

Webber Architects was engaged by Ripples Early Learning Centre to facilitate the development application process and undertake detailed design and construction documentation for the retrofit of an existing commercial building at Hillsborough Road Warners Bay. The new early learning centre located on a prominent arterial road, caters for 67 children and 13 staff and is independently owned and managed locally. The constrained site and existing building envelope were carefully considered in the provision of a design maximising the feasibility of the centre whilst exceeding minimum national childcare regulations, local council guidelines, and Australian Building Standards. The four indoor play rooms and two outdoor play spaces are linked by wide corridors and open to a 190 square metre 'rain room' which provides the opportunity for external activities to occur during inclement weather or sun protection times, a feature setting the facility apart from other centres. Three metre high ceilings and floor-to-ceiling shop front glazing help create a spacious aesthetic throughout. Efficiencies gained by centrally locating service and wet areas to serve multiple rooms aids supervision and reduces associated circulation area and construction cost. The outdoor space and car park design utilise underground storm water detention and reuse controls, and the air conditioning within the building is zoned to play spaces and staff areas only minimising the energy use of the facility. Webber Architects has received positive feedback from the facility owners regarding the functionality of the centre.



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