

Oaktree Retirement Village

Case Study



roofing.
people look
up to bristile

OAKTREE RETIREMENT VILLAGE

Chooses a roofing solution designed to last for generations.

Project: Oaktree Retirement Village
Location: 134 Baker St, Darling Heights QLD 4350
Function: Retirement Village
Developer: Oaktree Group

Australians have one of the longest life expectancies in the world. According to the 2015 Intergenerational Report "life expectancy at birth is projected to be 95.1 years for men and 96.6 years for women" by 2054-55.

Surprisingly the report doesn't address housing, but it does note that the number of Australians over 65 will more than double in the next 40 years and they will "look forward to more active and engaged retirement years."

This won't be news to the increasing number of older Australians who have already cast off the burden of a large family home for life in a retirement village.

Downsizing of accommodation and maintenance responsibilities doesn't mean a lowered expectation of the quality of construction and facilities. On the contrary, familiar and time-proven materials such as bricks and roof tiles help ease the transition from the family home into life's next stage.

According to the Retirement Living Council, part of the Property Council of Australia, more than 177,000 older Australians were living in retirement villages in 2013, a rise of 18 percent in just five years.

One of the companies driving this growth is the Oak Tree Group, which has 25 villages in operation or under construction in the four east coast states, including Toowoomba, west of Brisbane.

Although the group usually builds new villages, it purchased the Toowoomba site as an operational village with 25 villas and room for expansion. A community centre was soon added, along with a further 18 villas. Work has started on the final stage with another 15 villas, making 58 in all on this site.

The original villas are of brick veneer construction, with concrete roof tiles. The tiles had performed well so it's no surprise that the Oak Tree Group chose to continue the brick and tile theme in all the new villas, with one change: to clay roof tiles, the king of segmental roofing materials.

Products such as roof tiles serve to meet a number of the key requirements set out in Queensland Health's policy relating to aged care facilities. These include the reduction of recurrent costs, addressing general design considerations, and allowing the creation of designs that suit occupant preferences. These practical general guidelines could be applied

in other states and territories.

Clay roof tiles offer a range of advantages over conventional sheeting materials:

Superior appearance: The wide range of roof tile profiles and colours adds texture, visual interest and a home-like appeal that sheet metal roofing, with its industrial/institutional character, cannot match. A tiled, pitched roof fits readily into most neighbourhood contexts.

Easy to maintain: A simple pressure clean will remove grime, moss and lichen, restoring the roof to its original colour. Breakages are simply fixed by replacing the broken tile.

Structurally sound: Roof tiles won't rust or corrode. They resist salt attack, making them ideal in coastal regions. Tiles are also suitable for high wind or cyclonic zones and bushfire-prone areas.

Excellent acoustic and thermal insulation: Testing has determined that the mass of tiles can significantly reduce sound penetration from nearby traffic or aircraft over sheeting materials. Testing also concluded that tiles absorb less heat than



sheet metal roofing – 24.6% as against 32.4% – thereby reducing heating and cooling demand.

Long life: Clay tiles have an outstanding record of durability and longevity. Metal roofing will need to be replaced several times over during the life of a clay tiled roof. The cost savings would be significant.

Unbeatable warranty: All Bristile Roofing installations are covered by a 10 Year Total Roof Warranty. In addition, Bristile clay tiles carry a Colour for Life warranty that guarantees their colour will “remain the same for the life of the product”.

Some may be surprised at the selection of clay roof tiles for a project such as this, but not George Papallo, Oak Tree’s Queensland construction manager. He had previously specified clay roof tiles for his house on the coast north of Brisbane. “Being in the building industry, I wanted to have the best products for my house, and to me the best [roofing] product is clay,” he tells us. “I have never had an issue and we have had some amazing winds come through there.”

He is particularly impressed with the longevity of clay tiles and their resistance to fading,

especially by comparison to painted sheeting. “They say [painted sheet roofing] will last a lot longer now but it still fades,” he says simply.

We asked George what advantages clay tiles brought to the Toowoomba project. He told us that one is the consumer perception that they are getting a premium product. “And definitely the noise transfer with clay tiles is a lot less than a [sheeted] roof.”

Then there is maintenance. The colour of clay roof tiles is locked in for life. When a clay-tiled villa is refurbished before new owners move in, there will be no need to replace or recolour the roofing. A simple pressure clean will reveal the original colour, good as new.

That’s guaranteed by Bristile’s Colour for Life warranty.

But the ultimate decider for George and the Oak Tree Group was affordability. Despite clay roof tiles being a premium product they don’t come with a premium price. And when the lower maintenance and refurbishment costs, long life and durability are factored in, the Oak Tree Group is even further ahead.

“Once we found out about the affordability of clay roof tiles, it was a no-brainer,” says George. “It was affordable, it was within our budget,

and we have a premium product. So we were value adding.”

Bristile’s La Escandella clay roof tile collection includes a range of profiles from the slate-like Visum to the curvaceous Curvado, all in an unmatched range of colours and glazes.

Oak Tree chose the Grande profile, a classic French-style roof tile, in Roja, a handsome terracotta red. The installation was carried out by contractors overseen by Bristile staff under a supply-and-install contract.

So how do the new clay roof tiles look and perform? “No problems at all, they’ve been perfect, they look great up on the roof,” George Papallo reports. “Once they are up there they look impressive, and the consistency has been fantastic. We haven’t found any imperfections in any of the tiles that I’ve seen. From looking at the overall picture it looks impressive.”

Stage Three of the project is underway, and after that work begins on a completely new village next to the Toowoomba site. This will see a further 60 villas and a community centre constructed in a separate development that will carry over many elements from the existing Toowoomba project.

Will that include the specification of clay roof tiles? “We haven’t completed the design yet but I believe they would be,” George hints.

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