

Elizabeth Quay Seating



NOT ALL ABOUT THE LOOK

Recognised for its stunning design outcomes and inherent durability benefits, precast concrete is increasingly being used for outdoor furniture in public spaces around the world. It was the clear choice for seating at Perth's redevelopment of the Elizabeth Quay area in the heart of the city.

The aim of the redevelopment was to create a waterfront precinct to become the city's ultimate riverfront destination. It will eventually include multi-storey hotels, apartments and office spaces, but already, the new public spaces are drawing crowds and helping to revitalise the city centre.

CURVED TO FOLLOW THE QUAY

Local precast manufacturer and National Precast member PERMAcast was contracted to produce seating for this impressive redevelopment. 450 metres of seating was required, with varying radius curves to follow the irregular shape of the quay. PERMAcast's Managing Director Alberto Ferraro says over a four month period, the company produced more than 200 straight and 100 curved seating units, with more than 50 different lengths and eight different curves.

OUTSIDE THE SQUARE MOULDS

Mr Ferraro explained that a cost effective, but non-conventional, method of production was used. "Usually our moulds are made from steel but this time, we went to an alternative and used concrete moulds.

Precaster
PERMAcast

Contractor
Denmac

Client
Metropolitan
Redevelopment Authority

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It's the first time we've done that, but it allowed us to produce more moulds to increase the volume of output at a cheaper cost," he said.

The seating units were manufactured using a concrete mix that included a special stone selected for its particular aesthetic. "The architect wanted a unique look so we used special Muckinbudin quartz, from the small town of Muckinbudin about 300 kilometres from Perth," said Mr Ferraro. A high class, low maintenance finish was also required, so the seats were polished. "Once the units were polished, we applied a special protection coating. It's anti-stain and anti-graffiti to protect the finish of the concrete from damage from the elements and from people".

A DESIGN ONLY POSSIBLE WITH PRECAST

Precast concrete was the ideal solution for the project for many reasons. According to Mr Ferraro, an insitu concrete pour would've been virtually impossible and would have compromised the design and vision. "As well, the fact that it was being manufactured off site meant onsite works could continue. We produced the seats so they could be dropped in when the site was ready". They were stored undercover at the manufacturer's storage facility until delivery was required.

50 YEAR FURNITURE

As well as those logistical benefits, the precast seating units have other advantages. Mr Ferraro said, "From a visual perspective the precast seats look fantastic. But they are also extremely durable and low maintenance. They are designed to last more than 50 years."

It was a satisfying project for the precast team and one they will be proud of for years to come.

"Being in a high profile, and high exposure area in the city, where people are gathering for years to come for big events, it's good to see the public enjoy some of our work".

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