



## Melbourne office tower shows off precast's versatility

A striking multi-storey office tower in the Melbourne suburb of Mount Waverley highlights the versatility of precast concrete. This is a project where all aspects of precast were utilised from precast balconies, to stairs, structural walls, architectural walls, columns, pre-stressed beams, conventional beams, hollow core floor planks, lift shafts and stairs.

The building consists of four levels of hollowcore flooring with architectural precast walls on the perimeter, as well as stairs and a lift shaft core at the centre. The entire site was excavated and an underground car park created with the use of precast columns, beams, balconies, stairs, landings and hollow core planks.

Local precaster and National Precast member Hollow Core Concrete was an integral part of the Forster Road project, offering an holistic service. The company was responsible for design, manufacture and installation of the precast elements. The project was easily managed from Hollow Core's Laverton factory.

**Precast manufacturer**  
Hollow Core Concrete

**Client**  
Lettieri Group

**Architect**  
Malcolm Elliot Architects

**Engineer**  
Consentino Group

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### **Precast down under**

One of the more unusual features of the project's construction was the large underground car park. A huge 1874m<sup>2</sup> of parking space was created below ground level, which took up the entire block. This required long 16.5 metre spans of hollowcore flooring. The precaster's site supervisor, Balint Djeri says the manufacture of such long spans was straightforward. "The challenges came with the transport and installation, but they were easily overcome. Getting to the site, we had to use extendable trucks, and that meant restrictions on the time of day we could travel. Installing that length of span, we also needed a larger crane to be able to handle the load," Mr Djeri said.

### **Architectural wall panels to top it off**

The exterior walls of the Forster Road project have various patterns cast into the precast. Squares, diamonds and rectangles in the panels, as well as a stacked effect, give the tower a unique and striking edge.

Precast was the obvious choice for the building. According to Mr Djeri, traditional construction using in situ concrete would have taken 12 to 18 months. The use of precast shaved about nine months from the project. "Not only did we save the client time, but money as well. As soon as the precast walling and flooring was installed, other trades were able to begin fitting out. Trades like electricians and plumbers were able to complete their work straight away," Mr Djeri said.

"The other saving was with onsite labour. Because so much of the work is done offsite in a safe factory environment, fewer people are needed on site. As well, there's less risk that can otherwise be associated with being on a building site, like bad weather, the potential of industrial unrest and safety issues."

### **Making the builder's job easier**

The builder-developer of the office tower has been impressed with the flexibility and versatility of using precast and Hollow Core's Managing Director Peter Healy is also pleased with the result.

"Having one precast supplier made the scheduling and construction low stress for the client. Doing our job properly, makes the builder's job much easier", he said.