

## Media Release

### Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Thursday 16 July 2015

---

## Innovative approach with timber gets Inveresk project off to a flying start

The University of Tasmania today conducted a tour of the ‘production line’ where 120 student apartments are being prefabricated before being craned into the \$16 million Inveresk project.

University Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Mike Calford said it was particularly gratifying seeing the project take shape, considering the level of University involvement in its design and development.

“We have had senior architecture academics on the design team for the project and alumni directly involved in the production and testing of the early prototype,” Professor Calford said.

“The design uses an innovative approach in which the individual units are fully pre-fabricated with timber framing and subsequently trucked to the site.

“This approach was chosen partly because of the nature of the site, but also because it will result in a faster and lighter overall build, compared to conventional materials such as steel and concrete.”

Inveresk is home to the University’s School of Architecture and specialist research organisations such as the Centre for Sustainable Architecture with Wood (CSAW), which took a leading role in the development of the prefabrication system.

“Where we can, we try to have our teaching and research intersect in such a way it creates positive impact for industry and our communities,” Professor Calford said. “This apartment complex is a very good example of that.

“It was important to us that the nature of the project was complementary to the sort of activities which are carried out at Inveresk.”

The Inveresk apartments have been funded under the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), which will deliver a total of 770 apartments at a cost of \$120 million. The program includes apartments at Newnham and Inveresk in Launceston, West Park in Burnie and Melville Street in Hobart.

“What we are seeing is the realisation of a vision the University is pursuing in which the life of the University goes on in and around the very centres of the communities it serves,” Professor Calford said.

“These apartments are not directly related to the exciting proposal we are currently discussing for a considerably expanded presence at Inveresk. If anything they are evidence of an intent which has existed for some time, but accelerated by two things. Firstly, the State Government’s financial backing for the notion in this year’s State Budget along with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the State, the Launceston City Council, TasTAFE and the University to partner together to transform Launceston’s CBD and greatly improve educational opportunities in the North.

“We see a future in which a greater student population, a stone’s throw from Launceston’s heart, holds great promise for cultural and economic renewal in the city.”

Today, 30 of the 120 apartments were in place. The project is expected to be completed for occupation in early 2016.

**Information released by:**

University of Tasmania, Communications and Media Office

Phone: Jason Purdie – 0455 838 945.

Email: [Media.Office@utas.edu.au](mailto:Media.Office@utas.edu.au)