



PENGUIN PARADE VISITOR CENTRE

Architect: Terroir

Builder: Kane Constructions

Autex solution: GreenStuf® Soffit and Slab Liner (main hall ceiling), 50mm Quietspace® Panel in Nude Black (theatre), 24mm Cube™ in Flatiron (custom ceiling feature in retail areas), Vertiface™ in Myst (education centre and administration areas)



BACKGROUND

Since the 1920s, visitors have flocked to the beach at Philip Island's Summerland Peninsula to observe the nightly arrival of little penguins—also known as the Penguin Parade.

As the Penguin Parade's popularity has grown, so too has the need to protect the penguin population and manage the human impact on the colony—which can see up to 4,000 visitors in a single night. In 1988 a visitor centre was constructed, complete with viewing platforms and boardwalks. However, after just over 30 years of service, the centre was in desperate need of an upgrade.

For Jarvis Weston, Projects Coordinator for Philip Island Nature Parks, the new visitor centre had to meet several key requirements. "Through our conservation efforts, we've helped to increase the size of the colony from 12,000 to 32,000—so we needed to shift the location of the centre and give 6.7 hectares of land back to the penguins".

"We were also keen to create a building that blended into the landscape. The old centre was designed to do exactly the opposite, with red poles and blue sails, and was struggling to hold the increased visitor numbers we now see at peak times", Weston explains.

CHALLENGE

Multi award-winning architects Terroir created a spectacular, star-shaped concept for the new visitor centre; a stunning zinc-clad exterior and equally impressive geometric interior composed of glass, ply, and concrete finishes. However, with so many hard surfaces, acoustics were an obvious challenge. David McPeak, Terroir Associate, explains thus, "Treating the building interior acoustically, without compromising the building's internal geometry, required in-depth product research and development with the acoustic engineer. Ensuring strict fire codes were met was also a challenge when selecting appropriate materials for the project".

Not only did the centre's large open spaces, high ceilings, and irregular triangular shapes call for a high-performing, integrated acoustic solution—but the chosen product needed to be light-weight, easy to install, and easy to cut on-site to achieve the desired aesthetic.

SOLUTION

Working closely with their acoustic engineer, Terroir selected a range of Autex acoustic solutions to meet the requirements of different spaces within the visitor centre. Autex GreenStuf® Soffit and Slab Liner was specified

in the main hall, Black Autex 50mm Quietspace® Panel was installed in the theatre, and Autex Vertiface™ in 'Myst' was applied in both the education centre and administration areas.

"Autex offered a number of products which could be applied to these spaces to serve the various technical and aesthetic requirements for each area", McPeak explained, "as well as a 'one stop shop' for all technical and sampling support during the life of the project".

"The Autex solution delivers on acoustic performance without compromising the overall design aesthetic. Furthermore, we've already received positive feedback from both client and users on the acoustic comfort within the building – which is a testimony to the performance and reliability of the Autex products used, and their ability to seamlessly work within the aesthetic of the robust interior" McPeak said.

Jarvis Weston agrees, "The Autex products played a critical role in softening the feel and the acoustics of the new centre. In the main atrium, which is about 150m long, there's lot of Autex throughout and it looks quite spectacular – we're really happy with it".

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