior daylight. Rather than confrontational or confusing, the architecture conveys a direct, engaging simplicity. With high privacy where necessary, the mood otherwise is design as inclusive rather than exclusive. Daylight, acoustics and spatial flow all speak of an interfluent ease for patients and visitors.

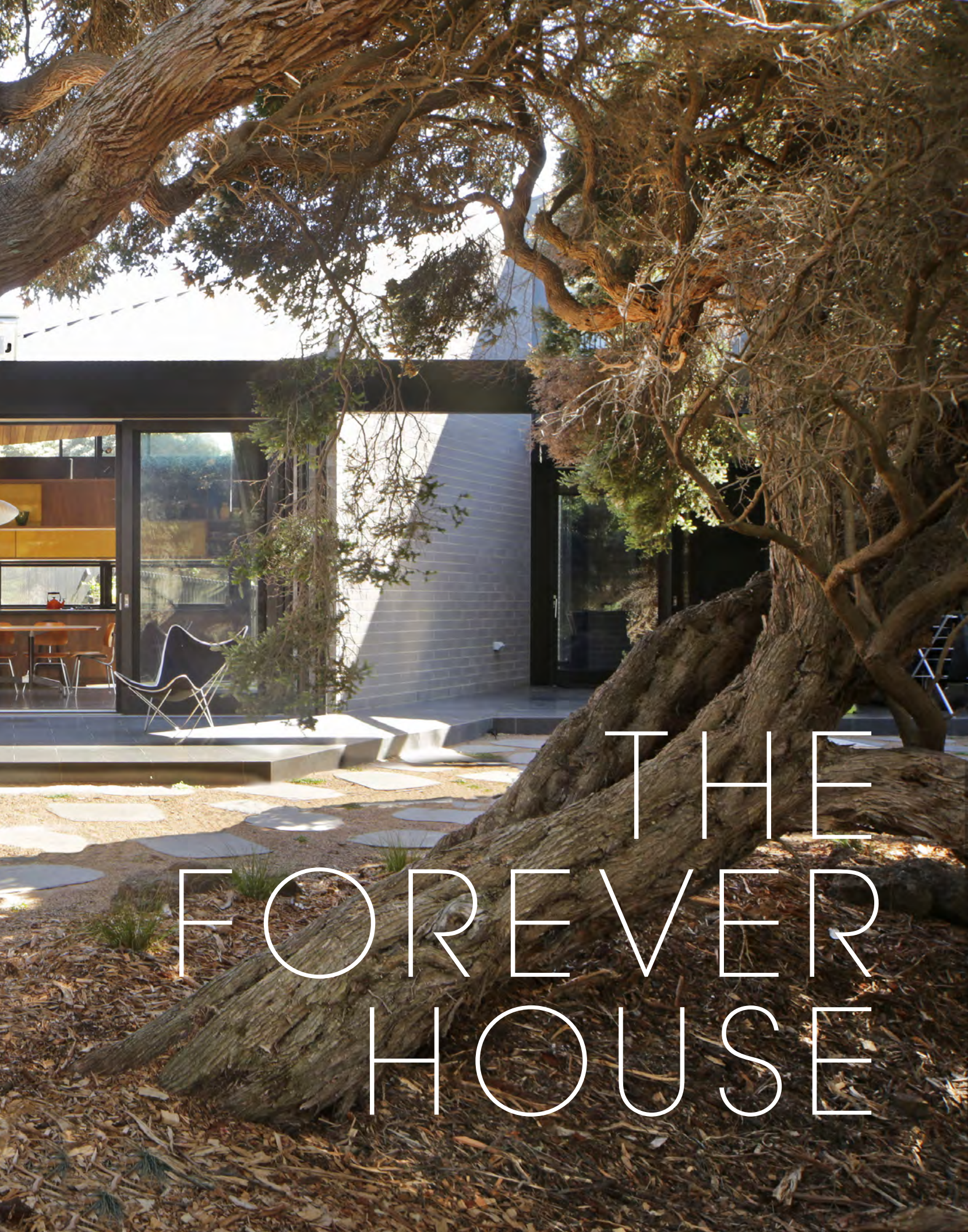


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ST. JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL



CLICK TO HEAR VIRIDIAN'S
CHRIS MURRAY DISCUSS THE
ST. JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL





THE
FOREVER
HOUSE



CLICK TO VISIT
THE FOREVER HOUSE



“This tree,” says Michael Bellemo, “is still more important than the house.” It’s a surprising admission by an architect. The object of reverence is a 300 plus year-old Moonah tree that takes centre-stage and inspired the Forever House on Victoria’s Bellarine Peninsula.

