



Australian Institute of Architects

**Jury Chair:** Matt Davis

**Jurors:** Sharon Mackay and Stephen Ward

**Specialist Advisor:** Tanya Court

**Category Overview:** The jury considered the Urban Design category to be particularly strong this year, with the inclusion of a number of quality high-profile projects. The entries provide a survey of the shifts occurring in urban design, in terms of what constitutes as an urban design project, various procurement and delivery models, ubiquitous fiscal challenges, and the value of collaboration.

The projects highlight the interrelated aspect of urban design projects, where a project does not exist, or cannot be judged, in isolation. Rather its success is dependent on what it offers, how it might catalyse other development, how it supports programs and public life, and how it might endure in time.

The Jury make special mention in the difficulty of determining the Named Award for this category, given the exceptional qualities of the two awarded projects, which are both exemplary and deserving in their own right.

**Project Name:** Victoria Square / Tarndanyangga Stage One

**Practice Name:** Adelaide City Council and Taylor Cullity Lethlean

**Award given:** The Gavin Walkley Award for Urban Design

**Award Citation:** Stage One of the Victoria Square / Tarndanyangga Urban Regeneration Project commences the implementation of Taylor Cullity Lethlean's nationally awarded Masterplan for the Square. The project implements a number of the key moves of the Masterplan and provides a compelling taste of what the complete vision might offer.

The most significant extent of work undertaken in Stage One is associated with the northern half of the Square and includes a fully serviced events lawn to allow for large events of up to 6000 people, promenades, terraces, temporary shelters, toilets and urban lounges. In addition, the Three Rivers Fountain has been relocated to the southern end freeing up space for a northern plaza and interactive water-feature that also functions as a stage for events.

Whilst the reworking of the northern half of the Square has created an attractive place for people to enjoy independently or as part of a regular program of events, the main strategic design decision realised from the masterplan is the reworking of the Grote Street / Wakefield Street connection, which creates a flexible central plaza to accommodate vehicle movement or events. The temporary closing of this street for events, such as the Fringe Festival or Tour Down Under, has demonstrated the potential of a contiguous urban square and should alleviate the long-held fears of changing this traffic movement pattern.

The Jury observed that some detailed elements do not demonstrate Taylor Cullity Lethlean's characteristic attention to detail that might have come with a full professional service. Notwithstanding, the Jury considers Victoria Square / Tarndanyangga to be an outstanding urban design project worthy of the Gavin Walkley Award. The Jury strongly supports that the success of the first stage of implementation reinforces the value, and imperative delivering of the masterplan in full and look forward to its realization in the years to come.

## Urban Design Award Citations

South Australian Chapter

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**Project Name:** The Hart's Mill Projects

**Practice Name:** Mulloway Studio and Aspect Studio

**Award given:** Award for Urban Design

**Award Citation:** The Hart's Mill Surrounds consists of three integrated projects, the public domain and play space; the adaptation of the industrial 'flour shed'; and the interpretive path that loops around the water's edge in historic Port Adelaide.

The project has been ambitious in seeking to renew and catalyse further investment in Port Adelaide through quality urban design and the programming of public events and activities. Set against the stunning backdrop of Hart's Mill, Mulloway Studio and Aspect Studios have successfully retained and celebrated the existing heritage fabric through considered design, while inserting a bold and innovative public play space and grassed recreation area, which breathes new life and activity into the precinct.

The project has enabled public access to the previously derelict wharf edge and provides a deeper understanding of the precincts' past uses, through creative interpretative signage. Significant challenges of mitigating contamination and selecting quality materials to withstand the harsh maritime environment have been overcome seamlessly. The simple material palette and a restrained approach to adapting the built environment impressed the Jury.

The full potential of the precinct will be fully realised over time, as the currently vacant heritage buildings are occupied and the adjacent spaces are integrated even further.

**Project Name:** Riverbank Bridge

**Practice Name:** Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, Taylor Cullity Lethlean & Aurecon

**Award given:** Commendation for Urban Design

**Award Citation:** The Riverbank Bridge is an important connection for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the River Torrens and a key component of a larger project to reimagine the Riverbank Precinct. More importantly is the experience of the journey, where in an open setting you are provided with new views of the compact city and the river. The bridge is scaled for both busy and quieter times but on game day the bridge is now an integral part of the arrival and departure experience, contributing to new traditions and rituals.

The bridge is becoming an icon for the city as the backdrop for news reports, tourist imagery and also contributes to the way Adelaidians view their city as one of increasing sophistication and liveliness.

The inspired curved footprint allows for the belvedere and waterfall fountain to provide new vantage points. Unfortunately, this has compromised the experience below the bridge with narrowed points for cyclists and less comfortable grade changes from the lower level. The benefits of the bridge will continue to be seen as the Riverbank precinct changes and the role of the bridge becomes even more significant.

## Urban Design Award Citations

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South Australian Chapter

**Project Name:** Adelaide Oval Redevelopment

**Practice Name:** Cox Architecture, Walter Brooke and Hames Sharley

**Award given:** Commendation for Urban Design

**Award Citation:** Adelaide Oval's completion includes the Eastern and Southern stands, public plazas and ancillary spaces. This latest development was initiated in recognition that the Oval failed to meet key performance criteria for a number of sports, putting at risk its ability to host major international events. The redevelopment was conceived as an activated and flexible public events platform to encourage a greater diversity of activities, as a key strategy in increasing the stadium's use with the relocation of the Adelaide-based Australian Football League clubs matches to the Oval.

The redevelopment of the Oval recognises a bigger context of park, river and city. The stadium acts as the final destination point for sporting fans, many of whom now congregate in the city and cross the new Riverbank pedestrian bridge to the new southern plaza, which replaces a former car park. Arrival into the ground via the new southern and eastern gates is marked by voluminous foyer spaces providing a direct connection to the green of the playing field and beyond. This sequence of experiences helps to develop a strong, almost visceral, sense of theatre prior to start of the main event.

The redevelopment recognises that as much activity happens behind the stands as in front of them, with a mixture of spaces each of individual character, which provides specific moments for pause, retreat, refreshment and entertainment. The primary horizontal connector within the Southern and Eastern stands is a promenade nestled under the seating plats and ending in a framed view of the scoreboard that acts as an internal street, overlooked and activated by adjacent spaces. This continuation of the urban experience, together with the development's recognition of and contribution to place, which the jury recognises as a valuable addition to Adelaide's urban design.