

Property Research Questionnaire Guide

This guide is provided to help you complete the Property Research Questionnaire. It provides internet links and tips to assist you in finding the answers to all the key questions.

Area

Relevant Established and Planned Infrastructure & Spending

- www.infrastructure.gov.au - This site can be a bit overwhelming as there is so much content, so you may have to spend a bit of time getting used to the site.
- www.arrb.com.au - ARRB produces a comprehensive range of transport related publications, these include (please click on the relevant link below for further information):
 - Technical reports, manuals and guides
 - Newsletters
 - Conference proceedings, and
 - Road & Transport Research, a quarterly research journal.
- www.alga.asn.au - This is the website for the Australian Local Government Association. It's a useful site that provides local council website links for all around Australia. Select 'Links' on the home page, then 'Local Government' and finally 'Council Maps and Boundaries'. From there you can select the relevant State and local council website.

Once you're on the council website, it can sometimes be difficult to find details on approved or planned infrastructure for the area. To combat this, our TSI researchers call the Economic Developer from the council. If you give them a call, they will be able to tell you what is approved and planned for the region. We find them very helpful, and they will often email links through for you to research.

Historic Capital Growth

- www.residex.com.au

Rental Vacancy Rate

- www.sqmresearch.com.au - Select 'Free Statistics', then 'Vacancy Rates'.
- Call at least 3 local property managers to get up to date information first hand, as information that can be found on the internet is often out of date.

What local amenities are nearby?

- <http://maps.google.com.au/maps?hl=en&tab=wl>
- www.whereis.com
- www.wikipedia.org – A useful website for an overview of the location.
- Contact the local property managers and ask them what is nearby.

Area (continued)

Current population and anticipated growth

- www.wikipedia.org - Provides the current population. Projected growth can be harder to find, but try the local council website.

○ Supporting Industries (only if regional)

- www.oesr.qld.gov.au (QLD only) - Office of Economic and Statistical Research.

- Local council website.

- Property managers.

- Often local Real Estate Agents get excited when something new like a Mc Donald's, Coles or Safeway opens in the area. Keep in mind that is not always a significant event, as the poorest locations in the country will still have a supermarket. However, a Bunning's or similar opening in town is totally different and is a sign of growth potential.

Also, hearing that something is opening in an area from a local Real Estate Agent does not necessarily mean it is going to happen, so check with a local planner in council.

You can get flood maps on council websites, but they can be hard to find. If you have trouble finding one, call the council and ask them to email you a map on the location you are looking at.

If the location is near bush land then check with the council on fire zoning, as different levels will add to the building cost if the property is new.

Developer/ Builder Information

- Whenever possible, visit previous projects from the same builder and ask for testimonials and their corporate profile. Speak to local property managers and building inspectors and ask for feedback on their work.

Project

Size of Project

- The developer/supplier brochure on the internet has all this information.
- Sales person.

Communal facilities within Project

- Advertised in developer/supplier notes on internet
- Sales person.
- Further notes:
 - Check whether broadband internet access is available.
 - Check if natural gas is available (dependent on location).

Local Property Manager Feedback

Current demand on similar properties

- Websites:
 - www.realestate.com.au
 - www.domain.com.au
 - www.residex.com.au
 - www.onthefhouse.com.au
- Speak to a property manager in the local area.

Local Property Manager Feedback (continued)

Approximate Vacancy Period

- Speak with a local property manager.
- API Magazine.
- www.sqmresearch.com.au
- www.realestate.com.au - Look under 'Rent' to see how many properties are advertised in the area.

General Feedback on Opportunity

- Speak to at least 3 different property managers within area and ask:
- Is the location in a desirable part of town?
- Is there anything you should be aware of as buying the property site unseen?
- Are there power lines nearby?
- Are there sewerage treatment plants nearby?
- Is there an airport or train lines nearby? If yes, what or who uses them? E.g. is it a commuter line or country link, freight line etc.
- Is the type of property (i.e. unit, townhouse, house, apartment etc.) in demand in the area?
- Who are the renters of the property likely to be? E.g. professionals, families, students etc.
- What is the ratio of renters to owner occupiers within the estate?
- What property features are in demand by tenants in the area? E.g. air conditioning or ducted heating, ceiling fans, tiled or carpeted living areas, dishwashers, security screen on front door, number of garages, remote control garage door, fully fenced or just the backyard, and so on.

Property managers really are a wealth of information regarding the local area. They can tell you where housing commission properties are located, where executive estates are, which side of the highway/town is known for being more desirable etc. Use this information to gain a better understanding of suburb. They can sometimes assist you with knowledge of builders too, as they will have tenants renting from certain builders and will know whether to stay clear of them or if they are recommended. Ask the property manager what a similar property to one you are looking to purchase is achieving in rent per week in today's market. Also ask how long it normally takes to rent a property and what is the vacancy rate in their agency. Tell them when the property is due to be completed to check that it is a suitable time to look for tenants i.e. not mid December, or the first week of January. Inquire as to when the high season for that market is, e.g. in Bowen QLD it's best not to try to lease a property in February/March as it's wet season then, and less people are applying for properties. If the area has had recent flooding, ask the property manager about the specific location you are looking at purchasing in and whether or not that was flooded.

○ Further notes:

For some areas that you suspect may have a higher than average crime rate you can call the local police station and ask if the location of the property you are looking to purchase in is a high crime part of town. If you tell them you're buying the property site unseen and live in another state, they are usually happy to help.

Local Property Manager Feedback (continued)

NRAS Model Information

- National Rental Affordable Scheme (NRAS) simply means you buy the property and discount the rent by 25%. To make up for you providing this discount, you get a rebate back from State and Federal Government of \$9524 per annum (not means tested). The property must be rented through certain agencies that are qualified for NRAS.

Ratio of NRAS allocated in this development

- Ask the property supplier or developer for this information.

Individual Properties

Proximity to city/town centre

- Use internet sites to get area maps, such as whereis.com.au and Google.

History of the site

- Check the site has not been land fill, or an old petrol station site. Check with the local council for this information.
- Are the surrounding lots and properties appropriate to yours.

Rate the following points when assessing a property

- Aspect and outlook
- Natural light
- Slope/gradient of lot
- Appropriate floor plan
- Confirmed as eligible for 4 or 5 star TSI rating
- Call at least 3 local property managers to get up to date information first hand, as information on the internet is often out of date.

This document is a guide to assist you in your research. It does not include all the sites we visit and list all the research we do, but we believe it will be a great help in your research.