How to incorporate the beauty of such a specimen tree? Consider it as a sapling from William Shakespeare’s time and it’s some perspective about this remarkable tree. Protection and space were preeminent for architect and client. Given the coastal bushfire risk, Bellemo and architect partner Cat Macleod had their work cut out. How to celebrate nature, yet provide high protection?

Meeting bushfire code can be arduous and not always pretty. The alternative can be strikingly effective. The duo’s choice of Viridian PyroGuard™ 40 bushfire rated BAL40 glass and high-performance Paarhammer window and door frames, produced an elegant, bushfire safe solution. More than this, it manages an intimate conversation between house and nature.

The classic Australian beach-house celebrated place like few others. Fast-forward 60 years and reconcile how ‘super-size’ is the new beige. Beautiful settings swallowed by quick turnover housing are commonplace. This makes the beautifully calibrated craft not only unusual, but worthy of exploration.

Architect Michael Bellemo sees the streetscape elevation as “a kind of quasi-smiley house looking through the ti-tree”.

PROJECT

The Forever House,
Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria

ARCHITECTS

Bellemo & Cat

PRINCIPAL GLAZING

Viridian PyroGuard™ 40
EVantage™ Double Glazed Units BAL29

TEXT, IMAGES & FILM

Peter & Jenny Hyatt

Bellemo and Cat have a record of highly innovative, highly sustainable housing. Their Cocoon House (2002) at Wye River, on Victoria's south-coast and Polygreen House (2007) Northcote, Melbourne among the highlights. Their knack is to deliver light-weight design of heavyweight significance.

Despite a formidable street presence and scale, the Forever House cleverly eases into its inclined site of vegetated sand dunes rising to the rear of the allotment. The architects' siting of the house on a north/south axis guides the house as a linear, narrow-waisted form with generous living areas and broad decks beach and street-side.

The couple's glazing program is complementary and quietly audacious – bold and double-height to the north with an inclined roof/ceiling tapering on the south where the house greets verdant native bush and the grand Moonah. It's a compelling pair of elevations welcoming vista, copious sunlight, bush scents and salt air.

Vision's Peter Hyatt met with Michael Bellemo and Cat McLeod to discover how their house design converted difficulty into opportunity:

VISION Why 'The Forever House'?

CAT MACLEOD The owners wanted a house that would take them well into the future. It isn't a speculative, investment type property but a house in which they see themselves virtually forever. They love everything about the house and setting and are very committed to living here as long as they can. This is an inter-generational home for clients with serious activities both indoor and outdoor. Hence there is a coffee roasting, beer brewing, games area below the deck, surf board racks, after surf plunge-pool, a lift to enable the clients to remain here until old, quiet recreational rooms and various decks for animals and children.

MICHAEL BELLEMO This is the clients 'forever' home. They wanted a house to endure the ages, so solidity and permanence were key words, within the transient holiday nature of the town. This was to be their rock.



The lower level games room, circular window echoes the larger windows of master and second bedroom.



“This is an inter-generational home for clients with serious activities both indoor and outdoor. Hence there is a coffee roasting, beer brewing, games area below the deck, surf board racks, after surf plunge-pool, a lift to enable the clients to remain here until old, quiet recreational rooms and various decks for animals and children.”

CAT MACLEOD, ARCHITECT





CLICK TO HEAR TONY PAARHAMMER
DISCUSS HIS BUSHFIRE RATED
WINDOWS & DOORS



“The BAL40 bushfire rated glass allows the house and tree to coexist so closely. Without that product the house and tree would need a huge separation or some other cladding without the delight that this solution offers.”

