Smart partnerships and creative innovation have led to the creation of a new and exciting building product, Scyon™ Stria™ cladding.

Applied innovation

Scyon™ Stria™ cladding on Plantation Homes' Empire House at North Lakes.

In a crowded home building market, design and innovation can give builders a competitive edge. When leading builders Plantation Homes' wanted to differentiate their homes, they knew they didn't have to do it alone. They brought their ideas to James Hardie – and found a smarter way to partner. Together, they created a solution that is not only cost-efficient but has turned out to be a hit with consumers.

The result can be seen at Plantations Homes' display centre in the northern Brisbane suburb of North Lakes, where homes have been constructed with materials created by a team of scientists, builders and materials experts.

It's an example of leading science embodied in the warmth and comfort of a family home. The homes feature Scyon™ Stria™ cladding, a new wide cladding board, which is the result of technical innovation applied to real world building challenges.

Creating the right solution with a smarter partner

General Manager of Plantation Homes, Paul Roots, says: "Our research and development department go around Australia looking at elements – could be single elements in construction – that truly relate to the Queensland environment. We decided to call James Hardie in and have a chat to create a look of what I call 'urban industrial'," says Roots.

To create this look, a process of trial and error began as James Hardie's Research and Product Development (R & PD) team worked with Plantation Homes' design manager and builders. The team used existing combinations of James Hardie products to achieve the ideal aesthetic. "In collaboration with James Hardie, we were able to create the look. But then realised it wasn't price effective …" says Roots.

The aim was not just to create the right urban industrial appearance, but the solution also had to be cost-effective, easy to install, and time-efficient to construct.

So armed with the series of sketches, Roots and his design manager, Shane Rogers, worked closely with James Hardie's R & PD team to create a product from scratch that would fulfil the criteria. Roots and Rogers wanted to use the new look in Plantation Homes' display centres. However, they didn't simply want to create a beautiful façade to impress consumers. They wanted a real product that would be available for use in construction as soon as the homes were sold.

Upper storey detail on another Plantation Homes' display home, showing Scyon™ Stria™ cladding.

A new wide cladding board, which is the result of technical innovation applied to real world building challenges.

James Hardie's National Demand Manager, Steve Pisani, says that timing was the key to bringing the product to market. Pisani says once James Hardie's R & PD team determined it was possible to create an appropriate product, they prioritised the project. "The process you would normally undergo would be one over a number of years, which is the case in most R & PD processes," he says. "Instead, we achieved it in under 12 months."

Classic but contemporary

The urban industrial look achieved by Plantation Homes at North Lakes combines the classic features of traditional design with a strong, contemporary feel. One of the most distinctive features of Scyon™ Stria cladding is a 15mm horizontal joint resembling corbelled masonry, a classic "stepped" looked that has been used in construction since ancient times. However, fast forward to the 21st century, and Scyon™ Stria cladding enables designers and builders to incorporate this subtle timeless aesthetic by using a pre-primed, easy-to-install product.

Scyon™ Stria cladding is used in residential homes on external walls in composite construction, upper storey and ground level extensions. It can also be used in internal feature walls.

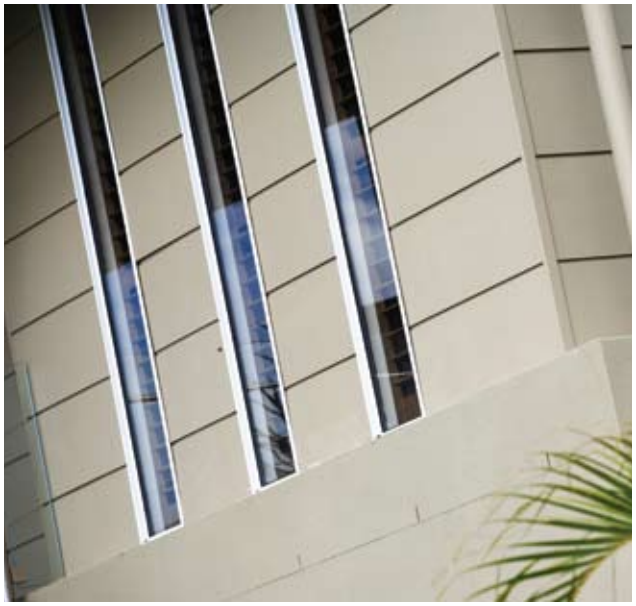
According to Pisani, a combination of robust planning, stringent experimentation and technical innovation has gone into the creation of the product which "ticks all the boxes." These include:

