



**Integrated**  
Consultancy Group

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The Secretary to the Owners Corporation  
The Owners - Strata Plan 69259  
C/- Strata Plus Pty Ltd  
P O Box H181  
Australia Square NSW 1215

23 April 2014

*Our ref: 2140076-REP*

Attention: Sheree Hope

Dear Sheree

**RE: SP69259 - MONDRIAN 2 POWELL STREET, WATERLOO NSW 2017**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An inspection of selected balconies of the above property was carried out on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 following instructions received from Guy Beresford of Strata Plus Pty Ltd on behalf of the owners of SP69259.

The purpose of the inspection was to assess a sample of units that have balconies with a pebble feature that may pose a potential safety risk and to provide a report outlining the determinations of the inspection and include advice regarding the remedial options available to make those areas safer.

The Building has total number 130 units on multiple levels of which 99 are highlighted for concern.

We are advised that the buildings have 3 balcony variations that may pose a safety risk. They fall into the following categories with the affected number noted alongside.

1. Glass down front -17
2. Glass finishing above the pebbles -73
3. Fence railings finishing above pebbles-9

The following 6 units have been selected by the owners for Inspection. These being 2 of each configuration;

Units 412, 418, 215, 353, 331, and 359.

The units are commented on in the report in order of Inspection.



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## 2. INSPECTION

### Unit 331. Building 3.

The style of Balcony balustrade found at this unit is classified as glass finishing above the pebbles.



The balcony is partially covered with a timber deck which is bordered by white/light coloured pebbles of various sizes. The pebbles are laid loose on three sides of the balcony directly onto the slab to a depth of approx 75mm. In general, the pebble finish is level with or slightly above the rail edge (arrowed). There is a gap of approx 50mm between the upper edge of the rail and the glass panels.

I was informed by the unit occupant at the time that there had been no issues with pebbles dropping from this balcony either by accident or through deliberate intention. I was further informed that as far as she had been aware, there had been just two incidents over the past few years where Pebbles had fallen from a balcony within the complex. It is understood that one incident was by accident and the other through a deliberate act however I was unable to confirm this.

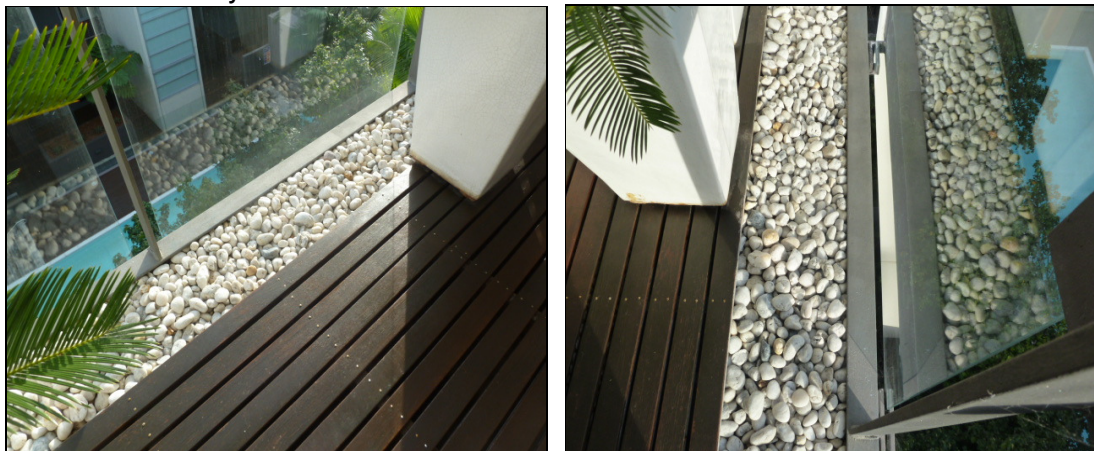
### Unit 352. Building 3.

The style of balcony in this unit was found to be a design where the glass balustrade finished down below the front edge of the balcony slab.

