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DESIGN OVERVIEW

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Architecture
Interior Design
Urban Design
Strategy

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VICTORIA RACING CLUB – THE CLUB STAND

Leading Australian architecture and interior design practice, Bates Smart has completed The Club Stand for the Victoria Racing Club (VRC). The \$128 million state-of-the-art hospitality facility with a GFA of 12,967sqm draws inspiration from Flemington's garden setting and will be the tenth grandstand built at Flemington since 1865.

The Club Stand delivers a clear philosophical design strategy that reads from the outside in. A key driver of the design was to create opportunities to improve sightlines to the race-track and ensure the floorplate remains flexible to accommodate any alternations to meet future needs.

Bates Smart's approach ensured the architectural language of the exterior was very well-defined, and this approach is continued internally with the elements of each fit-out treated like a sleek, timeless stage set that can be inserted into the preceding shell. Each venue is in effect 'plugged in' as sets for a theatrical experience with its own personality.

Internal decorative elements of The Club Stand are visibly disengaged from the base building architecture which has visible and clearly designed elements, allowing for a seamless flow through the building.

The principle white ceilings are curved to mimic the underside and the balconies of the external façade to bring the architectural expression within.

The perimeter of The Club Stand features floor-to-ceiling glazing that is treated as frameless walls. This concept is brought within with curved full-height glass dividing walls so there is visibility through the building.

Each of the perimeter columns have deliberately been kept white and are incorporated into the food and beverage elements to ensure legibility through the building. On occasions, seating has been wrapped around the white columns to continue the seamless flow. Coffers have also been installed and carefully illuminate.

Within this theatre, each individual venue is given its own signature personality with its unique name inspired by the horse racing tradition. The entry doors are treated as signposts to welcome guest into the energetic restaurant or bar experience.

The corners of the interiors spaces are carefully positioned to face the Winning Post, with low seating to offer uninterrupted and maximised views of the track.

The lifts, escalator and lounge areas are generally finished in timber slat walls to offer a warm ambience expected of such a prestigious Club. A general base palette that is consistent with the base building has been applied to the internal toilets and general facilities of the food and beverage areas.

Below is an overview of the 18 spaces designed by Bates Smart's architecture and interior design teams:

OUTDOOR SPACES

THE BETTING RING

The Betting Ring has always been a key element to the theatre and excitement of race day, as well as an important arrival experience at the racecourse.

The design of the Betting Ring creates a series of new pavilions for the traditional bookmakers. The curved form of the canopies, along with their elegant profile continues the curvilinear form of the building out into the forecourt. The pavilion canopies also provide a covered entry for Members before their arrival into The Club Stand.

GROUND LEVEL

THE LOBBY

The Lobby is pivotal in creating an enduring first impression for Members as they enter the new Club Stand. Styled as a five-star hotel, The Club Stand Lobby offers a sophisticated arrival for guests.

The impressive canopied entrance creates a truly ceremonial arrival experience and sense of occasion. The central interior 'promenade' provides a clear line of sight and passage to the action of the Members Lawn and the racing track.

The sweeping sculptural form of the Grand Central Stair provides a dramatic backdrop and vertical procession. Directly above, the spectacular void creates an impressive volume and focal point which draws attention to the bars and restaurants located on the upper levels.

With centre stage positioning, the Grand Stair rug is championed with the VRC's insignia. Viewed through the architectural volume created by void cut-outs to the first and second floors and on axis to the primary ground floor arrival, the Grand Stair rug adds to the richness of the interiors and offers a sense of occasion.

In partnership with the central circulation runner and flanking lounges, the carpets create a luxurious 'velvet' counterpoint to the stone flooring. The striking palette of green makes a delicate visual link to the vibrant turf of the racetrack beyond.

THE LOBBY LOUNGE

The twin Lobby Lounges are located directly beyond the Grand Central Stair. These social gathering spaces warmly welcome all Members and their guests into the heart of The Club Stand.

Celebrating the essence, the 154-year history and tradition of the Club, the impressive archive of equine artworks and memorabilia is showcased behind bespoke glass cabinets, while majestic fireplaces and comfortable leather lounges generates a warm and hospitable ambience that encourages social interactions amongst Members.

Custom-made fittings, rugs and decorative lamps are a consistent feature throughout all interior spaces. In the Lobby Lounge, a rich palette of green and taupe hues creates a backdrop to the Club's collection.