CAT MACLEOD, ARCHITECT



Did you have a light-bulb moment when the design answers came to you?

MB The light bulb moment was that a lot of house was needed. There was also a lot of program to fit onto this site and we had to get a big volume into a smaller volume. The ceiling and the roof needed to fold down to help achieve that.

How influential was the environment in shaping your solution?

CM The guiding principle was to respond to the site with gusto, matching bravura with bravura, the power of the magnificent Moonah tree is balanced with the power of the house, creating a conversation between the natural world and the built. This is a proud contribution to the community of new beach side architecture. The sense of solidity and durability is a deliberate response to both the landscape and the somewhat fickle nature of a holiday town, this is a permanent residence in a seasonal place and provides an enduring intergenerational home for this family.

It's unconventional in a number of ways, not least your window expression.

MB This house graces the street like a smiling fortress with echoes of the forts and light houses that stand facing the ocean in this area.

The two major elevations respond in very different ways with different performance glazing to maximise the potential amenity.

CM In order to encapsulate the dramatic twisted beauty of the Moonah tree the house has two fronts, one that embraces the tree and one that looks out at the town. The BAL40 bushfire rated glass allows the house and tree to coexist so closely. Without that product the house and tree would need a huge separation or some other cladding without the delight that this solution offers.

And from an interiors viewpoint the house provides that flowing sense of space.

MB Standing in the kitchen you're literally at the helm with clear views in all directions. The main living areas allow a flow through from the inside to the outside, front to back. One can walk across the house in a few steps, traversing the length and sink into a secluded lounge or perch in the eyrie-like study.

How do ensure quality finishes and reasonable economies?

CM The involvement of a local engineering firm allowed for ease of design. The other real contributor to the success of this building was the finesse of a very good local builder. This is a house to endure, there is economy in the use of robust ready finished materials, the use of standard concrete block as the finished surface for both inside and out meant no extra finishing was needed for most of the surfaces, saving time and money.

What are some of the other sustainability principles here?

MB In terms of environmental infrastructure, the house is loaded with solar panels, a solar hydronic heat system, heat pumps for water, water tanks and fans. There is no cooling as it was agreed to test and see and so far after three days of above 35°C the house has remained an even 22°C. Double Glazed units all around and performance Low-E glazing on the north elevation are incredibly effective in combination, allowing that ability to adjust the air flow so easily.

It's a large yet narrow-bodied house. There's some strong geometry at work.

MB One of the main successes of the house is the folded ceiling that helps direct and radiate daylight. It's almost as if the sun is coming into the house and then orienting all of its energy towards the Moonah tree.





“Double Glazed units all around and performance Low-E glazing on the north elevation are incredibly effective in combination, allowing that ability to adjust the air flow so easily.”

MICHAEL BELLEMO, ARCHITECT

A folded ceiling as light-catcher in the main living/family room has a pavilion feel of openness along both main elevations.





The use of circular motifs, frame and contrast the more conventional rectangular openings. In this instance Paarhammer's bushfire rated windows and Viridian PyroGuard™ 40 glazing create a brilliant bridge with the 300 plus year old Moonah tree.



“That north facing glass has no external sun protection. The reveals however are very deep, so in the middle of a summer’s day, the reveals actually do the job of an awning.”

MICHAEL BELLEMO, ARCHITECT



The tree is such a highlight.

MB We see it as the Moonah House. The clients call it their Forever House. It was an opportunity to design the house around the tree. It symbolises that idea of being around for a long time. At the end of the day, the tree is still more important than the house. The Moonah tree side of the house is weighted BAL40 so we needed a fire-proof shield on one side of the house. The glass, windows and doors on that side are all BAL40 rated.

What are some of the other fire-proofing strategies?

CM Choice of materials was really important. We needed something solid and substantial. Something fire proof. We've got bluestone floors, concrete block walls. There's no plaster, very little plaster. Everything is substantial. It's like the feature rock and tree. They're here to stay.

The south elevation glazing and framing really are star performers in what they allow you to achieve as designers.

MB We were fortunate to find bushfire-rated Paarhammer windows and doors. This gave us a fantastic result when combined with Viridian's PyroGuard™ 40 glass. So it's a great double.



