



**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 6PM, WEDNESDAY 29 JULY**

## **Western Architecture Awards – winners announced**

Fifteen projects have received awards in the 2020 Western Architecture Awards, a peer-reviewed programme run by Te Kāhui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA).

The Awards recognise the year’s best architecture in the NZIA’s Western Branch, which covers Taranaki, Whanganui and Manawatu.

**Images of all winners and jury citations are available [here](#).**

Demonstrating the breadth of work undertaken by architects in the lower North Island, the award-winners included several school buildings, a couple of offices, half a dozen residential projects and a newly-strengthened icon of New Zealand architecture – Whanganui War Memorial.

The Awards jury convenor, Palmerston North architect Matthew Argyle, said the jury, which also included architects Brady Gibbons from New Plymouth and Marianne Riley from Auckland, and Susanna Shadbolt, Director of Aratoi–Wairarapa Museum of Art and History, found that the quality of the shortlisted buildings made judging a pleasure.

“Sustainability was high on the agenda,” Argyle said, “with the clever re-use of existing buildings, and even, in one case, the hull of a boat, to create delightful spaces, while new projects also used smart design decisions to improve the quality of space.”

“Another feature of the entries,” Argyle said, “was the high level of integrity in the use of materials, with stone, raw steel, solid timber joinery and the humble brick being integral elements of many projects.”

Two projects received awards in the Commercial Architecture category. With Dawson & King in New Plymouth, the jury said Matz Architects “have dealt successfully with both a corner site and the need to bookend a commercial precinct to create a unique and engaging building.”

WSP Architecture received a Commercial award for Te Ao Nui, a Palmerston North ‘Importance Level 4 building’ capable of post-disaster operation.

## Media release: 27 July 2020

“The scale of the building is managed through some smart design decisions and enhanced by its mixed material palette,” the jury said. “Sustainability is key to the building design, with energy efficiency and thermal performance well considered throughout.”

Four awards were made in the Education category.

Green School New Zealand in Koru, New Plymouth, is “the result of extraordinary collaborative effort between client, architecture practice Boon, and the local construction industry,” the jury said.

“Necessity was the mother of invention: design decisions were guided by what the industry could deliver and building information modelling and off-site fabrication was used to maximise delivery times and minimise material wastage. The quality of the Green School’s architecture, achieved in just under a year, is impressive.”

Robertson Architecture Design won an award for Lepperton School and Community Hub in north Taranaki.

“Lepperton’s needs have been well met with this dual-purpose facility that leverages the needs of the school and the community to deliver bustling and activated learning and social spaces,” the jury said. “In a project with a tight budget, the architects have excelled themselves in delivering stimulating and comfortable environments.”

Two projects at Whanganui Collegiate School, both designed by RTA Studio, received awards in the Education category.

The refurbishment of the H.G. Carver Memorial Library “skilfully balances heritage restoration with contemporary functionality in a design that celebrates the library’s character and provides a diversity of modern study spaces,” the jury said.

The Whanganui Collegiate School Administration Building “plays a pivotal role in the school’s new campus plan,” the jury said.

“Its siting and repeating gabled forms give presence to the school upon approach and when viewed from across the playing fields. The building completes a quadrangle, bringing shelter and order to the campus, and is a fine complement to the heritage architecture at the Whanganui Collegiate School.”

The jury made an award in the Heritage category to one of New Zealand’s most acclaimed Modernist buildings, the Whanganui War Memorial Centre, which has been strengthened by BSM Group Architects.

The jury said the complex structural strengthening of the building, a Category 1 Historic Place which opened in 1960, “ensures its continued survival by applying sophisticated architectural and structural solutions that complement and enhance the existing aesthetic of the building.”

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“The result is exceptional,” the jury said. “The work has given the War Memorial Centre a new chapter in its life, not only preserving the building for its community but also retaining an icon of New Zealand architecture.”

Also in the Heritage category, Whanganui Collegiate School’s H.G. Carver Memorial Library won its second Western Architecture Award.

The jury said the H.G. Carver Memorial Library has been beautifully restored by RTA Studio and given a fitting new purpose for a heritage building: the pursuit of knowledge.

