

CASE STUDY

NORTH BONDI BEACH AMENITIES UPGRADE

Lymesmith Collaboration with Sam Crawford Architects

“North Bondi Amenities is a building that belongs to the sand and surf of Bondi Beach. Addressing the iconic promenade, it is designed for sandy feet, summer Sunday crowds and the relentless coastal elements.”

SAM CRAWFORD, ARCHITECT



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Sam Crawford Architects invited Lymesmith to design the colour and material palette for new public amenities at North Bondi beach. The toilets are attached to an historic Sydney Water Sewerage Pumping Station.

The architects proposed a robust concrete structure clad with recycled hardwood, and the recladding of the Pumping Station. Lymesmith was involved from early in the building design development. Designing for the harsh beach front location was a key requirement.



The 'brick dunny' prior to redevelopment



SITE ANALYSIS

Lymesmith projects begin with a site colour analysis. Colour perception is relational – which means that the same colour will appear to be different depending on the colours that are next to it. By understanding the local 'colour field' we make meaningful decisions about the relationship a new building will have with its context.

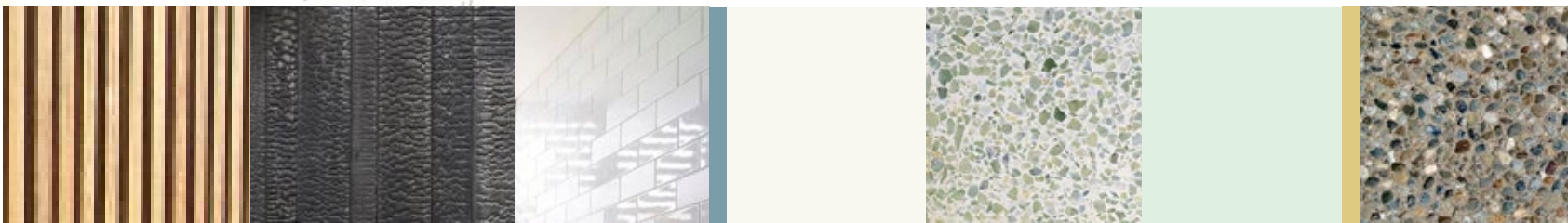
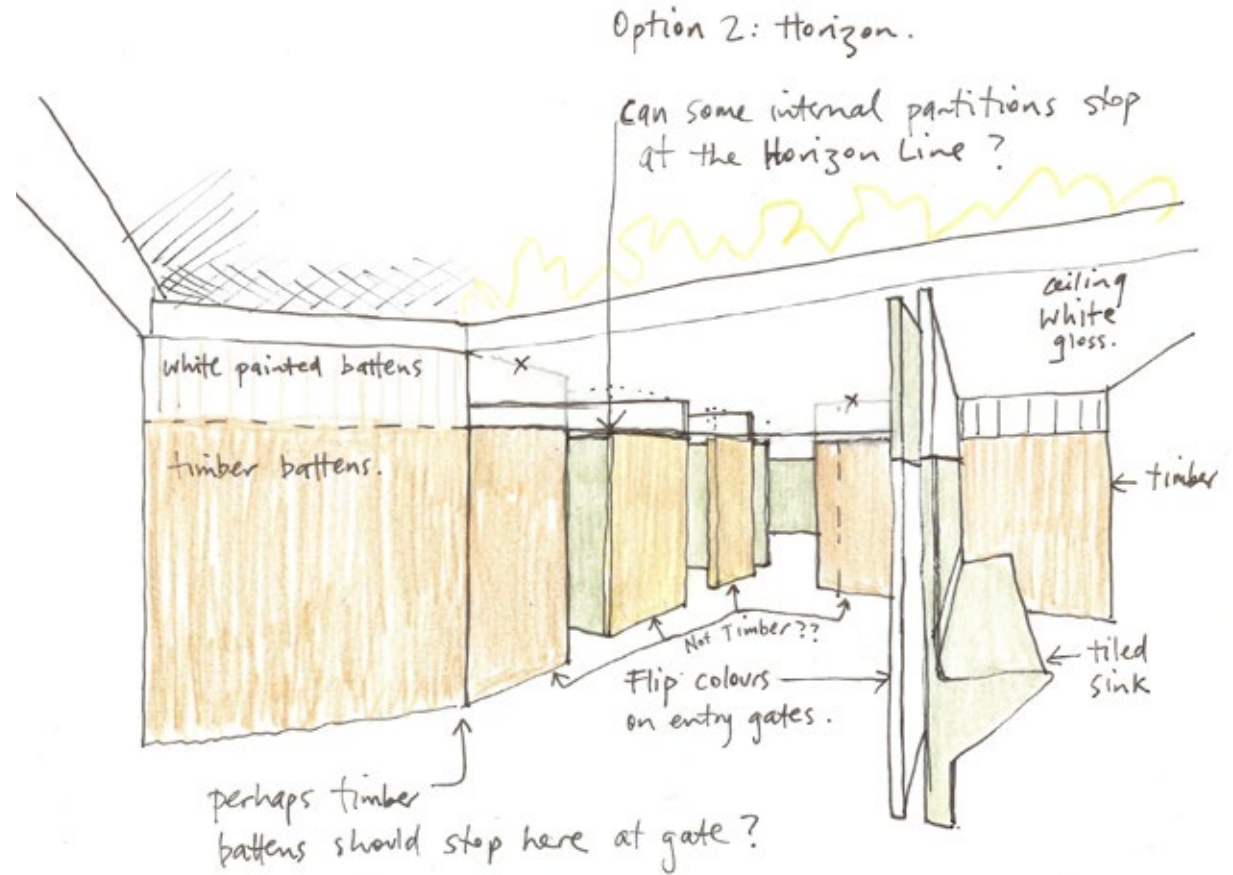
CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

Using the architect's early 3D model to explore the building from multiple angles is a valuable tool for developing an approach to colour and material that is synchronous with the architectural design.

