
Case study

Kirwan State High School



Queensland school goes from old to bold



Colorbond®

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BlueScope's COLORBOND® Metallic steel colour range has played a pivotal role as cladding for a new triple-storey school building that makes a grand statement amongst predominantly older single-storey classrooms.

As Queensland's second-largest State-owned high school, Kirwan State High School in Townsville has over 2300 students and increasing enrolments were placing pressure on its facilities. A new building with 20 additional learning areas and support space for 30 teachers was proposed.

The client – Queensland's Department of Education, Training and Employment – engaged Brisbane-based architects Deicke Richards for a building design that would provide a new visual identity and strong street presence for the school.

Deicke Richards director Eloise Atkinson said little had been updated since the original school was designed in the late seventies. "Apart from a small science building during the Building Education Revolution, the school hadn't had any significant new infrastructure," she said.

"John Livingston, the principal of 30 years who sadly died recently, was committed to creating a building that signalled the school's engagement with the wider community.

"Before the new building, you could come down the main road, Thuringowa Drive, and hardly know the school was there. The principal was determined that the building would have sufficient height to give it a strong street presence and for it to have sophisticated finishes that reflected its professionalism."

COLORBOND® steel is used liberally throughout the project including the COLORBOND® steel Metallic steel colour range.

Approximately 1300 square metres of roofing is made from COLORBOND® steel in LYSAGHT KLIP-LOK® profile in the colour Windspray®, and the same material extends to clad the soffits, in LYSAGHT CUSTOM ORB® profile.

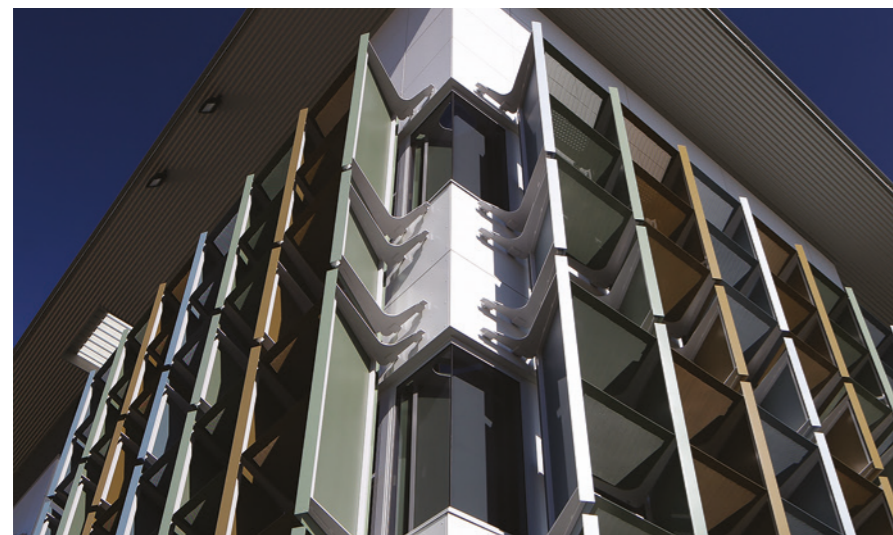
Such value was placed on the building having a 'clean' facade that walkways were internalised. "A typical model would have it as a single-loaded building with an external verandah but, given the weather in Townsville which is incredibly hot and has significant rainfall in the wet season, the principal

pushed for the building to have generous internal corridors that provided additional learning spaces and weather protection for students," Ms Atkinson said.

A decision to air-condition the internal corridors led to those services being shifted to a dedicated area on the southeastern end of the building. An end wall made from 70 square metres of COLORBOND® Metallic steel in the colour Celestian® clads the school's plant room, which is flanked by concrete blockwork walls set in a patterned fashion.

The architect explained that this part of the building was intentionally made to look very different to the balance of the school's wall cladding, much of which is made from 350 square metres of COLORBOND® steel in LYSAGHT SPANDEK® profile, in the colours Deep Ocean® and Ironstone®. Other wall cladding materials include fibre cement sheeting and brickwork.

