



## FAÇADE IMAGERY PART OF RETAIL REVOLUTION

A huge precast concrete mural is a striking feature in a \$400 million makeover of one of Brisbane's largest shopping centres.

Situated in a major commercial centre at one of Brisbane's busiest transport hubs and catering to a trade area of around 595,000 residents, Westfield Garden City Mt Gravatt has one of the largest trade areas among Westfield centres in Australia. But there was much more to the redevelopment than just adding 100 new speciality shops and increasing retail space by 40 per cent.

Touted a next generation shopping centre, the Centre heralds 'retailtainment' as the latest weapon against online shopping. The concept is designed to lure shoppers back into centres by enhancing their retail experience.

When Westfield Design and Construction considered design options for the makeover, they wanted to incorporate features that would surprise and delight. As well as using "first-to-market" digital entertainment and incorporating tailored shopping precincts in the design, striking large scale façade imagery was a priority.

### PLANNING FOR A STUNNING FAÇADE

In considering options for the Mt Gravatt redevelopment, Westfield Design and Construction decided that graphic concrete™ was the ideal solution for such an ambitious and exciting project. It would add a unique and innovative flair to the façade design.

#### Precaster

Austral Precast

#### Designer

UAP Studio

#### Client

Westfield Design & Construction (Scentre Group)

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Developed by the entrepreneurial Finnish architect and inventor Samuli Naamanka, graphic concrete™ is already used around the world, adding pattern and imagery to large-scale architectural surfaces by chemically etching imagery into concrete surfaces. Now available in Australia from National Precast Industry Partner ramsetreid, it is an exciting addition to the already extensive range of aesthetic options offered by precast concrete.

After a year of design evolution, a pattern by Spanish-born artist Dani Marti was selected for a 12-metre high façade wall. The abstract flower design spans 30 large precast concrete panels, to form an imposing multi-coloured, three dimensional decorative exterior facade mural.

## **SPECTACULAR PRECAST BRINGS THE PLAN TO LIFE**

Once artwork design was finalised, the precast elements were manufactured by National Precast Member, Queensland-based Austral Precast. Intent on delivering a high quality and innovative precast solution, the answer was a combination of products from Austral's suite of finishes.

graphic concrete™ imagery offered contrast between the smooth finish and the exposed aggregate. To match the background colour, long-lasting Nawkaw colour staining was applied to the rebated edges. Unlike conventional paint systems which apply a thin film to the surface, staining penetrates the concrete substrate to produce a deep, long-lasting colour finish that resists UV, mildew, weathering and mould, and will not peel. Further, it is non-hazardous and has low VOCs. And formliners were used to build in articulation and texture.

## **STUNNING RESULT**

The finished facade of Westfield Garden City is impressive. The new look demonstrates the versatility and innovation of precast concrete and the detailed and intricate architectural finishes that can be achieved.

Westfield is thrilled with the eye-catching mural and shoppers are enthusiastic about the new environment. According to Centre Manager Stuart Elder "It means the centre isn't just bland and white from one end to the other".

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