Design earns top state award

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by Erik De Wit

A $25 million building credited with revolutionising Brisbane Girls Grammar School has won a top state architecture award.

The Cherrell Hirst Creative Learning Centre won the FDG Stanley Award for Public Architecture last week.

The m3architecture design also won a commendation for interior architecture.

The jury said the building was “a dynamic place”, allowing students to socialise and learn.

School principal Amanda Bell said the building was the school’s most ambitious development since the heritage building on Gregory Tce was completed in 1884.

“It is revolutionary. It combines social spaces and learning. It blurs the edges,” Ms Bell said.

“The students love it. People who drive past (on the Inner City Bypass) say it is engaging.”

The building had a moire screen on the western wall, creating an optical illusion while protecting classrooms from the sun.

It had a flexible floor plan, with open spaces and retractable walls.

There were music and drama rooms, a café and covered terraces.

Environmentally friendly features included low-energy lighting and natural ventilation systems.

Architect Michael Banney said the award was the biggest achievement to date for his firm.

“It is obviously a great thing. The lineage of buildings that have won it is strong,” Mr Banney said.

“To be in that company is a great privilege.”

The building has been shortlisted as a finalist in the National Architecture Awards, due to be announced on October 30.