

Jane Foss Russell Building



A City within a City

The newly named "Jane Foss Russell Building" is a key component of Sydney University's Building for the Future Program. Already a major University and city landmark, this 12,850 square metre, seven-storey building provides centralised accommodation for a wide range of student administrative services together with commercial and retail spaces. Not only does the development service the needs of students living on and around the campus but it also engagingly services the residents of the surrounding areas

The building was the subject of an international design competition conducted by Sydney University in 2003. The competition winner, John Wardle Architects, was formally awarded the commission for the design of the building in December 2003. The construction contract, the largest infrastructure contract in the University's 158 year history, was awarded to Abigroup Contractors.

As John Wardle explains: "The overarching theme of the building is linkage. Sydney Central is positioned at the intersection of the Darlington and Camperdown campuses and forms a link between the landscaping currently underway on both campuses. In addition, it will form a link between the different student groups at the University and the community with its large and vibrant plaza area."

Precast Manufacturer

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Architect

John Wardle Architects +
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Engineer

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Visually appealing from every angle, the building vision of a 'city within a city' for students, staff and visitors features a large outdoor plaza with tiered seating, function space and cafes, interesting architectural themes and dynamic use of building materials. External balconies, terraced areas extending between floors, bleachers and an assortment of sitting areas are incorporated into the building's design. These allow all users of the building to enjoy as much of the natural light and the spectacular views as possible.

Precast concrete manufactured by Hanson Precast features in a multitude of surprising places, creating an attraction of forms and finishes:

- 82 polished white precast concrete panels made with feldspar aggregate and imported white cement. Nine of these were curved – both convex and concave.
- Unusual shaped flat and faceted façade precast panels, following the soaring façade facets of the building. Some of the precast elements have up to five polished surfaces at different angles.
- 79 expressive grey precast concrete vaulted external ceiling coffers as structure to the floors above.
- 25 patterned precast concrete panels cast using Reckli synthetic rubber form liners. These are displayed externally on two walls. The concrete for the textured wall panels uses off-white cement.
- The geometry of the buildings provides a vast array of panel shapes that are seldom seen on other architectural projects – demonstrating the design versatility of precast.
- A major consideration in the selection of precast concrete was concern over the possibility of vandalism and graffiti to this 24-hour open street-front facility. Polished precast is the perfect answer for such concerns.

A major objective was a 5-star green energy rating through environmentally sustainable design. All buildings constructed during the Campus 2010 program will be built according to the University's ESD Guidelines, utilising new technologies designed to minimise energy and water usage, and maximising recovery of waste materials. The building includes the use of low energy mechanical services. Chilled beams were also used to provide a passive air conditioning system and solar panels were installed on the roof.