As per the previous unit, the balcony is covered with a timber deck bordered by the pebbled finish on three sides. The description of the pebbles location, depth and size remained consistent with that noted in the previous unit.

The unit occupant stated that there had been no incidents with pebbles falling from

this unit's balcony.



#### **Unit 412. Building 4.**

The balustrading on this unit's balcony consisted of metal fence railing which finished approx 50mm above the level of the pebbles and above the front edge of the balcony slab. The railings of this unit were also covered with a wire mesh for approx 400mm height across the full width of the balcony. I am informed that this was to prevent the small dog from slipping through and had no relation to the pebbles. The unit occupant informed me that there had been no issues with pebbles falling from this balcony.



#### **Unit 359. Building 3.**

The style of Balcony balustrade found at this unit is classified as glass finishing above the pebbles, the same as Unit 331. There is a gap of approx 50mm between the upper edge of the rail and the glass panels. The pebbles are mostly slightly lower or level with the external edge rail.

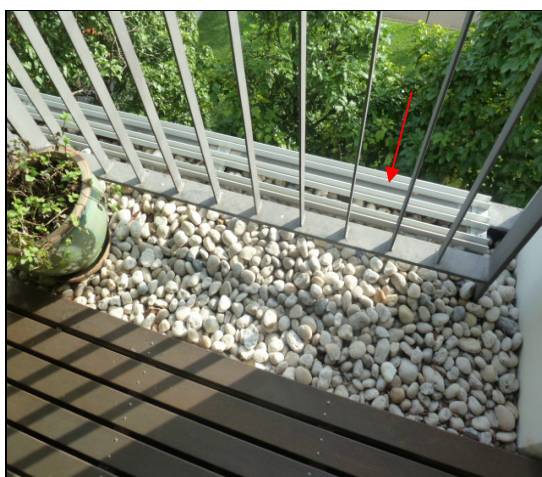


I am informed by the unit occupier that there have been no issues as far as she is aware with pebbles falling from this location since she has been in residence.

#### **Unit 418. Building 4.**

The balustrading on this unit's balcony consisted of Metal fence railing which finished approx 50mm above the level of the pebbles, similar to that of Unit 412. The difference in this case being the additional installation of a shuttered variation on the edge of the slab. (Arrowed). This prevents any pebbles from being accidentally kicked off this balcony. It should be noted however, that this configuration/design alters from the others inspected so far and it is unlikely that this solution (should it be considered) would be an option on the majority of the remaining balconies.

There are no reported incidents of pebbles falling from this location.



## Unit 215. Building 2.

The final unit scheduled for inspection had concurrent works underway. This restricted the area of the balcony for viewing as it was mostly covered with furniture.

The balustrading design was the same as that noted on Unit 352, the glass balustrade finished down below the front edge of the balcony slab.



The occupant was not available for comment and access was provided by the Building Management.

### 3. SUMMARY

I am informed that there are three basic designs of balustrading within the building complex and I was provided access to inspect at least one of each style. The only slight variation being that already noted on unit 418 which was the additional installation of an external shutter type fixing.

The inspection was bought about due to the safety concerns of the owners of the complex. Safety hazards have a hierarchy of controls i.e. different levels of dealing with a particular issue. The most effect control of a hazard is to remove the hazard completely. In this case, remove the pebbles. This would obviously remove the possibility of accidentally kicking off pebbles through any gaps off the edges and acts of deliberate vandalism, i.e., persons picking them up and dropping/throwing them.

The addition of the pebbles on all the balconies viewed presents a hazard to some degree. One could argue, so does the inclusion of potted plants and the like. However, either through accident or intention, pebbles can cause damage and injury if they fall from any great height. If left alone, the pebbles do not present any major hazard unless affected by human intervention. It is acknowledged that the pebbles are included for aesthetical reasons and do not form any part of any water flow/drainage system requirement.

#### 4. MOVING FORWARD

In my opinion, there are 4 options available to the owners for consideration, each with its own pro's and con's.

