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Queensland Dream Home Becomes Financial Nightmare

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A Melbourne family's quest for sunshine and space in Queensland turned sour when construction costs forced them to abandon their newly-built dream home. Sarah and Marlon Cornell, seeking warmer climates and outdoor living after cramped COVID lockdowns with their two young children, discovered their carefully planned relocation came with unexpected financial burdens.

The Cornells secured a rare parcel of land in one of Queensland's most desirable suburbs, envisioning their perfect family home. However, escalating material and labor expenses during construction created budget pressures they couldn't sustain. "We planned everything carefully, but the final costs were terrifying," Mr Cornell admitted, describing how their construction loan ballooned beyond projections.

Industry analysts confirm the Cornells' experience reflects Queensland's volatile building market, where material costs remain 30% above pre-pandemic levels despite recent stabilization attempts. The Housing Industry Association reports similar cases across Southeast Queensland, where families underestimate post-approval construction expenses. While Queensland's population boom continues driving demand, many interstate migrants encounter harsh financial realities upon building.

This cautionary tale highlights the risks in Australia's current property landscape, where dream home aspirations collide with economic realities. As construction costs show no signs of returning to pre-2020 levels, prospective builders must factor in substantial buffers for their projects. The Cornells' experience serves as a sobering reminder that paradise often comes with a higher price tag than anticipated, especially in Queensland's competitive housing market. Their story may give pause to other families considering similar tree-change moves in today's challenging economic climate.