

## MEDIA CLIPPING

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# Campus Perth in race for student tower first

■ Helen Shield

Campus Perth will go head-to-head with rival The Student Housing Company when the two Stirling Street student lodging towers throw open their doors at the start of next year.

Campus Perth, a \$100 million DevWest project funded by Gaw Capital Partners, has effectively recycled and added on to the dated former 80 Stirling Street head office of Telstra in Perth, and is on track to convert it into study, home and entertainment space for more than 1000 students.

The 11-floor development will comprise shared student sleeping quarters, ranging from the most cost-effective four and six-bed apartment options, with bunks and study space, to studios for one or the twin-share "twodios".

Much has been made of WA's need to reclaim its dwindling share of the lucrative international student market and Gaw Capital Partners president Kenneth Gaw said Campus Perth backers were encouraged by enthusiastic support for the project, particularly from those keen to arrest WA's sliding international student share, which dipped below 7 per cent last year.

Unlike Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, each of Perth's university campuses are outside the city centre, a factor identified as discouraging for young people, partly because jobs, services and entertainment were mostly central.

Christophe Vielle, chief executive of the Thailand-based GCP Hospitality, the hotel and lifestyle accommodation group running Campus Perth, said the towers, "a first for Perth", were designed for a mix of local and overseas students.

Mr Gaw said the end of the



Campus Perth's Brian McHenry, Gaw Capital's Kenneth Gaw with GCP Hospitality's Christophe Vielle and Tony Chisolm in a mocked-up student share room at 80 Stirling Street. Pictures: Simon Santi

mining boom had provided an opening for Perth's tertiary education sector because the city had become very expensive.

"For us frankly as an investor, we always like to invest ahead of the trend," he said.

"That's how we make money. And we see that in the future, that's where Perth can grow."

Campus Perth general manager Brian McHenry said the four-bed and six-bed apartments would appeal to regional and

remote WA students wanting to stick together away from home.

Campus Perth, with Stirling Capital's 24-level The Student Housing Project across the road, will be the first of a series of centrally located student housing developments.

Cedar Pacific is working on a Perth City Link plan for Roe Street behind the Perth Entertainment Centre, and 30-level



Campus Perth display rooms.

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# Campus Perth in race for students

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Atira Student Living on the Wellington Surplus Stores site on the corner of Pier Street is scheduled for a 2020 opening. Recently industry watchers have speculated DevWest could add students into its mixed-use residential, office, retail and entertainment plan for Perth City Link Lot 10 north.

At 80 Stirling Street, the “inefficient” floor plates of Telstra’s former head office proved a brilliant fit for students, as the bedroom accommodation, with windows, is around the edge of the building and the large internal areas are dedicated to communal study, exercise, kitchen, laundry and entertainment.



Campus Perth studio room.



Bunks with desks and storage.

Mr Vielle said Campus Perth would offer something different. “Are we going to be the ones to turn around the numbers of (international) students and bring in another 10,000? Probably not,” he said.

“Definitely this kind of product will show to the foreign market there are quality living spaces for students. Perth was a little bit behind compared with Melbourne or Sydney.”

Mr Vielle said the more stu-



Stirling Capital’s rival student tower, across the road.

dent housing options on offer in the area, the more it would be recognised as a student housing precinct, creating a sense of community.

In any case, Mr Gaw said, the international student market was growing. “We (with Stirling Capital) will be introducing 1000 beds jointly — from zero — (early next year) and from the numbers we have seen, the demand is much higher than that,” he said.