

Choi Ropha Fighera Projects Profile People Awards Press News Contact



Ballast Point Park Amenities

Program Amenities, Shade Structures
 Location Balmain, NSW
 Floor Area 460 sqm
 Client Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority
 Park Design McGregor Coxall
 Collaborators McGregor Coxall, Northrop, Deuce, Lighting Art & Science
 Builder Landscape Solutions
 Photography Brett Boardman
 Status Built

Ballast Point Park lies at the tip of Birchgrove on a prominent headland overlooking Sydney Harbour. The park draws interest out of the site's chequered history by retaining the cliff faces where ballast was quarried by the early settlers as well as retaining the footprints of the storage drums from when the site was more recently used by Cabot for lubricant and oil storage.

The challenge was to establish an appropriate design language that responded to the site's history whilst celebrating this new layer to its story.

Our strategy addresses these issues within a framework of sustainability by retaining selective components of past layers, using recycled materials from the site, and adding finely crafted details and elements to create a park that reveals the past, but speaks of the future.

The architectural program works within this overall philosophy by layering the site with contemporary structures that complement the remnant site features through their materiality and contemporary industrial aesthetic. The new structures include two amenities buildings and a cliff-top shade structure. Each structure has a finely crafted canopy formed with bright yellow recycled steel belt webbing that is woven in an interlocking pattern to allow full shade in the middle of day and depleted light in the morning and late afternoon.

These structures enable the spaces beneath to be light-filled and naturally ventilated while introducing an intriguing play of light and shadow. The amenities blocks consist of open plan modules of recycled aggregate in-situ concrete and recycled hardwood contrasted by finely crafted elements such as the bespoke pre-cast wash basins.

The architecture sits finely between abstraction and tectonic expression allowing the eye to appreciate the shade structures as delicate textured 'tiles' from a distance and close up, understand the construction and structural forces at play. Nothing is concealed. All details are designed to add to the 'craft' of the building.

The project received 2009 Australian Institute of Architects NSW Chapter Award Commendation, Small Projects Category and with overall park, 2010 International Waterfront Centre Award and 2010 National Trust Heritage Awards, NSW, Adaptive Reuse, High Commendation.