



# Grate Insights

Issue 8, 2026

Brought to you by Stormtech



# Grate Insights

## Welcome

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of Grate Insights!

If the last few years have taught us anything, it's that resilience and adaptability are not just buzzwords – they're the foundations of enduring success. As we look back on a year defined by macroeconomic shifts and a changing construction landscape, I'm incredibly proud of how the Australian architecture and design community has continued to push the boundaries of what is possible.

At Stormtech, our focus remains where it has been for over 35 years: on the things we can control. That means an unwavering commitment to Australian manufacturing, a refusal to compromise on quality and a dedication to designing sustainable products that go far beyond the minimum standard. Innovation and design excellence continue to be our anchor, ensuring we deliver for our customers without compromise.

We know that compliance is a growing challenge for waterproofing and drainage installers. So, in October, we were thrilled to launch the FlexiFlange, a patented flexible floor flange. It's the first product of its kind to achieve WaterMark certification and provides a simple, robust answer to the complex compliance issues our industry has faced for years.

We also refined our aesthetic range, expanding our Good Design Award-winning low-carbon aluminium offering with the new ultra-slim Wave Grate 65mm profile in a stunning Beach Gold finish. And we introduced the i50 hinged door threshold drains to make level-entry access easier to specify than ever before.

As always, these innovations are underpinned by a steadfast commitment to sustainability. We were honoured to once again receive Gold Excellence in the Vinyl Council of Australia's PVC Stewardship program, and we've achieved Global GreenTag EPD

and LCARate certification across our slimline linear drainage range.

As we look to the year ahead, we're ready to build on these achievements and continue leading the way – delivering quality, ingenuity and Australian-made excellence. And we thank you for your ongoing trust and support.

In this edition of Grate Insights, you'll find deep dives into some of these new products and the role of sustainability in redefining value in construction, as well as a profile on architect Matthew Woodward and a look at our unique collaboration at the ArchiBuild Expo. Could this event be a small step towards an industry-wide zero-waste revolution? I, for one, hope so.

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**TROY CREIGHTON**  
Managing Director, Stormtech

# i50 Hinged Door Drains

by **Stormtech®**



- + **Simplify compliant level entry thresholds at hinged doors.**
- + Deemed to satisfy solution as per NCC 2022 and the Livable Housing Design Standard
- + Made from low carbon 316 marine grade stainless steel for outstanding durability and aesthetic appeal



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# The South Coast Beach House:

Created from constraints, crafted for context

**O**n approach, the South Coast Beach House's sculptural frontage relates to its street setting with an unobtrusive magnificence. A considered composition of reassuringly solid forms – a rectangular garage volume and an organic curvature of brick wall – respectfully breaks down the scale of a large family home, allowing it to sit quietly amongst the contemporary embrace of neighbouring properties.

Nothing about the dwelling's massing is superfluous – its sweeping geometries and robust materiality herald profound intentionality and a sense of purpose that continues inside. The resilient palette of white, hardy brick, timber, brass and copper – all chosen to ensure the dwelling

can thrive in the harsh coastal conditions with minimal upkeep – offers a preamble to a cleverly concealed indoor realm where this enduring materiality unfolds with deliberate gentleness, and the streetscape context gives way to countryside serenity.

"The lovely thing about this home is that, once you're inside, it doesn't feel like you're on a suburban lot anymore," explains Daniel Weber of Casey Brown Architecture, which brought this dwelling to life in collaboration with Lime Building Group. "The two houses next door are quite close, but the dwelling's aspect is to the north, across the lagoon, looking up towards the hills and the dividing range in the distance."

A central corridor morphs that external robustness into a gentle palette of comforting resilience and soothing softness. Here, a combination of more sandy indoor brick and timber imbues the space with warmth, which is gently offset by stone floors and sweeping gestures of concrete interventions. Punctuated by splashes of colour, this hallway guides the eye, establishing an immediate visual link to the landscape. "You look straight down the corridor and see the grass at the back and the lagoon in the distance," Daniel describes.

