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ENVIRONMENTAL PRECINCTS

Timber provides unifying elements

Berrinba Wetlands Park is not a household name, but a hint as to its scale, biological diversity and ecological importance to one of Australia’s fastest-growing cities is implicit in its ‘mini Kakadu’ status.



Logan City, between Brisbane and the Gold Coast, was created in the 1970s and its population has soared beyond 260,000 – a culturally diverse collection of contemporary neighbourhoods, with more than half the residents under the age of 30.

The city council has pursued an enlightened policy of creating environmental and recreational facilities, highlighted by the opening in 2008 of Berrinba Wetlands – a \$12 million, 80 ha nature park on an old sand-mining site. In addition to seven kilometres of walking tracks there are five bridges for walkers and cyclists, remnant and restoration bushland, a series of sheltered picnic areas, playground, and an interpretive centre and meeting facilities overlooking the wetlands. Berrinba contains an estimated 430,000 native plants and a large population of bird and animal species.

Timber elements have played a major role in helping to protect the site's environmental values, including boardwalks to limit impact on drainage lines and surrounding vegetation, barrier rails as physical and perceptual deterrents in areas of regeneration and stabilisation, and timber bollards as buffers between urban and natural areas.

Timber is also used as the unifying character element – evoking an environmental perception of precincts within the park. That is demonstrated in its use with more refined elements associated with tactile 'learning' areas in buildings such as the Kiosk and the Interpretive Centre.

The project team specified Outdoor Structures Australia's Deckwood and Heavy Duty range of bollards – recognised by the state and federal government Innovative Technology Showcase. OSA timber was used in five steel-framed bridges, four full-timber bridges, a boardwalk, wetland viewing platform, decking, bollards, general facilities and signage.

The iconic bridge within the park is a 72-m-long twin-mast, cable-stay steel structure with a 26 m centre span. Timber was introduced to provide a warm and friendly feel, and a look appropriate to the bushland setting. In other areas, the graceful ageing of timber features will add to the honesty of the landscaping.

Treatment details

All of the OSA Deckwood and Joistwood used on the project was Tanalith E treated. Decking was coated with Arch CN Oil and Arch CN Emulsion was applied to sawn ends and between the top of the joists and the damp course.

Tanacoat, made exclusively for OSA by Arch Wood Protection, is used on handrails and lining boards below the shelters.

Arch has assisted OSA in developing its boardwalk and Deckwood guides, which represent world's best practice in weather-exposed timber design. A new guide on commercial timber barriers is soon to be released.

PROJECT Berrinba Wetlands Park, Logan City, Queensland

CLIENT Logan City Council

ARCHITECT AR:2

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT Verge

PROJECT MANAGER GHD Brisbane

PRINCIPAL CONTRACTORS Neumann Contractors

CONSULTING ENGINEERS James Pierce & Assocs

WOOD SUPPLY & INSTALLATION Outdoor Structures Australia

WOOD PRODUCTS OSA Deckwood, Joistwood and HD Bollards

PHOTOGRAPHY INWOOD/IMAGES

This feature is supported by Arch Wood Protection to highlight another environmentally responsible project using preservative-treated wood products.

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