Upper level north facing windows are entirely bespoke and custom-designed with Low-E Viridian glazing to harvest sunlight, sky and surrounds.

Your north-facing deck is inspired with its bleeding edge that merges decking/rock into landscape.

MB The front or northern deck is where the large rock absorbs winter sun. The kids go out and lie on the rock and also absorb some of that winter sun and just enjoy that space. In summer, the owners can occupy those southern decks and retreat to the sea breezes and cool shade.

How effective is the glazing into the main living areas. It cops some serious heat?

MB That north facing glass has no external sun protection. The reveals however are very deep, so in the middle of a summer's day, the reveals actually do the job of an awning. We designed a sun shading device but agreed with the clients to leave it off to put the house to the test.

And there's a strong invention with triangular and circular windows to break up the more familiar forms.

MB There's strong geometry in the house that is in part a response to the wiry Moonah tree. We also set up some strong geometry with circular windows at the front and triangular windows, which juxtapose the rock and tree.

It's all easy circulation throughout the house which is what all houses – especially beach houses – should be.

CM The house is actually just a series of block walls and in between those block walls are the glass components. The block walls guide you through to the tree from the front to the back and then the windows become the space between.





The north-facing deck provides year-round delight and in winter the feature rock acts as a heat bank.

“The house is actually just a series of block walls and in between those block walls are the glass components. The block walls guide you through to the tree from the front to the back and then the windows become the space between.”

CAT MACLEOD, ARCHITECT



“This is a house of permanence. Therefore it’s solid, but it definitely feels like a beach house. Here we are on a really hot day and yet the house is maintaining a comfortable 22°C and that’s partly due to the big sliding windows.”

MICHAEL BELLEMO, ARCHITECT

It's far from your run-of-the-mill beach house that is simply an urban box that relies heavily on air conditioners to be made livable.

MB While this is a house by the beach, it's not a beach-house or someone's weekender. This is a house of permanence. Therefore it's solid, but it definitely feels like a beach house. Here we are on a really hot day and yet the house is maintaining a comfortable 22°C and that's partly due to the big sliding windows behind me. The sea breezes flow through the house and work a treat.



There's a lot of reasons why designing this kind of house, or any house for that matter, is a pretty serious business.

Do you manage to have fun and enjoy these projects?

MB We always have fun designing houses. If you're not having fun then you may as well throw it in. You've got to have fun. There's a little bit of fun in the front of the house with the circular windows. We did many iterations of semicircles, full circles. At the end of the day we have a kind of quasi-smiley house looking through the ti-tree. I think the fun follows through in that almost wave form of the ceiling. It's not just a bit of plasterboard ceiling. You've got a ceiling that is folding and suggesting another geometry. It's a subliminal, nice effect.

One of the most successful parts of the house is the way you transition from the second story down to the ground floor.

MB The house is very open yet it's also very intimate. There's a sunken lounge. You can perch up on the second level, overlooking the large expansive living area. There's a cosy rumpus for the kids to get away. You've got front decks, back decks, roof decks. There's lots of places that people can go in this house and be alone if they want or have a party.

One of the privileges of the architect is the gift of enduring design to deeply touch their clients' lives.

MB Well, I could say: "Yes I know it's going to work," but in this instance, this is a return client. I was honoured to do a second house for them. They loved their first house. Their family grew and so I was up for the challenge of doing a bigger and more substantial house and one that I'm told, they're loving.

PROJECT

The Forever House,
Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria

CLIENT

Private

ARCHITECTS

Bellemo & Cat

PROJECT ENGINEER

PJ Yttrup Associates P/L

BUILDER

Bolder Construction

WINDOW SUPPLIER/INSTALLER

Paarhammer Windows and Doors
Mouldright Joinery

GLASS SUPPLIER

Viridian

PRINCIPAL GLAZING

Viridian PyroGuard™ 40,
EVantage™ Double Glazed Units BAL29





The coastline view south,
captured from the rooftop deck.



INTENSIVE CARE





A highly considered glazing program from the entrance/reception area to the rhythmic banding of the Viridian EVantage™ SuperBlue™ of the main hospital wings.



