



Case Study 01

Barker Street Apartments

Kensington NSW

**Representing Australia's clay
brick and paver manufacturers**

Think Brick Australia
PO Box 751, Willoughby NSW 2068
(1/156 Mowbray Road, Willoughby)
Tel (02) 8962 9500 Fax (02) 9958 5941
info@thinkbrick.com.au
www.thinkbrick.com.au

Copyright 2010 © Think Brick Australia
ABN 30 003 873 309



Winner

of the 1997 Horbury Hunt

**BARKER STREET APARTMENTS.
KENSINGTON NSW**



Student housing has come a long way from the communal formality of the English halls of residence system. The newest housing complex at the University of New South Wales reflects a more contemporary attitude with self-contained units accommodating from one to five students, a total of 246 beds in 52 apartments.

The site of just over half a hectare is adjacent to residential colleges and across the road from a typical between-the-wars suburban streetscape. The complex is designed around three massive Port Jackson Figs in a central courtyard.

The internal layout is based on a modular system that steps up

and down across the site. The 7x7 metre modules may be side by side or stacked up to three levels. The street frontage is kept to three storeys but the building rises up to five levels above the central courtyard. Roof pitches are simple and roof lines low, in sympathy with the residential context.

A base of red brickwork anchors the building firmly into its setting. This base is simply yet effectively detailed with bands of colour and string-coursing. The Horbury Hunt judging panel commented that the "detailing of the brickwork and the use of coloured brick bands set in and out of the coursing adds a very satisfactory shadow and sculptured effect to the external facades. The junctions of other materials with the bricks and the sensitive detailing of handrails and other metal attachments were very commendable as was the detailing of the concrete walkways with their tiled edges and other brick details."

The newest housing complex at the University of New South Wales reflects a more contemporary attitude



(Above) The warmth and familiar scale of brick gives an intimacy to the complex. (Left) Terracotta-edged, tree-level walkways provide access to the apartments. The buildings were designed around three large fig trees.



Award for Excellence in Brickwork

A feature of the buildings is the metal balconies that provide a “perfect foil to the brickwork,” according to project director, Ian McGilvray. Also working on this project were Philip Graus (project architect), Philip Cox (design director), John Eglington (documentation architect) and Brigitte Cesana (site architect).

Ian McGilvray criticises some university architecture as “low maintenance but also quite dowdy, heavy and ponderous.” He believes that campus housing in particular needs to be “warm and inviting and have a real spirit about it. And brick has that vitality while at the same time being low maintenance and practical.”

He goes on to describe brick as a “very mouldable material. You can mould facades in brickwork to create an interesting play of crisp, clean, cubic forms and then modulate as required to break up those forms. The scale of brick allows medium size buildings to have an intimacy about them. I suppose at the end of the day it’s that warm sense of intimacy and scale that we and the residents find most appealing.”

The complex was developed in two stages, the final stage being opened in early 1998.



(Left) The base of red bricks firmly anchors the buildings to the site, with cream brickwork above. Simple brickwork details such as stringcoursing sculpt the facade. (Below) Metal balconies complement the crisp geometry of the brickwork.



CLIENT:	University of New South Wales
ARCHITECT:	Cox Richardson
BUILDER:	Infinity Constructions
BRICKLAYER:	DJD Masonry
PHOTOGRAPHY:	Bart Maiorana