CLOAK ROOMS & GREEN ROOM

The Cloak Rooms and Green Room are located on the ground and first floors, adjacent to arrivals and toilet amenities. Secure cloaking, comfortable queuing and 'touch down' spaces are available.

The Green Room is a flexible, multipurpose space for sponsors, media and VIPs with a dedicated powder room, shower and storage facility.

THE BAKERY

Located on the ground floor, The Bakery is a light, contemporary café that activates the northern terrace and presents Members with exceptional breakfast options.

A contemporary, inviting space, The Bakery is a social gathering hub, which opens onto a terrace and leads to the Betting Ring.

The Bakery references a European café with beautiful ceramic feature lighting, bentwood chairs and glass cabinets showcasing the café options of the day. Timber flooring and a whimsical illustrative equine wallpaper creates a memorable backdrop and a distinctive environment for the early morning guest arrivals.

THE ARBOUR

Located on the ground floor eastern terrace, adjacent to the Members Lawn, The Arbour is a contemporary, upmarket food court.

The design pays homage to the great Flemington traditions of grounds keeping and gardening, and references the iconic rose arbours, synonymous with the arrival experience at Flemington Racecourse.

Broad, ceremonial arches form the focal point of the interior design. Bright green wall recesses occupy two of the arched openings. The third resembles a 'proscenium' arch and provides insight into the theatre of the show kitchen.

A generous high communal table is positioned just inside the sweeping curve of the shop front, while a bold, over-scaled sign references a garden trellis and adds to the energy and exuberance of the space.

THE LAWN BAR

The Lawn Bar is an open and informal walk-up bar, located on the northern perimeter of the ground floor, with an enviable trackside vantage point. An operable façade via the terrace area, allows patrons easy access from the Members Lawn.

The robust aesthetic incorporates white brick tiles and a memorable display of branding in a mosaic tile that references graphic design from the era of the previous stand.

SEATING DECKS

The Seating Decks will see Members enjoy an unprecedented level of access to elevated viewing podiums, outdoor seating across three levels and external undercover terraces across three levels.

The outdoor bench seating references the original design of the former Members Old Grandstand and is a significant and memorable departure from conventional stadium seating.

COURTYARD BAR

The Courtyard Bar is located on the ground floor and serves the active domain of the Betting Ring. An openable facade allows patrons to seamlessly transition from the interior to the exterior.

Deep navy glazed bricks, complemented by brass detailing with white marble accents, form the front of the bar. Alongside this strong backdrop, newel posts, salvaged from the Members Old Grandstand staircases are repurposed. Similarly, white timber bench seating, also kept from the old stand sits against a patterned glass backdrop.

The original window patterns of the Members Old Grandstand were closely studied and referenced in this decorative backlit screen.

These heritage elements pay homage to the history of the Club, evoking a nostalgic experience for the Club's Members.

PADDOCK BAR

The Paddock Bar is situated on the western perimeter of the ground floor, adjacent to the Mounting Yard and the Owners and Trainers Stand and opens out to the terrace.

Designed for the true racing enthusiast, the key decorative elements of this bar celebrate both racing culture and the robust aesthetics of the stables.

Equestrian accoutrements are on display and inform the rustic language of the bar detailing. Timber lining boards, and brass detailing make up the palette of finishes.

The iron and brass equine hitching posts, flanking the bar, salvaged from the Members Old Grandstand, further the theme of nostalgic homage.

LEVEL 01

MUMM CHAMPAGNE BAR

The Mumm Champagne Bar is the landmark destination for celebration at Flemington. Patrons will experience the art of champagne in this vibrant, contemporary interior which evokes the heightened energy of the race.

Bates Smart worked closely with Maison Mumm's creative team to set the style direction of what will become the first global flagship Mumm Champagne Bar. Members of the Bates Smart team travelled to Reims, France to experience the essence of Mumm and to research the lineage of this renowned champagne house.

Inspired by the iconic Mumm champagne bottle, a 70-metre-long signature Mumm red ribbon journeys through the space, celebrating the brand's iconic 'cordon rouge' sash.

The iconic sabrage ritual takes place here, entertaining and engaging patrons with the highly memorable celebration of champagne.

