

VICTORIA & VINE, COLLINGWOOD

A diverse Brick Inlay façade creates a positive influence on Collingwood's future



A New York-inspired development in the heart of Collingwood, Victoria & Vine celebrates and breathes new life into its Wellington Street address, merging the rich history of Collingwood with five-star hotel amenity.

True to the GURNER™ brand, aspirations were high to deliver the best, most relevant and connected community-led environment for Collingwood. And on this, Cox Architecture's inspiring design, combined with Hickory's immaculate build, more than delivered. Combining residential, retail and commercial spaces across an entire block, the development enlivens the precinct and community, yet feels like it's been there for years.

What sets Victoria & Vine apart is twofold: the way the design respectfully acknowledges, and is influenced by, the history of Collingwood that people love, in a new built form. And the way the design creates individual identity at a scale and mass on the ground level that people feel they can be part of, and identify with.

"We thought, people are going to live here for a long time, and we want them to live a life in this building with their own identity – to enjoy and identify with where they live. So, then how do we create individual identity and connection to context, so everyone living around it will embrace it and everyone living in it will enjoy it?," recalls Philip Rowe, Director, Cox Architecture.

This is how Victoria & Vine's "Building of Buildings" concept was conceived.

Victoria & Vine's warehouse-style design references New York's Meatpacking district, delivered in quintessential Collingwood style. It gives a clear nod to Collingwood's old warehouse and historic buildings, particularly the iconic and very brick-based Foy and Gibson building, scaled in a similar manner, but broken down into nine buildings across the entire block.

"We took the city block and broke it into the 'Building of Buildings', so everyone could see themselves in different environments and it didn't feel like one big entity, they felt like it's part of the scale of the suburb ... and it's broken down to identify each space that they're buying into and living in," explains Philip.



The development has 241 apartments and, as you move down the street, the heights of the buildings vary, rising from six storeys in the middle up to a maximum of 11 storeys at the ends, with a combined street frontage of 200m.

Its thoughtful, diverse design, exceptionally well delivered.

Of course with diversity, comes complexity – on multiple levels – as the team essentially created nine different environments across the site, each with its own style and architectural identity. Gurner™, Cox and Hickory put considerable energy into understanding how to bring that all together, and work with that diversity, to create a whole.

And, while brand new, each building was designed to look like it had been there for some time. Tim Gurner, owner GURNER™ says:

“It’s easy to make something to look finished and contemporary with perfect plaster, but to make a red brick wall look old and chipped, detailed and intricate, that’s the challenge. And when you go and put it on 1000sqm, varied on a façade, that’s a very difficult thing to build.”

Even that aspect alone makes this project so impressive.

“The best thing about it, is it looks like it’s been here for 50 to 100 years. Our pitch on this project was that we wanted to create an amazing streetscape, a building of buildings that looks like it’s been here forever ... and the response is that it feels genuine, and really authentic to Collingwood,” Tim continues.

The beautifully diverse material palette is predominantly brick, paired with glazing and precast concrete:

“The choice of materials was based around the opportunity of a language, and it was mainly brick because it reflected the context and the history, and a lot of that was extracted out of the relevance to its precinct and different attitudes, as people identify with different things. So one colour brick to another colour was working with us, it was still all brick, but it created that level of diversity that represented how the suburb of Collingwood looks,” comments Philip.



Robertson Façade Systems supplied the Brick Inlay panels and brick tiles in a range of hues from Rustic Red, to Grey and Iron Mountain, reflecting the tones and textures of the neighbouring buildings.

“The great thing about Robertsons is they understood where brick has come from ... each of the palettes helps us represent the history to what it was, to what we want in terms of the materiality, the history of the tone and textures of inner city Melbourne. The tones and colours were already there for us to work with, so we could just select them,” explains Philip.

There is diversity in the scale of the apartments as well, the ‘opportunity for all’ mindset creating a wonderful broad-based community, from investors, to professionals and families. Apartments range from more affordable one to three bedders on the lower levels, up to 34, three, four and five bedroom penthouses at the top.

There is also a diversity of spaces, both indoors and outdoors, across the nine buildings so that everyone can inhabit their own environment. Regardless of your apartment size, every resident has access to an unprecedented level of hotel-style amenity and service, and an abundance of outdoor communal space. The Victoria & Vine Private Club features a health club, spa retreat, infinity pool and sundeck, rooftop lounge and outdoor cinema, as well as private dining facilities, co-working spaces, a business lounge, NYC-inspired bar, library and Teppanyaki bar, and beautiful landscaped areas on the terraces.

“Tim Gurner has created a model that enlivens the precinct and the community of Victoria & Vine as well, so that’s pretty special,” concludes Philip.

Victoria & Vine is not just a great design outcome, it’s a wonderful environment for its residents that will also have a positive influence on Collingwood’s future.

Developer: GURNER™
Architect: Cox Architecture
Product: Brick Inlay with Rustic Red brick tiles, Grey brick tiles and Iron Mountain brick tiles
Interior Design: David Hicks
Builder: Hickory
Photographer: Peter Bennetts