

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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University lodges DA for \$15.7 million Inveresk student apartments

The University of Tasmania has lodged a development application with Launceston City Council to build 120 student apartments, promising to bring new life to the doorstep of city's heart.

Scheduled for occupancy in 2016, the proposal follows the fully subscribed opening of 180 apartments at the University's Newnham campus in May this year.

University Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said the proposal was aligned with the intent of other NRAS proposals on the Cradle Coast and in Hobart.

"In the great university cities of the world, the life and energy of the University is infused within the community, carrying on both within and in between buildings spread across the city," Professor Rathjen said.

"We see great potential in these units bringing the University to the doorstep of the Central Business District, and bringing with it the energy and movement of our student population."

The apartments will be funded under the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), a joint Commonwealth/State program, and supported by the Launceston City Council.

The \$15.65 million project is being designed by a Tasmanian consortium led by morrison & breytenbach architects. Senior academics from the University's Centre for Sustainable Architecture with Wood (CSAW) are part of the principal design team, providing advice on timber prefabrication technologies.

CSAW Director Associate Professor Gregory Nolan, who is based at the Inveresk campus, said the project team strived for innovation and the promotion of the Tasmanian timber industry in the design of the buildings.

The units would be constructed as timber-framed modules, pre-fabricated nearby and craned into position. The benefits flowing from this technology will include speed of construction and improved quality control.

A prototype of the units was being prepared by Island Workshop, a small advanced Hobart-based pre-fabrication company. Island Workshop is currently delivering several advanced prefabrication projects, including huts for the Three Capes Track.

“It is very fitting, given so much of the activity on the Inveresk campus is focussed on innovation and creativity, that these values could be brought to the thinking around the design of this project,” Associate Professor Nolan said.

“As part of the initial tender process, a major local builder conducted a cost analysis between this module-based proposal and the more standard construction approach. The results were comparable.

“This is one of those wonderful occasions at our University where research, teaching and the student experience have come together in a practical setting, creating a truly wonderful outcome.”

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