This connection to place was central to a deliberately loose brief from the clients, an older Sydney couple who envisioned a holiday home where their family could gather and where they

could eventually retire. To achieve this, the architects employed an “upside-down house” concept, designing the ground floor as a private realm housing five bedrooms and a cosy living area for the grandparents. This is also where the dwelling’s creative ability to rearticulate the site’s constraints becomes delightfully obvious – reframing the side orientation of the downstairs bedrooms, the staggered volume step inwards as the structure advances towards the back of the 1,020 square metre plot, creating angled pockets of framed views for each room.

But it’s the dwelling upstairs that sets the stage for the main event – both in terms of family life and the dwelling’s connection to its context. With a sweeping expanse of the 13-metre-wide north-facing volume containing the kitchen, dining and living spaces, the communal area seamlessly spills out towards the landscape stretching towards the horizon. “You’re greeted with this panorama of rolling farmland, the hills in the background, the sky, the lagoon and glimpses of the ocean,” Daniel enthuses. “It’s like you’ve walked from the street into a bucolic countryside landscape.”

Defined by the layered warmth of timber panelling and the intricate craftsmanship of the brick, meticulously laid with half-size brick joints, the interior stretches onto two upper decks – one off the dining room and one off the living area. The balconies are separated by a central void, over which – Daniel explains – the heavy operable doors hover when stacked

away in a tangible statement of engineering excellence.

This immersive double terrace is yet another example of Casey Brown Architecture’s ingenious approach to the site’s limitations – the seemingly decorative concrete railing is, in fact, an oversized upturned beam because the entire balcony is cantilevered. “The wonderful thing about designing around material honesty is that nothing is superfluous,” Daniel reinforces one of the project’s foundational principles. “Everything is doing a job.”

This inherent ethos – that every element must perform a vital function – underpins the terraces’ particularly inconspicuous feature: the drainage. For this outdoor area to feel like a seamless extension of the living space, a minimalist yet high-performing drainage solution capable of handling fierce coastal downpours and protecting the home’s integrity in this high-salt-attack area was essential. “That concrete upstand holding up the balcony had to be solid, so we needed excellent drainage,” Daniel explains. “And to ensure complete accessibility and safety as the clients get older, we wanted minimal thresholds.”

The architects turned to Stormtech, a choice Daniel describes as the “gold standard” for this kind of application. “Stormtech drains run all the way around the perimeter of the balconies, including along the front of the doors. The tile insert drains are perfect – you just don’t even notice they’re there,” he notes, pointing to the seamless integration with the

stone and concrete flooring, and highlighting the aesthetic imperative of the selection.

However, given the home’s distinct architectural form, the application required more than just a refined, high-quality product. “Given the building’s unique curves and non-standard angles, an off-the-shelf product was not an option,” Daniel explains. In a process that mirrored the project’s commitment to bespoke detail and integrity, the stainless-steel threshold drains were custom-fabricated and perfectly integrated with the sliding doors, while the custom curved balcony drainage systems follow the area’s organic form, ensuring seamless water capture and removal.

The level of precision required was immense, with the Stormtech team visiting the site to create custom aluminium templates for the drains. This ensured every component fitted the as-built curves of the concrete balustrade perfectly, guaranteeing a watertight seal and supporting the home’s long-term resilience in the volatile climate. “Thanks to the drains,” Daniel smiles as he praises Stormtech’s craftsmanship, “we haven’t had any leaks.”

A result of this robust architectural approach, the staggered volumes of the South Coast Beach House reveal a striking duality. Defined by its constraints, this intergenerational dwelling finds boundless freedom in its connection to the bucolic landscape, as both a resilient fortress and a light-filled pavilion built for a family, its context and the ages.

