



## State-of-the-art sustainability design

As the national leader in sustainability and planning design, it comes as no surprise that the City of Greater Springfield was declared the World's Best Master Planned Development by the FIABCI, the International Real Estate Federation. What was initially one man's dream, has blossomed into Australia's fastest emerging new city. Just 30 minutes south west of Brisbane's CBD, the City has attracted \$21 billion in private and public investment and has a population of over 30,000. Founder and Chairman of Springfield Land Corporation Maha Sinnathamby's vision of a community able to live, work, rest and play well, has been master planned around the interconnecting pillars of health, education and information technology.

The City's approach to sustainability is why General Electric (GE) chose Springfield as the location for its new Queensland hub. GE joins the award winning Brookwater Golf and Country Club, Mater Private Hospital, the University of Southern Queensland, Orion Shopping Centre, two train stations, 10 schools, 11 childcare centres, just to name a few.

GE's \$72 million, 12,500 square metre state-of-the-art building is the base for GE's Australian call centre and its Queensland power and water, mining, healthcare and transportation business units. The six storey, 15 000 square metre commercial office is home to 500 GE staff, with the capability of 700 more.

### The Green Approach

With the City's focus on the creation of green, environmentally friendly buildings, the GE Headquarters is no exception. The building, which features a dark coloured precast concrete exterior, is not only aesthetically pleasing with its strong visual building signature; it has also

#### Precaster

Austral Precast

#### Builder

Kane Constructions

#### Architect

Conrad Gargett

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accomplished its sustainability goals thanks to its clever design. The building's Five Star Green Star rating from the Green Building Council of Australia and 4.5 star NABERS rating recognise not only the building's minimal environmental impact, but also the strong design focus on reducing running and maintenance costs.

## **BACK TO BASICS DESIGN TICKS SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS**

A design competition for the site saw architect Conrad Gargett produce the initial concept and design, which was what won them and Kane Constructions the contract, but was also what secured GE as the anchor tenant. By going back to really basic building design principles, it was possible to achieve multiple sustainability ticks such as access to daylight and views across the floorplates. The bold L-shaped design certainly makes the most of the surrounding area. The shape gives majority of staff a view of the award winning Robelle Domain parklands, which connects to the ground floor plaza.

## **REDUCED HEATING & COOLING COSTS**

The strong focus on sustainability throughout the design process is one of the key reasons why precast concrete was used. National Precast member, Austral Precast was chosen after a competitive tender process to manufacture the precast panels for the façade. To assist in striving for the two ratings, the precast panels reduce the need for heating and cooling by adding thermal mass to the structure. The panels – which are also low maintenance - were made using reduced cement levels in concrete and recycled water.

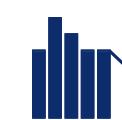
## **TIGHT TIMEFRAME**

Due to the project's tight timeframe and installation schedule, precast concrete was also used for its time saving benefits. The precaster was able to manufacture the components in their facilities as the site was being prepared, with the precast installed at just the right time.

Not only is the building perfectly tailored to its tenant, the building has caught the eye of those in the industry. The GE Headquarters won the best commercial building over \$5 million at the 2015 Brisbane Master Builders Awards and the Queensland State Award for Commercial Buildings over \$5 million.

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