

SUNDAY PROPERTY

NEW COMMUNITIES

» SYDNEY » HUNTER AND CENTRAL COAST » SOUTH COAST



Research will show whether a residential development such as this one, at Murrays Beach on Lake Macquarie, meets your needs

Do your homework

SALLY MACMILLAN

MASTER-PLANNED communities are increasingly becoming the option of choice, especially for young couples and families.

From first-home buyers to those upgrading to second or third homes for their growing families or downsizing empty-nesters, the choice of a community usually comes down to what suits their lifestyle.

Thorough research is needed to ensure you get exactly what you want — with both your purchase and the community you select.

There may be restrictions that all

residents must abide by, so make sure you're happy with those rules. You will be expected to share in the cost of community facilities, so ensure you understand the levies or fees and any future costs.

When it comes down to wish lists, most young families cite:

■ Green, open spaces for children to play and roam; a safe, caring and interactive community, with on-site or nearby childcare centres, schools, services, retail and transport; and proximity to their workplace.

■ Older residents want good leisure and recreational facilities; a safe and caring community; close retail,

transport and medical facilities; and good broadband internet services.

Stockland general manager for residential development in NSW Matthew Mears says families are demanding “close proximity to a range of parklands and recreation opportunities.

“They want to be able to walk or cycle rather than always have to drive. They want to feel a part of their immediate neighbourhood and broader community.”

Harrington Grove sales manager Brian Richardson agrees, saying the western Sydney estate attracts a diverse group, ranging from couples,

young parents and families with teenage children to grandparents, who “enjoy the sense of space, the country club and facilities, the community spirit”.

The development team at Harrington Park says that when choosing a new community, prospective buyers should ask themselves the following questions:

■ What facilities are available to residents? How close are amenities such as schools and shopping centres?

■ What is the main objective of the development? Is it simply blocks of land, or are community

and social interaction at the centre of the project?

■ What building controls exist? Buyers need to look at the guidelines about what can be built. Consider the size of the blocks and the way the houses are going to be built.

■ How do you get involved with community activities? An example is Harrington Grove, not far from Harrington Park — a family-oriented, community-title development with picnic areas, parks and playground areas for the residents' children.

There is a dedicated on-site community team to manage the residents' social and club activities.



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