

# Woden Bus Interchange Stairway



## CYCLISTS NOT FORGOTTEN IN STUNNING NEW STAIRWAY

As cycling becomes more and more popular, a renewal project for the Woden Bus Interchange in the ACT boasts a functional yet aesthetically pleasing new feature - an architecturally designed precast concrete stairway that looks after cyclists as well as pedestrians.

As well as improving accessibility and safety, the stairway provides a new connection between bus commuters and the town square. Besides its functionality, what is different about this stairway is the beauty and clever design that caters not only for pedestrians, but cyclists as well. Between the two sets of stairs, a central bicycle lane has been incorporated allowing riders to wheel their bikes alongside them as they ascend or descend

### THE BEAUTY OF FACTORY MADE PRECAST

All of the elements for the stairway, including the stair landings, curved central stair units and surrounding walls, were manufactured by National Precast member, Hanson Precast. In total, the project comprised 59 stair elements with a light acid-etched finish and 13 wall panels in a polished finish.

According to Hanson Precast's Project Engineer Robert Merjane, the high level of finish would have been very difficult to achieve had the stairway and walls been site poured. "That was one of the main reasons that precast was chosen for this project", he said.

Precaster  
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Builder  
Acclaim Contractors

Architect  
CCG Architects

Engineer  
SMC

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## COMPLEXITY AT ITS FINEST

While first impressions might indicate that the project was straight forward, careful planning and attention to detail was needed to ensure the project's success.

According to Mr Merjane, there were challenges with various elements of this project. "The central stair units were curved along each side to accommodate the bike wheel. The moulding required to achieve that detail was quite intricate. We drew some of the elements in 3D to determine the shape and final dimensions and then custom-made the moulds accordingly", he explained.

"The stairs were architecturally designed to look as though they are suspended", Mr Merjane continued to explain. "You can actually see the steps have a floating look on the outer edge, and achieving that result required clever planning. The solution was to fabricate moulds to give the steps a tapered edge".

"The polished precast walls that define the garden space are articulated with grooves that match the layout of the step treads." elaborated Mr Merjane.

## ACT GOVERNMENT AFTER LONG LIFE, DURABILITY & MINIMAL MAINTENANCE

While the main reason for using precast was the accuracy and quality of finish that could be achieved in a factory-controlled environment, durability was also a deciding factor. The ACT Government recognised that the stairway would have a long life and with precast concrete the benefit of minimal long term maintenance costs will be realised. As well, the client knew that high quality precast would perform well in Canberra's sometimes extreme weather conditions.

## IMPRESSIVE RESULT & A HAPPY BUILDER

Hanson's Canberra Sales Representative Drew Lincoln says the final result is worthwhile. "We don't often get an opportunity to demonstrate what we can do with precast and landscaping, particularly at the high end. The builder did a great job installing as well".

Builder Ivan Potrebica from Acclaim Contractors is also happy with the final result. "We're extremely pleased and so is the ACT Government. It's a bit of a showcase and was a tough ask (for Hanson), with stringent tolerances and complex dimensions and they handled it in their stride. It goes to show what you can do with precast".

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