

Sydney's most desirable suburbs for urban living are also the most dense

Wednesday, 18 November 2015

As Sydney is increasing its density with more apartments it is important that the liveability of the new urban environment is measured, says the Urban Taskforce.

"We commissioned demographer Mark McCrindle to develop an **Urban Living Index** from ABS data that measures the liveability of Sydney's 228 suburbs," says Urban Taskforce CEO, Chris Johnson. "The 20 most dense suburbs in Sydney generally scored very highly on the index indicating that a good lifestyle is compatible with urban density."

"The index measured scores across 20 measures within the areas of **Affordability, Community, Employability, Amenity and Accessibility** using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) broken into 228 suburbs of Sydney. These scores are matched with the density ranking of each suburb based on the percentage of apartments."

"The suburbs with the highest density are (in order) Haymarket, Potts Point, Pyrmont, Parramatta, North Sydney, Darlinghurst, Kirribilli, Waterloo, Double Bay, Homebush, Crows Nest, Dee Why, North Bondi, and Surry Hills.

The suburbs with the highest Urban Living Index are (in order) Crows Nest, Surry Hills, Pyrmont, Marrickville, Potts Point, North Sydney, Randwick, Chatswood, Leichhardt, Kirribilli, Hornsby, Newtown, Parramatta, Darlinghurst and Waterloo. Clearly there is an alignment between density and liveability that is good news for Sydney's planners."

"The factors that lead to a high Urban Living Index include the affordability of apartments, more diverse communities, access to jobs, more restaurants and cafes, closeness to public transport and a better walking environment. The Urban Living Index indicates that a new urban culture is evolving that is different to suburban living. Those living in urban areas seem to have creative industry jobs close to where they live and are far less car dependent than their suburban cousins."

"To supplement the ABS data, McCrindle also surveyed 1,000 Sydney residents living in both suburban and urban areas to get more detail on liveability issues. When asked how likely Sydneysiders living in high density were likely to recommend this type of housing to other people, 20% were extremely likely and a further 38% were very likely."

"The extensive survey taken at a critical point in Sydney's development demonstrates that Sydneysiders are adapting to a denser environment based on apartment living as long as amenities and public

transport are part of the new urban neighbourhood. There are important lessons for Sydney's growth in the detailed analysis by Mark McCrindle's team."

"The Urban Living Index has been refined to be of use by the soon to be established Greater Sydney Commission. The index for the six planning districts gives an interesting view of just how urban each district is. The Central District scores 73, North 63, South 60, West Central 57, West 49 and South West 48. Clearly the urban dwellers are moving out from the centre of Sydney towards the fringe areas."

"A number of suburbs gave surprising results that are explained by more detailed analysis. Homebush rated highly on the density measure at number 10 with over 70% of dwellings as apartments but was down at 64th on the Urban Living Index. A detailed look at the index score indicated that affordability only got 9 out of 20 points so Homebush while having reasonable amenities is not very affordable. Lakemba ranked at 20 for density but only 85 for the Urban Living Index. The major negative here was seen as access to jobs with an employability score of only 7 out of 20."

"The Urban Living Index gives data on seven different criteria with interactive maps on a website (www.urbanlivingindex.com) enabling a resident in any of the 228 suburbs to click into all 7 maps to read results. The extensive data gives a very detailed look into the swing in Sydney from a suburban to an urban environment and measures just how resident's satisfaction with the urban environment is tracking."

"As the base data for the Urban Living Index is sourced from the 2011 census it can be updated after the 2016 census to measure trends. The Urban Taskforce intends working with McCrindle to update the data to see how communities are responding to increasing density and to apartment life."

15 Highest Density Suburbs	15 Highest Urban Living Index Suburbs
01- Haymarket	01- Crows Nest
02- Potts Point	02- Surry Hills
03- Pyrmont	03- Pyrmont
04- Parramatta	04- Marrickville
05- North Sydney	05- Potts Point
06- Darlinghurst	06- North Sydney
07- Kirribilli	07- Randwick
08- Waterloo	08- Chatswood
09- Double Bay	09- Leichhardt
10- Homebush	10- Kirribilli
11- Crows Nest	11- Hornsby
12- Dee Why	12- Newtown
13- North Bondi	13- Parramatta
14- Surry Hills	14- Darlinghurst
15- Manly	15- Waterloo

The **Urban Taskforce** is a property development industry group, representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers.

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