



Institute for Professional Standards & Safeguarding
Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

Media Statement | 2 March, 2017

Re: Lanigan House, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn

Matt Casey, Director of the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn assured the Canberra community today that: "At no stage has the safety of children been compromised through the accommodation of clergy at Lanigan House".

In response to recent community concerns, former Parish Priest of Tumut, Fr Brian Hassett was today relocated from Lanigan House to appropriate alternative accommodation.

Fr Hassett was the subject of sustained complaints relating to his time as Parish Priest of Tumut.

An investigation into complaints against Fr Hassett commenced in 2013. This was overseen by the NSW Ombudsman.

Fr Hassett was temporarily relocated from Tumut to Lanigan House in early 2014 in response to the preliminary findings of the investigation.

In late 2014, the investigation was finalised and the allegations against Fr Hassett sustained. Fr Hassett appealed the matter. In August 2015, Fr Hassett tendered his resignation. He continued to reside at Lanigan House given its proximity to Canberra Hospital and his ongoing medical condition.

Following the establishment of the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding, the Archdiocese conducted a thorough risk assessment of the case. Given the location of Lanigan House, the Principal of Saints Peter and Paul primary school, Garran was advised in May 2016. "It is important to note that there were no concerns about Fr Hassett's behaviour during his time at Lanigan House," Mr Casey said.

"Based on recent community concern and acting on my advice, today the Archbishop relocated two other priests from Lanigan House. Both men were removed from ministry for other matters. I reiterate that the safety of children was not compromised at any time."

Two priests remain in Lanigan House, one who has retired for health reasons, the other having submitted his resignation. Both men are in good standing and exercise their priestly faculties.

Media Contact
Aoife Connors
0450 348 597