

Sharif Abraham

Anzac Memorial

Architects

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School, Camberwell, Victoria

Photos Sanja Pahoki



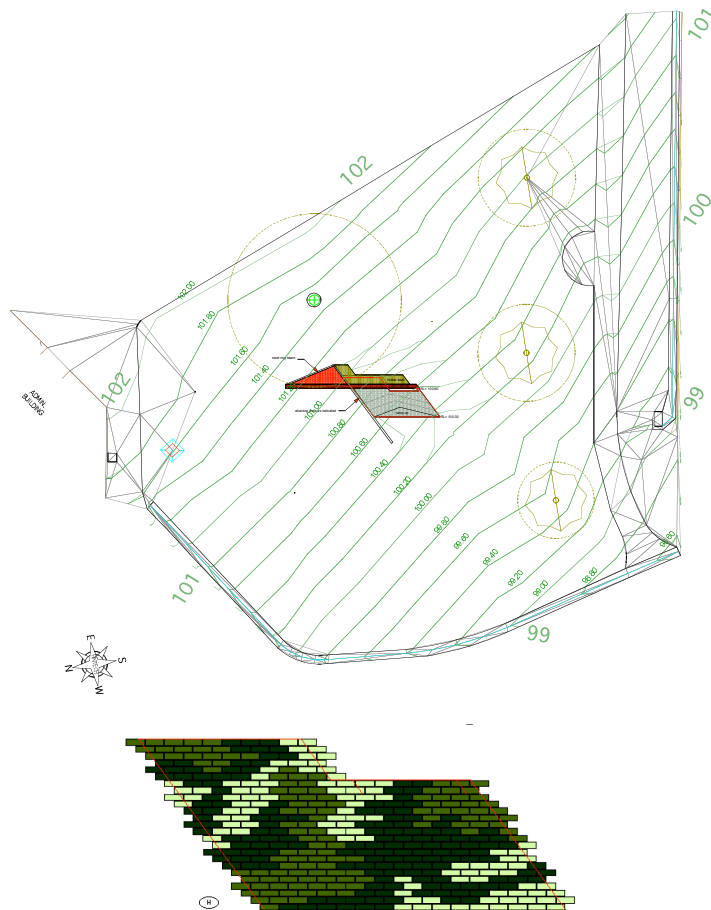
The brief was to design an Anzac Memorial at a government primary school on the outskirts of Melbourne. A significant number of residents on the housing estate to the northeast of the school are ex-service members and as such the school has traditionally been the centre of the Anzac dawn service for this community.

The client's children are the third generation of attendees at the school. His father donated the first Anzac Memorial in the early seventies. This was a very small bluestone plinth. The expansion of the school led to portables surrounding this structure and consequently there was a shift in the spatial focus of the school.

The brief was to design a structure to represent the significance of Anzac Day. Of specific importance was to maintain a sense of functional usefulness throughout the school year. As such, it needed to integrate well with the existing play equipment and for the greater part of the year to be used as such.

The new structure is located on an inclined open space opposite the entrance to principal's quarters and abutting the play area. An existing stepped concrete path surrounds this space and allows the visitor to circumvent the structure on arrival at the school.

Architecturally it is conceived as a large structure (10 metres long) and is represented as both "land form" and "architecture". A series of cuttings and folding of architectural planes are created to reinforce this idea. Its coloured bricks in camouflage pattern are a direct association with the materiality of combat, whilst its "Lego"





type construction, suggests a more playful reading.

From the play area the memorial is less clear of its function and integrates with the laconic structure of the existing school buildings. A seat is integrated at the rear to reinforce this more casual reading.

On Anzac at dawn, the brickwork is dimly illuminate, disguising it's multi-coloured nature. This achieves an atmosphere of contemplation. As dawn breaks and the day unfolds the structure is reclaimed by the school and again becomes part of its fabric.

