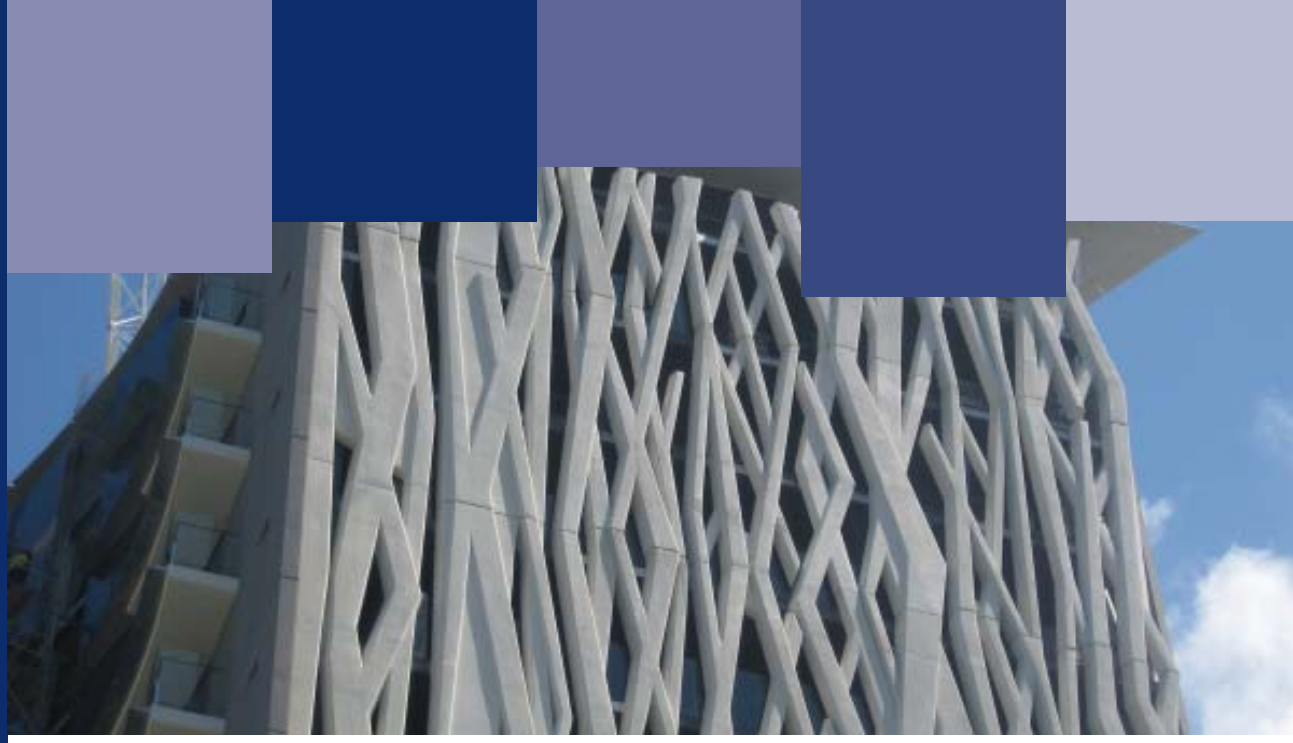
Kangaroo Point Apartments



Screen star

Brisbane's Kangaroo Point at the southern approach to the famous Storey Bridge now bears a distinctive landmark. Unmistakably individual, the super-luxury Scott St Apartments provide a real sense of 'arrival' both to visitors to the city and its fortunate occupants.

The most distinctive feature of the 12-storey apartment development overlooking the river and CBD is without doubt the elegant 'woven' screen that adorns the full length of its street front elevation.

In an extraordinary feat of engineering, design and construction, the screen is made from architectural precast concrete. It calls to mind a bamboo grove, with all its associations of soaring lightweight elegance, and forms a bespoke façade over the grey, load bearing precast external walls.

Already a challenging site, with limited access, water frontage and in the heart of a densely populated residential area, the screen concept was one that could easily have been abandoned, but for the persistence and ingenuity of the parties who worked so closely together to ensure its successful manufacture and erection – a complex operation requiring high precision craneage.

"This project creates new boundaries for the shapes that can be achieved using high quality precast concrete," says Colin Ginger, General Manager of Precast Concrete Products, which supplied the specialty precast for the screen.

Precaster
Precast Concrete Products

Project Owner
Waterford Properties

Architect and Project Superintendent
Jackson Teece
Hutchinson Contractor

Service Engineer
Alliance Design Group

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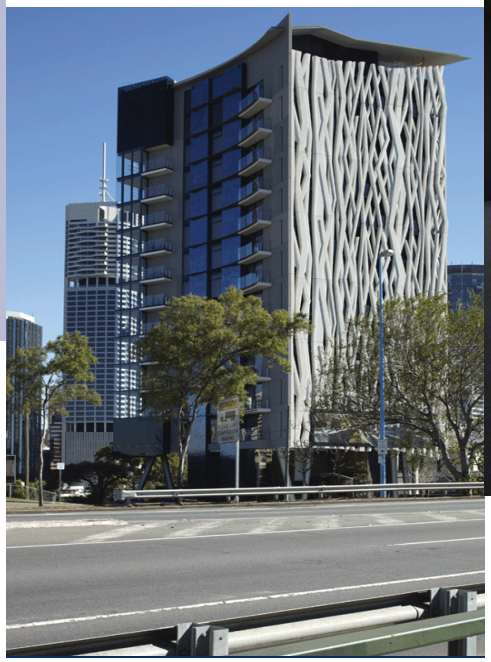

Made from class 2 off-form, off-white concrete, the screen has a raw concrete finish, with no sealers or coatings.

Casting the panels in order to successfully achieve the look the architect was aiming for was just one of the challenges involved.

This was ultimately achieved by the creation of 16 highly customised moulds, intricately sculpted from a combination of steel, polyurethane, polystyrene and timber.

Fifty-six cladding panels were required to create the pattern, which repeats every four levels.

Panel thickness varied from a minimum of 180mm to a maximum of 300mm, with the heaviest panels weighing in at a hefty 8 tonnes.

Beyond casting and craneage to get the panels on site, there was also a significant challenge in fixing the panels in a manner that would ensure the integrity of the screen itself and the primary structure.

In true 'icing on the cake' fashion, the panels were finally attached to the building with steel corbels after the main structure was completed and the scaffolding was stripped.

"The highly sculptured façade presented significant structural challenges when it came to handling the panels due to the thin, slender sections in some parts," says Colin Ginger.

"Close collaboration between the precast design office and the project architect, engineer and builder was vital to get panel shapes that were structurally sound, within the capacity of the tower crane and yet achieved the overall look that the client required."

"This project serves as a real testimony to the versatility of precast concrete and the innovation and new territory that can be explored when there is close collaboration between the building designers and the precaster."