The unique art of producing *methode* champenoise, which involves aging and turning the wine on inclined riddling racks, is referenced in the celebratory display of gold magnums creating towering, gilded backdrops to sculptural black gloss bars.

Inspired by dynamic sculptural works of art, the furniture clusters are accented by rich jewel-like colours, creating opportunities for patrons to socialise within this intriguing 'landscape'. The bars and soft furnishings are fluid with energetic, non-repeating forms.

Sophisticated 3D modelling was used to generate the shapes of the carpet which was drawn to create a universal design with no repeating patterns.

The bar also features an openable façade on the trackside and an outdoor terrace.

Freestanding pavilions create sculptural enclosures within the architectural volumes.

MEMBERS BAR

With exceptional views towards the track, Mounting Yard and Members Lawn, the Members Bar embodies the ethos and traditions of the Club. Located on the first floor in the western part of The Club Stand. From this bar, Members also enjoy access to the Committee Room foyer, The Forum and Betting Ring via a walkway.

Furnishings and carpets are tailored after the style of British Savile Row tradition with rich tobacco and burgundy colours featured alongside warm timber panelling.

The history of the VRC is celebrated with a display of Club memorabilia and graphics. Original Club signage has been salvaged and acknowledges the distinctive lineage of the Club.

The main bar is the centrepiece of the space with a towering back bar display, crowned by a commissioned VRC insignia.

The bar is flanked by two custom designed wallpaper collages as a curved diorama. Drawn from the extensive VRC and other heritage archives that includes black and white photography of jockeys, racegoers, members and trainers at the Members Old Grandstand, the wallpaper serves as a window to the spirited social and sporting milieu of Flemington's history from the 1930s to 1960s. Through the photographer's lens, we are invited into the conversations, social exchanges and trackside action of the day.

LEVEL 02

THE DINING ROOM

The Dining Room is a refined and elegant establishment that offers a traditional racing experience for guests.

Serving an a la carte menu alongside a dessert buffet, the venue appeals to traditionalists who have dined with their families at The Dining Room for generations.

Warm and welcoming, the space interior evokes a sense of familiarity while creating a new tradition in The Club Stand. Rich blue and green contemporary hand-drawn tartan carpets are complemented by vivid turf green velvet banquettes, timber joinery and soft bronze accents.

Equestrian portraits, hailing from the Club's considerable art collection, take pride of place on the panellised walls. Sinuous ribbons of banquette seating and woven screens form curated spaces within the room, achieving intimacy for guests dining at the venue.

Views of the track are optimised by an elevated 'dress circle' dining tier.

FURLONG BAR

The Furlong Bar is styled with a contemporary summer country club aesthetic. This bar is crafted to appeal to a new generation of racing enthusiast.

Generous club lounges, and a spectacular leather bar create a genuine club ambience. Oxblood red, burnt sienna and ecru taupe coloured upholsteries bring a wealth of textures and a warm colour palette to this room.

The bold, over-scaled, monochromatic carpet patterns reference traditional English suiting textiles, including Prince of Wales check, chevron and Windowpane check, are interpreted in a contemporary manner.

Timber panelled walls complement a large-scale display of equine art and memorabilia, celebrate the tradition and spirit of equestrian performance sport.

With premium views of the Mounting Yard and track, this high energy sports bar features a prominent 'peninsula' bar. Tapas, charcuterie and cheese boards are served from a distinctive show kitchen.

The space opens to an outdoor terrace and tiered seating, with a link bridge to the Forum level of the Grandstand

LEVEL 03

THE BYERLEY

The Byerley, located on the third floor on the western wing of The Club Stand, is the premium fine dining destination at Flemington that will be a worthy partner to the finest culinary experiences.

Renowned chef Ryan Flaherty will showcase his craft in the elegant show kitchen, adding a vibrant and contemporary ingredient to the room.

The sommelier's display cellar will complement an intimate bar which is an elegant and exclusive setting for patrons.

The Byerley boasts the most refined and elegant interior of The Club Stand with a distinctive textiles, carpets and lighting inspired by the English countryside. A soft hued interior with floral accents creates a refined, luxurious setting, including soft ecru, cream, powder blue and 'eau de nil'.

Bespoke hand-painted fabric was used to upholster the banquette seats of the fine dining spaces, referencing the rose gardens of the renowned Flemington arbour and garden beds. Fluted wall panelling of fine polished plaster and luxurious drapes of soft ecru leather feature in this distinctly feminine restaurant.

