

CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

Architect
Lovell Chen Architects

Construction
Icon Construction

AM-BOSS Access Ladders
60 bespoke ladders created and
installed to create mezzanine areas
in heritage redevelopment

DOMESTIC
SERIES
FOR USER SAFETY LADDER MUST BE ADJUSTED
FRAME MUST BE FIXED TO STRUCTURE

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Background

Attending university is, arguably, one of the most exciting and transformative experiences. For many, university presents a first taste of living away from home – something that can prove both empowering and daunting, in equal measure.

At the University of Melbourne – where more than 6,000 students reside in university accommodation – creating a ‘home away from home’ for new students is paramount. University College, first established in 1917, is one of 10 residential colleges at the university, priding itself on providing the best possible college experience for students to ensure that they get the most from their university years – both socially and educationally.

Challenge

As part of the university’s accommodation target for 2020, the college commissioned Lovell Chen Architects and Icon Construction to deliver an exciting redevelopment project; a new 192 bed dormitory. Externally, the building needed to match the existing red brick 1917 heritage buildings; but, internally, accommodation needed to be modern, spacious and comfortable – a combination of requirements that proved extremely challenging.

With the heritage building design featuring high pitched rooves, Lovell Chen were able to optimise use of the increased ceiling heights in the building’s loft rooms by adding mezzanine areas – but even this proved to be less than straightforward. “Ladders were used to access the mezzanine floors”, explains Anthony Murone, Contract Administrator at Icon; “but, as is often the way with heritage buildings, it transpired that the floor heights weren’t consistent and there were small, but important, discrepancies which required customised ladder lengths”.

Solution

Sixty bespoke ladders were supplied by Australian-based provider, AM-BOSS Access Ladders, to cater to the non-standard floor heights in the college loft rooms. With the mezzanine areas covering approximately one third of the total floor space, Icon opted for attic ladders that could quickly and easily fold into three sections and tuck entirely within the floor cavity when not in use; resulting in a clean finish without compromising on space.

“Rooms with mezzanines aren’t common in university accommodation”, remarks Murone, “but the extra level and folding ladders provide hugely valuable storage, study and relaxation space for students. We needed a quick turnaround on three non-standard ladder lengths and the team at AM-BOSS not only turned these around quickly but were very responsive and happy to visit site whenever we needed them”, enthuses Murone. “We’re very happy with the outcome – and hopefully, so are the students!”.