# Deconstructed beauty, reimagined scrap:

The Workshop signals waste revolution, Mad Max-style

Architecture and design trade shows are often defined by sleek, highly resolved interiors and an extensive use of materials disproportionate to their fleeting lifespans. But last year's ArchiBuild Expo in Melbourne offered a disruptive counterpoint – amid the buzz of the Convention Centre, a temporary installation called the Workshop challenged the status quo with a compelling – and rather beautiful – perspective on circular design.

“The project started with the idea of conversation,” explains Sian Wilmott, Sustainable Design Leader at Hassell. Conceived to facilitate workshops, talks and idea exchange within the Future Build precinct, the stand promptly transcended its practical, spatial role, sparking a myriad of transformative conversations often prompted by its unexpected appearance.

## Redefining waste through a “Mad Max” aesthetic

Defying the polished convention of industry events, the installation adopted what Paul Tisdell of Studio Round, who helped shape the space's identity, likens to a “Mad Max” aesthetic.

“It was meant to feel improvised, raw and hopefully make people go, ‘That’s a bit different,’” he explains. Rather than defaulting to new products and custom-built elements inevitably destined for landfill, the team prioritised reuse, rental and borrowing to create a landscape of discarded and mid-production components, like brick seating made from surplus stock that would later go back to the showroom.

But the ultimate symbol of this resourceful ethos was the industrial WORKSHOP sign, crafted by Ed Linacre of Edward Linacre Studio. Suspended from the scaffolding, the glowing SHOP letters acted as a beacon, drawing participants in to discover the true nature of the materials used to build the installation. To their surprise, the letters were not made from virgin acrylic or neon but from Stormtech's stainless steel grate offcuts. “We had these lovely moments when people would see the sign from afar, get up close and only then realise what it was made of,” smiles Prue Pascoe, Associate at Hassell.

## Finding waste near and... nearer

This sense of delight was underpinned by Hassell's

unwavering commitment to disrupt the standard, wasteful trade show model not just visually, but systemically.

The Workshop's imaginative structure was designed as a small-scale physical manifesto for the circular economy, demonstrating the viability of surpassing the single-use model and embracing what's left behind. To bring it to life, the team adopted a systems-thinking approach – a part of Hassell's regenerative design process – mapping a neighbourhood of partners to minimise transport emissions by bumping in materials at the same time. That meant looking for industry collaborators within the precinct and broader Expo and finding products that aligned with the Workshop's circular imperative and lent themselves to building that kind of structure.

Prue identified Stormtech as one of the collaborators early on. The grates' linear sections seemed like the perfect structure for the sign's lettering, while the perforated patterns offered a reflective, textured surface Prue thought would come to life beautifully when backlit.

## Surprising scrap scarcity

Ironically, it was the manufacturer's rigorous commitment to sustainability that proved to be an unexpected hurdle. The company manufactures its marine-grade steel drainage custom-to-length to ensure longevity and precision, making Stormtech's production line incredibly efficient. "Our key challenge was actually the lack of waste we produce," explains the Managing Director, Troy Creighton.

Stormtech stockpiled offcuts for months, treating the jagged ends of their production line as valuable commodities. This collected waste – a selection of a few different types of grate offcuts, which Ed humorously describes as a "jigsaw puzzle" – was just enough to create the four SHOP letters.

## Creativity of constraint

Embracing the material's inherent qualities, the team allowed the rigid offcuts to inspire the typeface's design, ensuring no usable scrap was left behind. "Together, we decided that we didn't want to cut or destroy things if we could avoid it," Paul explains. "We wanted to let the materials drive the visual outcome, and so the design of the letterforms just had to be what they were."

Further enhancing the grates' aesthetic potential, their geometric details added dimension to steel's otherwise monolithic expression – a striking graphic effect Ed would harness when transforming the disjointed scraps into the stand's sturdy symbol. He notes that the inherent quality of the material played an essential role: because

Stormtech uses high-grade 316 stainless steel, the offcuts were incredibly resilient. "Stainless steel welding is very robust," he explains. "So, we were able to weld them together to create a rigid, self-supporting structure."

