Will families with children live in apartments? An exploration of school-aged children yield in high density urban areas

Introduction

What makes a child- and family-friendly city? 3
- Healthy and safe environment
- Access to adequate health care
- Access to adequate educational facilities
- Space for play & recreation
- Adequate and affordable housing
- Connection to natural environment

Why should urban areas be child- and family-friendly?
- As families are a significant market segment, planning to accommodate this group is essential in achieving successful higher density residential development and redevelopment, reducing urban sprawl
- Promote community feel & diversity

Anecdotal evidence of a changing trend
- "Migrant families are more used to living in small spaces" 4
- "Affordability issues are driving families to rent, which makes more sense in urban areas" 4
- "School enrolments in inner city schools are increasing from children living in apartments" 4

Evidence of a trend towards higher yields from high-density attached dwellings

FutuRe casE sTudY
Keen urrew in orsinae has a relatively high yield of school-aged children compared to surrounding areas (27 per 100 attached dwellings compared to an average of 7.3 for adjoining SA2s) 5

Possible explanations:
- Access to secular state school
- Well designed urban village
- Access to local green space

Discussion

Key questions...
- What are the challenges for delivering child- and family-focused social infrastructure in inner city areas?
- Are there local factors such as access to good quality schools and green space that can have a secondary impact on yield? E.g. Kelvin Grove (see case study above)

Key questions...
- Is affordability the strongest driver of higher densities of school-aged children, rather than urban design factors?
- Are there other factors working against higher yields in inner city areas (e.g. health and safety concerns)?

Future research
- Improving population projections—further statistical analysis required including comparison with historical data
- Case studies to investigate characteristics of child- and family-friendly urban areas
- How to address lack of space for play and physical activity

Findings

Evidence in support of a trend towards higher yields from high-density attached dwellings

- For most inner city areas, the yield of school-aged children from attached dwellings is very low and not increasing (further research required)
- New product coming on the market in inner city areas (e.g. inner city Brisbane and Gold Coast) is predominately 1 & 2 bedroom - not targeted at families 6
- Short term rental activity for singles, young professionals with children, retired couples, students

FINDING
Inner-city urban areas typically have a much lower yield of school-aged children:
- Higher socio-economic areas
- Mostly medium- and high-rise apartments
- Age structure biased towards 20-30 year olds without children
Th e highest yield of school-aged children occurs in outer-lying growth areas
- e.g. Western Sydney, outer suburbs of Melbourne, Gold Coast hinterland
- Lower socio-economic areas
- A mixture of medium-rise apartments, townhouses and detached dwellings

FINDING
- The number or oceensons is a critical factor in determining yield

3. Unpublished research on a case study conducted in Auckland, New Zealand 2013
4. Rothwell’s Declaration on Child Friendly Local Government
5. FUTURE CASE STUDY
6. In the market at a rate of approximately $250,000 - 300,000
7. Eurobodalla Shire Council