Option one is the removal of the pebbles. As stated, this is the only sure way of removing the hazard completely. Obviously this would be at some cost to the owners with regards the removal and replacement with a suitable alternative. Perhaps extending the timber decking?

Option two is the lowering of the height of the pebbles. As mentioned earlier, the current depth is approx 75mm of pebble covering. This could be reduced by approx 25-30mm so as to bring the finished height below the edge and reduce the chance of accidentally kicking them off the edge. However, this does not remove the opportunity for deliberate acts of vandalism to continue.

Option three is a combination of option two with the inclusion of a fine wire mesh installed over the top of the pebbles. This would remove both the chance of accidental dislodgement and a greater reduction in the possibility of deliberate acts of vandalism.

Option 4 calls for the installation of a barrier of Perspex installed on top of the pebbles. This would require the removal of some of the pebbles to allow for installation and the Perspex to be secured against the edge of the lower rail of the balustrade with a suitable adhesive. The advantage of this option is that there is no possibility of accidental dislodgement, no chance of deliberate acts of vandalism and the location retains its aesthetic appearance.

Yours faithfully  
For and on behalf of  
Integrated Building Consultancy Norwest ACN 119 674 298



Colin Saunders  
Building Consultant  
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## CONDITIONS RELATING TO THIS REPORT

1. The Report is made in accordance with the requirements of Australian Standard 4349.1-1995 and is a special purpose property report that reflects the requirements of the instructions provided to Integrated Building Consultancy Norwest ACN 119 674 298. This is not a pre-purchase report nor does it express any view as to the value of the Property or parts thereof being inspected.
2. This Report and all its content is prepared for the exclusive use of the Addressee and may not be used for any other purpose than its stated intention with the exception of its distribution to any party in litigation to which this Report may have reference. No responsibility will be accepted for its content in respect of Third Parties.
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4. This Report may not necessarily be suitable for presentation in litigation and other Court or Tribunal actions as a report with a different structure, ie, a Scott Schedule, may be required by direction of the adjudicative body.
5. **Unless otherwise stated-**
  - (a) no soil etc has been excavated
  - (b) no plants or trees have been removed
  - (c) no fixtures, fittings, cladding or lining materials have been removed
  - (d) no items of furniture or chattels have been moved
  - (e) no enquiries of Councils or Authorities or persons have been made for the purpose of inspecting the Building and providing this Report.
6. **This Report does not include-**
  - (a) faults in inaccessible parts of the Building
  - (b) faults not apparent on visual inspection
  - (c) faults apparent only in different weather or environmental conditions
  - (d) faults resulting from different use of the Building's intended use
  - (e) minor faults (e.g. hairline plaster cracks, jamming doors, window and catches etc)
7. **Asbestos Disclaimer: "No inspection for asbestos was carried out at the property and no report on the presence or absence of asbestos is provided.** If during the course of the Inspection asbestos or materials containing asbestos happened to be noticed then this may be noted in the general remarks section of the report. Buildings built prior to 1982 may have all and/or ceiling sheeting and other products including roof sheeting that contains Asbestos. Even buildings built after this date up until the early 90's may contain some Asbestos. Sheeting should be fully sealed. If concerned or if the building was built prior to 1990 you should seek advice from a qualified asbestos removal expert as to the amount and importance of the asbestos present and the cost of sealing or removal. If asbestos is noted as present within the property then you should seek advice from a qualified asbestos removal expert as to the amount and importance of the asbestos present and the cost of sealing or of removal. Drilling, cutting or removing sheeting or products containing Asbestos is a high risk to peoples' health. You should seek advice from a qualified asbestos removal expert."
8. **Expert Witness Estimating Disclaimer:** Any estimates provided in this report are merely opinions of possible costs that could be encountered, based on the knowledge and experience of the consultant. The estimates are NOT a guarantee or quotation for work to be carried out. The actual cost is ultimately dependent upon the materials used, standard of finish required and what a contractor is prepared to do the work for. It is recommended in ALL instances that multiple independent quotes are sourced prior to any work being carried out. The consultant accepts no liability for any estimates provided throughout this report.
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