



Making better economic cases for housing

Seminar on newly published City Futures Research Centre report

Museum of Sydney, Bridge Street – Thursday 8 March 5.30-7.30

There is a strong case for housing to be treated as an essential form of productive, economic infrastructure. A City Futures research team led by UNSW Visiting Professor Duncan Maclennan recently completed a study on the implications of housing market performance for the wellbeing of individuals and the growth and productivity of the city economy as a whole. The research was supported by the Greater Sydney Commission and the NSW Federation of Housing Associations.

Building on existing work in this area, the team's report identifies numerous economically negative impacts of current housing outcomes, ranging from the adverse health and child learning effects of poor quality homes and neighbourhoods, to the damaging effects on household spending and saving where housing is overvalued and cost to the consumer, excessive.

The report argues that economic arguments for greater government attention to housing outcomes and investments are persuasive and must be given greater prominence by affordable housing advocates, as well as by Treasuries and other policymakers. A better-managed housing market is likely to raise productivity growth and reduce rising wealth inequalities.

Seminar program

5.30 Introduction and welcome – **Professor Bill Randolph** and **Professor Sue Holliday** (MC)

5.40 Making better economic cases for housing – **Professor Duncan Maclennan**

6.15 Panel member remarks – **Dr Jennifer Westacott**, **Dr Judy Yates**, **Dr Marcus Spiller**

6.30 Audience questions and discussion (presenter and panellists)

7.00 Drinks and networking

Speakers



Duncan Maclennan, Visiting Professor at UNSW, also holds Chairs at the University of Glasgow and the University St Andrews. He is an internationally-renowned applied economist specialising in housing, neighbourhoods and cities. At the University of Glasgow in the 1980s he established and led the Centre for Housing and Urban Research and in the 1990s directed UK-wide ESRC and JRF research programs. From 1999 he spent a decade working in government, as special Adviser to the First Minister of Scotland, as a Chief economist in the Victorian Government and as Chief Economist in Canada's Federal Dept for Infrastructure and Cities. He has acted as adviser to Ministers in the UK, Scotland, France, Poland and Norway, Canada, Australia and NZ.



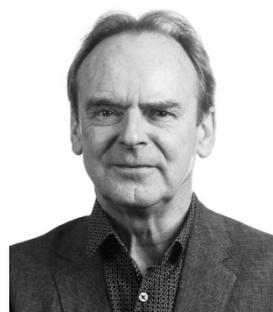
Jennifer Westacott has been Chief Executive of the Business Council of Australia since 2011, bringing extensive policy experience in both public and private sectors. For over 20 years to 2005 Jennifer held senior leadership positions in the NSW and Victorian governments. She was Director of Housing and Secretary of Education in Victoria, and Director-General of the NSW Dept of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources. Jennifer has also been a senior partner at KPMG (2005-2011). She is a National Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and Chair of the Mental Health Council of Australia.



Dr Judy Yates is an Honorary Associate at both the University of Sydney and UNSW. Celebrated as one of Australia’s leading housing economists, her research has latterly focused on housing affordability, rental housing supply, housing and finance markets, and housing taxation. As a career academic she was seconded to the Australian Government to work on its National Housing Strategy. She has served on numerous government advisory committees, and on the boards of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. She was a member of the government’s National Housing Supply Council throughout its five-year term.



Dr Marcus Spiller is a founding partner at highly respected consultancy SGS Economics and Planning. He has extensive experience in public policy analysis as an urban economist and planner. Marcus specialises in metropolitan planning, housing policy and in analysing the links between urban structure and national economic performance. Marcus is a past National President of the Planning Institute of Australia and a former Board member at VicUrban. He has served on the Commonwealth Government’s National Housing Supply Council. He holds an Adjunct Professor positions at both RMIT University and UNSW.



Professor Sue Holliday is a City Planner and Economist well-known in NSW and across Australia. She is Professor of Planning Practice at UNSW and also a policy consultant. Sue was Director General of Planning NSW from 1997-2003. Her many board member roles have included membership of the National Housing Supply Council (2008-2013). **Professor Bill Randolph** joined UNSW in 2004 as Professor and Director of the City Futures Research Centre. With 40 years research experience to his credit, Bill

leads a nationally renowned team specializing in housing policy, housing markets and affordability, urban renewal, city data and analytics, urban wellbeing and metropolitan planning policy issues.



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