

CHINATOWN BROOME STYLE

Restriction grit in oyster to create this pearl

The words "steel" and "heritage" evoke images that often conflict with one another.

But one West Australian developer-builder is looking to change that by proving modern steel cladding that is equally at home in a heritage setting.

Karl Plunkett's Shiba Lane development in Broome's Chinatown has been a commercial success for his company, Eco Constructions.

It is also the Kimberley gateway's first three-storey building.

Eco Constructions built 20 luxury two-bedroom apartments and eight commercial suites to create the Shiba Lane complex, which was designed by award-winning Paul Meschiati & Associates.

Broome's Chinatown is at the heart of local history and subject to extensive city council restrictions on new structures built among the original corrugated iron huts of its pearling past.

"In the Chinatown precinct, Lysaght Custom Orb profile is the only material approved for external cladding," Mr Plunkett says.

"It can only be applied horizontally and it can only be white. The building highlights can only be red, green and black.

"Custom Orb cladding is fantastic for this region. It is a strong, lightweight material and the colour options are huge where there are no heritage restrictions.

"I'd call it the material of the North."

Mr Plunkett has backed that judgment with the development of several residential and commercial projects in Western Australia's north.

His company specialises in providing

sustainable living systems and work places suited to tropical living.

The design of his Eco Beach resort at Roebuck Bay will continue the trend when it opens this year.

John Rimington, whose company Just Roofing carried out the wall and roof cladding on the Shiba Lane project, is not surprised it has turned out to be a commercial success - with some apartments resold for nearly \$1 million.

Mr Rimington has 20 years' experience providing roofing and cladding throughout the Kimberley and his knowledge of the region's construction challenges is highly valued.

"The same project built elsewhere would have been much easier to clad," he says.

"Just the same, it was worth the effort.

"Part of the challenge was that because this was Broome's first three-



Shiba Lane uses Lysaght Custom Orb profile cladding in a heritage setting. storey building there were no suitable cranes available.

"Buildings up here have to be bulletproof because of the cyclone risk, so the structure used steel portals and steel framing.

"We used .42mm bmt Custom Orb profile in the Colorbond steel colour Surfist to clad the walls and roof.

"Extensive scaffolding was required

for work platforms but the bundles of sheets were light enough to be lifted into position with a telehandler."

Custom flashings, which contribute significantly to the building's overall impact, were fabricated in Just Roofing's sheetmetal workshop.

"I've tried others but there's no better brand than Lysaght," Mr Rimington says. ■

Global demand for eco tents, cabins and villas

Eco Structures Australia has been successfully supplying permanent and semi-permanent eco tents, cabins and villas to the tourism, mining, indigenous and agricultural industries.

Helmed by Karl Plunkett, the company offers an ideal solution to accommodation problems in a range of industries.

Along with Sean Connolly of Model-It, Mr Plunkett developed accommodation designs that were fast, stylish, cyclone-proof and, above all, economical.

"The only hurdle to growth has been manufacturing in quantity," says Mr Plunkett, who took on a venture capital partner in The Hawaiian Group.

With the additional network of

resources and contacts, ESA is now offering its products globally.

The basic tent structures are strong, simple and modular in nature, creating a myriad of options for tailoring the eco tents, cabins or villas to a diverse range of sites, conditions and purposes.

As the eco structures are free standing and open plan, construction is simple, minimising the need for skilled labour in erection and installation.

An eco cabin can be constructed in about four days and an eco tent in two - depending on available labour.

Transport of the components is economical, as the structures pack down compactly.

A world-class example of a project

incorporating eco tents is the recently completed Karijini Eco Retreat in the Pilbara.

The modular accommodation is also being used to rejuvenate Eco Beach, the tourism project originally destroyed by Cyclone Rosita.

Another recent development is strong interest in the Eco Structures products from the Middle East. The first eco tent was airfreighted to Abu Dhabi last month.

Information: phone 08 9192 3152 (Aaron Bell), aaronb@ecostructures.net.au or www.ecostructures.net.au.

ADVERTISING



The Australian leader in Eco Tents, Cabins & Villas.

Eco Structures Australia is a world-class innovator in the design and supply of permanent and semi-permanent eco tents, cabins and villas to the tourism, mining, indigenous and agricultural sectors. Strong, simple and modular, our product can be tailored to a diverse range of sites, conditions and purposes. Importantly, our range is engineered to Australian Government standards of wind region "C" with the option to be increased to meet 'D' classification.

For more information visit our comprehensive website at www.ecostructures.net.au

call us on (08) 9192 3152 or email: karl@ecostructures.net.au



ECO STRUCTURES
AUSTRALIA

LOW ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT - FAST INSTALLATION - EASY TO TRANSPORT - AFFORDABLE