

# PRIMED FOR SUCCESS

DEVELOPER: University of Tasmania  
MAIN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY: Fairbrother Pty Ltd  
ARCHITECTS: Fender Katsalidis & Terroir Pty Ltd  
CONSTRUCTION VALUE: \$69 million



The \$69M University of Tasmania Student Accommodation is part of the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS). It's comprised of 442 purpose-built studio apartments situated within four free-standing towers. Features include modular pod bathrooms, communal kitchens, student lounges, tutorial rooms, an art studio, music room, café, bookstore, 4 Star Green Star design and a striking façade.

**Construction of the University of Tasmania's new student accommodation towers in Hobart was by Fairbrother.** The 442 purpose-built studio apartments are in four free-standing towers. The \$69 million towers are part of the National Rental Affordability Scheme, a nationwide state program for affordable accommodation.

Fairbrother Senior Project Manager, Clinton Mead, said working to a timeline and the particular methodologies derived by Fairbrother were key elements for this project. "Firstly, building the towers from the inside out was a careful and deliberate methodology that meant coordinating with consultants so they too approached the project in this preferred way, and they saw it as the logical approach," Clinton said.

Building from the inside out was derived upon consideration of the fact the site was a brownfield site and had adjacent heritage buildings. In addition, the approach meant significantly minimised traffic disruption, and Fairbrother had the flexibility to meet client requirements on time – essentially the requirement of 'students in beds.' "We could see that 'students in beds' mattered – building to enable early student occupation by February 2017 and the start of the university year," Clinton explained.

With a striking façade, the University of Tasmania accommodation towers vary from 5-storeys up to 12-storeys. Studio apartment complexes include communal kitchens and student lounges, modular pod bathrooms, tutorial rooms, art studios and display areas. Also included is a music room, café, mailroom and bookstore.

Handover of the four accommodation towers at the corner of Elizabeth and Melville streets in Hobart will be staged with early occupation in February 2017 followed by final project handover in mid 2017.

"Building involved two tower cranes onsite to service each of the towers and basically we viewed the job in two parts – early works in-ground and the carpark up to Level 4, this was a lump sum component, and this approach got the main component of

the towers up early. Then Stage 2 – which required an agreed construction sum – from Level 4 up, and a fitout and all other building activity. Our flexibility has been important – to give the client what they required," said Clinton. Careful planning and design was required to enable the bulk excavation at the project site. An archaeological excavation had been undertaken prior to Fairbrother's commencement. Archaeological works had commenced in January 2015 with construction, including bulk excavation, retaining walls, underground services and building footing commenced in May 2015.

Other current Fairbrother projects of note in Tasmania include the Mona museum extension and the Devonport City Council's landmark Living City project. Success in the Tasmanian market has enabled expansion into regional Victoria and also to undertake selected projects at a national level.

Fairbrother, was established in 1973 as a family-owned and operated business in the north-west of Tasmania. After establishment by Royce and Thea Fairbrother, the business has steadily grown to become a recognised leader in the building and construction industry. Employing more than 500 people across its businesses Fairbrother covers all aspects of the building construction and maintenance process. Forty-three years on Fairbrother has offices in Devonport, Hobart, Launceston, Bendigo and Warrnambool.

Fairbrother's business units are a large and varied group including the mainstay of Fairbrother business, Fairbrother Construction and Joinery (Tasmania) specialising in commercial construction and the manufacture of superior quality joinery. Fairbrother Construction (Victoria) has had a strong state presence with its headquarters based in Bendigo. Other business activities include facility management and property developments; all supported by an experienced and dedicated corporate services team.

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Below Ireneinc Planning coordinated and managed the planning and urban design elements throughout the approval process.

Below Engineering Solutions Tasmania provided building services engineering on the NRAS UTAS project.



Ireneinc Planning began work on the NRAS University of Tasmania student accommodation apartments in 2013. As specialists in planning and urban design, Ireneinc Planning was involved with the consultant team through the approval process. Ireneinc worked on statutory planning, management and coordination of the development application, and urban design elements.

“For us the important challenges for the accommodation towers were heritage and archaeology elements, the complex titles, height discretions and the unprecedented scale of student housing,” said planner and Ireneinc principal Irene Duckett, about the four towers with 442 studio-style apartments.

