

Cultural precast linking Australia's heritage

La Perouse Headland located on the northern shores of Botany Bay provides spectacular cliff top views across the Bay and out to sea. The Headland is one of the most significant cultural heritage sites in Australia.

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This has been recognised by a heritage listing and creation of a National Park over most of the Headland. Other significant cultural heritage elements include the La Perouse Memorial, Watch Tower, Bare Island Fort and the former Telegraph Station that connected Sydney to London.

The combination of heavy visitor use and inadequate infrastructure had left the Headland in poor condition, with uncontrolled parking along the loop road and no path available for pedestrians. Randwick City Council's commitment to upgrade the amenity resulted in a brief to integrate the new section of Coastal Walk with works to upgrade the Loop Road as a one-way system and provide efficient parking.

"A key aspect of the site that we immediately recognised was the need to maintain the spectacular open views from the Headland. At the same time we needed to replace the steel crash barrier with an attractive element that was strong enough to stop out-of-control vehicles from going over the cliff, while allowing pedestrians to gain access from their parked cars to the new section of Coastal Walkway" says Noel Corkery of Corkery Consulting.



The highly corrosive coastal environment created by salt spray required careful consideration of materials, with concrete the obvious choice in terms of its impressive durability and minimal maintenance. The choice was the use of nearly 600 elements in five different shapes - wheel stops, separation blocks, kerbs and two styles of bollards that provided a 'garrison look' to the project.

Working closely with Hanson Precast in the detailed design stage, a cost effective process was achieved in moulding, manufacture, delivery and installation. For example, gang moulds were used for the bollards, which made for the perfect alignment of the elements on site. Also, a void across the bottom of each bollard removed the need for visible lifting anchors.

Transport was also a very important part of the project with each precast element individually protected before palletising to prevent any minor handling damage. The delivery of all elements was undertaken by a crane truck.

"We decided to use precast concrete to ensure we achieved the precise dimensions and control of colour and texture that we wanted for the bollards. It also allowed us to create a distinctive profile for the precast wheel stops. The concrete bollards not only form a unifying urban design element but also provide seating along the full length of the Coastal Walk" says Noel Corkery.