

SOUTH EAST WATER

South East Water's sleek Brick Inlay façade engages Frankston's foreshore



In 2015, South East Water relocated more than 700 staff from three locations into WatersEdge, a single, purpose-built facility in Frankston. This leading edge, environmentally-efficient building is more than just a corporate headquarters, it's an integrated workplace and base building complementing its location on Frankston's foreshore.

"Our corporate headquarters is a dynamic space that fosters innovation and collaboration amongst our employees. Located within the heart of our service region, WatersEdge was purpose built, with sustainability front of mind throughout the design, build and now operational phases of development," Terri Benson, Managing Director, South East Water, 2017 - 2020.

Designed by BVN Architects, and built over nine levels, WatersEdge increases opportunities for connection and collaboration with open plan offices across five levels. It also creates a new public facility for the local community, providing generous public spaces, cafes

and a retail zone along a generous verandah that wraps around the building. A terraced landscape beside the waterway, with public seating, fig trees and grassed areas, contributes to the public realm, creating a revitalised place for people to walk and sit.

As BVN's national director James Grose commented, creating the new building was a "great opportunity to contribute to the renewal of Frankston's foreshore". Throughout its almost eight-year lifespan, WatersEdge has successfully activated and enhanced the coastal boulevard, bringing a much-needed boost in trade to local businesses.

The building has a domestic scaled entry, along with an indigenous garden reflecting its 'beach house' setting. It's designed in three parts, to break up its mass and 100m length, presenting as three differing façades: brick, glass and precast concrete.

The brick façade was created by Shepparton Terrazzo Works using Brick Inlay System and Pressed Red thin brick supplied by Robertson Façade Systems. The brick facade brings a domestic feel and familiarity to



the development, blending with the surrounding buildings and environment, while adding a modern aesthetic to the foreshore.

The Brick Inlay System was an efficient and cost-effective solution for the façade, given that all panels are created and quality checked offsite, prior to installation with a crane.

“South East Water was a great project to be involved in because we achieved significant efficiencies and a really authentic brick appearance. This was because BNV allowed us to be involved early on, to assist with detailing in the brick module, ensuring that the precast panels worked well. And we also worked closely with Shepparton Terrazzo, supporting its team with training and advice because it was their first Brick Inlay Project. As you can see, the results speak for themselves,” recalls Peter Robertson, Director, Robertson Façade Systems.

Inside, a glazed central section opens up the inner workings of the building to the outside, maximising the spectacular views to Port Phillip Bay. A stair ascends from the ground alongside the external wall, providing expansive views for everyone inside, right down to the garden at the building’s base, and encourages the use of the stairs. The floorplate opens out and maximises stunning bay views to the west, north and south, pushing all service cores to the building’s east side.

WatersEdge is certified with a 5-star Green Star Office As Built rating from the Green Building Council Australia, including sustainable features such as double glazing, shading systems to minimise glare while allowing optimal access to sunlight, rainwater storage, internal thermal comfort, and sustainable building materials.

Since its opening, the WatersEdge has become a focal point for the local Frankston community. There’s no doubt that the BNV-designed building has created a positive legacy for South East Water and set a strong foundation for its future success.

Architect: BNV Architects
Product: Brick Inlay with Pressed Red brick tiles
Precaster: Shepparton Terrazzo Works Pty Ltd
Builder: Probuild
Photos: Dianna Snape and Peter Marko