

Project

Melbourne Convention Centre

“Coiled on the banks of the Yarra River, a major new public work in the heart of Melbourne makes for a subtly considered intervention in the the city’s urban fabric, despite its powerful proportions”

Adam Haddow, Architectural Review
Australia, Issue 109 - April/May 2009

Project

MCC

Title

Melbourne
Convention Centre

Client

Plenary

Location

Southbank, VIC



1. Convention Centre & Hotel on the Yarra River
2. Public foyer to Plenary Hall
3. Plenary Hall interior

This Public Private Partnership (PPP) project for the Victorian Government is the first convention centre in the world to be awarded a 6 Star Green Star environmental rating.

NH Architecture, in joint venture with Woods Bagot, aimed to create a public building that belongs to Melbourne, rather than the typical convention centre stereotype that looks like a modified sports stadium.

The triangular design of the new Melbourne Convention Centre gives the cityscape a new feature on the banks of the Yarra River. The distinctive 18 metre high glass façade gives passers-by a glimpse of activity within the centre and creates a foyer full of natural light, as well as offering views out across the Yarra River to the city beyond.

The team has also met the challenge of integrating the new Centre with the existing Exhibition Centre, while attempting to create a building with its own distinct identity. The two buildings are linked via an enclosed glass walkway, becoming the largest exhibition and convention facility in the southern hemisphere. The roof is a vast, seamless expanse and its exciting geometry makes for spectacular angles and sweeping planes from any vantage point. The total area of the roof is 20,000m², each side being 200m long.

The design also exceeds the Government's brief for a 5,000-seat divisible plenary hall. The Gala seating offers maximum flexibility allowing 2 or 3 events to take place concurrently with spaces set up in differing configurations. "It was a complex problem," says Hamish Lyon of NH Architecture. "We travelled the world and saw 5,000 seat halls and divisible halls but none that combined the two."

Ultimately, the team has created an innovative and successful design solution which includes a deluxe hotel with restaurants and cafes; a banquet hall for up to 1,500 diners with a spacious pre-dinner cocktail balcony; 32 meeting rooms, and a ground foyer able to cater for 8,400 guests.