Irene and planning colleague Jen Welch looked at how the application could be structured and approached, and were involved with the architects to facilitate the most suitable application for the purpose built accommodation towers.

Projects in Tasmania with Ireneinc Planning involvement include Mona, Blundstone Arena (formerly Bellerive Oval), Larks Distillery, Redlands Distillery and the cutting edge Hobart development ACIPA (the Academy of Creative Industries and Performing Arts).

In business for 13 years, Ireneinc Planning’s multi-disciplinary team of five cover projects including commercial, residential and subdivision work. “We provide urban design and planning guidance on design and development detail to achieve better planning outcomes,” said Irene.

Ireneinc Planning are members of the Planning Institute of Australia, and take an active role maintaining ethical standards and professional development internationally.

Ireneinc Planning was awarded a Planning Institute of Australia commendation last year for Best Planning Idea, Small Project, Tasmania, for the WhiteStone Point Specific Area Plan. Ireneinc Planning has previously won the Planning Institute’s Great Place Award, Tasmania section, and a Planning Institute of Australia national commendation for work on the MONA planning application and subsequent work at the site as well as the National award for Excellence in Urban Planning for The Green Masterplan in Rocherlea, Tasmania.

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Engineering Solutions Tasmania provided building services engineering for the \$65 million University of Tasmania Student Accommodation project. All ten employees of Engineering Solutions Tasmania had input into the apartment project, the fourth NRAS student accommodation project that the company has worked on.

Leading the project were Director and Electrical Engineer of Engineering Solutions Tasmania, Andrew Blackberry, and Co-Director and Mechanical Engineer, Steven Banbury.

“For the 440 studio apartments in these new towers, and for the shop, café and 3-level car park we provided a range of building services; mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, hydraulics and fire sprinklers,” Steven Banbury said.

“We had a particular challenge in getting the power supply across the project with low head-height and large distances.”

Steven explained the first issue was solved through coordination, sketching, modelling and meetings onsite, whereas large distances called for an incremental approach. “We implemented a particular system allowing progressive power installation, that way we could

provide long term flexibility across the site giving the university the capacity to add or subtract power supply as needed over the lifetime of the building.”

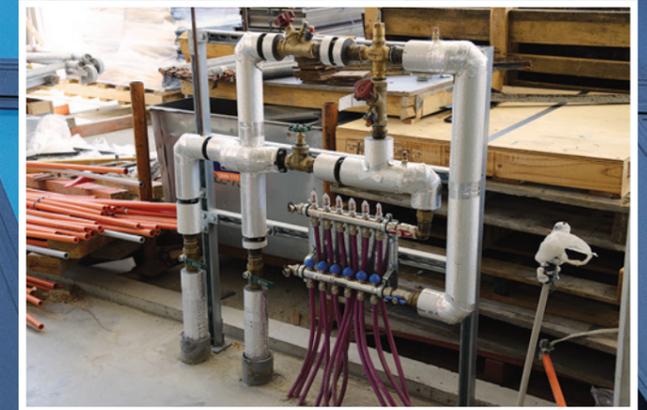
The project was subject to Green Star certification. Engineering Solutions Tasmania had contributed to that process, with a 4-Star outcome, Steven said. Finalisation of the company’s involvement in the NRAS University of Tasmania accommodation towers project will be through a staged handover, in February and April 2017.

Engineering Solutions Tasmania’s Launceston office was established in 2004 and the Hobart office in 2007. The majority of the company’s work is in Hobart, Launceston and the state’s north-west. Another high profile project the company worked on was the upgrade at Burnie’s North West Regional Hospital.

*For more information contact Engineering Solutions Tasmania Pty Ltd, 100 Cameron Street, Launceston TAS 7250, phone 03 6323 6500, email [info@estas.com.au](mailto:info@estas.com.au)*

Below The Carpet Company supplied and installed floor coverings for the NRAS UTAS Student Accommodation.

Below Masters Contracting Pty Ltd installed and commissioned heating, ventilation, air conditioning and gas services.

