

# Media Release

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MP**

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Training and Skills

Minister for Higher Education

Minister for Agriculture



Wednesday, 24 August 2022

## **BOOST TO PROCESS MORE PLANTATION TIMBER**

Australian Sustainable Hardwoods (ASH) are expanding their plantation timber manufacturing operations thanks to a \$1.2 million Victorian Forestry Plan innovation grant.

Minister for Agriculture Gayle Tierney today visited the Heyfield mill to announce the innovation funding and inspect the mill's newest addition – a retail outlet also funded by the Andrews Labor Government.

The new funding will help build a new \$2.4 million specialised MASSLAM (Glue Laminated Timber) manufacturing facility to support the mill's transition to alternative fibre sources thanks to the *Victorian Timber Innovation Fund*.

ASH is the only large-scale manufacturer of MASSLAM in Australia and this investment will help them expand their current operations to manufacture products made out from plantation shining gum.

The grant will support the build of the specialised MASSLAM manufacturing facility which will create 12 new full-time jobs and help retain the mill's existing 172 roles.

The investment will help future proof ASH's manufacturing business. The facility will be able to manufacture more products from plantation timber in the future such as mass flooring systems, engineered floorboards, kitchen benchtops and components for staircases, windows, doors and furniture.

The mill previously received \$1.6 million through the Victorian Timber Innovation Fund to install a new manufacturing line to produce engineered flooring made from plantation shining gum and Australian made pine plywood and to expand both its online and retail outlet.

The retail space has recently been completed and customers can purchase staircase and furniture components directly from ASH. The engineered floorboard line is anticipated to be up and running by the end of the year, ASH will become the only company in the country to manufacture this kind of high-value plantation product.

The Victorian Timber Innovation Fund is a key part of the Victorian Forestry Plan supporting timber businesses to diversify and plan for their future. For more information visit [vic.gov.au/forestry](http://vic.gov.au/forestry).

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Gayle Tierney**

*"We are proud to support ASH to continue to support local jobs and manufacture world renowned timber products into the future."*

### **Quote attributable to Australian Sustainable Hardwoods Managing Director Vince Hurley**

*"Plantation shining gum is a key pillar in the future of MASSLAM production. This investment will mean that ASH can continue to produce Australian made large-scale section columns and beams."*