Named after the Byerley Turk, the earliest of three stallions that were the founders of the modern thoroughbred horse racing bloodstock, the room is primed for a superior race day experience with stunning views over the Mounting Yard and track from an exclusive outdoor terrace.

STRAIGHT SIX

On the eastern wing of the Club Stand is Straight Six – a contemporary bistro serving gourmet share plates in a communal dining space.

The open kitchen is the heart of the restaurant, staging a lively theatre for guests. The vibrant and youthful Straight Six offers a range of menu options including antipasti, woodfired pizza, meats and fish dishes.

A range of dining options are set in a layered space of varied decorative palettes. Vibrant herringbone patterned tiles inject vivid colours into the space, while textured brick walls sit alongside an array of pendant light fittings.

Distinctive joinery and robust materials, such as the timber flooring and terrazzo bar top, add to the diversity of 'flavours' in this communal dining environment.

BLUEGRASS BAR

Centrally located between The Byerley and Straight Six, Bluegrass Bar offers an exclusive, signature bar experience serving premium beverages and cocktails.

Faunting the bold, contemporary sculptural form and intense signature deep purple of the island bar, patrons and cocktail bar staff are all players in this theatre in the

round. Mixologists will be star performers, creating the new 'cocktail hour' tradition at the Flemington racetrack.

Bluegrass Bar represents the high energy exuberance of the Melbourne Cup Carnival.

The dramatic purple carpet comprising bold, vibrant stripes and sweeping curves, accentuates the sculptural form of the island bar.

Cantilevered brass arcs host lit-spheres of brilliant glass and create a focal architectural volume and heighten the drama of the central tulip ceiling form.

A bay window lounge with 'box-seat' views to the track and the city skyline beyond complements the bar.

LEVEL 04

THE ROOF GARDEN

The Roof Garden is a spectacular new destination, with exceptional views of the course and Melbourne's city skyline.

The Roof Garden embodies the essence and spirit of a marquee at the Melbourne Cup Carnival.

This aspirational, multipurpose venue is an elevated architectural pavilion with seamless thresholds between the interior and exterior. Boasting two permanent alfresco bars with complementary show kitchens, The Roof Garden emulates the social festivities of the Members Lawn. The terraces are genuine garden settings accented by decorative paving, umbrellas, garden furniture and trellises.

The façade can be opened to invite Members onto the expansive timber-decked and hard paved terraces complete with curated landscaped gardens.

Green tiled recesses to the white panellised facade create vibrant backdrops to the impressive terrazzo bars. Large scale wall lanterns and lanterns reinforce the language of the authentic garden setting.

Significant commercial opportunity is provided by the flexible use of these spaces for private functions as well as corporate events.

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About Bates Smart

Bates Smart is a multidisciplinary design firm delivering architecture, interior design, urban design and strategic services across Australia. With more than 300 staff across Melbourne and Sydney, Bates Smart creates award-winning projects that transform the fabric of a city and the way people use and inhabit urban spaces and built environments.

The studio is synonymous for delivering premium Australian hospitality precincts including Crown Towers Perth, Rockpool Bar and Grill, Spice Temple, The Fat Duck, Dinner by Heston Blumenthal, Hyatt Regency Sydney, Canberra Airport Hotel, Intercontinental Sydney Double Bay and the upcoming Darwin Westin Hotel.

Other recent works include Jam Factory in South Yarra, 171 Collins Street in Melbourne, Bendigo Hospital, Constitution Place in Canberra, 35 Spring Street, Australian Embassy in Washington and The Store in Newcastle.

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About the Victoria Racing Club

Host of the Melbourne Cup Carnival, the Victoria Racing Club at Flemington was founded in 1864 and is the world's largest member-based racing club, with more than 30,000 members. Regarded as the world's most vibrant racing event, the Melbourne Cup Carnival is a uniquely Australian celebration of sport, fashion, food and wine and culture, attracting more than 310,000 racegoers to Flemington Racecourse over four magical racedays each year and injecting more than \$444 million into the Victorian economy. The jewel in the Melbourne Cup Carnival crown is the Lexus Melbourne Cup, a 3200m Group 1 staying race, one of the world's richest, offering \$7.3 million in prize money and held on the first Tuesday in November.

www.flemington.com.au