1. Speed of installation

Scyon™ Stria cladding is the fast way to create a classic look. Instead of laying bricks, rendering, scoring and painting (with all the associated mess and scheduling of different trades), Scyon™ Stria cladding has a simple, speedy installation method.

2. Versatility of design

Scyon™ Stria cladding can be used with a variety of finishing details and trims. It's ideal for those who want a robust base product that acts as a strong foundation which allows for further differentiation in design. James Hardie General Manager Research & Product Development, James Gleeson, says that this differentiation can incorporate a diverse number of looks. "Easy-to-cut mitred corners mean



Scyon™ Stria cladding corner detail using Scyon™ trim.

Scyon™ Stria cladding is a classic look created without having to lay bricks, render and score before painting.

that horizontal lines can wrap the building. It creates a seamless look," says Gleeson. "Or you can create contrast by using Scyon™ trim. You can also create a very modern, geometric look with a vertical flashing stop allowing a 15mm vertical groove to match the horizontal one."

Gleeson adds that Scyon™ Stria cladding also works with face or concealed fixing.

3. Low maintenance and lower costs

While some timber is susceptible to cracking in exterior applications, which can then lead to shrinking or warping, Scyon™ Stria cladding resists shrinking, swelling and cracking to hold paint longer than wood. It can also be painted in both dark and light colours.

The product is already making waves in the industry. James Hardie, who already provides a 10-year product warranty on Scyon™ Stria cladding, is not the only company guaranteeing its success. Wattyl® Australia Pty Ltd feels so confident about Scyon™ Stria cladding, that it's given a 15 year paint warranty* on Wattyl Solagard® when used on Scyon™ Stria Cladding.

Plantation Homes' Castella with Scyon™ Stria™ cladding, on display at North Lakes.

4. Durability, safety and ease of construction
Because Scyon™ Stria cladding is made form the revolutionary Scyon™ material, it is resistant to damage from termites, rot and fire**. It is also gun nailable and easy to cut.

Consumer appeal

While Scyon™ Stria cladding may be the new kid on the block in the building industry, it is already making inroads in cost-effective, efficient construction. And, as Roots points out, consumers are quick to recognise its appeal. While the rule of thumb is that 70% of what it sold is based on what consumers see on display, Scyon™ Stria cladding is proving to exceed expectations. "The results have been fantastic," he says. "People are asking specifically for that product on their homes regardless of whether it was displayed … or not."

Close collaboration, communication and sharing of ideas were paramount to the project's success. Roots says: "James Hardie worked extensively on site on our display homes in North Lakes with our carpentry teams to come up with a way that was suitable for them and us to create this look in a cost effective environment." ■

What products were used?

Scyon™ Stria™ cladding

What is it? A wide cladding board with a 15mm horizontal joint that has the classic appeal of corbelled masonry. Pre-primed and easy to install, Scyon™ Stria™ cladding is the fast way to achieve a timeless look and that's smarter construction.

Where do you use it? In residential applications wherever a classic but conteporary design is required including external walls in composite construction, upper storey and ground level extensions, and internal feature walls.

Scyon™ trim

What is it? A durable decorative building material.

Where do you use it? Ideal for edge treatment around windows, finishing touches to internal and external corners, design enhancer at butt joints, and can be used in cavity construction where specified for use.

Stria *(Latin)*: a slight or narrow furrow, esp. one of a number in parallel.