For illumination, Ed also applied the project's strict zero-virgin-material rule, raiding his own studio's bin to salvage LED tape and aluminium extrusions to light the grates from within. Crucially, he also resisted the urge to add acrylic covers – an act of subtraction enabled by the qualities of the material itself.

"We found that we didn't need to provide any further diffusion," Ed enthuses, while Prue recalls the shared moment of joy when the lights were turned on. "The way light spread and refracted through the grid lines was already magnificent. It really reinforced my belief that all discarded materials can be valuable and beautiful."

## Closing the loop, assigning the sign

The Workshop embodied this sentiment even through its own act of seamless disappearance. Sian confirms no waste was created post-dismantle, and the ingenious team even found a use for the packing refuse that slipped through the cracks – Prue recalls "bin diving" to retrieve the plastic strapping used to deliver bricks, using it to tie elements of the structure together to ensure even the packaging had a second life.

As for the sign, the iconic letters have also found new homes. "No one wants a grate offcut, right?" laughs Prue, who happily claimed the "P." "But a custom, lit-up

initial is a pretty cool design piece and a great conversation starter."

And what a conversation starter. This fleeting installation facilitated conversations among visitors and exhibiting manufacturers, setting in motion an industry-wide current that has already surpassed the footprint of the now-dismantled structure. And that, Ed optimistically predicts, is the beginning of a revolution. "Waste is going to become the new major resource," he says, pointing to nature's inherent circularity. "If we don't emulate that system, our waste will continue to overcome us. We have to start treating all materials as valuable now – soon enough they really will be."









# Redefining Value in the Built Environment:

## Integrating Sustainability, Luxury and Affordability in Product Specification

Architects face the complex task of balancing environmental responsibility with aesthetic and economic performance. Increasingly, sustainable building frameworks, such as GreenStar, are pushing projects to demonstrate measurable impact across the full lifecycle. At the same time, client expectations around visual quality, comfort and cost remain unchanged.

Redefining Value in the Built Environment: Integrating Sustainability, Luxury and Affordability in Product Specification examines how design and specification professionals can respond to these competing demands through a specification

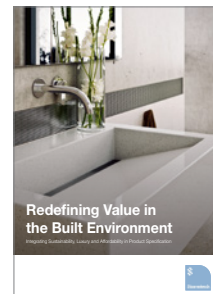
framework that treats sustainability, affordability and luxury as complementary rather than conflicting goals. It highlights strategies for material selection, system integration and finish specification that deliver both regulatory compliance and design excellence.

Stormtech's Slimline drainage range provides a clear example of how architectural products can meet sustainability, luxury and affordability objectives simultaneously. Engineered for high-performance drainage in wet areas, the range is available in marine-grade 316 stainless steel and BEP-certified uPVC, both chosen for durability, corrosion resistance and low environmental impact.

*Download this paper to explore how architects can align sustainability, affordability and luxury through thoughtful specification, lifecycle analysis and integrated material selection strategies.*

### KEEP READING

[bit.ly/GrateInsights\\_2025\\_WP1](https://bit.ly/GrateInsights_2025_WP1)



# Internal Wet Areas:

## Eliminating Defects Through Better Design and Detailing

Bathrooms and wet areas continue to rank among the most defect-prone areas of construction in Australia, with waterproofing and drainage failures a persistent problem. Industry studies show that between 20% and 40% of apartment buildings experience some form of waterproofing defect, highlighting systemic shortcomings in current practice. It is important for design professionals to understand approaches that can reduce failure points and deliver reliable wet area performance.