Design might appear a world away from life-saving procedures, palliative care, or birthing units, but Berwick's new 210-bed hospital delivers ease not angst. Overlooking Melbourne's high volume Princes Freeway, the facility illuminates patient care and the workplace. Wrapped in an array of Viridian EVantage™ SuperBlue™ Double Glazed Unit, the St. John of God Hospital is as artful on the outside as it is fully functional and highly specified inside.

Medical services are just as easily made, as broken, by design. Quality patient care inevitably makes the link between good healthcare delivery and an uplifting, smooth running facility. Berwick's newest hospital for this rapid population growth corridor demonstrates a design DNA integral to the entire patient experience. For passers-by and local community, the result is confidence-building.

Daylight and amenity are among the now well-understood factors in operating conditions, patient recovery and visitor/staff morale. Transcending mere clever fit-out, the \$120 million hospital represents the kind of smart ideas where health care technology and art, blur seamlessly into a single entity. If you happen to need a hospital, this is about as good as it gets.

PROJECT

The St. John of God Hospital, Berwick, Victoria

CLIENT

St. John of God and Generation Health Care (GHC)

ARCHITECT

Silver Thomas Hanley

PRINCIPAL GLASS COMPONENTS

External Windows Double Glazed Unit using Viridian EVantage™ SuperBlue™

Spandrel Double Glazed Unit using Viridian SpectraSeraphic™ (Custom Colours)

Entry Laminated Glass with Viridian EVantage™ SuperBlue™ and Viridian SpectraSeraphic™ 3mm White Dots

Internal Splashback Viridian SpectraColour™ (Custom Colours)

Internal Feature Wall Viridian PixaGraphic™ (Custom Design)



With so many funds absorbed by the inner workings of many hospitals it's easy to see why skeleton budgets are all that remain for the superstructure. Hospital management boards don't like 'flash', the opulent or extravagant. No argument with this at Berwick. The result is purposeful, imaginative delivery – crisp outside, streamlined inside. Wiser minds appreciate how buildings are key to whether the people and equipment housed within merely exist, or prosper.

Reception areas are a good guide as to whether the architects and hospitals have got it right. A rabbit-warren of pharmacies, assorted retail and coloured floor strips, speak of the wayward rather than way-finding. Here the double-height atrium as entry feels generous, open and leads to the first level day-care reception area.

It's an approach repeated throughout and the result is an easy calm. Interior fit-out and furnishings prefer natural materials wherever possible. Jittery noisy visuals are excluded from a setting where patients, family and friends can otherwise feel anxious.

“The healing benefits of daylight for patients can't be underestimated. The glazing selection plays a key part in delivering this intent.”

IAN WONG, ARCHITECT



Canopy glazing of Viridian
ScalaSeraphic™ reveals complex
water and mechanical cutting to
achieve a highly elegant solution.

Beyond front-of-house the theme of transparency and clarity continues in ways small and large – from the infill glazing in the staircases, especially popular with staff, to the nuanced artwork of pomegranate motif as Viridian's digitised PixaGraphic™ feature glazing.

If nothing else, the hospital is a reminder that such facilities can be uplifting rather than antiseptic or coldly utilitarian. Project architect Silver Thomas Hanley's work is uniform in elevation and plan. Slice it like a cake and its consistency is evident throughout – always a good sign.

Most conspicuous is the graphic glazing-as-envelope that yields identity and, most significantly, daylight filled interiors. Good architecture feels spacious. It's less a result of size than spatial economy whereby the absence of solid walls and cluttered joinery make occupancy a pleasure, rather than pain. Think easy circulation zones, slender parts, clear way-finding and an overall clarity of experience.





CLICK TO HEAR VIRIDIAN'S
CHRIS MURRAY DISCUSS THE
ST. JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL



North facing 'therapy terraces' offer patients and staff the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of largely protected outdoors.



“Most conspicuous is the graphic glazing-as-envelope that yields identity and, most significantly, daylight filled interiors. Good architecture feels spacious.”

VISION



Vision's Peter Hyatt spoke with project architect Ian Wong of Silver Thomas Hanley about the graphic energy and interior calm of Berwick's sleek new hospital:

VISION What are the key qualities you wanted to invest here?

