

# WHICH BUILDER WINS THE VOTE?

## We reveal why one local firm wins repeat business time and again



Shane Brunner, (left) has helped Aliesha and Shane Christensen design all the homes they have built with Ron Cullen Homes.

What is the best way to judge a building company? How can you be sure the builder you choose will really deliver a top quality product and not a lemon?

One way to test the waters is to ask former clients of a builder if the company really lives up to its claims, or its advertising is just so much hot air.

To find the answers to these questions *Toowoomba Homebuilder* went behind the scenes and in doing so met one local couple who claims their builder is so good they are now building their third home with them.

According to Aliesha Christensen the company, Ron Cullen Homes, offers a top quality product and value for money.

Aliesha said she and her husband, Shane, were now building their dream home at Glenvale with Ron Cullen Homes after building two investment properties with the company.

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# The four critical questions you must ask your builder before signing!

With so many builders in Australia reported to be facing difficulties, how do you decide which company to choose to build your home?

In recent years the media has reported many complaints about building companies that did not deliver on their promises, either by failing to produce high quality workmanship or failing to complete projects.

The industry has been plagued with reports of sub-standard workmanship or companies going into liquidation and being unable to finalise assignments.

Toowoomba Homebuilder has drawn up a set of four criteria which homebuilders can use

to decide whether or not a company will deliver the high standards of workmanship expected of them.

- Builders should have a proven track record and an established reputation in the industry.
- They must prove they produce quality homes that are renowned for their high standards of workmanship.
- They must be transparent in their dealings with clients and not have a name for hitting customers with hidden costs after construction has started.
- They must consistently complete projects on time and on budget.



Ron Cullen says his company has a track record of living up to its clients' expectations and has many testimonials praising his team for their high standards of workmanship.

Research carried out by *Toowoomba Homebuilder* has found that Ron Cullen Homes has a proven track record in the industry and has won many awards over the years for the high standards of its workmanship.

We asked the Managing Director of Ron Cullen Homes, Ron Cullen, why his company had been able to establish such a formidable reputation.

## 1. Builders should have a proven track record

“At Ron Cullen Homes we have a proven track record of living up to our clients' expectations. We have many testimonials from clients to show that we have met their expectations in all respects, whether it be the quality of our design and construction, or meeting schedule and budgetary considerations.”

## 2. They must prove they produce quality homes

“We set a very high standard of workmanship at Ron Cullen Homes and only employ the most experienced, highly qualified tradespeople available. We are renowned for the quality of our work and have won several prestigious industry awards.”

## 3. They must be transparent in their dealings with clients

“We include many features in our contracts that other builders ignore and if something is not included we make it clear right from the start so clients are not faced with unexpected costs.”

## 4. They must consistently complete projects on time and on budget

“Not only do we complete projects on time and on budget but there have been many instances where we have completed an assignment early and come in under budget. We have testimonials from clients which prove this and demonstrate our ability to adhere to schedules and keep costs down.”

# Which builder repeatedly wins work from their past clients?

## Before you sign a contract read this report!



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Aliesha told *Toowoomba Homebuilder* she and Shane built their first home with Ron Cullen Homes in 2006 but only lived in it for 12 months before selling it and building another with the company which they also sold within a year.

“They were both investments really. We believed we could make money by building and selling properties. I know value for money and we certainly got it with Ron Cullen Homes. There are cheaper companies out there but they’re not high quality builders like Ron Cullen Homes,” Aliesha said.

“After we built the first two houses we decided to put all our money into building our dream home at Glenvale. I’m really excited about it. We definitely won’t be selling this one.”

Asked why they initially chose Ron Cullen Homes, Aliesha said: “We visited their display home in West Street

and met Sales Consultant, Shane Brunner. He was so helpful with designing the first property that we went back to him later when we wanted to build the second house.

**“We had a really good rapport with him from the outset. He has also worked closely with us in designing our home at Glenvale.”**

Aliesha said they had changed the designs of all the homes they had built with the company.

“Ron Cullen Homes worked with us on changing the designs. They were terrific the way they handled all our ideas.”

