

Eco-style Architecture, Interior Design, and Modern Living Solutions

A photograph of a modern office lobby. In the foreground, a curved staircase with a wooden slat railing and a metal handrail leads up. The floor is dark grey with red and green square accents. In the middle ground, a man in a dark suit and light trousers stands near a reception desk. The background shows a bright office area with large windows, a red pillar, and a sign that reads "STUDENT SERVICES COURSE INFORMATION PAYMENTS".

Sustainable
Office Practices

Green Business Practices

KEY TO GREEN PRACTICES IS ENGAGING THE TEAM

- Our philosophy is about balance.
- As with our projects we do the best we can with the resources available.
- Green practices need to be convenient and affordable.
- Balance is about common sense- eg heating, model –making glues, etc
- Many of the practices can be readily adopted for home.

CAN YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

- We are a small practice- 6 staff. We rent our premises. We do not use a lot of materials, do not manufacture etc but we have reduced the environmental footprint of the business. Through both our practices in the running of the office and in the way we work on our projects and influence our clients decisions we are making a positive contribution.

Benefits of Green Practice

- Feel good, engaging the team.
- Walking the “talk”- clients appreciate integrity.
- Marketing tool.
- Save money, improve profitability.
- More productive and healthier working environment.

What is Sustainable Design

- Our philosophy is that design is about balance. We provide, choice and opportunity, and balance issues such as energy and water efficiency with ease of management and individual comfort , with realities of budget, site conditions, legislation etc
- Our role is to advise and guide clients through this process and help them to make informed decisions.
- Energy Efficiency
- Water management
- Reduce pollutants in and from the building
- Healthy environments
- Construction waste management
- Minimise life cycle and building management costs

Sustainability includes:

- Flexible, multi purpose spaces that can be used more people for more time of the day and/ or year.
- Maximum use of space and resources
- Designing flexible spaces that can be adapted for future users and uses.



What are Eco-style Green Practices

- We looked at the whole office from our printing practices through to furnishings.
- We are renting our premises which limits some of the opportunities that a business re-fitting their own building may have, but recently moved premises and reviewed our practices.
- We have a staff meeting each fortnight to discuss projects, office co-ordination and resourcing. That can also be used to fine-tune our business practices.

Office Premises

- Most of our furniture is modular and was readily adaptable to our new premises. New walls in Eco-ply.
- Furniture constructed from FSC timbers, low toxic glues, low VOC seals.
- Recycled timbers- some of our desks were previously built with panels from the demolition of another project and off-cuts.
- Painting- low VOC paints.
- Carpets- we kept the existing, but if replacing look at the glues, manufacturing processes, materials and Accreditation.
- Lighting- look at fittings, globes and the ability to zone lighting so that only the areas occupied are lit as required.
- Appliances- look at star rating when replacing. Eg fridge, heaters, dish washer, kettle

Printing

- Started off with a few basic principles and have fine tuned over time to a surprising number of small improvements.
- Minimise printing- looked at every document- what do you really need to print?
- Printer default set to “pdf”- have to consciously select to print on paper.
- Photo-copier default tray set to re-used paper so that both sides used. Have to consciously select to print on good paper.
- All documents staying in-house on re-used paper. Some client issued documents but careful about client confidentiality and selective of which clients and documents.
- If you must print drafts of documents to read- print 2 to a page eg Specification or select required pages only.
- Other than re-used paper, we use a re-cycled paper- “Evolve”.

Printing and paper (cont)

- All in-house notes eg phone messages are on scrap paper. Emails did work for us.
- Email everything possible- all documents to clients, staff timesheets, drawings to builders etc as pdf.
- Additional benefits include clear record of transmittals, clients pay invoices quicker, sub-contractors better informed.
- Reviewed drawing format so that 90-95% of our projects on A3- saves money, benefits also include builders likely to provide more drawings to sub-contractors.
- Formalised clearly defined points of issuing drawings to clients, builders etc. Additional benefits saves time, money and good quality control.
- Reviewed the format of letters and documents balanced with the need for legibility and professional image- font size, layout etc. We reduced a standard 40 page Specification to 33 pages.

Printing and paper (cont)

- All paper products are recycled (envelopes, folders etc)- suits our image.
- Faxing- go to Nofax, StopfaxingMe or others to un-enrol from fax list of the junk faxers.
- Scanning- scan documents and send as pdf.
- All paper once both sides used etc is then binned in Walkabout yellow bin. Each desk has 2 waste-bins, a round bin for rubbish, a square bin for paper. Additional benefits- Walkabout is a not for profit organisation employing people with disabilities. P. 6272-8244
- To make the above work- we agreed to the principles and developed good filing practices and documented all procedures in the quality manual.

Recycling, Composting etc

- Recycling- Surprising how much is generated-milk cartons, tuna tins, newspapers. Other organisations- drink bottles, coffee cups etc
- Composting- Surprising how much is generated-mainly teabags, banana skins, coffee grounds, apple cores.
- We have a Bogashi Bin- Japanese urban composting bin. Ferment speeds break-down , no odour and only have to take home every 3 months.
- Our office plants our edible- decorative and edible- herbs, lettuce.
- Computers particularly laptops- charities send old laptops abroad.
- Water use is minimal- but only wash up once a day to save water and time.
- Cleaning products- choose green products, soap, toilet paper

Energy Use

- Yes we heat our office. Warm, happy staff are productive staff.
- Heat only zones in use. Close doors between zones. Small under desk heaters when only one or 2 people in the office.
- Choose appliances for energy rating. We have a bar fridge- small office.
- Switch off at power point each night- music system, printers, kettle etc
- Shut down computers of a night. No screen savers.
- Light required zones only.
- New computers- laptops use less energy. Choose Energy Certified LCD monitor - uses $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ less power.

Transport

- Reduce carbon footprint by flying less often.
- Rationalise driving- instead of meetings can you phone, conference call, skype?
- Combine meetings to reduce driving.
- Choose fuel effective car.
- Walk, cycle, bus to and from work. Only one person in our office regularly drives-hey have small children and live in 7 Mile Beach.