

**Concurrent Session L**  
**Wednesday 2 September**  
**1.55pm – 2.45pm**



**Session 3**

**University of Melbourne's Arts West Redevelopment - A Case Study in Value-For-Money Sustainability**

**Gerard Healey, Tom Dean**

*Arup, Slattery*

*Dr Gerard Healey is Arup's Southern Buildings ESD leader, with a background in engineering and social science. Over the past decade, he has worked on projects in a wide variety of sectors and project types. Gerard's particular interest is how people and technology influence each other - how decision-making process affect building outcomes and how building design influences user behaviour.*

*Tom Dean from Slattery is the Project Cost Planner on Arts West and took a key role in the collaboration with Arup to help implement the Green Star strategy adopted. Tom has been with Slattery for more than 7 years and has significant experience with many large projects implementing value-for-money Green Star solutions. Tom has cost managed a number of projects at the University of Melbourne in recent years, including the VCA campus at Southbank.*

This is a case study of the Arts West Redevelopment at the University of Melbourne's Parkville Campus, a \$55m project that is on track to achieve its targeted 5 star Education v1 design rating. What makes this project an interesting case study is that it has achieved this at an ESD cost almost half that initially budgeted – a budget that was set based on industry experience and typical costs - and using a process that actively sought to make the rationale for the design transparent and achieve the Green Star rating in a value-for-money manner.

Some background information will help illustrate why this is a useful case to learn from. Green Star is an environmental rating tool that is used by many Universities around Australia to set minimum sustainability performance for their buildings. How Green Star influences building design is therefore very relevant to many University facility managers. While the intentions of Green Star are admirable, many in industry hold the view that Green Star does not always add value to a project. Stories circulate of cogeneration systems that are oversized and uneconomic, water treatment systems that don't work properly or are never turned on, and even energy metering systems that are too cumbersome to use. There is often criticism that Green Star becomes about chasing points in a least cost way rather than achieving good outcomes. The result is that the reputation of Green Star, and sustainability for buildings in general, is tarnished.

The Green Building Council of Australia has recognised this and responded with a number of changes for the better. However, this is only part of the solution. Design teams must shoulder some of the responsibility for the perception of sustainability.

This paper summarises an action-learning research method used to build on work by Healey (2014), which sought to understand how to better develop, communicate and implement sustainability strategies. Arts West allowed an ESD approach to be tested in collaboration with Slattery Quantity Surveyors, which included estimation of the additional costs of ESD initiatives along with the value that each initiative could deliver for the University. This enabled transparent discussions about the initiatives proposed and resulted in a value-for-money

Green Star strategy.

This paper also reflects on the extent to which the success of the approach on this project was dependent on the specific project team and site and whether it could also be successfully applied to a wider range of projects.