

Cann Valley Bush Nursing Centre

East Gippsland

The Cann Valley Bush Nursing Centre (CVBNC) is a key building in the Cann River Community (and surrounds) in East Gippsland and had been subjected to a number of discrete and uncoordinated renovations/works over the years.

This project sought to consolidate the building and in doing so improve its efficiency within the existing building envelope. This was a project of adaptive re-use, renovation and redevelopment. As much as it was a sustainable approach, it was also considered to be the most effective and economic approach, in recognising the existing inefficiencies of the building and creating a state of the art facility.

The intent was also to improve the status and recognition of the building, within the community and beyond, with an opportunity to create a 'landmark' building, but one that seemed organic in its evolution.

The existing building was effectively stripped out and refitted with an efficient layout, oriented towards practical considerations such as ambulance access, best practice patient care and access to natural light and views. The staff corridor for example was transformed into a galley style kitchenette with bar and views across to the Cann River.

The building sits in a natural environment in a small regional town in East Gippsland, mediating between road and river (east and west), and so a neutral 'sandy clay' context colour was specified for the main walls, selected from the Resene whites and neutrals range.

The Resene product provided excellent coverage over a textured 'bagged' finish inspired by the sense of 'shoreline' of the riverbanks, and intimating the sense of building fabric as mediating between the interior of the building and its exterior environment. The metal screens were used in a similar way as a 'filter' between the building and its context.

The landscaping reflects this as well, with patients crossing a 'bridge-like' path to access the building, over a sandy/granite

riverbed and seeking to provide an integral connection between the colours of the building and its landscape context - in this way, and with a 'pliable and heavy' effect and a condensed clay ochre, the building is 'seated' in its context, drawing immediate inspiration from the riverbed to the west.

The design is also derived from the original vernacular 'Cann Valley huts' of settlement in the area from around 1880, being single rooms and built of corrugated iron and rough rendered surfaces using local earthen materials and scrap found on site. The simplicity of form is also used in transformation for modern interpretation. The resultant form uses a simple gable roof, with a perforated corrugated screen for (multiple) purposes of screening of existing equipment and water tanks, as well as bushfire protection and signage for the building.

The colours are also selected as they are suggestive of a comfortable and welcoming palette. The natural hues converse well with, and contrast well against, the deep charcoal of the window frames, the cool greens of the background foliage and the deep blues of the river for which the area is known. And the colour also balances well with the neutral off-whites of the interior spaces.

Being more of a minimalist atmosphere, the Resene colour works perfectly as a canvas for the overall intent of the scheme, and provides the classic sense of a timeless building.

The existing building raised several challenges, with some changes to existing openings. A patchwork of 40 years of renovations and additions had to be consolidated into a simple, singular statement. A strong history in the region and the importance of the building as a community hub also created particular challenges.

Resene AquaShield mineral flat was used to seal the rough 'bagged' texture of the blockwork. It was selected for its high mineral content and super-hydrophobic, water-repellent and water-shedding

properties. It also dried to an attractive mineral flat finish, which provided a very natural finish - this contrasted with the highly polished surfaces throughout the facility, such as the glazed entry element. The colour was also used internally, to 'carry' the outside 'in' and help to create a warm transition between the inside and outside of the building, with a focus on welcoming patients.

Given the location of the building, paints were selected to provide a high commercial durability, resilience even, while also providing a natural, approachable warmth. And the colours were important in providing a contextual response in blending with the natural environment, while also seeking to provide a point of difference in the streetscape. The paint colour was also selected to coordinate with the signage for the centre, with the 'rebranding' of the centre developed in tandem with the building works, as well as coordinating the colours with the 'rock' colours of the local feature granite.

The integration of the various design mediums was very important. The clients were keen to create a new presence about the building and the work of the centre, but avoiding being too 'loud' in its differentiation in the street. With only a single colour, **Resene Triple Canterbury Clay**, used in the exterior walls, the colour was most critical, and was selected to coordinate with the natural colours of the palette. The metalwork was finished in **Resene Nocturnal**.

Perhaps most importantly, the paint specification was inspired in autumn - a year on, the photos demonstrate how the Resene colour works with the seasonal autumn colours of the feature deciduous tree, which is framed by the new works. The ochre colour of the specification is a seamless 'fit' within the colour spectrum - fallen leaves from the tree were in fact used as part of the original finishes board, and the Resene paint colour selection was made because it could reflect the natural seasonal hues.



 Resene Howlin Wolf

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