

CASE STUDY

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Victoria
University
Coastal
Ecology
Laboratory
Island Bay, Wellington

Coastal Ecology Laboratory

Island Bay, Wellington

Wellington's iconic Island Bay is usually associated with surfing, where board riders gather to take advantage of the big rollers crashing in from Cook Strait.

But it's also a place to learn about marine life. Victoria University established a Coastal Ecology Laboratory on its northern shores many years ago in a collection of old industrial buildings once used as a fish cannery. But when these old buildings became too run-down, cramped and uneconomic to maintain, they were replaced by a new facility.

Designing a new building for such a prominent waterfront site was no easy task, from both durability and aesthetic points of view, says Tim Burns of Pynenburg and Collins Architects. The brief called for a durable and attractive building that functioned in line with Environmentally Sustainable Design principles.

"The south coast is an iconic environment in Wellington, with stunning landforms and sea views - on rough days, however, the site is blasted by salt-laden southerlies," he says.

Natural materials— stone, metal, glass and the large curved timber ribs at the entrance – were used in different zones to help ensure the new Coastal Ecology Laboratory complex had a coastal feel in its appearance. Pre-painted corrugated metal is used on the roof, feature walls and over the entrance to give it just such a look. But traditional galvanised iron is just not suited to such harsh environments, so a modern substrate was specified for the laboratory building – ColorCote® ARX™ pre-painted aluminium roofing and cladding.

ColorCote® ARX™ is constructed from type 5052/5005 marine grade aluminium alloy substrate, it is protected by a primer and PFV2 top coats that deliver a highly durable finish that can withstand the extreme marine environment of this part of the Wellington coast.

The finished Coastal Ecology Laboratory melds into the landscape, with the Sandstone Grey roof and Bone White cladding colours ensuring that it remains in harmony with the surrounding area; not overpowering it. The lab provides a pleasant learning environment for the Victoria university students and faculty and will stand up to the worst Cook Strait can throw at it for much longer than the older buildings it replaced, whilst connecting the students with the subject of their learning just across the road.

The building has also captured the attention of the professional architects' body, winning an NZ Institute of Architects branch award.



Owner:

Victoria University of Wellington

Architect:

Pynenburg and Collins Architects, Wellington

Builder:

Mainzeal, Wellington

Rollformers:

Steel & Tube, Wellington

Roofers & Main contractor:

Tararua Roofing, Wellington

ColorCote® product:

ColorCote® ARX™ marine-grade aluminium alloy substrate

Colours:

Sandstone Grey and Bone White



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February 2011
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