

# CENTRE REVAMP PUTS CUSTOMER NEEDS AND TRENDS FIRST

Port Adelaide Plaza is the local community centre located within one of Adelaide's most transformative precincts. Located just 13.7 kilometres from the Adelaide CBD and close to major arterial roads, the centre is set to be a destination of choice for convenience shopping in a safe and friendly environment.

The rebuild and extension of what was formally the Port Canal Shopping Centre, from 19,000 square metres to over 29,000 square metres, makes the project the most significant retail development in Port Adelaide in decades. The original building was built approximately 30 years ago.

Owned and managed by Precision Group, Port Adelaide Plaza boasts Australia's biggest retailers, over 70 new specialty stores and services, a casual dining precinct and more than 900 car parking bays including 250 undercover spaces.

Precision Group's vision for the project was in direct response to customer needs and trends, with the aim to provide the best customer experience possible.

Precision Group's Chief Operating Officer, Trevor Dill said the re-development has given them a unique opportunity to create the right balance of social, environmental and economic conditions for retailers, shoppers and the Port Adelaide community.

Architectural practice Brown Falconer was commissioned to design the development. The architect's main design brief was to ensure that a contemporary interpretation of Port Adelaide was created, which had to work in combination with the amenity and experience required of the shopping centre.





The centre's design incorporates a palette of colours and materials that complements the existing contextual setting and enhances its visual environment.

The materials and finishes include curtain window entry glazing, standing seam steel cladding with white finishes, stained plywood soft fit lining on the exterior entrance, precast concrete for exterior walls with precast red brick walls, terrazzo tiling interior finishes and a range of outdoor paving design, materials and patterns.

The finishes aid in articulating the appearance of the existing and newly built forms. Furthermore, the use of soft materials gives the building a smooth finish and an inviting appearance.

The expansion project commenced in April 2018 and has since been built and delivered in stages to ensure minimal disruption. Precision Group enlisted BADGE, a privately-owned local South Australian construction group, as its building partner.

The builder's scope of works included the partial demolition of the existing shopping centre and ancillary structures (occurred over two stages); construction of the new shopping centre with internal links to existing shops; construction of building façades that comprise new entrance points and canopies; alterations to streetscape design for enhanced pedestrian links; and alterations to car parking areas.

One key challenge for BADGE was that the existing shopping centre was located on a reclaimed shipping canal. Therefore, a driven concrete pile system was required in lieu of drilled piles to address challenges with the ground conditions and to eliminate the need to remove excess spoil

from the site. This method also provided time benefits to the programme.

Due to COVID-19, the project has had to be staged to ensure certainty for retailers who may have been affected. The first stage of the project was opened on 15 March 2019, with the second stage commencing a month later with the demolition of the Port Canal Shopping Centre. The second stage was completed in November 2020, while the final stage of the development is scheduled to open in mid-2021.

Mr Dill said the opening of Port Adelaide Plaza's \$50 million redevelopment will realise Precision Group's vision to create a 'everyday needs' community shopping centre with great casual dining options.

"[The centre will] cater to the 209,000 residents that live in the trade area of which over a quarter are households with children," said Mr Dill.

The redevelopment of the centre has had a significant impact on the local economy, creating 120 jobs during construction and a further 160 full-time retail positions – or almost 300 jobs in total.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION TAKE CENTRE STAGE

A key aim for Precision Group was to reduce Port Adelaide Plaza's impact on the environment. In order to balance form and function while creating sustainable luxury, the centre's state-of-the-art amenities include beautifully appointed restrooms and parents rooms fitted with quality and sustainable tapware and fixtures.

“It’s a fact that each toilet flush requires a lot of water, but since water needed for flushing doesn’t need to be the kind that has gone through several rounds of treatment, a flushing system that’s supplied by harvested rainwater is a sensible idea,” said Precision Group’s National Facilities Manager, Scott Harvey.

Harvesting rainwater for reuse via a 22,730-litre rainwater detention tank for toilet flushing and landscape irrigation allows Port Adelaide Plaza to improve water management by recycling and reducing its water usage.

Port Adelaide Plaza has also installed a \$1.3 million and 824kW solar system comprising 2,030 solar panels across a roof area of 5,000 square metres.

Since being switched on, the system has generated over 790,000-kilowatt hours (kWh) of energy, supplying 50 per cent of the centre’s total electricity kWh per year.

Another solar system has been installed at Customs House, a modern, low-rise, commercial office building which is home to 200 government naval and maritime authorities’ workers, and located on the doorstep of Port Adelaide Plaza.

The 100kW solar system comprises some 240 solar panels and is expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 80.58 tonnes per annum, and generate 22 per cent of the base building load of Customs House.

Centre Manager for Port Adelaide Plaza and Customs House, Michael Gillett, said Precision Group is committed to implementing innovative and sustainable practices to reduce the impact that their properties have on the environment.

“We are proud to have achieved a 5.0 Star NABERS rating for Customs House. Our focus now is to continuously monitor and manage our energy consumption and drive improvements to exceed the expectations of our stakeholders,” he said.

More than \$300,000 has been invested in the Customs House’s new solar system as well as new façade upgrades including signage and painting, and the complete refurbishment of the building’s ground floor and level 2 entry foyers.

Another unique feature of Port Adelaide Plaza is the installation of Adelaide’s biggest shopping centre LED screen, a large format 6x4 metre LED advertisement screen which is considered to be the most advanced outdoor retail screen on the market.

Additionally, Port Adelaide Plaza has made a significant investment in its sound system to provide the best experience for visitors. Precision Group said the careful placement, aiming and equalising of the sound system was critical to achieving excellent speech intelligibility and coverage. The aim was to complement the ambience and enhance the experience for shoppers with surround sound throughout the new casual dining precinct, whilst complementing the large format LED screen.

