

Water Police Park



Playing it safe

The design brief for this urban Sydney park called for a harmonious combination of aesthetics, practicality, safety and the durability to withstand the rigorous of its waterside location.

The \$26 million urban waterfront park is located on the old water police site at the historic Pyrmont peninsula, on Sydney Harbour.

Designers ASPECT Studios wanted to seamlessly incorporate a modern playground into the broader site in which original elements have been retained to promote a sense of its history as a working industrial site.

The solution was to furnish the park and playground with individually crafted precast elements to provide both form and structural function.

Hanson Precast was selected to provide the playground's barbecue benches, seating areas, flat steps, paving areas, spacers and columns. These were finished in a Class 2 off-form concrete, using off-white cement, as were other new elements. These included 'boomerang' concrete walls that sculpt the grove to ensure they are integrated with the original elements of the restored area.

"The architect didn't want to see any of the cast-in lifters in any of the precast units," explains Adib Jomaa, Engineer at Hanson Precast. "In most building projects these are patched afterwards, but they can be unsightly if they are not done well."

Project Owner

City of Sydney Council

Architect

ASPECT Studios

Builders

Ford Civil Contracting

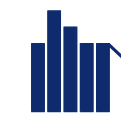
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To meet both this and the durability and maintenance issues posed by units that were built either over or near the water, a unique erection process involving a special lifting bracket and strategically concealed cast-in lifters was used.

Safety was another key requirement, with the precast steps and slabs requiring falls in their surfaces to prevent water pooling and thereby creating a walking-hazard.

“These units varied in shape and had to be cast face-down in special moulds that demanded a high degree of attention in design and setup,” Adib explains. “Tolerances were also important, as even a small change in the surfaces between units could become a trip hazard.”

Testimony to the successful blending of its elements was the park’s receipt of best overall project in the 2009 CCAA Public Domain awards.