

Professor Paul Burton

There's more to growth than getting bigger

- There is more to growth than “getting bigger” - there is more to growth than population.
- On GC become used to parts of the city growing upward at a rapid rate. Mainly at places we have become used to accommodating temporary residents. Not used to growing upwards in places where we aspire to live. Also become used to growing outwards. The GC like a number of Australian cities has been growing outwards in search of a suburban dream – affordable house on a decent block of land in a nice area. Some aspects of that dream are becoming increasingly distant. Housing affordability is an increasing problem partly because we have been producing larger and larger houses on smaller and smaller blocks. In car dominated environments that because you have to drive everywhere there is less chance of encounters with neighbours. (Sovereign Island bad example nobody outside, no pavements).
- Often density discussions tend to polarize and people think of rural and Q1 type schemes. Density per say has no particular value – neither good nor bad. Design is what matters.
- Why is the GC growing? Population – growing because of 1. Excess of births over deaths (age profile of population) 2. More interstate in migrants than out migrants 3. Overseas migrants.
- GC is no longer a place that attracts the retirees or sea-changes, its younger families with children. Why come to the GC? Combination of quality of life, perceptions matter, perceptions of quality of life. Lifestyle greatest factor: climate, also economic climate (needs to grow more jobs than houses), sense that it is an entrepreneurial city, image of social relaxation (laidback), housing (prices, dollar value and affordability), jobs and job security (that are also accessible). People don't come to the GC for: lack of cultural facilities, governance arrangement, shopping, transport or public transport.
- Lifestyle – more than just sunshine and beaches or rural land – might include a more distinctive sense of place – walkability – more affordable houses – satisfaction with local government (never going to be high up on the agenda).
- Package: Continue with the sprawling city approach – need to spread out increase the release of rural land for development of detached houses.
- Package: More self contained city, less need for car based travel, pockets of high density in appropriately selected areas, better connected places and improving connectivity within those places, more varied housing – more varied in terms of size and price (long term running costs and tenure), more places for cultural development and more mature politics (maturity is the key because GC must and will grow).