Internal Wet Areas: Eliminating Defects Through Better Design and Detailing examines the underlying causes of recurring wet area defects and identifies the challenges with current industry practice. It sets out a more effective approach to

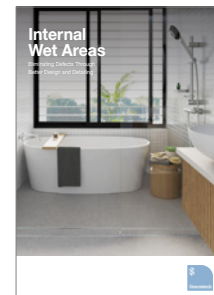
wet area design, providing strategies to reduce complexity and minimise potential failure points. With a focus on shower areas and drainage, this paper also equips architects with clear guidance to achieve wet areas that are both streamlined in execution and reliable in long-term performance.

For more than 30 years, Stormtech has delivered innovative architectural drainage solutions for bathrooms, showers, thresholds, paved areas, driveways and pools. Renowned for sleek design and practical performance, Stormtech linear drainage systems are manufactured in Australia from high-quality 316 stainless steel and are available in both made-to-length and modular formats that can be cut on-site to suit project needs.

*Download this paper to explore approaches to improving wet area design and reducing defects through smarter detailing and product specification. accumulating and entering the indoor environment.*

### KEEP READING

[bit.ly/GrateInsights\\_2025\\_WP2](https://bit.ly/GrateInsights_2025_WP2)







# Room to breathe:

The architecture of Matthew Woodward



When Matthew Woodward, the Principal of Woodward Architects, stepped onto the building site of his family home at 13, it was amidst the collaborative hum of construction work that his architectural fate was sealed. As he watched timber framing rise from the expanse of the citrus orchard, he was captivated by the palpable energy of a close-knit building team.

"I felt the excitement of encapsulating space and being able to see how the house was evolving," Matt smiles as he recalls climbing through the framing to see the process from different perspectives. And while he admits that he was first drawn to construction management, that formative moment combined with his lifelong affinity for drawing

ultimately set his architectural trajectory.

## **The art of coming together – and letting go**

Today, that same appreciation of the collective craft underpins his core belief that architecture is the result of human interaction that sets individual egos aside.

"It takes a village to build a project of architectural merit," Matt says, highlighting the decades of knowledge held by tradespeople like concreters and carpenters. "As the architect, you need to create the platform for that collaboration. And when you create an environment where everybody has a say, that's where you get the richest work."

For him, that means embracing the fluidity of process, celebrating other perspectives, being

unafraid to start over, and – Matt paraphrases Australian architect Glenn Murcutt – being ready to let go of a good idea. "You must be willing to do that in search of the most appropriate solution," he affirms. "If you can do that, you're working in the best interest of the project, the client and the problem at hand."

## **Collaboration with context**

This collaborative spirit extends to a more elemental partner: the place itself. Matt considers location an intimate collaborator whose character has to be profoundly understood and respected before the first line is ever drawn.

"It's essential to get to know each place in terms of its climate, seasonal changes, geography and topography," he explains. "If we don't understand the site, how can we create something that's

going to move the person who experiences it on a deeper level?" That sensory pursuit has led Matt and his team to camp on sites, including a memorable winter trip to the Kosciuszko National Park. "You can get a profound sense of what the place is like that way," he smiles.

### **Emotional architecture that breathes**

Unsurprisingly, this personal relationship to place yields architecture that relates to its surroundings with intricacy, generosity and openness. "For us, it's crucial that our buildings breathe," Matt explains. "It's about finding the opportunities to connect to something bigger than just the structure itself. That's what triggers an emotional response."

This philosophy was beautifully revealed in the radical transparency of the Wirra Willa Pavilion, Matt's first project. Perched on the edge of a natural dam, the glass structure establishes an uninterrupted dialogue with its remarkable surroundings, investigating the fluid meeting of prospect and refuge.

For Matt, this engaging interplay is rooted in the structure's capacity to adapt. As such, the building's perimeter – the skin-like threshold between inside and out – must be able to respond to various climatic conditions or daily rituals, allowing for different modes of operation and flow of space. "We always try to imagine these different modes," Matt says. "And consider how you would feel if there were no glass or walls – just a roof over you."

