

# STATE EQUESTRIAN CENTRE

**MAIN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY :** Walton Construction  
**CLIENT :** Moreton Bay Regional Council  
**COMPLETION :** August 2011  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER :** Bornhorst & Ward  
**ARCHITECTS :** PDT Architects  
**PROJECT END VALUE :** \$15 Million

## WALTON CONSTRUCTION'S EXCELLENCE PROVES A WINNER

Walton Construction (QLD) has delivered a blue ribbon performance constructing the new Queensland State Equestrian Centre at Caboolture, Queensland.

The Queensland State Equestrian Centre project consists of construction of a 2,500 seat capacity covered arena, two warm-up arenas, over 150 new enclosed stables, horse wash bays, a laundry facility, camp grounds, improved traffic access, car parking, horse float and trailer parking and extensive landscaping works. This has been a massive undertaking, both in scope and scale.

Works were spread over two sites, the arena side and the stables side, separated by a vegetation protection area. A connecting road runs between the two areas, which is a short walk for a horse and rider from the stables area to where the action is.

The first task Walton undertook was cleaning up the site, which borders a former landfill site. Numerous swales and silt fences were constructed during early works to control runoff and direct flows which can be as much as 1.2m deep into retention ponds, and tens of thousands of tonnes of clean compacted fill used, some provided by the client, Moreton Bay Regional Council.

A major challenge was the weather over the Christmas period. There was over 200mm of rain in one weekend. Because the existing ground was unsuitable on the stables side, Walton had to dig it out to 1.2m and fill it to compacted height, but because the ground was so waterlogged, whatever was dug out had to be filled that night, which contributed to extremely intense programming. Because the budget was fixed, with some D&C elements, Walton brought value engineering ideas to the project, for example, the arena seating. Walton used a combination of less steel with precast floor plank, and insitu concrete on top, to deliver a very cost effective outcome. Walton also changed a lot of the precast elements of the constructions to rendered and textured block work.

One of the innovative aspects of this project was the relationship Walton had with the client, Moreton Bay Regional Council. Walton had to work hand in hand to meet budget requirements. Elements of the project were designed or finetuned largely on site with the client and subcontractors; there were six or seven months of every other day collaboratively making decisions to achieve an even better outcome for both the Moreton Bay Region community and the eventual users of this site. Walton did a lot of informal sketching and varied the project accordingly.

Drainage on the site was a real challenge. Walton redesigned all the roof drainage for the arena side to a wet system with two 12,000L tanks. Because the roof is so large, 90mX45m, the 4,000m<sup>2</sup> roof area creates a large volume of runoff - even just the morning dew sounds like rain as it runs off.

The water from these tanks will be used for irrigation and for the sprinkler system which keeps dust down in the sand floored arena - this sprinkler system uses a significant amount of

water when operating. The sand is a special mix provided by Equestrian Land Developments, spread 120mm thick over a mixture of road base and metal fines. Recycled roof stormwater is also being used for the amenities flushing, to ensure the project is water-efficient during drier seasons.

While the site was a greenfields project, there was a crucial need to manage the public presence both on and adjacent to the site, with the neighbours including Caboolture Showground, the AFL Oval, the Gun Club, the Historic Village, and the train line. Keeping the public safe while managing daily concrete truck movements and nightly fill deliveries required dedication. Walton's team are justifiably proud of the project's LTI free record, with the safety of both workers and the public successfully protected.

The project is being funded by Moreton Bay Regional Council, the Australian Government and Queensland Government.

Walton Construction (Qld) Pty Ltd are a multi-award winning builder with extensive experience in all areas of commercial construction and refurbishment works across built asset construction sectors in Queensland, including commercial, education, aged care facilities, health care, retail, fit out, medium to high density affordable housing, and the mining, oil and energy sector. The company prides itself on a steady, well considered approach to construction management, bringing sound, experienced construction skills and knowledge to their client's projects. They engage in ongoing communication with clients, and take an integrated, proactive approach to delivering exceptional outcomes, resolving challenges with ingenuity and expertise.

This innovative team have also tackled another job with Moreton Bay Regional Council, the construction of the Albany Creek Leisure Centre. This comprised building a new gymnasium and physiotherapy facility, while maintaining constant public access to the existing pool.

Walton Construction (Qld) Pty Ltd also recently completed the Redcliffe Tennis Centre which was improved and upgraded while allowing continued public use and access to the sporting facility. Walton took out top honours in the 2011 Master Builders Award in the Sporting and Community Facilities Category (up to \$4 million) for this project.



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## MARVELLOUS JOB DESPITE MASSES OF MUD



The drainage work done by Gibbs Earthmoving for the State Equestrian Centre proved more challenging than usual, due to the deluge of rain and high storm water flows that hit the site. Undaunted, the Gibbs team kept working through some of the worst weather possible, as part of a twelve month stint on the project completing not only the drainage works but also civil works, swales and roads.

Gibbs Earthmoving brought to the project four decades of experience in earthmoving and both bulk and detail excavations. This experience added value to the project. Gibbs Earthmoving helped to redesign drainage and roadways to increase the land space, and assisted with the drainage design to better manage storm water flows. A team of up to four Gibbs staff and seventeen machines including Liebherr dozers and excavators, Takeuchi skid steers and various types of rollers completed the works in a timely and efficient manner.

“The biggest challenge was working on reclaimed swamp land,” said Gibbs Earthmoving Manager, David Gibbs. “It was a challenge

trying to get the site dried out enough to even start work, and then of course there was the big wet!”

“This was a great project to be involved with. We are very proud of our efforts and grateful to Walton Construction for letting us have so much input into this project.

“We pride ourselves on being able to put our hand to anything. We love a challenge!”

Gibbs Earthmoving is a family owned and operated company, which has been operating for over forty years. Current Manager, David Gibbs is the second generation of his family to shift earth for major projects.

Based on the Sunshine Coast for the last six years, Gibbs Earthmoving has undertaken civil contracting on projects between Hervey Bay and the Gold Coast, and carry out the bulk of their work in the Brisbane area. The company’s approach to a project is to put in lengthy days on site, using

skilled labour efficiently to achieve results within timeframes which enable projects to proceed smoothly and on schedule. All The Gibbs Earthmoving staff are licensed operators and a hardworking, adaptable and versatile crew who are willing to tackle any aspect of the work, including labouring.

The company began their operations with house sites, including undertaking numerous projects for AV Jennings in Sydney in the 1970s, then expanded into large commercial project sites in Sydney in the 1980s and 1990s. Gibbs Earthmoving has also in the past undertaken demolition works. Since returning to Queensland, the company has provided services for the residential, commercial and civil sectors, and numerous School projects as part of the Federal Government BER works in southern Queensland. Noteworthy recent projects include Aldi Noosaville, Animal Hospital at Australia Zoo, Capital Place Kawana and Redcliffe Tennis Centre.

The company capabilities include cut and fill, compaction, preparation for roads and carparks, drainage and all other aspects of bulk and detail excavations and civil earthworks.



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