

MASTERS OF PRECAST

THE RECENTLY COMPLETED COBURG STATION IN MELBOURNE'S NORTH SHOWCASES THE QUALITY OF PRECAST CONCRETE DELIVERED BY MASTER PRECASTER ADVANCED PRECAST. *ROADS & INFRASTRUCTURE REPORTS.*



As part of the Victorian Government's Level Crossing Removal Project, the recently completed Coburg Station in Melbourne's north features a new station building and public space development.

Exemplifying the changing light conditions throughout the day as the sun angle changes, the new station building uses a complex diamond-stamped façade manufactured from precast concrete. With its strong civic gestures, its contemporary impact creates a strong new cultural identity for the area.

The design of the new building integrates perfectly with an existing refurbished heritage station building which was built in the 19th century in late Victorian Gothic style and is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. Both are surrounded by a landscaped plaza, and together they reflect the vibrancy and diversity of the local surrounds.

Working with the project team, renowned architectural firm Wood Marsh employed precast concrete to realise the textured façade. The stamped façade features circular windows and circular cutouts in elevated platform screens that extend the structure's theme beyond the building as trains arrive and leave the station.

The many precast concrete panels that comprise the new station building's façade were supplied and installed by National Precast Master Precaster Advanced Precast. Advanced Precast employed custom form-liner technologies to achieve the complex diamond embossed façade panels for the new Coburg station building and used a white oxide concrete mix to ensure the station's façade had a bright and welcoming appearance to commuters.

Precast concrete is highly suited to precision, architectural-grade applications such as this. It is perfect for facades which require intricate detailing, or in structural applications that require accurate tolerances. As precast concrete elements are manufactured offsite in factory-controlled environments, architects, designers and engineers can achieve tight specification of colour, finish and tolerance.

Prefabricated construction methods such as precast offer benefits in construction and for the structure's lifetime. Manufacturing in safe, purpose-built factories allows elements to pass thorough a quality control check before their transport to, and installation on site, where precast greatly reduces the burden of onsite trades and waste.

According to National Precast Chief Executive Officer Sarah Bachmann, the consistently high-quality precast elements evident in the Coburg Station project are indicative of Master Precasters and the high calibre elements they manufacture.

"Offsite manufacturing easily facilities the use of purpose-built moulds and form liners, which offer architects complete design freedom and an opportunity to achieve the most ambitious shapes and finishes, all whilst maintaining tight manufacturing tolerances of panels, parts or voids," says Bachmann.

"Using Master Precasters like Advanced Precast ensures an outstanding result." The clever architectural vision combined with Advanced Precast's technical experience has ensured a striking realisation of the station's design intent and has greatly increased the time and cost efficiency of the project, when compared to traditional, onsite construction methods.

Precast concrete has breathed new life into the site, rendering the new station building as a standout feature amongst the public space and landscape upgrades that compose the site, with the station marking another successful level crossing for Victoria and a greatly improved experience for many generations of commuters to come.

A SNAPSHOT OF WORK FROM THE MASTERS

Master Precaster is a new standard in the manufacture of precast concrete introduced by National Precast. It's an initiative that has come about in response to discussions with government and industry.

"Master Precaster is a vital safeguard when awarding a precast contract," says National Precast CEO Sarah Bachmann.

"Awarding precast contracts based purely on price can be fraught with danger. We have seen the negative results that this kind of short-sighted thinking can have on the quality, safety, timing and cost of a project," says Bachmann.

"This new standard has a clear aim – to make those in the industry who meet and exceed best practices, easily identifiable to the people that specify precast concrete.

And importantly, our Master Precasters have a genuine interest in the longevity of the industry. They are engaged and committed to raising standards."

Below is a snapshot of some of the works delivered or being delivered by National Precast's Master Precasters. ■

To find a Master Precaster for your next project, visit www.nationalprecast.com.au.

Project: Coburg Station
Location: Coburg, VIC
Master Precaster: Advanced Precast
Architect: Wood Marsh
Construction: John Holland Group



Project: Cross River Rail
Location: Exhibition Station, Brisbane, QLD
Master Precaster: Reinforced Earth
Client: Queensland Government
Architect: Hassell



Project: Edzell House
Location: Toorak, VIC
Master Precaster: Hollow Core Concrete
Builder: Surrey Developments



Project: West Dubbo Gross Pollutant Trap
Location: West Dubbo, NSW
Master Precaster: Rocla
Client: Dubbo Regional Council
Builder: Whittaker Civil
Project Management: Optimal Stormwater

