

Case Study



Caves Beachside Resort, Hotel, Display Home

Saddington Chose Graph



When a region's major building industry supplier recommends a commercial builder it's a big plus. When that supplier appoints a builder to his own multi-faceted, \$20m-plus project without going to tender it is the highest possible recommendation.

When the project goes on to win local and international accolades the trust is warranted.

In Newcastle and the Hunter Saddingtons Building Supplies has been a major trade supplier since 1921. The company's client list is a who's who of the region's residential and commercial builders.

Yet when The Saddington Group took off their supplier's hat to develop the Caves Beachside Hotel, Resort and residential development Bill Saddington had absolutely no qualms appointing Graph Building to the entire project.

Apart from the \$13m showpiece hotel, Graph would be responsible for a \$7.3m civil works project for the planned residential development, the fitout of 18 luxury 4.5 star beachside suites and the building of an architect designed display home.

"After a period of time trading in the building industry you know the genuine people and you also know the ones living on the edge," Bill said, adding that he would regularly recommend five to ten major Hunter builders (depending on the size of project) but the company's own choice was a straightforward one.

"It's all about using somebody that's got some building principles and personal principles so that whatever you do you know you're going to get a fair deal and you're always comfortable with what's going on and not wondering if you're being shafted.

"They have the professional integrity to do the right thing in all circumstances.

"In the building industry, whether it's commercial or domestic, there's a myriad of things that you never see, that you never know exactly what's in there, so you're actually relying on the goodwill and integrity of the builder.

"Graph's well organised, honest to deal with and goes the extra mile. It becomes a seamless operation," Bill said.

Bill said that quite apart from the professional integrity of the firm and personal integrity of the directors, Graph brought much to the project.

"They have a very good company structure, excellent quality systems, their own programming, Quantity Surveying and in-house legal services.

Graph made available all of these services in the planning and pre DA development.

"It's very much a one stop shop and Saddingtons has had a long association with Graph as a supplier and

during this time we have built personal relationships and it's nice when you can do that in this day and age."

Bill said that Graph brought much to the table, right from day one with suggestions for cost savings on all manner of things, starting with a rationalisation of excessive lighting in the design right through to major refinements in construction.

They also showed a preparedness to entertain his suggestions and work with him on everything from a new retaining wall system to the "hand building" of the display home which would constantly change to get the home design right, adding a month to the build time but with no complaints from Graph.

Graph's attention to detail was put to the test with the hotel's steel frame. After much research Bill and the Graph team had determined that a Dulux two-pack paint process with a 20-year guarantee was more desirable than galvanising which could only be guaranteed for 10 years.

To ensure that there could be no comebacks in the event of a warranty claim, he and Graph employed inspectors to double check and document the fabrication, every weld, the quantities of paint purchased and the application of the paint.

With the 18 beach suites Graph was charged with the fitout. The suites themselves were built at BuiltSmart's Central Coast factory and transported to the site. Bill and the architect were so particular about these suites that a prototype erected at the factory was rebuilt three or four times before they were satisfied.

Such was the attention to detail with the fitout that included joinery, plumbing, electrical, tap ware and PC items that these suites nestled behind a man-made lagoon 100m from the beach have been awarded an AAA Tourism 4.5 star rating.

Since it was officially opened in March 2009 the once controversial hotel and resort development has won countless accolades.

The hotel itself took out the 2009 Newcastle Master Builders Association Excellence in Building Award for a Public Building over \$10m.

The prestigious American Express Travel and Leisure Guide rated the resort one of the World's Top 30 Affordable Beach Getaways. Despite the many other awards, Bill's greatest sources of pride are the comments from growing numbers of international visitors who consistently rate it a very special place.

"We'll give the credit to Graph and the architect for that," Bill said.

Project Summary

Hotel - \$13m

Civil Works Package - \$7.3m

Fitout of Beach Suites - \$1.2m

Display House - \$0.7m

(Figures exclude GST)

Commenced (Hotel) October 2007

**Completed (Display House)
December 2010**