Aliesha told *Toowoomba Homebuilder* a good example of how far Ron Cullen Homes went with customer service was an incident that occurred before they bought the land for their home at Glenvale.

“We had chosen a block but not signed the contract. Shane Brunner knew we

were hesitating about the land and met the company’s Construction Manager, Greg Wilson, at the site to discuss any potential problems that could arise if we went ahead and bought it,” she said.

“They didn’t have to do that. We hadn’t even signed the contract to buy the land let alone signed a contract to build the third house. However, that’s the sort of people they are. They go out of their way to make sure everything will run smoothly.

“They also build quickly and without any dramas. Once they start working they get right into it; there are no delays and they organise their tradesmen very well.”

Aliesha said the Site Supervisor for the first two properties was Trevor Lawrence and he was very approachable.

“There were never any problems about access to the site and we could contact him at any time we liked,” she said.

“We would definitely recommend Ron Cullen Homes. Not only are they happy to tailor their designs to suit you but they’re also most approachable and willing to listen to what you want, rather than try to convince you to do what they want.

“They also give value for money and are transparent in their dealings. They make it obvious what’s included in the contracts and what’s not. There were no surprises down the track and that what’s we liked. We knew we could depend on them.”

Aliesha said there had never been any issues with the company’s integrity; a point which she felt was reassuring when so many building companies seem to be the subject of dispute and claims of inferior workmanship.

**If you want a building company you can trust, one you know will give you value for money and keep their word, contact Ron Cullen Homes on 07 4635 0996.**

# Is your builder up to the mark?

**‘A company is only as good as its tradespeople’**



**When you're planning to build a new home, how do you know your builder will deliver on time, on budget?**

Let's face it a building company is only as good as its tradies and supervisors. If they're not up to the mark then you can get into a lot of trouble when they start constructing your property.

One Toowoomba company that has been consistently praised for its quality and reliability is Ron Cullen Homes, so to find out if this builder really is up to standard or it is all just talk *Toowoomba Homebuilder* put some hard questions to one of the company's Site Supervisors.

Trevor Lawrence has been with Ron Cullen Homes as a Site Supervisor for more than 11 years. With many years in the industry, Trevor is a qualified builder.

*Toowoomba Homebuilder* asked Trevor if Ron Cullen Homes only used qualified tradespeople.

“Definitely! We can't afford to do otherwise because if we did and the worker made a mistake it could cost us and the client dearly.

“All our tradies are qualified with the exception that we also have some

apprentices, which is what we are expected to do. We would be failing in our responsibilities to the industry if we didn't have a few apprentices on our payroll.

“However, once they are qualified they often stay with us anyway. We prefer it if they do because once you have trained an apprentice then you can be sure they really know their job. And, that's what we want; qualified tradespeople who are highly skilled. A building company is only as good as its tradies.

“For example, we have two carpenters working for us, Mark and Morrie Taylor, who have been with Ron Cullen for about 30 years. They are highly professional. I don't need to be checking on them.

**“They're so good that clients who have built with us more than once have insisted they work on their sites. And, that's saying something.”**

A common complaint about builders is they don't allow clients on site. It is an issue that has led on occasions to frustration and anger, with some builders flatly refusing clients access at all. Trevor told *Toowoomba Homebuilder* that Ron Cullen Homes had no objection to clients visiting the site providing all the OH&S rules were adhered to.

“I deal with clients all the time,” Trevor said. “They ring me regularly and I like it that way. Our company goes out of its way to maintain open lines of communications with them because we know clients will always have questions and if they are not answered then it can lead to confusion and doubt.



**Site Supervisor, Trevor Lawrence, has no objection to clients visiting the site providing they abide by the OH&S requirements.**

“So, we don't mind them checking out things on site. If there's something they don't understand we'll explain what's being done to put their mind at peace. We let them go on site as much as they like providing they realise that construction sites can be risky. You can trip; you can injure yourself. “So, our willingness to let them visit whenever they ask is subject to the provisions they must give us prior warning and they must agree to abide by the safety laws. Under those circumstances they can visit whenever they like. We've got no problems with that.”

**If you want a builder who will deliver a top quality home, on time, on budget, contact Ron Cullen Homes on 07 4635 0996.**