IAN WONG With 80% single patient bedrooms, the hospital required a large extent of perimeter glazing. Hospital corridors are often single loaded and devoid of natural light. By placing large windows and day rooms at the end of each corridor 'wing', patients and care-givers benefit from orientation and proximity to daylight around the building's 'edge'.

How does your glazing strategy form a synergy with the hospital's aims?

All bedrooms maximise full-width windows, taking advantage of the magnificent views, especially south across the Princes Freeway and beyond across treetops. The healing benefits of daylight for patients can't be underestimated. The glazing selection plays a key part in delivering this intent. This is demonstrated in the southern facade where triple-glazed window units were specified to address both thermal requirements and acoustics issues associated with the Princes Freeway. In all instances maximum views are maintained from patients bedrooms.





Reception links to the upper-level day visitor area provides a brilliant spatial reading within and throughout.



“The internal spaces optimise the use of natural light and landscaping with the aim of accelerating the healing process through provision of therapeutic terraces, together with a combination of colours and acoustics.”

IAN WONG, ARCHITECT



Your upper level breakout areas – or decks – for palliative care and new mothers is something of a sanctuary. Glazing doesn’t automatically come to mind where intense privacy is often needed.

The internal spaces optimise the use of natural light and landscaping with the aim of accelerating the healing process through provision of therapeutic terraces, together with a combination of colours and acoustics. The therapeutic terraces located on the upper levels comprise timber, concrete pavers and soft, colourful landscaping, which balance against the glazing panels that mirror subtle sky reflections.

The reflectivity of the EVantage™ SuperBlue™ also ensures the privacy you mention so that patients have this wonderful vista but at the same time know that no one outside can see in.

Viridian’s relatively new PixaGraphic™ digitised glass printing process provided the hospital’s signature Pomegranate motif to be repeated throughout, while SuperClear™ glass helps illuminate and humanise the central stairway as popular alternative to the elevator service.



How have you tried to shape a building as professional yet approachable as possible?

While large for the region, the hospital is separated into distinct parts that give it an overall logic and help reduce its scale. The ground and first level forms the podium which contains all acute and ambulatory care. This is wrapped with white aluminium panels, indented with a feature dark, metallic band. This treatment of the facade breaks down the scale of the building, offering a more intimate approach at the ground level. Perched above the podium is the in-patient unit tower, where the white aluminium panels are repeated as a picture frame around an intricate mosaic of clear glass and green-blue, colour-backed Viridian SpectraSeraphic™ glass panels. The horizontality of the building is book-ended on both ends by twin dark-charcoal precast stairs, with a slit of vertical windows running parallel through the podium, puncturing the mass of the structure. Internally, these windows at the end of the corridor presents a 'rest' stop with views outwards.

The day-care public waiting area enjoys the benefits of high-visibility combined with acoustic benefits of separation from the main reception area below.

Catering for one key group – patients – really means there is a huge flow-on benefit to everyone who occupies or visits the hospital.

That's true. I think views from within and beyond really are indicative of the way this hospital connects patients and staff and, more broadly, to its setting. Light-filled dining rooms and lounges, wonderful views from operating theatres and careful positioning of courtyards and terraces. Despite the deep and complex planning, patients, visitors and caregivers are rarely far from a view of the outside, be it greenery, wide aerial views of Berwick, vistas or sky.

