

Architecture firm restores a piece of Melbourne's history

A SPECIALIST in city, suburban, and regional design, ClarkeHopkinsClarke boasts an impressive portfolio of multi-residential, commercial, education, health, and aged care projects.

The firm consists of seven partners, backed by an experienced team of architects and draftspeople.

From the outset of the Mutual and Empire Apartments project, ClarkeHopkinsClarke was involved in the planning, design, documentation, interior design, town planning, and heritage submissions.

On-site regularly throughout the construction period, ClarkeHopkinsClarke developed a strong relationship with both the builder and developer.

"Throughout construction, we had a strong professional relationship that was able to see us through any differences or pressured situations. Now that the project is finished, we have ended with what we hope will be lasting professional relationships with both Baycrown and Abigroup," said ClarkeHopkinsClarke partner, Robert Goodliffe.

"The development of the Mutual and Empire Apartments was generally smooth and well organised," said Mr Goodliffe.

"On a project involving the restoration of two heritage buildings, unexpected finds will invariably force you to revisit and amend your initial program. Unexpected things did crop up and were dealt with without compromising the smooth running of the project," he said.

One of the key challenges of the project was that the original floors of the Mutual Store were constructed from terracotta planks, an early 20th-century

solution to providing fire-rated floors.

This meant it was impossible to drill through the original floors to run services through. As a result, whole sections of the original floor had to be replaced to enable the new services for the apartments to be installed.

Mr Goodliffe said one of the highlights of the construction phase was the removal of the 1970s facade renovations to reveal the original arch entry features and articulated brickwork facade.

"The restoration of the heritage facades is one of the elements we are most pleased with. The facade mouldings were restored, and where the damage was too great, the mouldings were replicated and all the original brickwork was re-tuckpointed to restore the Mutual Store to its former glory," said Mr Goodliffe.

ClarkeHopkinsClarke uses cutting-edge software and all documents and presentations are produced in-house.

During the design phases of the Mutual and Empire Apartments project, the firm used three-dimensional architectural software to develop a virtual model of the heritage buildings and the proposed additions, so the client was able to get a complete picture of what the completed project would look like.

"We also found the 3D images useful during the town planning process, as they were able to more fully communicate the changes to the existing streetscape," said Mr Goodliffe.

Established almost 50 years ago, ClarkeHopkinsClarke continues to develop and grow under the mentorship of founding partner Les Clarke, AM. Recently, Dean Landy and Wayne

Stephens (who were both involved in the Mutual and Empire Apartments project) were invited to become partners in the practice, further expanding the practice's depth of expertise.

The range and variety of projects that ClarkeHopkinsClarke is involved with makes it a uniquely diverse practice.

Some of the company's other recently completed works include award-winning projects such as The Office in South Yarra, and the Victorian Department of Primary Industries' Campus Upgrade in Horsham.

The firm has a particular interest in environmentally sustainable and cost-efficient design.

For the Department of Primary Industries' Campus Upgrade,

ClarkeHopkinsClarke designed the new information centre, office tenancy building, laboratory/office building, and processing centre, as well as associated road, car park and services infrastructure.

The new information centre featured state-of-the-art ESD principles, including a thermal labyrinth for cooling, recycled materials, and solar-tinted glazing to reduce heat and glare, plus thermal mass and water-saving technologies.

The building formed a link between the existing and new campus facilities.

In the end, the information centre won Hooker Cockram the 2004 Master Builders Association Award for Excellence in Construction of Commercial Buildings (\$2-4 million).



ClarkeHopkinsClarke also designed new facilities for the Department of Primary Industries Campus in Horsham.



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