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## **3XN's Quay Quarter Tower, the World's First Tower Transformation, Named 'Building of the Year' in World Architecture Festival 2022**

The tower, designed by 3XN and developed in partnership with BVN, is the world's most comprehensive upcycling of an existing tower. It was also recently named the winner of the 2022 International Highrise Award.

*High resolution photos and visuals can be downloaded [here](#). Please credit 3XN for photos and visuals, unless noted otherwise in the file name.*

3XN's Quay Quarter Tower has been named the World Building of the Year in the World Architecture Festival's 2022 Awards in Lisbon. The project, located in Circular Quay in Sydney's CBD, marks a milestone achievement – it is the most comprehensive transformation project ever completed, stripping back the existing AMP Centre at 50 Bridge Street and giving it new life as Quay Quarter Tower.

"Quay Quarter Tower is a project about transformation: urban, social, and environmental," explains 3XN Founding Partner Kim Nielsen. "It is now also recognized as the most important transformation project ever completed – one that would not have been possible without an ambitious client and a great team. Instead of demolishing a building that no longer worked for its users, we have prolonged its life and given it new form and character – with its further transformation in mind."

The radical sustainability strategy for QQT started with the client brief back in 2014, challenging the winner of the competition to keep as much of the existing tower as possible. 3XN's scheme retained 95% of the existing core and 65% of the previous tower's beams, columns, and slabs, cutting off the bulk of the building's northern façade and grafting on new floorplates. The resulting design doubles the usable area from 45,000 to 102,000sqm, and accommodates double the number of users (from 4500 to 9,000). This approach resulted in embodied carbon saving (as compared to that of a similar, traditionally constructed tower) of 12,000 tonnes, the same as that of 8,800 one-way flights between Copenhagen and Sydney.

"It's a great sustainability story; we are pushing transformation of existing assets and, in doing so, saved about nine months of work in the process – so as an asset owner, you can fill up the building quicker. Circular economy is about *economy*," explains Fred Holt, Partner and Director of 3XN's Sydney studio. "But it's first and foremost a project that was designed from the inside out and with people top of mind. It's all about the user experience."



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Social sustainability was key to 3XN's approach, emphasizing the studio's ethos that "architecture shapes behaviour". Despite enormous site and programme constraints (not least the transformation, but also a mandate not to expand the solar envelope), the project was designed first and foremost from the inside out. The tower's volume is divided into five smaller masses, reducing the visual bulk of the building and allowing for the development smaller "villages" along the tower's vertical axis.

A successful user experience for any highrise starts at the moment of arrival. QQT's podium links seamlessly to street level activity, while creating a dramatic arrival by opening up fully to the public across the building's inclined site.

“The winner was commissioned to provide a building on a world-class site, and to retain a huge proportion of an existing fifty-year-old commercial tower,” said WAF Programme Director Paul Finch in the award announcement. “The result was an excellent example of adaptive reuse. It has an excellent carbon story, and it is an example of anticipatory workspace design produced pre-COVID which nevertheless has provided health and attractive space for post-pandemic users. The client was prepared to risk building out an idea on a speculative basis – it worked.”

“Mid and late 20<sup>th</sup> century towers are reaching the end of their usable lifespans,” explains Kim Nielsen. “We know that we can no longer demolish and build the way we have in the past – that we must instead extend the life and potential of the buildings we already have. This is the most essential definition of sustainability in architecture – and the driving force behind Quay Quarter Tower. This award emphasizes the importance of daring to reimagine how we approach the future of our built environment. Perhaps we can imagine skylines and towers across the world being transformed in the years to come.”

Quay Quarter Tower was shortlisted for WAF’s Completed Buildings: Office category; it moved onto consideration for the World Building of the Year after winning in its initial category. The project was also nominated for the WAF Engineering Prize, which was jointly presented in Lisbon by 3XN and BG&E.

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#### **Quay Quarter Tower Credits:**

The design of Quay Quarter Tower was led by Kim Herforth Nielsen (Founder and Creative Director of 3XN) and Fred Holt (3XN Partner and Australian Studio Director). In addition to Nielsen and Holt, Audun Opdal and Jeanette Hansen (3XN Senior Partners) formed the design competition leadership.

