

Warlpeyangkrere flooring project

Warlpeyangkrere, located about 500km from Alice Springs on the Plenty Highway, is a small outstation comprised of only two houses.

ITS conducted an inspection of these two houses at the request of the traditional owner. One of the issues identified was the poor condition of the flooring. Whilst most houses in this region are built on a concrete slab floor, these elevated houses are unusual in that they are light steel framed construction with plywood flooring.

The original design and construction of these houses contributed to the poor state of the flooring:

- Floor joist spacing of 600mm is inadequate for this plywood flooring product. Spacing should be 450mm. As a consequence, the flooring was bouncy and had sagged between joists.
- No fireproof material had been placed beneath the wood heater. Holes had burned through the flooring where embers spilled from the fire box.
- External doors had no sills or cappings resulting in lifting and splitting to plywood at the entrances.
- MDF skirting boards had deteriorated significantly.

In consultation with Aramwelke Resource Centre and the traditional owners it was decided to install new flooring over the existing plywood. Aramwelke purchased the flooring and skirting materials, while ITS provided fixings, consumables, labour and transport. Termite and water resistant flooring sheets were screwed and glued to the existing flooring and cut to fit around all door and window frames.

A cement sheet substrate was fitted underneath the existing wood heaters, and new cover strips were installed to external doorways. The existing MDF skirtings were removed and replaced with solid timber skirtings, a far more durable product. The floors and skirtings were sanded and sealed with a clear water based sealer, which can easily be recoated in the future.

Willy, Dave and Karl from the Mobile Service Team (MST) undertook the project over a two week period, camping out at Warlpeyangkrere with the resident pig, cats and peacocks. An electrical contractor was engaged to undertake electrical safety checks and to re-establish power to the houses. A plumbing contractor repaired drains, replaced tapware and installed solar hot water systems. Future plans include replacing the overhead water storage tank and repairing broken decking.



The outcomes and impacts from this project and associated maintenance include:

- improved condition of the housing assets
- easier cleaning of the sealed floor providing healthier living conditions
- reduction of fire risk through installation of cement sheeting under existing fireplace
- improved draught and dust control
- functional tapware
- reliable hot water supply
- safe electrical supply
- renewed confidence that basic maintenance was carried out and that a long term approach to asset management had been established

This project has supported a renewed focus on an on-going maintenance plan for assets and infrastructure and has established beneficial partnerships between the owners, the resource agency and CAT.

