

BSR

Constructions



Tuesday, 22 July 2008

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Environment,
Communications & the Arts
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry into the *Save Our Solar (Solar Rebate Protection) Bill 2008*.

Located in Beachmere, Queensland, Beachmere Sands Lifestyle Resort is an over 55s independent living community proudly built by BSR Constructions. To date we have completed 55 Villas, a Club House, 5 Rink Bowling Green and heated outdoor swimming pool and spa. When completed, we expect this project to cover almost 300 acres and boast in excess of 1400 villas and condominiums.

The Resort's master plan has been developed with great consideration given to the environmental sustainability of its housing and facilities. We have built upon the site's natural assets with our design approach involving the careful use of natural resources whilst placing minimum demands on the environment. Environmentally responsible innovations built into the Resort include:

- **K.E.W.T.** (Kele Effluent and Wastewater Treatment) system is a viable alternative to traditional Sewerage Treatment Plants;
- 5kW solar grid system on the Club House;
- CSR Hebel;
- Solar Hot Water;
- Energy efficient lighting;
- North facing buildings; and
- Use of natural lighting and cooling systems.

Currently, each home is fitted with a 250 litre Split System solar water heater, reducing electricity consumption for heating water down by approximately 40% in comparison to an electric water heater.

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PeopleFIRST

Retirement Living

Our master plan envisaged each home boasting a minimum of a 1kW grid connected solar power system that would generate 1400 kWh of clean, green electricity per year. This would give an annual reduction in CO² emissions of approximately 1316 kg - equivalent to 572 litres consumption of petrol in a car. The 1kW system would take care of around 30% of the consumption of electrical appliances in the home.

Unfortunately though, since the Federal Government's recent decision to introduce a means test for the installation of solar panels we will no longer be able to implement this beneficial approach to saving energy due to cost restraints that will now affect a number of residents.

Prior to the Budget announcement the Resort's residents attended an information session on photovoltaic cells (PVCs) and much discussion, and support, was given to installing PVCs at each residence. As Beachmere Sands is a retirement resort, the majority of households are retirees surviving on fixed incomes. Before the introduction of a means test all residents were on an equal footing with regard to the installation of the PVCs. The massive support for installing the PVCs provided the residents with a greater purchasing power, ensuring value for money for everyone.

It is with great regret that we have now cancelled the proposed rollout for the current 55 villas. The residents were not looking at the project as a way of making money or increasing the value of their property but purely from an environmentally responsible aspect.

As is evident in the products we have used to build the Resort, residents and staff at Beachmere Sands Lifestyle Resort are extremely environmentally responsible and a major factor in the success of the Resort to date has been the proposed inclusion of the PVCs on every residence. It is disappointing that this proactive response to climate change has been taken out of reach for many of our residents due to the means test.

BSR Constructions strongly supports the Inquiry into the *Save Our Solar (Solar Rebate Protection) Bill 2008* and implore the Government to reconsider the implementation of the grossly unfair means test.

Kind regards

George Papallo
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