

# NICCO

TIMBER WINDOWS & DOORS

# Case Study

## Fox Johnston

### Waranara Early Learning Centre



# WARANARA CHILDCARE

Fox Johnston is a prestigious Architectural studio that specialises in creating well-resolved, light-filled, tactile and thought-provoking buildings. They have an acute awareness of sustainability, and design with great care and precision.

Their work ranges from large private houses to adaptive re-use of heritage buildings, to major multi-residential properties. They are driven by a passion for light, space, natural materials and finely crafted buildings.

The outstanding Waranara Early Learning Centre at Green Square Zetland designed by Fox Johnston, was a rework of the Royal South Sydney Hospital nurses' quarters and outpatients' buildings. Fox Johnston was awarded the project as winners of the Design Competition for the site. They masterfully kept the integrity of the existing buildings yet renovated it into a fresh, uplifting and spacious centre.



The thoughtful design is functional for young pre-schoolers yet is community focused, environmentally friendly and every little detail is architecturally sound. The centre has a solar energy system, and passive ventilation and heat-recovery air-conditioning systems. Recycling from the demolition was used wherever possible.

In 2018 Fox Johnston took home both the NSW Australian Institute of Architects awards for Interior Architecture and the Educational Architecture - Commendation award for the centre.

NICCO supplied the windows and doors consisting of sliding, fixed glass, sashless, power louvre and box frame windows, and single and French doors.

NICCO Timber Windows and Doors were chosen to replace the existing supplier because Fox Johnston had worked with NICCO previously and knew them to be of a high quality and able to produce both the intricacy of the old heritage work, and the new contemporary elements.

The project comprised of strict datum lines that meant all the elements were measured on site and had to align to millimetre accuracy.

As Alan Powell of Fox Johnston said **“NICCO can handle working to the highest precision, and across a range of needs. They will also contribute to design resolution, providing advice on ways to execute your design intent.”**

There was a particular wall in the old heritage building that was marked for retention as existing; and since it was in poor condition it fell apart during construction. It had to be fully restored to match its original form. This comprised of two timber windows to be built exactly as they were with masonry arches, and all the timber detailing as original.

Several of the new windows in the new building were a combination of fixed frameless glass differing interface seamlessly to the required precision. The project also required working with a range of timbers for their various purposes.

According to Alan, NICCO was instrumental in helping overcome these difficulties.

Waranara Early Learning is part of a new precinct called Joynton Avenue Creative Centre where visitors and neighbours can spend time, connect and express creativity.

The precinct is the winner of numerous awards, at the 2018 National Architecture Awards it won the highest accolade, the Lachlan Macquarie award for heritage, and a national award for public architecture.

At the 2018 NSW Architecture Awards it won the first ever Architectural Medallion. It won the Greenway Prize for heritage, and awards in the public architecture and sustainable architecture categories.

At the 2018 Australian Urban Design Awards it was one of the winners of the local and neighbourhood scale build projects category.



## CHALLENGES

### Contamination

Being a site that had been partly demolished for several years, it was riddled with asbestos and other material dumped from other sites. This caused a slow start for the project. Once commenced, the whole area required decontamination. This was hugely difficult coupled with the need to retain the existing heritage building, and limited the methodology for decontamination.

## Heritage

The main building was the outpatients wing of the old South Sydney Hospital, so much of the original facade + detailing needed to be retained, but most of it was in poor condition, so needed to be replaced/rebuilt. This also informed many of the design decisions for any new interventions, as these generally required justification as a form of re-interpretation of the former building.

## Height

In particular the retention of the existing building dictated the height of several new architectural elements such as the main covered walkway, as they needed to sleeve in under the existing building. This became challenging to get adequate soffit heights, structural depths in roofs, and consistent datum lines throughout the centre.

## Adjacent sites

It was part of a major urban renewal exercise that was still continuing, with several of the adjoining sites and roads and infrastructure being reconstructed. In particular, this made it difficult for the builders with programming and sequencing, as two of the four main external facades were the site boundary, therefore edge of the construction site, beyond which were builders from adjoining projects.

## Client

Being part of a major urban renewal project, the Client (City of Sydney) comprised several tiers of stakeholders all with their particular level of input, and wider agendas for the greater green square project.

Fox Johnston rose to the occasion and received accolades for their success. Fox Johnston have received many awards and always work to impeccable standards despite the difficulties on any project. This type of excellence requires a supplier such as NICCO.

NICCO proudly and regularly work with Fox Johnston. For details on the services and materials provided on the project featured above or for further information on our services, head to [our website](#) and [contact us](#) today.

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