“Seismic strengthening has been integrated without adversely affecting the architectural elements,” the jury said, “and clever new character windows have been integrated into the building so seamlessly as to suggest they were always there.”

Three projects won Awards in the Housing category. The jury said the core concept for G&C House in New Plymouth, designed by Ardern Peters Architects, was “the creation of a private retreat for the client, which could adapt to the frequent influx of the wider family.”

“Inspiration is drawn from the natural surrounds, while the design balances the dual nature of a location on the urban-rural boundary,” the jury said.

Two Peaks, by First Light Studio, is a New Plymouth “city beach house that sits nicely in its city fringe location and deals well with both the streetscape and the infill nature of the site,” the jury said.

“The thoughtfulness applied to detailing flows through to the considered use of natural materials and finishes to provide a beautiful and healthy home.”

Westmere House, Whanganui, by Dalgleish Architects, is “a well-thought-out alteration which sets a standard for future changes to the house,” the jury said. “The clever use of raw materials and finishes has given this 1970s house a new lease of life.”

Papaioea Place Social Housing in Palmerston North received an award in the Housing – Multi-unit category. The project “achieves economic and environmentally sustainable objectives in tandem with a level of design that elevates it well beyond other social housing in the region,” the jury said.

In the Interior Architecture category Govett Quilliam in New Plymouth, designed by Boon, is an “innovative and forward-thinking fit-out that challenges the norm for law practices,” the jury said.

“The layout provides a balance of open plan, breakout and task-specific work zones which enhances physical and visual connections throughout the space, resulting in a more cohesive place of work.”

The final two Awards were made in the Small Project Architecture category. At New Plymouth Boys High School Wharenui, designed by Boon, “structural strengthening work has been carried out in sympathy with the existing historic building, blending the European context of the building with a new focus on Māori culture.”

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“The re-purposing of this building brings a cultural narrative from the rear of the campus to the heart of the school,” the jury said.

Iona, by Drawingroom Architecture & Design, is a “delightful, cleverly designed tiny house sited on the banks of the Whanganui River amongst native flax, and in close proximity to the town centre.”

“Iona features the reclaimed hull of a 1925 kauri workboat and is a celebration of the re-use of materials,” the jury said. “Great consideration has gone into the design, construction detailing, and crafting of the building – the complexity of this project is anything but small.”

The 2020 Western Architecture Awards is a programme of Te Kāhui Whaihangā New Zealand Institute of Architects, supported by Resene. All NZIA Branch award-winners go forward for consideration in the New Zealand Architecture Awards, which will be announced in early November.

**Images of award-winning projects and jury citations are available [here](#).**

ENDS

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**[2020 Western Architecture Awards – list of winners by category & photo credits](#)**

Commercial Architecture

Dawson & King, New Plymouth  
Matz Architects  
Photographs: Gina Fabish

Te Ao Nui, Palmerston North  
WSP Architecture  
Photographs: Andy Spain

Education

Green School New Zealand, Koru  
Boon  
Photographs: Aviation Productions

Lepperton School and Community Hub  
Robertson Architecture Design  
Photographs: Paul McCredie

Whanganui Collegiate School – H.G. Carver Memorial Library  
RTA Studio  
Photographs: Simon Devitt

Whanganui Collegiate School Administration Building  
RTA Studio  
Photographs: Simon Devitt

Heritage

Whanganui War Memorial Centre Strengthening  
BSM Group Architects  
Photographs: Mark Brimblecombe

Whanganui Collegiate School – H.G Carver Memorial Library  
RTA Studio  
Photographs: Simon Devitt

Housing

G&C House, New Plymouth  
Ardern Peters Architects  
Photographs: Sandra Henderson

Two Peaks, New Plymouth  
First Light Studio  
Photographs: Andy Spain

Westmere House, Whanganui  
Dagleish Architects  
Photographs: David Silvester

Housing – Multi unit

Papaioea Place Social Housing, Palmerston North

Boon

Photographs: Sandra Henderson

Interior Architecture

Govett Quilliam, New Plymouth

Boon

Photographs: Sandra Henderson

Small Project Architecture

New Plymouth Boys High School Wharenui

Boon

Photographs: Sandra Henderson

Iona, Whanganui

Drawingroom Architecture & Design

Photographs: n/a