



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
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Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Building Quality in the ACT

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SUMBISSION – Inquiry into The Quality of Recently Constructed Buildings In the ACT

It is with much disappointment that we, the Executive committee of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] also known as [REDACTED], provide you with our submission to the inquiry into quality of recently constructed buildings in the ACT. There are 24 units in the complex and having resided for over 12 months we are still awaiting our 90 day maintenance claims to be rectified, our electricity meters to be connected correctly and phone lines to be provided.

The units were for sale through [REDACTED] [REDACTED] were the vendors. At the time of purchase many of the residents were unaware [REDACTED] was in fact the vendor. [REDACTED] was helpful until purchases were finalised. Upon finalisation of sale in late 2017 [REDACTED] has been uncontactable by email or phone and according to sources has moved to Melbourne.

A few of the purchasers moved into their properties prior to settlement as “renters” organised through [REDACTED]. It has since been identified at the time of renting the Certificate of Occupancy and Use had not been signed off (see attached). Many of the purchasing “tenants” were renting from August 2017 and the Certificate of Occupancy and Use was dated 5 October 2017.

As purchasers moved into their properties common faults were noted. Some pictures are attached to give you an idea of the extent of faults. Grout around tile areas is lifting, cracks evident in joins between staircases and walls, toilet seats falling off, multiple faults in plastering and painting, tiles cracked on balconies, air conditioning not working properly, no phone lines. Individual unit faults include bathroom vanity falling apart, grouting in bathroom wet area is cracking so much so that one purchaser has not been able to use their bathroom since moving in 12 months ago. Clotheslines installed incorrectly, front gate latches broken upon moving in, holes in bedroom ceiling due to incorrect placement of air conditioning vents. These are just some of the faults. There are many more too numerous to add.

After some investigation a few of the residents found a contact for whom was thought the “Licenced Builder” for the complex. In contacting him he arrived one Saturday morning with no forewarning knocking on random doors in the complex asking to come in and see the faults. Those who were renting asked him to contact the real estate and organise a time to come back. Those of us who were home owners asked him to identify himself but he could not provide any identification. It was established in his words “ [REDACTED] used my building licence and this is my reputation”. His name is [REDACTED] and his business is [REDACTED] Homes House and Land Packages. [REDACTED] has proven to be just as unreliable as [REDACTED]. While he has made a half hearted effort to fix some things he has absolutely no idea how to fix them correctly and there are still multiple faults he hasn’t attended to. He turns up out of the blue and wants to come into residents’ homes without any warning. There is no guarantee on his work and after him being “overseas” for some months he only reappeared after a member of the Executive Committee informed him about this submission. His response was all the trades people are busy.

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Some of the major faults include the electricity meters being connected incorrectly. It has come to the attention of the Executive Committee when first connecting meters to units the person responsible has not looked at the unit plan and has assumed the numbering of the units. This has caused the units being connected to the wrong meters and each resident has been paying their neighbours electricity bill. The confusion did not end there as many residents struggled to even get electricity connected in their name as the unit complex has three or more addresses some being [REDACTED].

Some of the residents have had their electricity disconnected as tenants vacate the unit next to them who obviously have their metered connected wrong. One resident was away at the time and her fridge and freezer food was spoiled. Who is responsible for the cost of the food that was lost? Many hours have been taken up with ACTEW AGL, Origin, ACUMEN, the Ombudsman and only now some months later we have started to get some traction. The battle is not yet over. There has also been additional cost and time taken up by individuals trying to get this sorted not to mention the personal toll it has taken on many residents. We are yet to be told who is responsible and who will fix it.

No-one in the complex has a phone line. We have been informed we have NBN cabling in our units however NBN is not due to be in Gordon until at least mid next year and we know with the current roll out of NBN that means at least 12 months from then. Once NBN is in the suburb there is according to Telstra, no pit for the cabling to be connected to. Who knows what battle will need to be had to get that sorted. So in short there are no active phone lines and no ability to have internet connected via a phone line. This has impacted on people who require internet for family and business use. There is only one reliable supplier of wireless internet. This has resulted in poor connection and unreliable coverage.

This submission is a brief overview of the difficulties faced. It is not a true reflection of the depth of personal distress, angst, frustration, financial burden and time taken over the last 15 months or more to get very little resolved.

The Executive Committee would be very happy to meet with you should you require further information. A copy of this submission will be provided to Fair Trading, the Master Builders Association and any other agency that is relevant. We give permission for you make this submission public and pass it on to anyone you think needs to see it.

We hope this inquiry will put an end to the pain and suffering that has been felt by us and we're sure many other residents in the ACT.

We can be contacted on [REDACTED].

regards

Body Corporate, Executive Committee for [REDACTED]