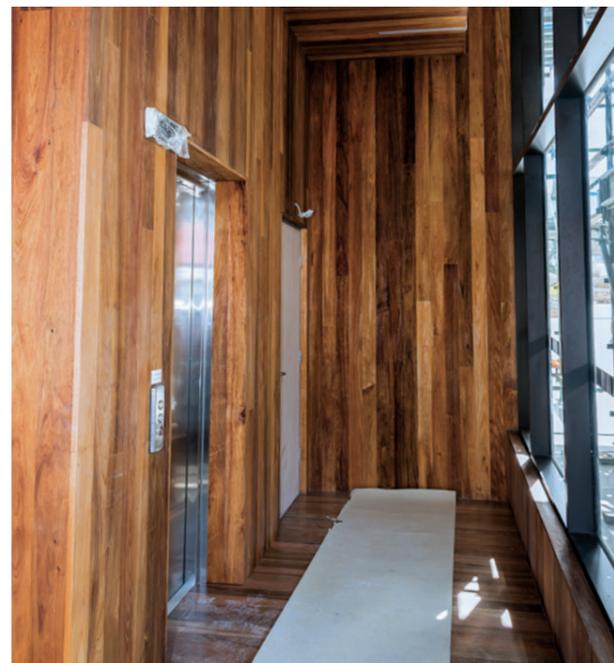


The Carpet Company, a leading Tasmanian commercial floor covering contractor, provided the floor coverings for the NRAS University of Tasmania Student Accommodation towers. This Tasmanian-owned and Hobart-based company has been in business for 22 years. For the NRAS UTAS accommodation project, The Carpet Company was responsible for the floor coverings for approximately 430 student apartments and a further 20 student apartments configured for students with a disability.

A commercial consultant for The Carpet Company, Andrew Rubenach, said the company provided commercial carpets and resilient floor finishes, specialising in floor preparation and waterproofing. "We are a strong and professional team of 21, and work right across Tasmania," Andrew said.

The company's recent Hobart projects include the Myer redevelopment, Village Cinemas, the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies, and the Barossa Park YMCA Wellness Centre.

For more information contact The Carpet Company, 105 Harrington Street, Hobart TAS 7000, phone 03 6234 3242, fax 03 6231 1312, email admin@carpetcompany.com.au, website www.carpetcompany.com.au



Masters Contracting Pty Ltd installed and commissioned heating, ventilation, air conditioning and gas services for the purpose built NRAS University of Tasmania Student Accommodation towers. Masters Contracting's, Geoff Lane, said the project included kitchen ventilation and toilet exhaust systems for 442 apartments, ducted exhaust ventilation for the 3-level carpark, pressurisation systems for five stairwells, and provision of commercial kitchen canopies and domestic style range hoods. Masters Contracting also provided air conditioning systems for selected areas and selected apartments, plus natural gas reticulation for domestic hot water, heating water and kitchen equipment.

A particular challenge came with pressure testing for leaks in 50 of the 442 apartments as they required a high level of sealing to reduce heat loss. "We also installed more than 1,500m of floor slab hydronic heating pipework into a pre-tensioned concrete slab and coordinated this with the reinforcement cables, mesh and conduits," Geoff explained.

Geoff Lane and Denis Cooper are Masters Contracting's highly experienced Mechanical Services Contractors. They are also Directors of the company which employs 22 Tasmanians and has operated continuously since 1977. And in a touch of history – the two were part of TasTAFE's first apprenticeship intake in Tasmania for mechanical

services plumbing, back in the early 1970s, both have gained Certificate IV engineering qualifications.

"We work solely in Tasmania, but I should add we also work for the Australian Antarctic Division, providing designs, advice and pre-fabrication of mechanical services for re-assembly on the Antarctic bases, and we provide some training for them," Denis said. Denis has spent three winters in Antarctica as a Mechanical Services Plumber responsible for the re-commissioning and documentation of the existing systems at Mawson, Casey, Davis and Macquarie Bases.

Masters Contracting relocated to larger premises in 2014 with enhanced offices, more workshop space, improved undercover storage and easier access to main roads and highways. Recent key projects for the company include Fairway Rise Lifestyle Village, KGV Grandstand and Function Centre, and 40 Molle Street (Hobart), as well as medical gas and fume cupboard installations for numerous facilities.

For more information contact Masters Contracting Pty Ltd, 92 Mornington Road, Mornington TAS 7018, phone 03 6234 6588, fax 03 6234 4205, email admin@masterscontracting.com.au, website www.masterscontracting.com.au