3XN’s design for QQT was chosen as the winner of a two-stage, international, design excellence competition; following the competition win, 3XN and client AMP Capital selected BVN as the Executive Architect. *Quay Quarter Tower was designed by 3XN and developed in partnership with BV.*

During Construction, BVN was novated to the contractor, Multiplex, to complete documentation while 3XN remained client-side to oversee the design and review construction development. Additional project partners include ASPECT Studios (Landscape Architects), Tom Dixon DRS (Lobby and Market Hall interiors), and Olafur Eliasson, whose studio contributed the public artwork at the tower’s base. BG&E was responsible for structural services, Arup contributed services and ESD, and Pier Property Corporation handled external project management on behalf of AMPC.

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#### **For more information on Quay Quarter Tower, please contact:**

Katherine Allen, Head of PR, 3XN

[kaa@3xn.dk](mailto:kaa@3xn.dk)

Phone: M +45 5370 7082



**About the [World Architecture Festival](#):**

Launched in 2008, the World Architecture Festival has been bringing the global architecture community together in different cities around the world for over a decade. Each year the event welcomes thousands of architects, designers, and suppliers to celebrate their achievements, learn from their peers and discover new products and services. Architects and designers from across the globe enter their work into 45 categories across completed buildings, future projects, and landscape.

Shortlisted practices attend the festival in order to present live and be in with the chance of winning their category and going on to compete for the prestigious title of World Building of the Year, Future Project of the Year, Landscape of the Year or World Interior of the Year.

**About [3XN](#):**

3XN was founded in 1986 by Kim Herforth Nielsen and has more than 35 years of experience in creating cultural, office and residential environments, which positively affect behaviour, productivity and social interaction. The studio is driven by the belief that “architecture shapes behaviour” - that buildings should add new and positive qualities to their environments and improve the quality of people’s lives. In each new project, 3XN carefully investigates site, climatic conditions, user needs, client brief, programming and functionality, seeing complexity as a positive creative force. A commitment to the highest standards of sustainability and design excellence unites the studio’s portfolio, combining the playful and poetic with the renewable and resilient.

In 2007, 3XN extended with a research and innovation department “GXN Innovation”, whose research and prime services in Behavioural-, Circular-, and Parametric design channels directly into 3XN’s designs and strategies to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The synergy between 3XN and GXN - between practice and research – makes it possible to design some of the groundbreaking structures in the world. 3XN/GXN design buildings that place users at the heart, with the intention of fostering well-being and social dynamics across age, culture, and background.

3XN’s Scandinavian approach to designing human-centric and resilient environments has resulted in the realisation of some of the world’s most ambitious sustainable buildings, including [Quay Quarter Tower](#) in central Sydney (2022), the world’s first “upcycled” skyscraper and the award-winning Olympic House - [IOC Headquarters in Lausanne](#) (2019), which received the highest LEED Platinum score ever given. Other key completed works include the [Royal Arena](#) in Copenhagen, Denmark (2017); [the cube](#) in Berlin (2020), the [North Wing](#) (2020) of Rigshospitalet, Denmark’s leading hospital; [UN City](#) in Copenhagen (2013), and the [Klimatorium](#) in Lemvig (2020), which was part of the New European Bauhaus celebrations in 2022. The studio is currently engaged in, among other projects, a transformation masterplan for [BMW’s main campus](#) in Munich, the [Children’s Hospital](#) at Rigshospitalet in Copenhagen, and the [Sydney Fish Market](#), which will be completed in 2025.

3XN employs more 200 architects and researchers of 30 different nationalities, and has offices in Copenhagen (HQ), Sydney, New York, London, and Stockholm.

