



## The Marys Hope | Starbox Architecture

*Rosetta TAS 7010*

The Marys Hope, created by Starbox Architecture, is a project collaboration between the Department of Social Services and affordable housing provider Housing Choices Tasmania.



The project comprises 26 single level, 2 bedroom units that were designed and constructed with very tight budgets and timeframes. The practice was required to find a site suitable for a multiple unit development, maximise the yield and provide comfortable low cost housing that met the requirements of Silver level for Liveable Housing Australia. This proved to be a

challenge, with Starbox opting for a steep site which made remaining within the confines of the budget a difficult exercise.



The practice ultimately tiered the units down the site enabling each unit to achieve not only amazing views of the river Derwent below but also the required solar passive design into the living rooms and private open spaces.



The other challenge was planning approval. Upon submission for a Development Application, many neighbours objected to the development. The council and councillors were even persuaded to object to the development even though the arguments put forward by the public had no merit. After spending much time and money with the Tribunal, the council backflipped on their position and backed the proposal, leaving the neighbours to fight alone. Mediation was reached as a courtesy not a requirement.





Starbox continued to proceed with the development, however the delays affected the date of practical completion. This date was very difficult to achieve due to the planning process and ultimately went over causing much frustration to the government and the developer.



The units were cut into the site marginally to provide access into the carport and a solid concrete slab base for the entry and bedrooms to comply with the silver level of Liveable Housing. The living room, kitchen and bathroom were then supported by an elevated timber and steel structure. Careful planning and smart design with good access resulted in reaching silver level for LHA and over 7 stars for energy efficiency.



Despite the challenges of community backlash and a sloping site, Starbox Architecture have created a suite of affordable houses for Housing Choices Tasmania. The project speaks to the expertise of the practice, who was able to move beyond a number of adversities and provide affordable housing in a time where it is needed most.