

Aussie Ambassadors Bowral Bricks wins Embassy contract



Bowral Bricks is supplying 400,000 bricks for the new Australian embassy in Bangkok. (Artist's rendering courtesy BVN Donovan Hill.)

Bowral Bricks has won the contract to supply 400,000 of its renowned bricks for the construction of Australia's new embassy complex in Bangkok, Thailand.

The design philosophy set out in the project brief called for the buildings to "represent Australia to the host nation by using, where appropriate, a range of Australian materials and finishes in the public and representational areas."

The brief further describes the key architectural challenge as "how to translate a distinct national image into 'bricks and mortar'."

What better than that most Australian of building materials made by one of our most respected brick manufacturers?

Bowral Bricks products will feature in three buildings: the head of mission (ambassador's) residence, chancery, and guardhouse.

The two main buildings are designed to complement each other in architectural form and expression. The chancery is the

"business end" of the complex, accommodating staff representing the many arms of the Australian Government.

Bowral has developed a special brick, Embassy Red for the residence, and will also supply 50mm Bowral Blue bricks for the chancery, and Brahman Granite for the guardhouse. A range of Bowral Blue radiused bricks (to form curved walls) will also be supplied.

Construction has begun in Bangkok of the new embassy complex, designed by renowned Australian architects, BVN Donovan Hill. The bricks will be manufactured and delivered to site later this year.

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Brickworks delivering into landmark Sydney development

A derelict 22-hectare waterfront site immediately north of Darling Harbour known as Barangaroo is undergoing radical redevelopment, a \$6 billion blend of residential, commercial and recreational precincts that is said to be Sydney's last CBD waterfront development.

Two Brickworks brands, Austral Masonry and Austral Precast, are playing substantial roles, albeit supplying very different products for this landmark project.

Austral Masonry has supplied about one-third of the 2000 square metres of Magnumstone hollow-core retaining wall blocks specified for the Barangaroo project.

The giant blocks, each weighting over 600 kilograms, are hoisted into position using a crane. Patented lugs cast into each unit allow it to interlock with the unit below. The hollow

cores are then filled to add further mass and enhance stability.

The Barangaroo retaining walls are generally curved and will be terraced, with planting in front to help the walls blend into the landscape. The units are made at the Prospect NSW plant.

Not far away, at Wetherill Park, the Austral Precast plant is gearing up for production of concrete panels for Barangaroo's first residential buildings, Anadara and Alexandra, 11 and nine storeys respectively.



The precast panels will be the first from the Wetherill Park plant to be finished with Austral Precast's unique Permatint system, a factory-applied finish which penetrates the concrete substrate producing a tough, deep, long-lasting colour, superior to paint.

Production will commence in late April for delivery to site and installation in late May. All 159 apartments in the Anadara and Alexandra buildings pre-sold within hours last September. The entire project is not expected to be complete until 2023.





Above: The Barangaroo site, formerly East Darling Harbour, occupies a commanding position. The 22-hectare site will eventually accommodate 23,000 workers and residents. (Artist's impression of Barangaroo South courtesy Lend Lease.)



Left: Magnumstone blocks, made under licence at Austral Masonry's Prospect NSW plant, allow economical and efficient construction of attractive retaining walls. They are being used extensively at the Barangaroo project.



Where does the project's name come from? *Barangaroo was the second wife of Bennelong, the Aboriginal leader after whom the Opera House site was named.*

Bristile brings power to the people

Solar panels (also known as photovoltaic cells) are popping up on the roofs of houses across Australia, as consumers grapple with rising energy prices.

They are everywhere to be seen ... and that's the problem which Bristile Roofing has addressed with new Bristile Solar, a modular photovoltaic flat tile system that blends into the roofline.

Conventional solar panels are fastened to the roof, requiring holes to be cut in the roofing material, and acting as a trap for dirt and leaves. And they are very visible, some might say unsightly.

Bristile Solar Tiles integrate into the roofline rather than above it. Each panel replaces three standard tiles, coordinating perfectly. They even have a watercourse, just like a conventional tile, to ensure drainage.

