

## **Size Is Everything**

QM Properties, one of Queensland's largest developers has come out in support of traditional allotment sizes and backyards.

"There has been pressure on councils and the state government to approve more small lot developments, some as small as 187 square metres," said QM Properties General Sales Manager Damien Ross. "However, we feel that family and community values are better served with families having more space," he said.

Recent research by Planet Ark revealed that children are increasingly short on skills that allow them to climb trees, jump rope, or play outdoor games due to sedentary indoor lifestyles, computers and social media.

One researcher has even established a name for this, Nature Deficit Disorder.

Richard Louv suggests that time spent communing with nature is essential to physical and mental wellbeing. As chairman of America's Children and Nature Network, his work has shown the importance of trees and grass on motor skills, intelligence and problem solving.

His research even shows that just a view of nature from a bedroom window reduces stress in a child.

"Our other point in support of the traditional back garden with room to kick a ball is the effect on the environment," said Damien. "Families with no outdoor space will have increased use of motor vehicles ferrying children to parks and recreation areas," he said.

Despite their larger lot sizes, QM have been able to keep prices down and refute the idea that smaller lots are more affordable.

"Many of our master planned developments are extremely affordable, yet offer plenty of space," said Damien.

Central Lakes at Caboolture for example offers a House and Land package on a 600 square metre lot for \$299,500.

"This family friendly area features a recreational lake and park with walkways and bikeways through a nature reserve," said Damien. "\$172,500 buys a 450 square metre lot here."

Sunshine Coast's Forest Pines near Maroochydore offers House and Land packages on 600 square metres for \$359,888.

"Industry sources indicate that House and Land packages on 187m<sup>2</sup> lots on the Sunshine Coast will be offered at \$320,000," said Damien. "We believe we offer excellent value for money."

Similarly, even acreage land is still well priced by QM.

'The Fairways', built around a golf course at Hatton Vale is on offer at \$255,888 for a House and Land package on a one acre (4000m<sup>2</sup>) lot. Land only is available for \$99,950 for 4800 square metres. At River Retreat at Karalee, land is available for just \$209,900 for 5500

square metres. House and Land packages here are on an acre of riverside land and have a price tag of \$379,888. All this and only about 35 to 40 minutes from Brisbane CBD.

Damien thinks that many of the small lots are overpriced due to acquisition of the development land at the top of the market.

“Land stocks are also drying up,” he said. “But we sourced most of our land bank a long time ago.”

Land for The Fairways at Hatton Vale was acquired 20 years ago, and River retreat at Karalee 8 years ago. QM purchased large parcels of land at Caboolture, now Central Lakes 8 years ago.

“Our approvals have also all been in place a long time, which has kept prices down.”

“We think that the Australian dream of a back garden is still alive and well,” said Damien. “Smaller lots could suit first home buyers or empty nesters, but families still want some green space,” he said.

<http://www.qm.com.au/>

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