

Architecture evolved

Quality projects lead the way for investment

Dani Wright talks to PBD Architects about a new era in apartment design.

Apartments aimed at price-driven first-home buyers are being replaced by those appealing to savvy investors and down-sizers, as affordability pushes out those wanting a start on the property ladder.

For smart Sydney property developers, it means looking outside the box, so to speak, when it comes to apartment projects, according to PBD Architects, who believe developers need to work smarter as their target markets shifts.

“Buyers are demanding quality architecture and larger apartments,” says Paul Buljevic, PBD Architects’ managing director. “It’s now about creating maximum efficiency of the site and tailoring each with flexible design and larger apartments.”

He says buyers will continue to look for quality design, efficient planning and good internal articulation, but with increasing choice.

“These people are 100 per cent more educated and savvy than buyers in the past,” says Buljevic. “There’s so much more available to them prior to purchase, so they get a really good sense of design, space and materials.”

Buyers are more inclined to ask questions



Buyers are educated investors and are spoiled for choice in the apartment market.

about finishes and quality of architecture, which Buljevic believes is a selling point, because buyers know investing in high quality design helps protect their investment.

“Access to high levels of amenity, adequate storage and communal facilities is also driving the trend,” says Buljevic, whose firm’s ethos for the past eight years has been

about combining form and function. “Buyers also want to know about the architect’s reputation, there’s that appreciation, which was lacking before.”

The design-driven shift is likely to raise the bar for quality architectural design in Australia with configuration and sizing, quality finishes and functional planning becoming core factors for apartment purchasers alongside pricing.

PBD Architects have recently completed projects including Northbridge by BridgeLane Property, a mixed-use development with four levels of residential apartments above ground floor retail space. Others include Tara Maree (Cronulla), Coterie (Crow’s Nest), Chapman Green (Beecroft) and Eva (Mosman).

For some property developers, diversifying land and housing packages by including a mix of townhouse developments and boutique apartment developments in strategic locations such as within five to 10 kilometres of the city or in beachside locations – as well as building major residential projects – is one way to minimise exposure to risk in those large apartment developments.

“At the end of the day, if residents are happy with the place they live then that’s what makes a project successful,” says Buljevic.

“We have a lot of happy residents and a lot of repeat work from clients. We’re heading into a good phase.”

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PBD Architects is a multi-disciplinary, Sydney-based practice of architects and interior designers known for their portfolio of landmark residential and commercial projects. Drawing on the combined knowledge of their talented team, the firm has developed a holistic and beautiful approach to design. A comprehensive knowledge of functional requirements, and an adherence to the highest architectural/aesthetic standards are the key hallmarks of their designer developments.

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