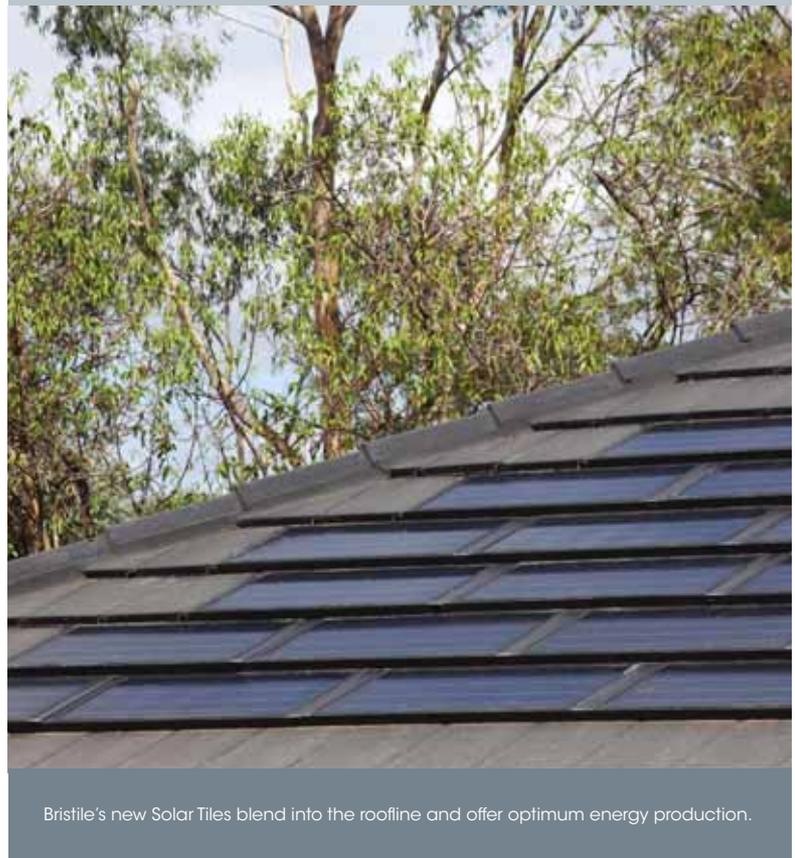
The toughened glass face of Solar Tiles allows them to support

the weight of a person. The glass is also hail resistant.

Each panel comes with a micro-inverter which converts the solar-generated electricity to AC for entry into the grid. This technology replaces a central inverter and allows for tracking and monitoring and improved efficiency.

The output performance of Solar Tiles is guaranteed for 25-years. The initial range matches the flat profiles of the popular Prestige concrete tiles and La Escandella Planum premium terracotta tiles.

Bristile Solar Tiles promise optimum energy production without compromising street appeal.



Bristile's new Solar Tiles blend into the roofline and offer optimum energy production.

PROJECTS IN PROFILE

Two recent projects featuring Brickworks products couldn't be different! One is by the beach, the other inner city. One is architect designed and the other handcrafted by a self-confessed "brick tragic."

The Steampunk House

Situated on a tiny site on a side street in South Melbourne, this highly individual house was a hit when broadcast earlier this year on Grand Designs Australia. The project would not have been possible without the active assistance of Austral Bricks Victoria which gave the owner-builder-

bricklayer free rein to hand glaze over 10,000 bricks before firing them in the Wollert kilns.

Grand Designs' cameras followed the process, recording discussions at the Wollert plant and watching as the owner painstakingly applied the glaze, a brick at a time, and built them into this unique family home.



The Block House

On the NSW Central Coast, in the secluded village of Pearl Beach, a magnificent weekender has been constructed with to-die-for views over Broken Bay. The two-storey home features Austral Masonry Architec Smooth Face concrete masonry throughout.

These units not only look great but they resist attack by moist salt air and abrasion by windborne sand, all without requiring high-maintenance finishes such as paint.

Weatherboards are a popular cladding material in this location, however the designers took their cues from the caves and sandstone cliffs in the surrounding area "which seem to have lasted a lot longer than the trees!" the architect quipped.



Interesting name, great timber

Is wormy chestnut “the next big thing in Australian timber”?

Wormy chestnut is the unusual name for a new star in the Auswest Timber lineup. And it's a Cinderella story of the timber that was once considered low value now being appreciated for its unique character.

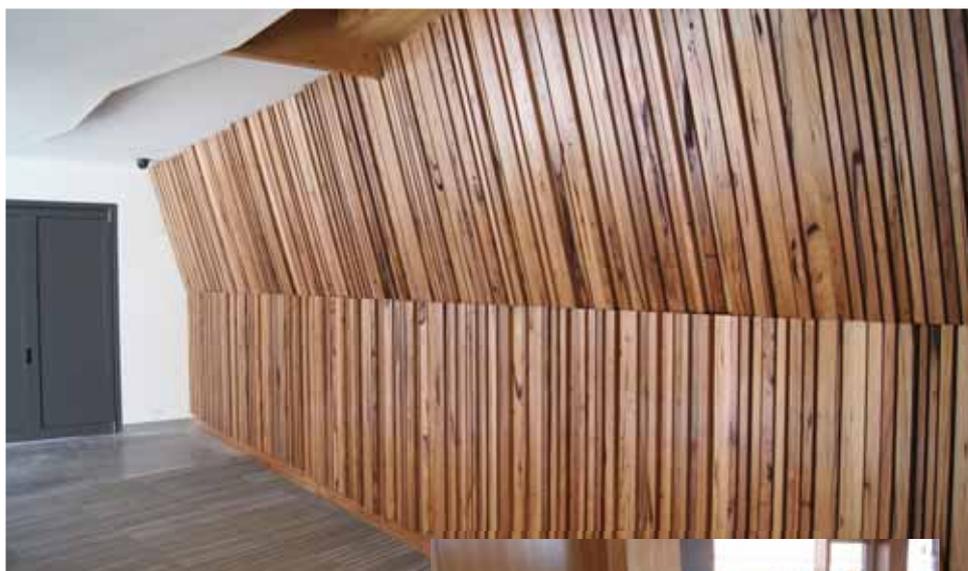
Wormy chestnut was a high-value American timber from trees that were all but wiped out by blight in the early 1900s. Today in the US, it is available only as reclaimed timber.

