

Public Architecture Award Citations

South Australian Chapter



Australian Institute of Architects

Jury Chair: Matthew Davis

Jurors: Sharon Mackay, Stephen Ward

Guest Juror: James Trezona

Category Overview: The Public Architecture entries span from a modest regional airport upgrade to the major redevelopment of Adelaide Oval and a number of significant health-care projects. Common to these very different projects is the challenge of needing to reconcile demanding operational requirements, with providing rich and engaging experiences for people. All the entries have elements worthy of recognition, the jury has awarded projects which are clearly the most complete and sophisticated pieces of public architecture.

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Project Name: Adelaide Oval Redevelopment

Practice Name: Cox Architecture, Walter Brooke and Hames Sharley

Award given: The Jack McConnell Award for Public Architecture

Award Citation: In this major redevelopment, the Adelaide Oval has been transformed from a picturesque sporting venue into a civic building, able to accommodate multiple international sports and events. The new Oval is immediately recognisable for its sculpted white roofs forming a horseshoe shape above the Adelaide Parklands, characterised by a scalloped roof-line above the Eastern stand and an inverted and elongated dish above the Southern stand. The Oval is different to many other stadiums worldwide – the normal spectator bowl is interrupted at the northern end to retain the historic grassed mound, Morton Bay Fig trees, scoreboard and views of St Peter’s Cathedral. This large opening, in addition to the articulation of the bowl into three separate pavilions, retains visual permeability and outward views. This strategy is amplified by the provision of open decks at both north and south ends affording alternative spaces for social interaction and panoramic perspectives of the parklands and city beyond.

In accommodating a complex brief beneath the stands, many functions are made visible through the perimeter skin, exposing the movement and activities within and interrupting the homogenous and impersonal exterior sometimes associated with stadiums. External materials are selected to age gracefully and act as reference points to the City. Coloured and textured precast panels incorporating local sands respond to the stonework of Adelaide’s early civic buildings, while bronze cladding and copper mesh screens acknowledge the scattering of metal sculpture in the City’s terraces and gardens. These materials are carried through to internal spaces and combined with timber, providing a higher level of detail, intimacy and richness not normally expected in a building of this type.

In awarding the Adelaide Oval the Jack McConnell Award for Public Architecture, the Jury recognises this project as not just a landmark building, but also one that extends the contemporary typology of sports venue design.

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Project Name: Old Parliament House – Facility and Accessibility Upgrade

Practice Name: Swanbury Penglase Architects

Award given: Award for Public Architecture

Award Citation: As one of our most important historic places and the only South Australian building on the National Heritage List, Old Parliament House has been carefully redeveloped to improve functionality and accessibility. New structurally independent elements such as the lift and entrance have been added to facilitate access and connect the multiple levels within Old Parliament House with the new and historically significant Parliament House to the east. The redevelopment includes a landscaped courtyard providing an exterior extension of parliamentary functions.

Internal work has achieved not only improved functionality but has revealed important fabric in a building, which has undergone many additions and changes over its life. This includes the removal of part of the floor, which for many years divided the original Legislative Chamber in two, providing an interpretation of the building's evolution.

The redevelopment is characterised by bespoke and confident detailing that is materially distinguished from the original fabric. This detailing has been conceived to avoid awkward junctions between new and old, and instead providing a unifying element that ties together the disparate building parts. New insertions such as the entry placed in between the two buildings, don't overpower the original fabric and instead acts as a contemporary counterpoint to the historic parts. Others, such as earthquake bracing and new services are cleverly and discretely concealed.

The Jury recognises the considerable time taken to understand the unique cultural and built significance of the building prior to the thoughtful architectural response. The project is recognised with an Award for its achievement in adapting, extending the life and reinforcing the qualities of a significant public building.