BlueScope's COLORBOND® steel has played a prominent role as cladding for Kirwan State High School's new building, which provides a new visual identity and strong street presence for the school.



The school's services are hidden with one of the first ever applications of BlueScope's COLORBOND® Metallic steel colour range. The architects said they chose the material for its sparkling effect and in the colour Celestian® to distinguish it from surrounding blockwork.



“We’re really happy with the result and the school is also very happy with the outcome.”



“We initially planned to use a standard colour and let the surrounding blockwork patterns be the plant room centrepiece. But when we learned about the new COLORBOND® Metallic steel colour range and its sparkling effect, we decided to be playful and make that part of the building a departure from the rest,” Ms Atkinson said.

“There’s a prominent view to that wall from the administration building, and in the early morning you can really notice the black steel shining in the sun. It’s very prominent from the main school entry.”

Deicke Richards project architect Tim Zieth said the addition of the plant room coincided fortuitously with the launch of the new COLORBOND® Metallic steel colour range. “The plant room was a non-priced variation in the contract and was still unfinished, so it was a great opportunity to try a new product,” Mr Zieth said. “We were impressed by samples of the new Metallic COLORBOND® steel colour range and when we found the price was within budget we jumped on it.

“We’re glad we did because it has a nice, sharp effect. It’s quite eye-catching. I particularly like the way the cladding provides a contrast to the blockwork screen. It really ‘punctures’ it and punches out. It adds another whole layer of texture and pattern to the building.”

Mr Zieth said builders Watpac Construction rose to the occasion to finish the variation in time for the new school year in February 2015.

“It was a tight schedule but Watpac liaised directly with BlueScope to ensure quick delivery of the COLORBOND® Metallic steel,” he said.

Watpac Construction project manager Stuart Watterson agreed. “We were under the pump a bit so it was a big help that BlueScope got coil to us really quickly,” he said.

“It also helped that it allowed for a very quick and efficient cladding system. In comparison, the fibre cement wall cladding material we used for the school was very time-consuming to fix. The steel cladding allowed for a much quicker coverage rate which is a big advantage – especially when you’re hiring scissor lifts and coordinating other equipment on site.”

Mr Watterson was also appreciative of the final result. “The finish is more upmarket. It’s more of a premium finish. You can definitely tell the difference between it and normal COLORBOND® steel because of the sparkle. It glistens in the early morning sun.

“It was nice to have a feature wall on the end of the building. It’s nice to have something that’s a little bit flash.” He also said it is reassuring to have the backing of BlueScope’s warranty. “As a project manager it’s always handy to know BlueScope stands behind its warranties,” he said.

Ms Atkinson said durability was another reason to choose COLORBOND® steel. “The school is in a very harsh climate so the materials we chose for the building had to be robust.

“Pre-painted steel was a great solution because it’s hardy and low-maintenance, which is particularly important because the maintenance budget is always tight.”

So now that the project is complete, does the architect think the principal’s dreams were realised? “He was deeply committed to the project and he wanted statement finishes for a statement building. I think we have achieved that. We’re really happy with the result and the school is also very happy with the outcome.”

Project details

Project: Kirwan State High School

Location: Townsville, Queensland

Products: Plant room: 70 square metres of COLORBOND® Metallic steel in the colour Celestian®; Roofing: 1300 square metres of COLORBOND® steel in LYSAGHT KLIP-LOK® profile, in the colour Windspray®; Soffits: made from COLORBOND® steel in the colour Windspray®, in CUSTOM ORB® profile; Wall cladding: 350 square metres of COLORBOND® steel in LYSAGHT SPANDEK® profile, in the colours Deep Ocean® and Ironstone®

Architect: Deicke Richards

Builder: Watpac Construction

Client: Queensland Government Department of Education, Training and Employment

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To learn more about COLORBOND® steel

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