

# SON OF A BEACH!

## Cronulla RSL:

38 Gerrale St, Cronulla NSW  
(02) 9523 6833 or [www.cronullarsl.com.au](http://www.cronullarsl.com.au)

Altis Architecture (02) 9364 5000 or [www.altisarchitecture.com](http://www.altisarchitecture.com)

Boden Projects (Builder) (02) 9567 4488 or [www.boden.com.au](http://www.boden.com.au)

Globe West (Feature Lighting) (02) 9515 1800 or [www.globewest.com.au](http://www.globewest.com.au)

Korda Carpets (Carpet) (02) 8688 5788 or [www.kordadesign.com.au](http://www.kordadesign.com.au)

Beckton Joinery (02) 9500 8788 or [www.becktonjoinery.com.au](http://www.becktonjoinery.com.au)



John Waters, CEO of Cronulla RSL, was presiding over a club that was ticking over unspectacularly. What has always been spectacular, is the view – panoramic vistas of the Pacific Ocean. Saying that, there was an elevated bowling green between the club and those million dollar views, not anymore.

When the bowling green had reached its use-by date and the desire for generational change had gathered real momentum in the boardroom, the trigger was pulled: it was time to build over the green, and completely re-imagine the club's F&B offering.

John Waters engaged club specialists, Altis Architecture and Boden Construction, and set about turbo-charging Cronulla RSL's future. The objective of the renovation was to capitalise on the club's potential and our position. So we closed the bowling green and designed a new area with 65m of glass frontage. "We changed the food delivery to be brasserie style. We were determined to move away from our 220-seat fine dining on the weekend, to seven-day casual dining for \$50. We partnered with Con Dedes and his Watergrill concept, which was a good fit for us."

The result? The club's membership soared from 15,000 to 23,000 in six months and continues to grow at about 1,000 new members a month. From an F&B perspective, bar sales have increased by 300 percent and the restaurant is busy, and on

the weekend it's heaving. All up, the club is doing five times the business, and has taken on 40 new staff. In short, the results have been nothing short of staggering.

Altis Director, Rolfe Latimer, "Altis has been at the forefront of many of the success stories in the club industry, however, Cronulla RSL is quite unique in our 22 years as a practice."

The Altis design revolved around a number of key principles: maximise the club's unique position overlooking the local beach and park; create a balance between designing spaces for traditional members and aspirational spaces to capture the new members in the very competitive hospitality market of Cronulla; and a flexible design to allow the new spaces to open up or close depending on weather conditions in this exposed beach front context.

A regular theme for any successful clubs renovation is quality of the teamwork, and this was no different. "We worked hand in hand with Altis and Boden," noted John Waters. "I was pleased with the way they understood our business and worked with me, rather than just went about things in their own way. There was a constant information flow which helped us to maintain our business while work was being done."

I guess it's the job of a CEO to keep a lid on things when his club has just blown the roof off the universe. Spectacular.