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Win-win as house that had to go finds new home



Mara Pattison-Sowden | 26th Jun 2014 7:17 AM



Paul Ferrall and Katie McDougall will make the Gladstone region their new home.

Contributed

PAUL Ferrall and Katie McDougall are a step closer to making the Gladstone region their new home, after relocating an existing house from Gladstone Affordable Housing's Fisher Crest development site.

With construction at GAH's Glenlyon St and Fisher St sites scheduled to begin in the near future, the family jumped at the opportunity to purchase and relocate a highset, timber home.

It originally stood on one of the three Fisher St blocks that will soon be developed for affordable housing accommodation.

Mr Ferrall has regularly been working in Gladstone over the past several years, and with reasonably priced acreage available for purchase near Mt Larcom, Ms McDougall said a move to the area was a logical step for the young couple and their one-year-old son, Jim.

"We wanted to be close to Paul's work, where he could come home every night, but also be out of town on acreage with extra space to move," she said.

Having purchased a 250ha block two-and-a-half years ago, they spent 18 months searching for a quality home to relocate and renovate - a task that was more difficult than they imagined.

"It's been so hard to find a quality house. We even travelled as far

away as Brisbane to look at homes, but the quality wasn't there," Ms McDougall said.

The house they secured "was the best we had seen, and there was the added bonus that we only had to move it 40km from Gladstone to our block".

The house was moved in two sections, with the final delivery completed in mid-May.

The removal company, Lammi Brothers, has since reconnected the two parts of the structure, reinstalled the roof and reconnected amenities.

"We're hoping to be in a position to move the family from Townsville in the next month or so," Ms McDougall said.

GAH general manager Rebecca Oelkers said being able to help the couple source a new home in the Gladstone area was an unexpected, but fortunate, by-product of GAH's local efforts.

"We had to remove the home as we near commencement ... so it's been a win for both of us," she said.

She said while the availability of "retail" rental accommodation had increased in recent months, there continued to be an undersupply of quality, affordable housing in the Gladstone area.

"Unfortunately, while Gladstone rental prices have eased, they are still not affordable for GAH's target group," she said.

"GAH is endeavouring to address that gap and provide accommodation for key workers who earn low to middle incomes," Ms Oelkers said.

GAH is initially constructing 12 architecturally designed, units at Glenlyon St, with a total of 79 units having been approved, and a mix of 32 units and townhouses at Fisher St.