

Dress circle living

Sophisticated urban living has arrived in the heart of Adelaide's CBD with this landmark apartment block.

The \$51 million, 15-storey Rowland Apartments complex consists of 87 apartments in South Australia's first 8.1 star Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) building.

Situated close to Adelaide's historic Her Majesty's Theatre in the popular Central Market precinct, the project provides local students, professionals and others who crave an urban lifestyle with the latest in high rise living – and also sits at ease with its historic, lower-rise neighbours.

Project Owner
MANDALA Developments

Architect and Project Superintendent
D'Andrea & Associates

Service Engineer
Lelio Bibbo

Builders
Brookefield Multiplex

Precast Manufacturer
SA Precast

www.nationalprecast.com.au

As well as environmental performance – enhanced by features such as solar-powered hot water systems, water retention tanks and double glazing – the project is characterised by attention to finishes and details designed to appeal to discerning residents.



These include fully tiled balconies and generous 920mm-wide solid timber apartment entry doors with natural wood finishes, while that bugbear of apartment living, excessive noise, is eliminated by double corridor and party walls with a 55mm air gap: totalling a privacy-assured 160mm thickness.

Similar standards applied when it came to the exterior finish, with precast the first and only choice. It offered the





winning combination of aesthetics, durability, speed and ease of construction, value and safety that the developers desired.

The 2,510 square metres of precast panels that make up the building's façade were supplied by the SA Precast team, which worked closely with the designer and builder prior to the project's commencement. Involvement at this early stage enabled a level of planning and preparation that helped streamline construction, despite a number of challenges.

"The original plan called for off-form colour panels with polished panels at the ground and fifth level. However, the designer then requested a trial of an acid washed panel for a different look. The ultimate decision was to finish the majority of panels in a paler acid wash with a darker, contrasting acid washed panel, along with some polished panels," explains Claude Pincin, from SA Precast.

Once the decision to use the acid washed panels was made, another challenge arose: ensuring that the majority of paler panels were constructed to the required two-storey height while remaining under the maximum engineering weight requirements. At close to 22 square metres per panel, this meant thin – therefore relatively fragile – panels. Combined with the acid washing requirement, this called for extra care in the treatment and handling process so as not to damage the panels. To address the issue, hydraulic tilt-up frames were used for casting and washing.



The decision to increase the building height from 14 to 15 storeys mid-build posed another challenge. This required the swift design and supply of an additional 20 subtly-different panels that retained the building's design integrity, without hampering the tight construction program.

Happily, construction proceeded smoothly, aided by another precast advantage: the panels were delivered on walkway frames, eliminating the risk, time and cost associated with the alternative: ladders and boom lifts.

The final result is a structure that's ideal for 21st century living, enabling residents to enjoy both the heritage and history that Adelaide has to offer as well as its growing range of thoroughly modern delights.