### **Longevity comes first**

But this idea of responsiveness extends beyond the immediate moment – for Matt, it's key to longevity. "It's essential for buildings to be flexible so they can facilitate multiple generations," he notes.

Reflecting a profound consideration for both the buildings and the occupants' lifespans, longevity forms the foundation of Matt's practice – from adaptable design to responsible material specification, which prioritises enduring, high-performing and locally made products that help minimise carbon emissions. "When specifying materials, we put longevity first," he says. "For us, it's inherently tied to the quality of construction."

This focus on enduring quality is one of the reasons Stormtech's Australian-made products have been a consistent detail in Matt's practice since the dam-adjacent Wirra Willa Pavilion, where, on the advice of a competent builder, Matt integrated drainage grates between the steel eave and the sliding glass panels.

"We needed a way for water to drain right through instead of pooling on the steel," he recalls. "Stormtech was perfect because we could wrap it continuously all the way around the pavilion. It became a cohesive detail that worked in various lengths, even where it went back into stone paving."

Stormtech's refined design and palette, reliable performance, quality of output and durability are as appealing as they were over a decade ago, allowing Matt and his

team to achieve compliance while creating uninterrupted, seamless thresholds – a synergy masterfully evidenced in the now-iconic Wallis Lake House.

Here, integrated seamlessly with a sub-sill for cavity sliding doors, the flush drain allows the concrete floors to flow fluidly from inside to out. Cutting through the concrete expanse in a refined line of reassuring materiality, the grates – which, Matt adds, "on every project look exactly like they did when they were first installed" – quietly nurture the concept of an enduring and adaptable architectural exhale.

### **Room to breathe**

This profound belief in letting things breathe is also organically guiding the future of Matt's practice. While he is clear-eyed about the challenges facing the industry, it's the evolution of his team he feels particularly galvanised by.

"Over time, the practice evolves and the people you work with make the projects better," he says warmly, echoing that formative sentiment of collaboration on his family's building site. "We have a wonderful team and seeing that evolution – and how it has taken on its own trajectory – is what excites me the most."

Whether he's designing a structure that generously engages with its context or leading an empowered team poised for its next chapter, there is a compelling consistency to Matthew Woodward's ego-less approach – to help foster a platform for connection so that everything – and everyone – has room to breathe.

# Newer, slimmer and sun-kissed:

The ultra-discreet 65mm Wave Grate in Beach Gold finish is here

It's highly likely that anyone reading this article will be familiar with Stormtech's signature Wave Grate product – its unique fusion of exceptional performance and refined design quickly earned it a status as a drainage cult classic. In fact, when the original Wave Grate was honoured with a prestigious Good Design Award – a pinnacle of international design recognition here in Australia – the judges lauded the design, celebrating not only its aesthetic and innovative qualities, but also its market impact. There is no doubt that this iconic innovation set an outstanding benchmark for the collection's expansion.

That's precisely why the arrival of the new, ultra-discreet 65mm Wave Grate has been such a highly anticipated industry event. Grounded in Stormtech's unwavering pursuit of design excellence, the collection's slimmest profile yet has been engineered as a direct response to the needs of Australian architects and designers. Here, we explore how this newly launched range builds on Wave

Grate's award-winning philosophy to offer unprecedented design flexibility for seamless drainage integration in the most sophisticated of settings.

"We've always believed that the best designs are those that can seamlessly integrate into their environment," says Troy Creighton, Stormtech Managing Director. "And that's what we've focused on with the new Wave Grate profile."

The resulting slim silhouette is genuinely impressive. Compared to the original Wave Grate's 106mm width, the new 65mm profile is almost 40% narrower, expanding specification horizon for architects and designers who seek minimal visual disruption in their most detailed and sophisticated projects. The minimalist, unobtrusive profile blends into premium architectural settings with inconspicuous ease, quietly receding to let luxury materials like stone, timber and tile take centre stage.