The early concept drawings were hand sketches over images taken from the 3D model. This enables the ideas to develop quickly and fluidly, with openness to reworking and collaboration.



interior: pale green tiles + paint
wash basin: depends on construction - is it cast conc? possibly match to exterior + make swing doors coloured in some way.



PLAYING WITH THE HORIZON

Cultural and historical factors come into play. In this case, the heritage listed Pumping Station was an important consideration. However, its value lay in the internal workings of the structure, and not in its drab facade.

Cladding the two parts of the building with differently treated battens provided both contrast and harmony. The Pumping Station battens are charred, using the Japanese method of Shou Sugi Ban, which seals and preserves the timber from further weathering. By making this volume dark and mysterious we intended that its presence and history become more compelling.

The new amenities element is more playful, with two-tone battens evoking seaside changing sheds, boats and painted piers. The 'horizon line' created runs right through the building from exterior to interior. It echos and plays with the real horizon line, the relationship between the real and constructed horizons are in a constantly changing relationship, depending on ones point of view.



"Nodding to the assertive presence of the horizon over Bondi, the datum line created in the building is just one of the well-considered design elements that makes this building work so well within its natural setting."

2017 DULUX COLOUR AWARDS JUDGES COMMENT

CONSTRAINTS

There would be few buildings subject to more wear and tear than a public toilet on Bondi Beach. All materials were chosen for robustness, durability, and amenity. Accessibility requirements influenced colour selections, for example, to ensure visual contrast between doors and surrounding elements.

Durability and cleanliness were central requirements. The project was substantially enriched by the provision of recycled hardwood salvaged from a Council building demolition at Green Square.

Terrazzo floors and partitions - this highly durable, hygienic material offers great texture and visual interest through its coloured aggregates. It was selected for its ability to give an earthy, but clean and natural feel.

Ceramic tiles - again clean and durable - the combination of gloss and matt white tiles subtly plays with light.
Paint - a palette of weathered greens, teal and lemon inside reference the banksia trees nearby, and create a calm and serene atmosphere.



“A harmonious material palette of tiles, terrazzo and concrete is used throughout, and adds tactility to the project. The building’s detailing is both crafted and durable, with color maintaining a constant presence.”

JENNIFER MCMASTER, ARCSPACE.COM (DANISH ARCHITECTURE CENTRE)



“The details throughout the North Bondi Amenities Building are consistently thoughtful, while still meeting the rigorous wear-and-tear requirements of a public facility. The gentle curves of the exterior are mimicked in the change-room benches, which curl to hug the corners of the space, and are inlaid with fine timber slats.

A beachy mixture of marine colors - fading from dark blues to dusty greens - creates a joyful interior experience.”

JENNIFER MCMASTER,
ARCSPACE.COM (DANISH
ARCHITECTURE CENTRE)



“A timeless accomplishment that has been created for the masses, yet is still so beautifully considered.”

2017 DULUX COLOUR AWARDS,
JUDGES COMMENTS

REFLECTION

The collaboration with SCA was deeply enjoyable and respectful. Sam's brief was very open, "go and have a look at the site and let's see what you come up with". All parties were open to discussion and negotiation from the beginning, and throughout all the changes that inevitably happen along the way. The generous and open spirit embodied in the building itself is reflected in the way Sam runs his practice. It's a privilege to work with talented architects and enrich their buildings in this way. My aim is to help the buildings exceed even the designers own expectations.

"Sonia brings to each project a fresh perspective and a deep and considered understanding how of colour and materiality can be an expression place. The whole team really enjoyed working with her, and we hope to do so again."

SAM CRAWFORD, ARCHITECT





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“Sam Crawford Architects’ North Bondi Amenities Building is a refreshing take on the most unlikely and - usually - unglamorous of building types. It is a crafted, sculptural and tactile building that balances the hardy with the delicate, and the playful with the serene. As such, it manages to emblemize this beachside suburb, and to embody its warm and welcoming spirit.

JENNIFER MCMASTER,
ARCSPACE.COM
(DANISH ARCHITECTURE
CENTRE)



AWARDS

- 2017 AIA National Award for Small Project Architecture
- 2017 NSW Australian Institute of Architects State Award: Small Project Architecture
- 2017 NSW Australian Institute of Architects State Commendation: Public Architecture
- 2017 Dulux Colour Awards 2017 Grand Prix
- 2017 Dulux Colour Awards 2017 Winner - Commercial Exterior

DETAILS

- CLIENT Waverley Council
- ARCHITECT Sam Crawford Architects
- BUILDER Grindley Interiors
- COMPLETED 2017
- PHOTOGRAPHY © 2017 Brett Boardman

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