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For immediate release

## Top designers, chefs and architects find inspiration in waste

An old tip site turned recycling depot in the Melbourne outer suburb of Dandenong seems an unlikely place for some of Australia's acclaimed furniture designers, chefs, architects and artists to find inspiration.

Yet Vue de Monde's Shannon Bennett, furniture designer Mark Tuckey, eco-entrepreneur Joost Bakker, architect Jerry Wolveridge and artist David Bromley are all regular visitors to the Waste Converters Recycling Depot in Dandenong.

When he can, Jerry Wolveridge loves to sift through the recycled materials at the Waste Converters yard.

"Our firm has a reputation for the robust merging of textures, most commonly incorporating the natural character of timber – recycled where possible."

The practice was recently awarded the Australian Timber Design Award, and the Australian Institute of Architects Victorian Chapter for Sustainable Design. Materials sourced from the Dandenong site, particularly a recycled plywood sheet from discarded glazing delivery crates, were used in the winning designs.

"We were able to find a re-use for the material as internal wall lining at a very cost effective and interesting way," said Jerry Wolveridge.

Ward Petherbridge, Managing Director of Waste Converters, has been running his Dandenong recycling business for over 15 years. One of the main materials recycled at the depot is post-industrial timber packaging waste. Waste Converters customer, IVECO Trucks, for example, import hundreds of engines from America and Europe annually. They arrive on large pallets made of exotic hardwoods.

"I thought it was a travesty that these valuable timbers were ending up in landfill or being mulched," said Petherbridge. "It became a bit of a mission to find artists and designers to create products from this untapped resource."

Pallets and other timber packaging frequently end up in landfill sites or are pulverised into low-grade mulch. In Victoria alone, over 500,000 tonnes of timber waste are disposed of each year. "In the 2010/11 financial year Waste Converters recycling activities provided a net carbon benefit of 14,500 tonnes."

Bespoke furniture designer Mark Tuckey has been sourcing from Waste Converters for over 10 years. "These recycled materials are an important part of our product range. The real benefit is that the materials are re-worked at the site into a state which allows us to easily use them. They remove the nails and machine them ready for use," said Tuckey.

Sustainable restaurateurs Joost Bakker and Shannon Bennett have incorporated recycled products into their high-end restaurant fit-outs.

'The Greenhouse eco- restaurants in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth incorporated a huge array of items from Waste Converters depot. "The interior fit out was built from broken down timber boxes and packing crates, much of it salvaged from Waste Converters" said Bakker. "We have used Kenworth truck engine pallets for tables and chairs, Ford banners for furniture upholstery and plastic pallets and plywood for floor detailing. Even our platters are made from recycled baking trays from Cadbury's and plywood salvaged from Viridian Glass was used by David Bromley as a canvas for a large painting behind the bar". The Greenhouse demonstrates that the technology to live sustainably is readily available".

Shannon Bennett commented that Waste Converters allowed him the opportunity to use products in his restaurant fit-outs that others have tossed to the side. Bennett stated that, "Waste Converters has been supplying me with all manner of recycled items for many years to use in my restaurant Vue de Monde and

also in the fit out of some of my other venues. Ward's passion for unloved waste products others have tossed to the side is unparalleled.”

Waste Converters accepts timber, garden, construction and demolition waste. Products developed on-site include; timber products such as pallets, crates boxes and pegs; aggregate; mulch; compost and soil. Companies including, GM Holden, IVECO Trucks, Aldi Food stores, Viridian Glass and CEVA Logistics use the recycling services.

**For media interviews contact Emer Diviney on 0400 100 596 or [emer.diviney@gmail.com](mailto:emer.diviney@gmail.com).**

**Waste Converters Website: [www.wasteconverters.com.au](http://www.wasteconverters.com.au)**