However, Troy is quick to point out that the reduction in width certainly doesn't compromise the iconic product's integrity.

"The Wave Grate's unique, patented profile cleverly conceals the underlying channel," he explains. "This was a core feature of the original, and we've maintained it in the 65mm version to ensure that the added aesthetic subtlety of the narrow profile doesn't come at the expense of performance." The new profile also maintains a high capacity for water flow while its narrow openings prevent debris from passing through – making cleaning and maintenance a breeze.

What makes this new wave of innovation even more compelling is an exclusive, oceanside-inspired new finish: a sun-kissed hue called Beach Gold. This quintessential, elegant hue has been meticulously created to evoke the distinct warmth and luminous glow of the coastal context and further elevate drainage offering for contemporary dwellings.

Like the rest of Stormtech's Wave Grate collection, the versatile new profile – especially when coupled with the stunning

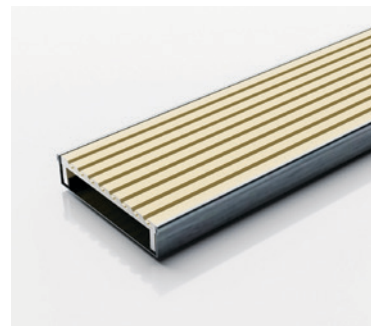
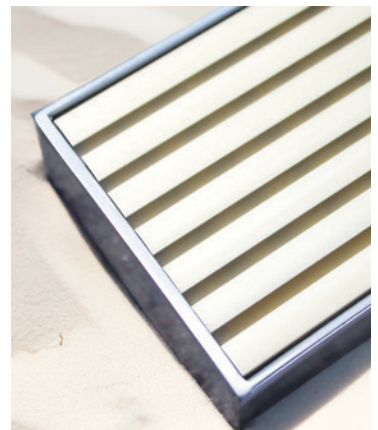
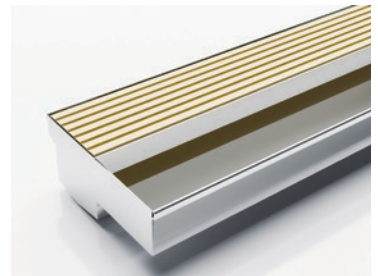


finish – is suited to a wide variety of premium applications. “Whether that’s creating an uninterrupted flow on balconies and patios, providing a sleek and safe solution for pool surrounds and outdoor showers, or offering a luxurious touch in bathrooms and wet areas,” says Troy. “And, from our perspective, it’s particularly well suited for creating seamless transitions between indoors and outdoors – a staple of modern Australian design.”

He adds that Stormtech’s relentless focus on innovation has never dominated the company’s staunch commitment to environmental responsibility – sustainability remains a core tenet of the company’s DNA and the new Wave Grate profile continues this tradition. The slim silhouette is manufactured on the South Coast of NSW, using Capral’s LocAl® Super Green low-carbon aluminium. This groundbreaking material offers a significantly lower carbon footprint than the global average and is sourced from smelters certified by the Aluminium Stewardship Initiative

(ASI), guaranteeing it is produced responsibly. “Sustainability has never been a buzzword for us,” says Troy. “It’s a fundamental part of our process. From powering our manufacturing with solar energy to choosing sustainable materials, we remain committed to making choices that are not only good for our products, but good for our planet, our built environment and our customers.”

The launch of the 65mm Wave Grate and the Beach Gold finish marks another major chapter in Stormtech’s long history of transformative industry innovation. It’s a testament to the company’s ability to listen to the architecture and design community and respond with comprehensive solutions that are both beautiful and functional – an ethos that has defined Stormtech’s ingenious evolution since inception. Building on this commitment to listening and Wave Grate’s award-winning design, the collection’s slimmest profile yet expands design freedom to create spaces that are not only visually sophisticated but are also built on a legacy of exceptional quality, integrity and sustainability.



# Stormtech

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