



DRUMMOND ST APARTMENTS
BUILDING MANAGEMENT REPORT 2021-2022
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OVERVIEW

Maintenance at Drummond St Apartments in 2021/22 has again been kept to a minimum. Our focus has been on keeping the property looking clean and tidy, and managing reactive maintenance to keep the facility functioning.

We ensure that the grounds are kept clean and weed-free through a water-blasting and spraying programme, and that graffiti and dumped rubbish and furniture are removed promptly.

The laundry has had its annual full clean, and we have taken the opportunity to repaint the walls and thoroughly clean the floor while the machines were removed.

We are keeping the gates and doors functioning by doing continual temporary repairs - realigning strikers and catchers, lubricating locks and closers, and realigning the gates.

We have experienced a couple of leaks in the courtyard from burst water pipes, which have resulted in insurance claims.

The Building Warrant of Fitness compliance inspections are done monthly, as well as the regulatory fire and alarm checks.

I am pleased to advise that our builder Rodney Collier is now based permanently in Wellington. Rodney has handled maintenance here on a part-time basis for a number of years, but his full-time presence ensures an immediate response and reduces our reliance on outside contractors for much of the routine maintenance and building work.

While the cladding was redone seven years ago and is still looking fresh, the other external areas of the complex are starting to look run-down, along with the internal stairwells which, being high-traffic areas, are showing wear. There has been minimal investment in maintenance over the last few years, and it is really starting to show.

We are surrounded by new and upgraded apartments which really emphasise the age and condition of our complex. Our ability to attract and retain good tenants, and get a good rental return is compromised by the state of the grounds and common areas.

We are getting to the point where if preventative maintenance is not completed in a timely fashion, we run the risk of facing higher costs to rectify serious issues that could have been prevented.

2021/22 SUMMARY

Grounds Maintenance

Graffiti is still an ongoing problem, and we are getting tagged every couple of weeks or so. The tags tend to be large, and are time-consuming to paint over, but a quick response is the most effective way to deter vandals. At least it has been the brick surfaces which have been tagged, which are relatively easier to re-paint.

I am pleased to advise we have had no further incidents of maggots in the rubbish bins, nor of any ant infestations. Pestproof continue to lay ant bait and monitor the area every two months, so that seems to be working well.

There are currently no issues with the littering of chewing gum, but we continue to monitor the grounds and common areas.

We continue with a regular gardening, waterblasting & weedspraying regime to trim shrubs, clean the courtyard, remove moss and keep weeds under control.

Exterior Cleaning

The building wash was done in August 2021, once the widening of the gate at the lane entrance was completed. The roof and gutter wash was completed at the same time, and the exterior window cleaning continues to be done quarterly.

Roofing

Repairs to the gutters and fascias were approved in November 2021, but were delayed due to Covid, so will be completed in the next financial year.

Gates

The gate at the lane entrance was modified in August by DNG Gates to create a wider opening. The fixed fencing attached to the pedestrian gate by the laundry was dismantled and a swing gate installed. This now allows elevated work platforms entrance to the property giving easier access for roof and gutter cleaning.

The temporary maintenance done last year in replacing rivets and installing pads has been effective in minimising the rattling noises, but the gates are not fit for purpose and need to be replaced.

Laundry

In August 2021 we repainted the laundry walls. While the machines were removed we took the opportunity to thoroughly clean the vinyl floors.

Insurance Claims

In April 2021, we had water pooling in the common area at the front entrance. After waiting three days for council contractors to attend, they advised that a pipe had burst, but as it was 10cm inside our boundary line, we were responsible for fixing it. Plumb I attended and had to cut the concrete to find and repair the leak. They also found and fixed a second leak. We are fortunate to have good relationships with our contractors which meant that the repairs were completed quickly, and the \$3500 insurance claim is still progressing.

In November 2021, we had a leak outside Block A, where it was discovered a water main had burst. As it was 1.5 metres deep, specialised machinery was required, so Mr Big Plumbing attended and fixed the leak. The ground was left to dry, then covered in again prior to Christmas. An insurance claim for \$4k has been submitted but not yet settled.

Building Warrant of Fitness

Monthly inspections are undertaken for Building Warrant of Fitness compliance. The building was checked by CoveKinloch and certified to July 2023.

2022 WORK IN PROGRESS AND ONGOING CONCERNS

Insurance Claims

At the end of March 2022, there was a leak in Apartment 18, coming from a water pipe in the ceiling cavity, which required after-hours attendance from Plumbing Express and Engie, as it also activated the smoke detector connected to the alarm panel. The carpet was cleaned and dried and the ceiling repaired. Once all invoices have been received this will be submitted as an insurance claim.

Scaffolding

The Body Corporate has accepted a quote from TL Construction to provide scaffolding for the gutter and fascia repairs as they were cheaper than Three65 Spouting. However I am concerned about their very relaxed attitude to safety. They do not appear to have a Traffic Management Plan in place, which was part of the service from Three65. I have asked them to provide details of their Health and Safety plans but there is the potential that I will need to spend more time on-site to proactively ensure they meet required standards.

