

2000 STUDENTS: THAT'S A LOT OF LONG SHOWERS

Designed to be state-of-the-art in student accommodation facilities, the two brand new Urbanest sites cut an impressive silhouette on the Sydney city skyline.



Across their four facilities, Urbanest caters for nearly 2000 students. Such a large number of residents living in a shared space presented a range of challenges for the construction team, in particular to Smart Plumbing Solutions, which was contracted to supply and install the large-scale centralised hot water systems.

Installing a system that could cope with the demand from students using water in numerous kitchens, bathrooms and laundries across the Redfern and Ultimo buildings was number one priority.

"The brief was to supply an energy efficient centralised gas hot water plant with solar pre-heat and low running costs to each building while meeting the daily hot water requirements of the students," says Chris Christoforakis of Smart Plumbing Solutions.

The Rheem Tankpak Commercial water heating plant consists of 12 6.1-star energy efficient commercial continuous flow water heaters, combined with three low height commercial storage buffer tanks. The Commercial Loline Solar Pre-heat consists of 52 flat plate solar collectors which heat Rheem commercial storage tanks.

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One of the biggest challenges associated with the Rheem plants was ensuring adequate roof space was made available to install the solar collectors.

"This was made more difficult due to the sharing of limited roof space with other services," explains Chris. "Another challenge concerned working to the overall building height (including the roof top plant equipment) permissible within the Development Approval on the Redfern site."

Joshua Elliott, Technical Sales Manager, Rheem Australia says that: "Rheem met this challenge by custom building a special lower height frame to support the manifold pack of continuous flow water heaters, supplied with our shorter commercial storage tanks."

Ideally located in central locations, Ultimo and Redfern, Urbanest has attracted many local and international students with its easy access to nearby universities, TAFEs, public transport and social centres.

A lifestyle experience

"International students from Asia, America and Europe contribute to a large percentage of the occupancy," says James Longbottom, Urbanest General Manager of the Cleveland St site.

"About 15% of student residents are from local and regional areas.

"Urbanest is a preferred student accommodation partner with the University of Sydney. Their facilities have on-site security at night plus on-call staff. Urbanest works closely with the universities and TAFE colleges to help identify and assist with student issues such as poor academic performance.

"Urbanest also focuses on the whole lifestyle experience for the students and organises regular social activities and events."

The facilities aim to bring students closer to local businesses while eliminating the need for cars - the Redfern facility has storage for 120 bicycles!

Much like the way Urbanest supports the students living in its accommodation, Rheem was able to support Smart Plumbing Solutions as the team installed the heating systems and solar panels at each site.

"The complete plant was supplied by one manufacturer, which made it easier to manage," says Chris. "Rheem was able to provide Smart Plumbing Solutions with technical assistance and support for the design and installation. They will also provide ongoing support and service of the equipment for Urbanest." ■

Urbanest at a glance

What is it?

Urbanest is a collection of state-of-the-art student accommodation sites. The four sites house almost 2000 students from Australia, America, Europe and Asia who attend one of the universities or TAFE colleges in the Sydney area.



Where is it?

Redfern and Ultimo in inner city Sydney (there are further Urbanest facilities in Quay St and Darlington).

How did Rheem help out?

Rheem supplied a Tankpak Gas Boost Plant combined with low height commercial storage buffer tanks, as well as a Loline Solar Pre-heat system. Rheem also custom made a lower height frame to support the Continuous Flow Gas water heaters.

What's unique about it?

Urbanest offers a complete experience for its student residents. In addition to providing a brand new living environment, it provides additional safety with round the clock security, organises social gatherings, and encourages use of public transport and physical activity with its prime location.