



KPMG
Media Release
7 September 2010

Melbourne's Western edge now Australia's fastest growing region

It's official. The fastest growing region in Australia is no longer the Gold Coast but the Western edge of Melbourne, finds KPMG research.

The analysis by KPMG demographer, Bernard Salt, shows that the municipalities of Wyndham and Melton added 18,000 new residents over the 12 months to June 2009, as compared with 17,000 added to the Gold Coast.

"This extraordinary growth in Melbourne's West has come out of the blue," says Mr Salt.

"Just ten years earlier this region was attracting approximately 4,000 new residents per year, but is now attracting more people than the Gold Coast", Mr Salt adds.

Mr Salt says housing affordability may be a key driver of growth in the West.

"There are new house and land packages on the market in Werribee for less than \$280,000, compared to Melton South where packages start at around \$260,000," says Mr Salt.

The analysis also revealed that over the next decade the Western edge is projected to add 175,000 people and 82,000 dwellings. Much of this will occur in the growth areas that lie to the north of Werribee and to the west of Deer Park.

"Population growth at this pace and scale means more demand for social infrastructure such as houses, shops, schools, roads, medical centres and sporting grounds," says Mr Salt.

"One could say Melbourne is rebalancing to the West. In fact, much of the story of Melbourne's growth in the early 21st century will be created in the West," Mr Salt adds.

Other findings:

- 1 **The West has corporate muscle.** Corporate Australia is well represented in Melbourne's West with manufacturers like Toyota and Mobil at Altona, Orica at Deer Park, Caltex at Spotswood and OneSteel at Altona North.
- 2 **Corporate head offices in the West.** There are corporate head offices in the West in places like Altona (Toll Ipec and Qenos), Tottenham (Olex Cables) and Laverton North (NuFarm).
- 3 **Property developers lead the charge.** The property development industry is well represented in the West with groups like Delfin at Caroline Springs, Peet Limited in Point Cook, the Dennis Family in Wyndham Vale and Metricon in Tarneit.
- 4 **Kids and grandparents on the up.** Over the last 20 years most growth in Melbourne's West has been in the 'family' stage of the life cycle (between 30 and 55). However, over the next 20 years there will be a surge in the under-20 population underpinning demand for schools and sporting facilities. A



surge in the grandparent population (aged 60-80) will mean more demand for leisure facilities, health care, wellness centres and a focus on value.

- 5 **Focus for Infrastructure spending.** The West has been the target of major infrastructure spending including the \$4.3 billion Regional Rail Link between Wyndham Vale and Southern Cross Station, the \$330 million Deer Park Bypass completed in 2009, and a \$1.2 billion upgrade to the Western Ring Road due for completion in 2012. Planned projects include WestLink which would create a second crossing of the Yarra and which is scheduled for completion later this decade.
- 6 **Shift in attitudes to the West.** Melburnian's attitude towards the West is changing following the completion of the Westgate Bridge more than 30 years ago and the opening of the Western Ring Road in 1998. Melbourne's suburban icons, usually associated with suburbs in the east (*Neighbours* and *Kath & Kim*), are being supported by new suburban heroes including Darryl Kerrigan from Coolaroo (*The Castle*) and Kenny from Melbourne's West.

Analysis

The Western Bulldogs commissioned KPMG demographer, Bernard Salt, to undertake an analysis in order to better understand the Western Suburbs community. The analysis draws together official population estimates and forecasts, making comparisons with other regions throughout Australia. KPMG Partner Bernard Salt is one of Australia's leading population analysts.

ENDS

For further information

Bernard Salt
KPMG Partner, 03 9288 5047 bsalt@kpmg.com.au

Caroline Baldwin
KPMG Communications Manager, 0400 508 748 cbaldwin@kpmg.com.au

David McNamara,
Western Bulldogs Media Officer, 0402 320 853 david.mcnamara@westernbulldogs.com.au

Release Event

Date: Tuesday 7 September 2010
Time: 10.30am
Location: level 89, Eureka Tower