



New Zealand Institute of Architects Incorporated

Buildings that enhance human spirit recognised in 2015 Western Architecture Awards

The lower North Island's outstanding architectural projects have been acknowledged in the 2015 Western Architecture Awards, which were announced at an event at the Manawatu Golf Club in Palmerston North on Friday 19 June.

The jury in the awards programme, which is run by the New Zealand Institute of Architects, selected 11 winners, ranging from houses to school buildings and from a hotel to an airport terminal.

Jury convenor Mike Swann said the ability of architects to make a difference at a community level is evident not only in the design of family homes but in amenities such as a new medical centre in Foxton, a teen parent unit in Levin and a preschool in New Plymouth.

"One purpose of the Western Architecture Awards is to showcase work that enhances the human spirit, and these award-winning buildings certainly do that," said Mr Swann, who is an architect practising in Palmerston North.

"The awards jury was also impressed with the quality of work across many sectors, and the skill of design execution, despite limited means in some instances."

"For example, the schools we visited all displayed new approaches to modern learning, and all have been designed and built with great skill to meet modest budgets. The awards show that tight budgets are not incompatible with excellent architecture," Mr Swann said.

"It was also good to see cultural and historical references in buildings that reference both the local context and the local conscience".

New Plymouth-based Boon Goldsmith Bhaskar Brebner Team Architects was a dominant force in the 2015 Southern Architecture Awards, picking up five awards and making a clean sweep of the housing categories.

In the Lynskey House, designed for a narrow site in New Plymouth, Boon Goldsmith Bhaskar Brebner Team Architects, have created "moments of delight" by means of "attention to detail and a mixed palette of materials including glass, local stone, and cedar," the jury said.

The firm's second housing award was for the Peacock House in Oakura. In this "rich but contemporary house", the jury said, "a simple exterior form combines with a seamless flow of dynamic interior space, which can be closed off to create separate spaces for children, adults, and guests."

Media release: 19 June 2015

Boon Goldsmith Bhaskar Brebner's Krough Bach in Opunake is "a delightful interpretation" of a typical New Zealand bach "pared back to its essential qualities", the jury said, and the practice's comprehensive addition and alteration to the Wells House in New Plymouth "has transformed the living spaces of the house from cellular rooms to open plan living."

Boon Goldsmith Bhaskar Brebner Team Architects also won an award in the public architecture category, for the visitor pavilion at Taranaki Regional Council's Hollard Gardens. The pavilion "nestles into the surrounding natural environment," the jury said. "A richness is created with memories of the previous accommodation embedded into the new structure."

"A triumph for the Foxton community" was the jury's description of this year's other public architecture winner, Te Waioira, a healthcare facility designed by Bruce Barry Architects. "The architectural form responds to site, function and, most importantly, cultural context. The gable roof and building forecourt evoke whare and marae respectively, creating a warm and welcoming environment in a facility which meets the diverse medical requirements of its community."

In the education category, an award went to an important community institution in Levin. He Whare Manaaki Tangata Teen Parent Unit, by McKenzie Higham Architects, is appropriately scaled for parents and children, the jury said. "The architect has really enhanced the environment of a building which provides such a great social service."

In New Plymouth, Jumpstart Preschool, designed by Atelierworkshop, caters to the specific needs of the very young. Facing the challenge of locating a preschool in an industrial area, the architects responded by using simple forms and basic materials to produce "a simple but well-planned environment, with the industrial aesthetic lifted through the use of opalescent cladding and counterbalanced by a natural outdoor play area."

In giving an award for commercial architecture to the Ohakea Air Movements Terminal, designed by Beca Architects and Architype Shadbolt Architects in association, the jury praised the clever use of materials, including "a striking metal cladding that wraps the walls and roof in a simple shed form."

In the interior category, two projects were awarded. New Plymouth's King and Queen Hotel Suites by Chapman Oulsnam Speirs are "elegant and well-detailed interiors" that "befit the building's status as a boutique hotel", the jury said.

For insurance company Aon New Zealand, Matz Architects designed a "vibrant office environment" in which "materials, details, and fittings all contribute to making a successful transition to an open-plan office environment," the jury said.

The Western Architecture Awards are part of the annual, nationwide, peer-reviewed Architecture Awards programme run by the New Zealand Institute of Architects with the support of Resene. It is the country's premier architecture competition, recognising outstanding work by New Zealand's architecture practices.

Joining Mike Swann on the 2015 Southern Architecture Awards jury were architects Simon Novak,

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Sophie Ross and architecture graduate Scott Ferguson.

All winners of this year's Western Architecture Awards will be considered for 2015 New Zealand Architecture Awards, which will be announced in November.

Rights-cleared, hi-res images of all award-winning projects and a pdf of the 2015 awards booklet, which includes jury citations for all award winners and a statement by the jury convener, can be [downloaded here](#).