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MEDIA RELEASE

Leading Perth architectural practice, Donaldson and Warn, rebrands

With_Architecture Studio open for business

With_Architecture Studio is the new name for one of Western Australia's best known and most awarded architectural practices – Donaldson and Warn.

The rebranding and relocation of the practice within Northbridge reflects significant changes to the firm's team during the past 18 months with the practice now led by Geoff Warn and two directors Daniel Aisenson and Jane Wetherall, after the retirement departure of co-founder Dick Donaldson.

Rebranding as With_Architecture acknowledges that the profession is now a complex, collective and collaborative enterprise requiring a multi-skilled, multi-disciplined team. The new name highlights the firm's preference for working in rewarding creative partnerships with clients and stakeholders, and with consultants and contractors.

With more than 30 years of history in designing and developing leading projects throughout Western Australia, With_Architecture continues to adopt new design and building methods to achieve the best results for its clients in sectors such as commercial property, tourism, education, health and Government.

Director Geoff Warn said the new name emerged through discussion about the changing nature of architecture, the need to uphold the value of design-led architecture in Perth, and how the practice could better position its approach and philosophy within the industry.

'Our new name will be the cornerstone of a strong brand that is built on our heritage, but which emphasises a team rather than individuals. The new name is an evolution of one of Perth's leading architectural practices to ensure we leverage more than three decades of experience, reputation and remarkable design to maintain employment continuity and build knowledge and growth.'

Mr Warn said With_Architecture is now located in new offices on William Street, Northbridge, so that it can better deliver its focus on collaborative partnerships by providing a larger, flexible working space to enable the formation of project teams and strong working relationships with consultants and contractors.

'Our converted warehouse not only provides great flexibility as a working space but gives us the ability to interact with the local neighbourhood. We are all interested in making a real connection and contribution to the community and have already hosted public art exhibitions and performances.'

About the name and brand

In grammatical terms “with” is a preposition. It is a linking or joining word that is integral to forming relationships. Adopting the word “With” signifies our preferred way of working and it captures the nature of contemporary architecture – a process that brings together many disciplines and people focused on a common goal.

The new logo acts as a neutral platform, with a simple typographical approach adopted for the logotype. This is comprised of a primary component (with) and an interchangeable secondary component (architecture studio). These two components are co-joined by an underscore that is used as a motif throughout the brand identity. The design highlights relationships and interchangeability - the ability to use ‘with_’ in isolation or in conjunctions.

Carbon Neutral Certification

First architectural practice in Australia certified carbon neutral

With_Architecture Studio (previously Donaldson and Warn) certified against National Carbon Offset Standard.

With_Architecture Studio has broken new ground for the architecture profession by becoming the first practice in Australia to be certified carbon neutral after a three year process.

The certification occurs under the National Carbon Offset Standard, which is a rigorous and transparent framework supported by international standards, tailored to an Australian context.

The overarching Carbon Neutral Program certifies organisations, products and services as carbon neutral against the Standard. To be carbon neutral, an organisation must measure emissions, reduce these where possible, offset remaining emissions and report on their carbon neutrality.

With_Architecture Studio Director Geoff Warn said the practice’s team viewed the certification as very important to the evolution of their design and development work for a range of sectors.

“The principles and experience we have acquired during our own certification process have direct relevance to our work for clients and will be deployed in our approach to conceptual and detailed project design.”

“We already had an excellent track record in achieving clients’ sustainability goals through our work and this certification clearly demonstrates that our team knows exactly what they are talking about when we discuss reducing carbon emissions through innovative and forward-thinking design. When we talk to clients about sustainability issues our team has the credibility to carry the conversation forward,” Geoff said.

With_Architecture began to monitor its resource consumption in 2014, tracking improvements and aiming to become Carbon Neutral in 2017. All parts of the practice’s operations are included in the Carbon Neutral Certification, and are in accordance with the following standards:

- National Carbon Offset Standard v3.0
- The Greenhouse Gas Protocol: A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard (Revised Edition)
- National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (Measurement) Determination 2008

With_Architecture began the certification process by measuring its carbon consumption and putting carbon reduction initiatives in place, including recycling and printing policies. Phased-out IT equipment was donated to a Rotary Club initiative supporting the Friendship Hospital in Phnom Penn, with all other e-waste being recycled with Tech Collect. Energy consumption was reduced by 9% from FY15 to FY16 and paper consumption by 18%.

The practice is continuing to make improvements and saw a 19% reduction in electricity consumption during 16/17 compared to 14/15 alone.

Funds from an offset programme support the Yarra Yarra Biodiversity Corridor - a multi-species native reforestation project in Southwest Australia. The reforestation programme removes 1.257 million tonnes of carbon in a region where over 90% of the woodland has been cleared.

The Yarra Yarra reforestation is focused on rejuvenating degraded, semi-arid agricultural land that no longer supports viable farming practices, with the goal of restoring the project landscape to its natural condition of vegetation.

This project also removes existing carbon from the atmosphere to recreate a healthy and functioning landscape, restored after decades of habitat loss and degradation. This is a legacy project that strives to ensure the land is continually nurtured and improved. (visit carbonneutral.com.au for more information on this project)

Practice background

With_Architecture Studio (previously Donaldson and Warn) was established in 1985 and is now a mid-sized design studio with around 25 employees operating from Perth, WA. The practice has a reputation as a creative and contemporary architecture studio with an impressive record of built projects. With_Architecture Studio has received regular recognition and awards for its design excellence, national and international recognition and publication. Among its 40 awards are two George Temple Poole awards: the highest honour for architecture WA, the Premier's Award for civic architecture, a British Airway's Tourism Award, and the national BHP Award. The practice's work is regularly published, and has represented Australia at the Venice Biennale of Architecture on two occasions.

With_Architecture Studio's expertise spans institutional and civic architecture, commercial developments, education buildings, learning environments and campus planning, hospitality and tourism, multi-residential architecture, arts buildings, heritage adaptation, urban design, masterplanning and development guidelines.

Since 2013, Director Geoff Warn has held the high profile public role of Western Australian Government Architect, which includes overseeing the Better Places and Spaces: A Policy for the Built Environment in Western Australia action plan.

With_Architecture Studio was awarded the first Green Star Multi-Unit Residential rating in Australia (4 Star) by the Green Building Council Australia (GBCA) for one of its residential projects. All recent education projects have achieved a 4 Star Green Star rating equivalent. The Greater Curtin Masterplan, for which we were the urban design and built-form consultants, was the first project in Australia to receive a 5 Star Green Star Communities rating.

With_Architecture Studio's sustainability commitments are integral to its QA and management systems ensuring their full implementation through every level of the business. The practice began to monitor its resource consumption in 2014, tracking improvements and aiming to become Carbon Neutral in 2017. The practice reached this goal in early 2017 to become the first architecture practice in Australia to receive carbon neutral certification against the National Carbon Offset Standard.

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