Gutter and Fascia Repairs

The drone survey of the roof in November 2020 identified gutters blocked with dirt and growing seedlings, and rust on the fascias of all blocks. The essential repairs were finally approved in November 2021, with the work scheduled for early 2022. This was affected by Covid delays so the scaffolding went up at the end of June, and the work will commence in early July. Blocks A and B are each scheduled to take two weeks, with Block C being scheduled for three weeks for the front and back. The front of Blocks D and E will be done together over a three week period, followed by the back of these blocks over a further three weeks. The scaffolding will be in place for around 14 weeks, and we will be monitoring the work done, as well as taking advantage of the scaffolding to have a close-up inspection of the roof and the TV aerial.

Gates

The current gates are not fit for purpose. They are domestic gates with a flimsy structure, not suited to being used hundreds of times a day. We are constantly having to realign the gates, which are hard to open, with locks and keys in a worn state. Temporary repairs are largely ineffective, as worn keys won't open new locks, and the result is that tenants are totally fed up, and constantly chock the gates open with stones to avoid the hassles. Open gates allow outsiders to dump rubbish, which encourages tenants to do the same. With gates left open, there is basically no security at the complex. We have had on-site meetings with Beveridge and we are waiting on quotes but significant investment in the gate system is urgently required.

Stairwell and Apartment Door Painting

The stairwells and apartment doors were last repainted seven years ago, and the white paint shows every mark. The paint used was not suitable for high-use areas; doors and walls are scratched and although we have managed it with touch-ups over the years, the whole area is looking really run-down. These common areas need a full professional paint job as soon as possible. Quotes have been sourced and presented to the committee.

Landscaping

A design plan and quote was sourced for landscaping and planting of the grounds in 2018, and revisited again in August 2020. However there has still been no action on the plan, and we can expect costs to have risen considerably over the last quote. As advised last year, the courtyard paving is also in need of investment. The pavers are sinking and are a trip hazard, and while we are doing remedial work where possible, the courtyard does need to be stabilised, relevelled and repaved.

Foundations

When the Long Term Maintenance Plan was prepared by CoveKinloch in 2018, they recommended further investigations into the north-facing foundations of Block C to determine if there is the potential for undermining of the foundations in this area. This was discussed at an on-site meeting with the Body Corporate committee in June 2019, but no action has been taken. We are now seeing the foundations of Blocks C and D being exposed where the recommended landscaping has not been done, and the fill has been slowly disappearing over the years. I have requested the building foundation plans from the Body Corporate Secretary to provide to one of our owners who is a retired engineer and who has offered his expertise in this area for free. It is important that this potential issue is investigated to ensure that any remedial action is taken before there is any further escalation.

Laundry Contract

The tenants continue to complain about the laundry operation, and ineffective machines. We have finally had replacement of two of the washing machines, but the complaints are now regarding the old driers which are not drying the clothes. Tenants are paying for what is a very poor service. As far as I am aware there is no actual contract in place with the operator, and I would suggest we look to terminate the arrangement. Nxt Lvl would be willing to provide a laundry service and ensure that the machines are fit for purpose and properly maintained.

Fire Safety Contract

We have been using Engie for the servicing of our fire safety equipment for the last four years. For the first three years this worked really well as they were offering a more competitive rate, better service, and we were dealing with one very knowledgeable and helpful senior technician. However that staff member has since left, the company has been sold, and the rate has increased sharply. They are very difficult to communicate with, by both phone and email, and do not give any prior notification of on-site attendance for monitoring or annual checks. There is additional time required in checking their invoices against the services provided. I think we need to urgently revisit this contract and I have asked Nationwide to requote. I am receiving very good service from Nationwide at another complex and feel that they are much better value for money.

CCTV Monitoring

The new CCTV system installed in March 2020 is working very well, with seven cameras providing high quality footage of the entrance gates, block entrances and the back areas. The system is serviced twice a year, and we review the footage regularly to ensure that recordings are happening correctly and clearly. However as there is no internet access, recording is to a hard drive on-site, and it is not possible to remotely monitor the cameras. It would be worth considering supplying internet access to the system, so that the cameras could be viewed remotely at any time without having to attend site, thus providing an extra layer of security.



HOURS FOR NXT LVL BUILDING MANAGEMENT FOR DRUMMOND ST APARTMENTS 2021/22

Breakdown of the hours spent on the major facilities management tasks:

Administration:	109
Grounds Maintenance:	30
Building Warrant of Fitness:	21
Painting:	12
Plumbing:	11
Gates/Doors/Windows:	9
Leaks:	5
Health & Safety:	5
General Maintenance:	4
Security:	2
Roofing/Gutters:	1
Electrical:	1

Total: 210

I think it's important to note that although a great deal of my time is charged under administration, around 70% of these hours pertain to various areas of maintenance, security, and health and safety - investigating problems, getting quotes, liaising with contractors, providing access, checking their work, and checking and approving their invoices are all necessary parts of the maintenance process. Administration also includes dealing with the Body Corporate committee and accountant, property managers and tenants, insurance claims, minor and ongoing maintenance tasks, and reporting.