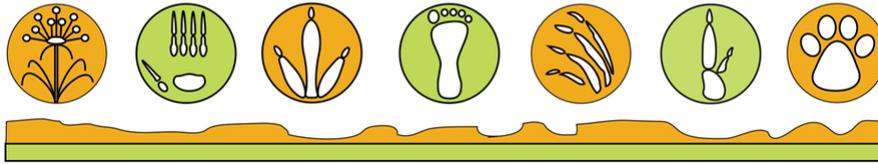


BARKLY REGIONAL COUNCIL



MEDIA RELEASE

1 March 2018

Battle to improve remote housing in the Barkly

Mayor Steve Edgington is calling for better remote housing following the discovery of poorly designed and unliveable housing extensions in Ali Curung.

Extensions for three homes were recently built under the Room to Breathe initiative, which is the first part of the Northern Territory Government's (NTG) 10-year, \$1.1 billion remote housing election commitment.

Part of the election promise was that building additional living spaces on to existing homes would create jobs, improve housing and lives and restore local decision making.

However, residents from Ali Curung say there was no community consultation regarding the installation of extensions on three homes and that the quality of work was substandard.

"Two of the extensions are basically corrugated iron sheds slapped on the side of the house," said Mayor Edgington. "One of them has windows at least but none of them were insulated. Where is the room to breathe? How do you expect anyone to live in those conditions?"

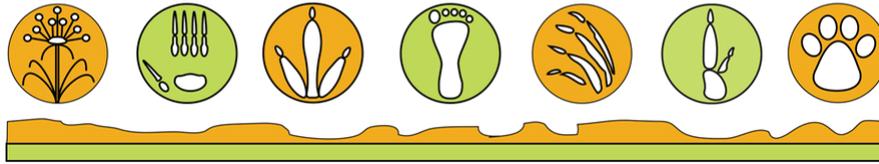
Concerned residents approached the Deputy Mayor Noel Hayes, who lives in Ali Curung, earlier this month about poor workmanship and told him that no-one from the Department of Housing or the builders asked them, 'what do you want?' and 'what do you need?'

"Cr Hayes was very upset about the inappropriate design, shoddy work and lack of consultation," said Mayor Edgington.

With the assistance of staff and councillors of Barkly Regional Council, a meeting was held on Tuesday morning with representatives from the NTG's Department of Housing and Community Development and the builders.

"As a result of that meeting the builders are now going to take the sheds down. The NTG will also carry out better consultation with residents to deliver more liveable extensions," said Mayor Edgington.

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“This is great news that the problem is going to be fixed, but I am concerned about the lack of consultation and planning in the first place, and I wonder if this is just the tip of the iceberg.

“Twenty four communities were identified by the Territory Government as having high levels of overcrowding and the local building capacity to deliver what people say they need. How many other residents in remote communities are not being consulted or presented with sub-standard extensions?”

Mayor Edgington said he highlighted several housing issues in the Barkly in a letter to the Chief Minister Michael Gunner on 21 December 2017.

“I asked if air conditioning would be installed in new homes built in Alpurrurulam, how many homes were beyond economic repair in Tennant Creek and if a house destroyed by fire in South Camp in Elliott would be replaced.

“It is part of Council’s role to advocate for better living conditions for the people of the Barkly and we will pursue this for as long as it takes.”

Mayor Edgington said he finally received a response to his letter to the Chief Minister on the evening of Wednesday, 28 February.

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