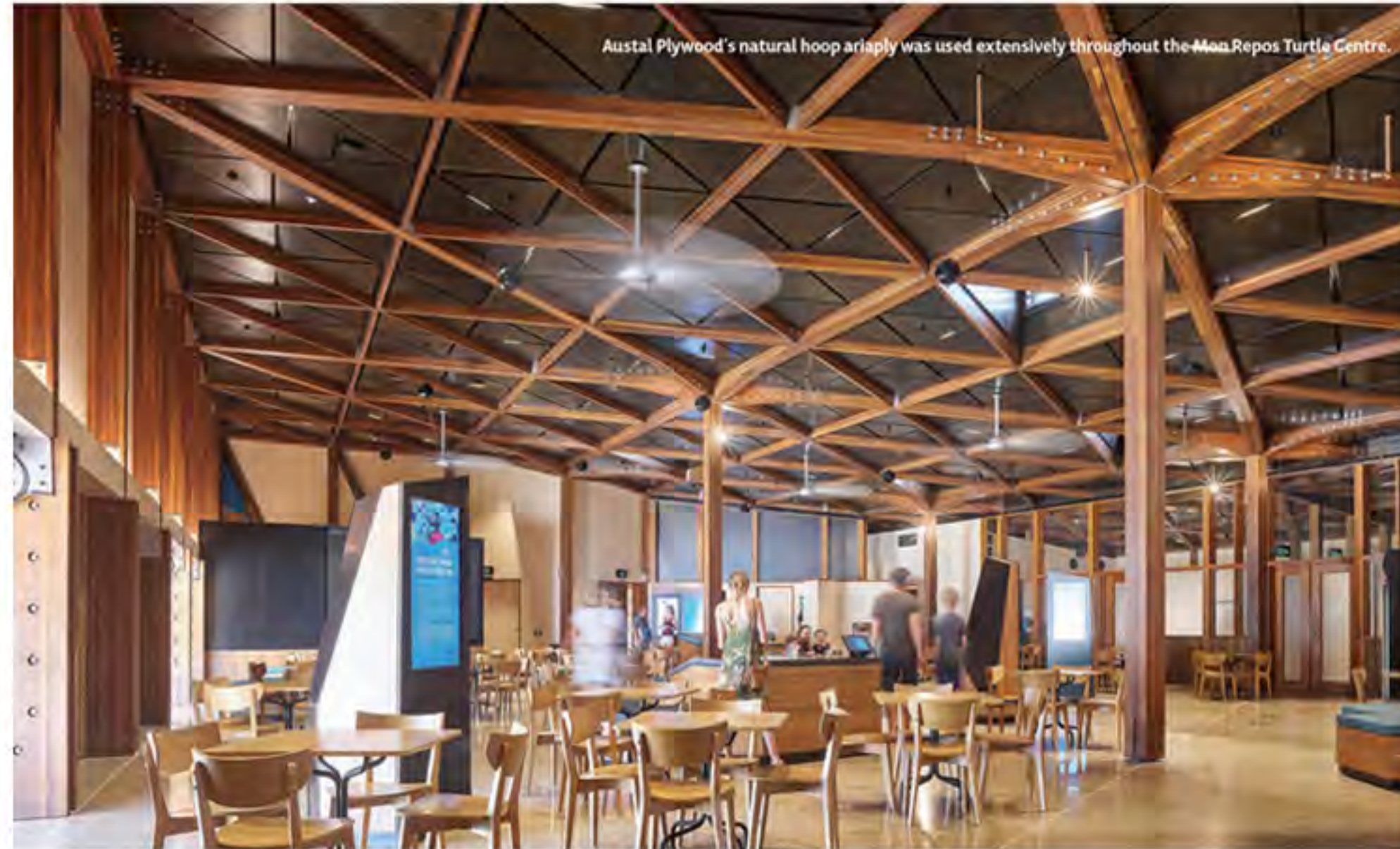


A treasure in the sand dunes

Mon Repos is dedicated to marine turtle research, protection and education



Austal Plywood's natural hoop ariaply was used extensively throughout the Mon Repos Turtle Centre.

WELCOMING more than 20,000 visitors a season, the Mon Repos Turtle Centre is home to the largest concentration

of marine turtles on the eastern Australian mainland.

Indeed, the success of nesting and hatching turtles at Mon Repos is critical for the survival of the endangered loggerhead turtle.

Mon Repos, meaning 'my rest' in French, is a conservation park near Bundaberg in southeast Queensland, situated on the Burnett River, about 15 km

inland from the Coral Sea.

Here passionate rangers and scientists manage conservation and research programs to enhance the success of nesting before hatchlings make their perilous journey to the sea some months later.

Commissioned by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, the Mon Repos Turtle Centre underwent a \$22 million dollar rejuvenation. Located behind the sand dunes, the new

centre embodies the famous turtle's connection with nature – encapsulated within the project brief – 'connected to nature.'

At the grand opening, Queensland Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef Leeanne Enoch said the centre would offer a year-round state-of-the-art experience, with touch-screen televisions, vivid displays, an

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The design of the centre was carefully considered to ensure the building was ecologically sustainable.

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immersive theatre room and interpretive signage.

"This redevelopment now provides a contemporary

possible spill of the buildings light," Mr Kirk said.

Embracing sustainability in its design, the new centre featured a prefabricated Hyne glulam timber structure.

conservation needs of the centre and its year-round visitors."

The Mon Repos structure itself is known as a 'diagrid' which presents an innovative

made from ariaply in an ebony finish. The triangular shapes, representing a turtle's carapace, were meticulously cut from detailed plans supplied by the architect. The perforations provided both acoustic benefits



The use of sustainably sourced glue laminated timber was instrumental in meeting the project's 50-year design life requirement.



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eco-tourism experience that allows visitors to fully immerse themselves in marine turtle research and conservation," the minister said.

"The design of the centre was carefully considered to ensure the building is ecologically sustainable, long-lasting and had minimal impact on the surrounding environment," she said.

For Richard Kirk, the centre's award-winning architect, the brief for the project was underpinned by focus on sustainability and environment.

"Firstly, the location is behind established sand dunes which provide a natural shield between the building and the hatchlings to conceal the

In addition, Austral Plywood supplied hoop pine 'ariaply', a premium prefinished panel based on 'A' grade hoop pine plywood.

Locally grown and manufactured, the timber meets the Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management, a prerequisite for Responsible Wood certification. Richard Kirk added: "The entire glue laminated timber structure is locally grown, certified spotted gum that not only meets exceptional sustainability credentials, but from a practical perspective, allows large spans with no internal structural walls.

"This means the interior can be readily seasonally reconfigured to meet the educational and

resistance against cyclonic conditions and is believed to be the largest diagrid in Australia.

Natural hoop ariaply in solid sheets were used as wall linings throughout the centre.

Austral Plywood's joint CEO Stuart Matthews explains:

"The ceiling is particularly impressive, consisting of numerous perforated triangles



The entire glue laminated timber structure is locally-grown, certified spotted gum that meets exceptional sustainability credentials

and an attractive appearance to the centre."

The significance of using spotted gum goes far beyond the environmental credentials and support for the local economy. This timber was specified for its durability, strength, density and appearance to suit the corrosive, coastal environment.

Hyne Group business development manager, glue laminated timber, Rob Mansell said the use of sustainably-sourced glue laminated timber was instrumental in meeting the 50-year design life requirement in what was a corrosive marine environment where steel structures were highly susceptible to corrosion.