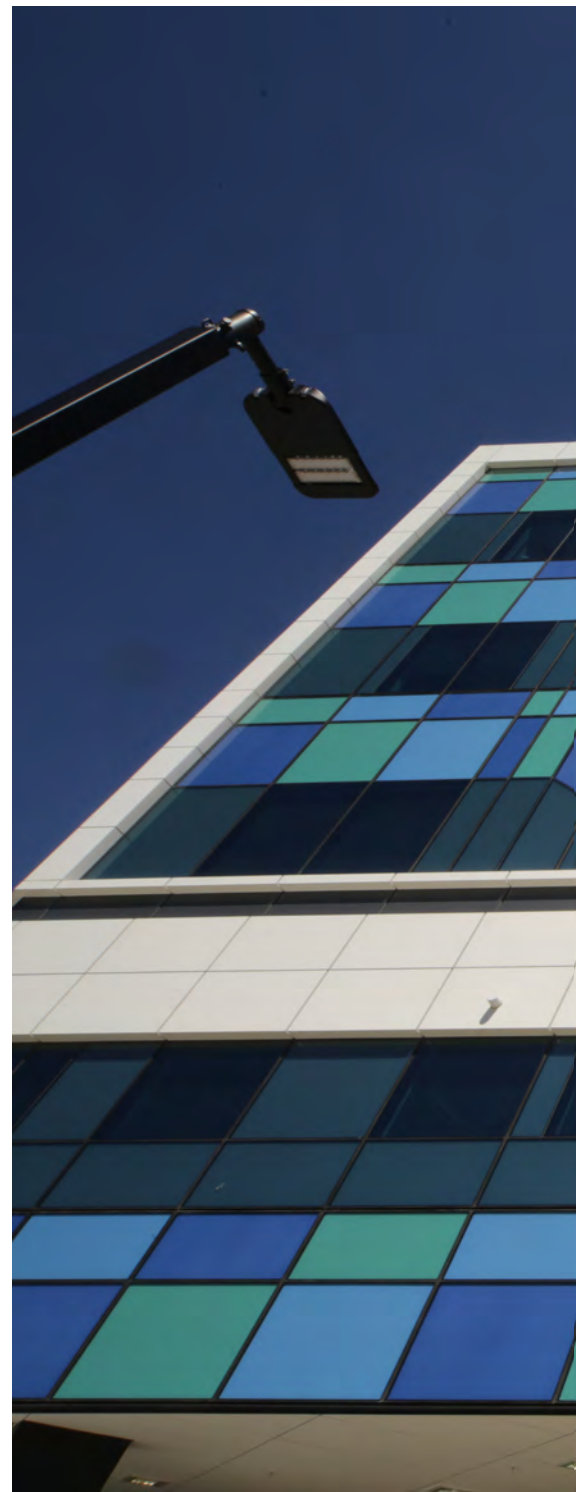


How does glazing contribute to the quality of the first – and lasting – impression.

The new main porte-cochere is identified by a cantilevered canopy with a central column and large, double-height clad in EVantage™ SuperBlue™ glazing. It delivers quite a wonderful sense of arrival and occasion. A similar glass box within the large front facade glass box forms the airlock and main entry into the building and main foyer. Within the highly intimate foyer, a myriad of textures and materials provide a stark contrast against the large expanse of glass and aluminium panels of the sleek facade. Full height glazing provides ample light into the foyer, highlighting the range of other finishes including the perforated metal screens with the SJOG’s signature Pomegranate theme which is also incorporated on other levels with Viridian’s digitally printed feature glazing. The arrival on Level 1 into the day procedures area more resembles a lounge than hospital waiting room.

What about some of the less immediately obvious parts of the hospital?

There’s eight operating theatres, a cardiac/vascular catheter laboratory, six birthing suites, 17 consulting rooms, chapel and pastoral care and education and research facilities. Just to challenge ourselves there’s also a 350 vehicle basement carpark.



PROJECT

The St. John of God Hospital,
Berwick, Victoria

CLIENT

St. John of God and Generation
Health Care (GHC)

ARCHITECT

Silver Thomas Hanley

PROJECT ARCHITECT

Ian Wong

BUILDER

Hansen Yuncken

GLASS FACADE ENGINEER

Inhabit Group

WINDOW FABRICATION AND INSTALL

Mills Glass P/L

PRINCIPAL GLASS COMPONENTS

External Windows Double Glazed Unit using Viridian EVantage™ SuperBlue™
Spandrel Double Glazed Unit using Viridian SpectraSeraphic™ (Custom Colours)
Entry Laminated Glass with Viridian EVantage™ SuperBlue™ and Viridian SpectraSeraphic™ 3mm White Dots
Internal Splashback Viridian SpectraColour™ (Custom Colours)
Internal Feature Wall Viridian PixaGraphic™ (Custom Design)

SIZE

30,000sqm

BUDGET

\$120 million



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