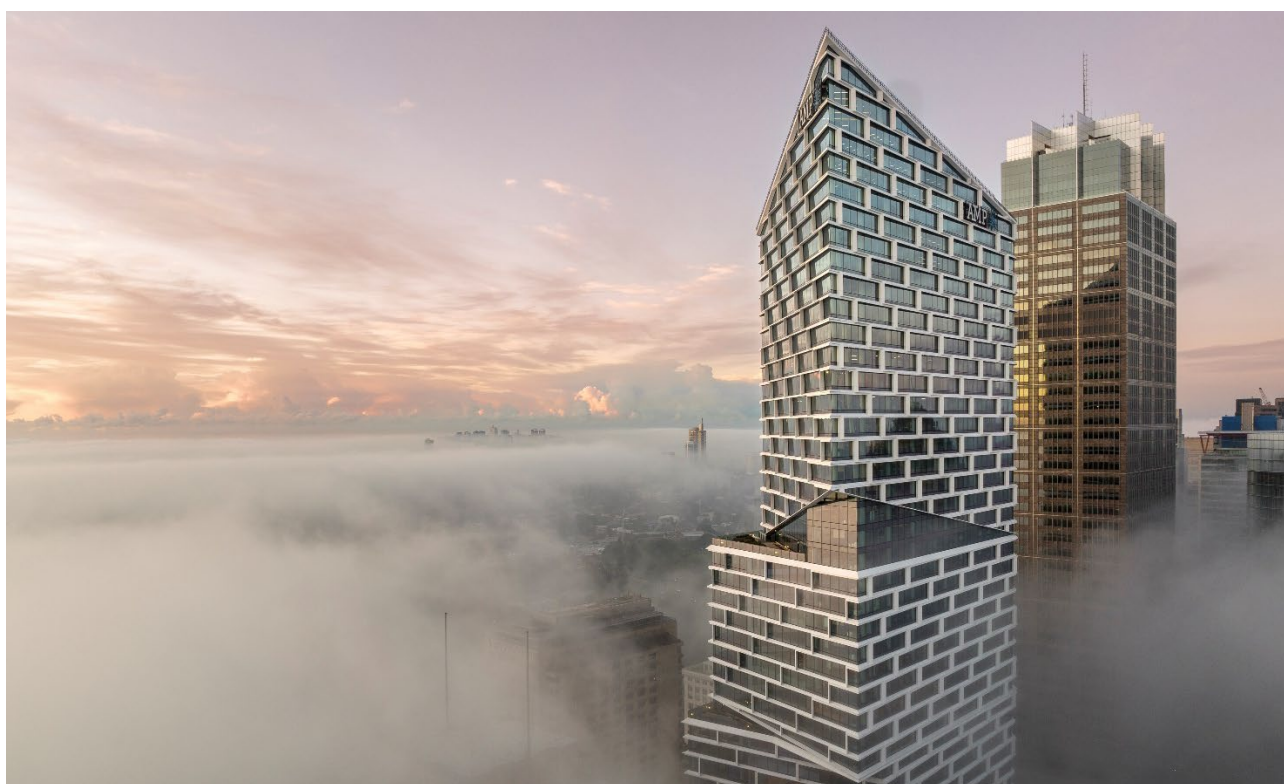


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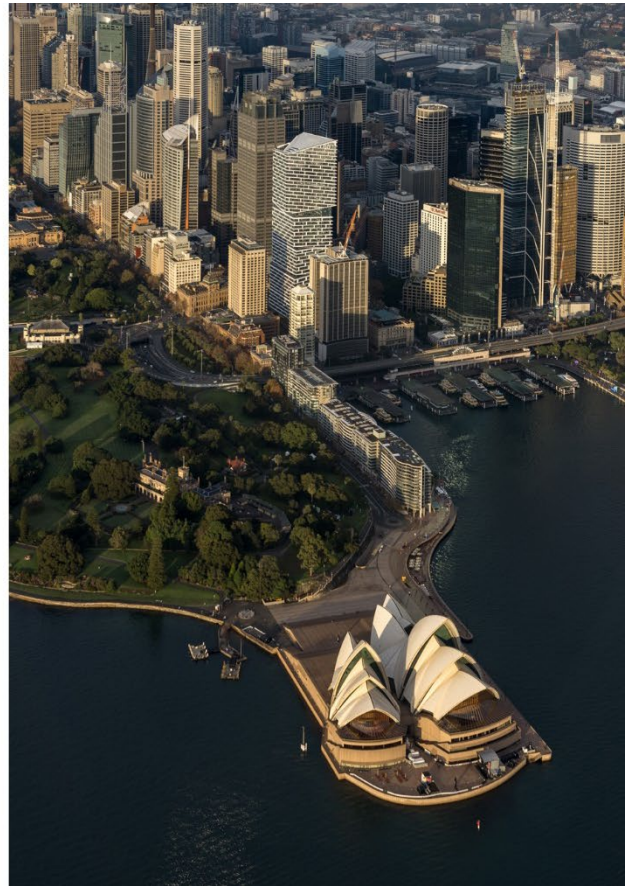


Left: Rendering/Photo Composite © 3XN; Right, ©3XN, Adam Mørk









(Left: The original AMP Centre, center of image. Image by BOSTON, Courtesy of AMP Capital. Right: Quay Quarter Tower in 2022. Image Courtesy of 3XN, © Adam Mørk)





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