

Qubec by Nettletontribe Architects and Stable Group

Newport, New South Wales, Australia
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An extensive range of Fisher & Paykel appliances not only enhances the cooking experience but complements the refined design aesthetic.

Bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the east and Pittwater to the west in Sydney's Northern Beaches is the suburb of Newport. Its distinctive blend of urbanity and surf culture has rendered this coastal enclave a highly desirable place to live, and Qubec – a low density development by Nettletontribe Architects and Stable Properties – leans into the area's many attributes with ease.

Jeremy Bishop, Director at Nettletontribe Architects, describes Newport's lifestyle as having a "harmonious duality" informed by Pittwater's tranquillity and the ocean's contrasting ruggedness. The architects have embraced this dichotomy in Qubec's design, reinterpreting the area's traditional vernacular of beach shacks to create an edgy, urban aesthetic. "The architectural language of the Northern Beaches would typically be weatherboards in blues and creams, but we wanted to turn that on its head and create something quite distinctive," Jeremy says. Ed Horton, Director of Stable Properties, speaks to Qubec's distinctly contemporary design direction, saying "we were drawn to the simplicity of materials like concrete, steel and glass, and we wanted to create a building that not only appeared strong but one that would endure."

The resulting architecture is indeed a bold contribution to the area, and the exterior is defined by a minimal palette of robust and low maintenance materials. However, as Jeremy explains, the architects sought

to soften this through "patterning". As such, Qubec's street presence is enlivened by a sense of rhythm gleaned from breezeblock brise-soleils, recycled brick fences, expressed off-form concrete, black steel vertical batten screens and landscaping retaining two significant existing trees. Combined, these elements make for a layered and characterful built contribution, which will patina and settle into its surrounds over time.

Situated on a large parcel of land, the planning takes advantage of the site's dual street frontage with 10 north-facing townhouses on Queens Parade and eight south-facing townhouses on Beaconsfield Street (the project's name is a portmanteau of the two thoroughfares), separated by a communal garden. "We introduced quite a lot of garden and green space throughout the development both as a separator between townhouses and as a way to create a street address," Jeremy offers. Ed echoes this, saying, "we could've built more townhouses, but we decided to instead create more open space and common areas to enhance the daily experience of Qubec." This diversity of base provides residents with increased access to greenery and natural light as well as extended sightlines through the development. Every townhouse has its own solar array and in-garage charging system, reflecting Nettletontribe and Stable's joint goal for smart, premium and sustainable housing in the heart of Newport.



Concealed behind timber joinery, the Fisher & Paykel Column Refrigerator is a seamless addition to the kitchen.

Alongside pursuing a contextually relevant and meaningful collection of townhouses is the parallel endeavour for elevated livability and amenity. As Jeremy shares, “downsizing from a larger home to a townhouse doesn’t have to mean compromising on a lifestyle of entertaining,” and as such, generous and considered spaces for cooking and hosting were central to the design response. In the kitchens, large island benches facilitate socialising and cooking, and designated work zones illustrate an intuitive response, while Fisher & Paykel appliances support this refined framework for living, creating and entertaining. “The opportunity to have multiple functions within the one space at any given time is fundamental to our design consideration, and the use of Fisher & Paykel appliances throughout the kitchen meant that we could achieve that,” Jeremy says. Pleasingly, each kitchen matches the level of utility and refinement often found in large family homes, exceeding the expectations typically associated with a townhouse typology.

Ed recalls that the decision to partner with Fisher & Paykel was informed by a recommendation from a trusted supplier who cited the company as being leaders in the luxury market. The resulting appliance selection not only enhances the cooking experience but complements the design aesthetic as well. Concealed products such as the Fisher & Paykel DishDrawer, Column Refrigerator and Freezer and Wine Cabinet are integral to this condition; as Jeremy says, “we really wanted the ma-

teriality – which is warm and sophisticated – to be the hero of the kitchen, so it was important that we could integrate some of the appliances.” Additionally, pieces such as the wall ovens with touchscreen guided cooking capability, Combination Steam Oven and Combined Gas and Induction Cooktop are minimal and sleek in appearance, creating visual cohesion. Ed comments specifically on the Integrated Refrigerators and Freezers, saying “they’re beautiful to look at and the functions are such that food will last two or three times longer through the zoned climate control system.”

The rooftop terraces, which are unique to each townhouse, are seamless extensions of the kitchens. What’s more, they afford views of Qubec’s immediate context and of its broader surrounds. As Jeremy explains, “not only are the rooftops a fantastic asset from an emotional and experiential point of view, but they actually have cooking facilities up there with the DCS Grill, which means you can entertain up top and cook and prepare food without having to go downstairs.” Secluded, sheltered and with enviable aspects, these terraces undoubtedly enhance the overall living experience of Qubec.

As a reflection of its residents and a hopeful contribution to Newport’s appealing atmosphere, Qubec scrutinises the baseline of low-density development. Its intentional duality is sure to not only match but, in time, enhance the inimitable energy of Sydney’s Northern Beaches.

