



Case Study 32

Hunter Institute, Cessnock Campus, Stage 5

Cessnock NSW

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Hunter Institute
Cessnock Campus, Stage 5
Cessnock NSW

Client: NSW Department of Education and Training
Architect (design & documentation): Suters Architects
Architect (contract administration): NSW Department of Commerce
Builder: ADCO Constructions
Bricklayer: Paul Grob Bricklaying
Building cost: approx \$3.7 million
Photography by Greg Callan



“Our brief ... was to create a

Clockwise from left:
Precast colonnades clad in brick create a further link to the campus's original architectural design.

The new buildings relate to the buildings they are directly addressing, presenting as brick to the square and steel clad to their rear.

The original campus building and two new buildings address a square, defining the campus centre and entry. The 1956 building set the theme for the new development.

The new library/teaching block addresses one side of the square and picks up the brick colour and detailing from the 1956 building.

Hunter Institute Cessnock Campus, Stage 5

Nestled in the heart of the Hunter Valley, Cessnock is surrounded by such famous wine names as Pokolbin and Rothbury. In the 1950s the Cessnock campus of the Hunter Institute was a technical/industrial college working closely with the mining industry. Today the college offers tourism and hospitality studies, along with health, engineering, arts-media, and more.

The low-set campus sits in a flood zone and until recently its buildings were a disparate collection, lacking a theme, let alone a focus for students and staff. "Our brief from the Department of Education was to create a centre for the campus," explains Chris McBriarty, who handled the project design and documentation for Suters Architects. The campus had no defined entry aside from the imposing portico fronting the original administration block, a 1950s red brick building in a "stripped classical" style.

By removing a number of demountable buildings, Suters were able to create an open-fronted square flanked by a new library/teaching block on one edge and a canteen/administration building on the other. The 1956 building completes the square.



centre for the campus"

The forms, details and materials of the new buildings take their cues from the surrounding buildings, including face brick and metal cladding. "The faces the new buildings present to the square relate to the 1956 building. We used similar bricks and a colonnade arrangement derived from the original building," says Chris McBriarty. "The other sides are more attuned to the industrial-style buildings with exposed steel work and so on."

The colonnades are made from precast concrete columns and beams with walls clad in brickwork. A "great veranda" caps the face of the new admin building, taking the focus away from the grand entrance of the old building and directing attention to the new.

By closely matching the brick colour, heights and detailing, the new brickwork sits comfortably with that in the 1956 building, further unifying the campus. New brickwork was used to create an external liftshaft for this building. "You really have to look fairly closely, particularly where the liftshaft butts directly into the old brickwork," McBriarty contends. "You'd have to know that it wasn't original to pick it."

Completing the redevelopment is hard and soft landscaping those combines with a magnificent established tree to create a much-needed focus for student relaxation and activities.

Links:

www.hunter.tafensw.edu.au

www.sutersarchitects.com.au

www.adcoconstruct.com.au