Auswest recognised some of the characteristics of this classic American timber in hardwoods from eastern Victoria, timber that until recently was considered only usable for pallets or tile battens.

Australian wormy chestnut is not perfect, and that's its attraction. It's timber with a story to tell, from the sinuous trail left by scribbly borers as they search for nutrients under the bark, to bardi grubs (aka witchetty grubs) that gorge on the tree's gum, the peppering of pin holes by ambrosia beetles, to the scorching by fire and lashing by rain.

It's all there on display in the milled timber, imparting a character and uniqueness that cannot be manufactured or grown in plantation timber.

This unique timber has been called “the next big thing in Australian timber.”



Wormy chestnut is ideal for character flooring, and is also being used in furniture, joinery and commercial fitouts. Auswest is also marketing wormy chestnut in China, Vietnam, South Africa and, appropriately, the USA.

Above and left: The unique qualities of Auswest Timber's wormy chestnut are showcased in the redevelopment of the Bairnsdale VIC Library, shown here in a feature wall and cladding the information desk. (Photos courtesy NOWArchitecture)



Austral Bricks fired up over energy efficiency

Rubbish disposal is a world-wide problem. Not only are sites becoming harder to find, but the very process of disposing of household and industrial waste can create problems.

One of the challenges of land filling garbage is the generation of landfill gases, predominantly methane, as micro-organisms break down materials such as food waste. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas, much more so than carbon dioxide. To prevent its escape into the atmosphere, landfill sites often burn the gas, a process known as flaring.

Austral Bricks has received a grant of just under half a million dollars from the Australian Government's Clean Technology Investment Program to investigate and develop an innovative plan to use landfill gas to help power its Horsley Park brick kilns.

The source of methane is the adjacent Veolia landfill site. The grant will allow Austral Bricks to pipe the methane from the landfill site and harness its energy to power the kilns.

It is expected the landfill gas will replace approximately 50 percent of energy needs,

reducing site-wide carbon emissions by 32 percent and saving \$290,000 annually.

Austral Bricks has long shown leadership in energy efficiency, as far back as the implementation of tunnel kilns over half a century ago, to the development of world-leading energy-efficient brick production

at Wollert VIC, and most recently the production of carbon neutral bricks in Tasmania (see story this issue).

Austral Bricks believes that thanks to the landfill gas initiative, the Horsley Park site will have the only Australian brick kilns using this technology.



The landfill gas initiative will save Austral Bricks \$290,000 per year and reduce carbon emissions by 32 percent.

Carbon neutral bricks fuel a unique marketing opportunity

Brickworks Building Products has taken a significant step forward in its ongoing quest for sustainable products and processes by achieving Carbon Neutral certification for all products produced at the Longford Tasmania plant.



The plant produces clay bricks and pavers under the Austral Bricks brand which are sold in the local market and exported to countries such as Japan and New Zealand. It also manufactures Daniel Robertson bricks, a premium brand renowned for their unique and varied colours and textures, and sold throughout Australia.

The Carbon Neutral Program, a voluntary scheme administered by the Australian Government's Department of the Environment, requires the measurement, auditing and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and the offset of any remaining emissions.

The most significant factor in achieving this Carbon Neutral certification is the use of an unusual fuel to fire Longford's kilns. For decades, they have been fuelled by sawdust, a local timber industry byproduct. This alone results in significantly lower emissions than a conventional natural gas fired kiln.

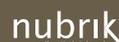
The certification process also measures other inputs such as extraction, transport, packaging and waste, even administration, and incremental improvements were also made in these areas. All remaining greenhouse gas emissions are offset by purchasing carbon credits that assist in local projects such as tree planting.

The certification bolsters Brickworks Building Products quest to become Australia's most sustainable building materials company and creates a unique marketing opportunity for our Tasmania-manufactured products.



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