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## NEW 'LIVEABILITY' SURVEY FINDINGS AND LEADING URBAN EXPERTS UNVEIL KEY INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL CITIES

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A major new survey of 2,500 people nationwide by the country's largest residential developer has revealed what Australians consider most important for making their communities and cities liveable.

The Stockland Liveability Index, released today, was conducted between January and March 2017 in partnership with leading research specialists, Colmar Brunton.

Its findings and relevance to the future direction of our cities will be discussed at a special event hosted by the Committee for Sydney tonight featuring eminent visiting international land use expert **Professor Christopher Leinberger**, together with Greater Sydney Chief Commissioner **Lucy Turnbull AO**, Stockland CEO and Managing Director **Mark Steinert**, and Co-Founder of Roberts Day, **Mike Day**.

Voted one of the Top 100 Urban Thinkers in a 2009 poll conducted by international urban planning site Planetizen, Professor Leinberger is at the forefront of research into the changing dynamic of urban spaces in the United States.

Professor Leinberger's 2016 report, *Foot Traffic Ahead*, shows that: "For perhaps the first time in 60 years, walkable urban places ('WalkUPs') in all 30 of the [US] largest metros are gaining market share over their drivable sub-urban competition — and showing substantially higher rental premiums."

Stockland Managing Director and CEO, Mark Steinert, said: "We are delighted to partner with the Committee for Sydney and bring Professor Leinberger to Australia at a time when as a nation we are rethinking the future of our cities, with a strong focus on liveability."

"For communities to be liveable, they need to be smart, healthy, connected and importantly, affordable. The powerful emerging market trend toward walkable urban development in the US is one we expect to see replicated in Australia, as our cities continue their strong growth trajectories."

"Capturing and applying the insights from research by experts such as Professor Leinberger will help ensure our growth story is a positive one for the people who live, work and visit our metropolitan centres."

Tim Williams, Chief Executive of the Committee for Sydney said: "Governments at all levels are accelerating their efforts to shape the future of our cities, with a focus on ensuring we have the right infrastructure and public amenities in place to make them sustainable and liveable over the long-term."

Mike Day, Co-Founder of Roberts Day, said: "With Sydney suffering from the overlapping crises of health and affordability, a key step to transform Sydney is creating walkable places. Walkable places offer people safety, comfort and delight. Benefits of a walkable Sydney include creating a true 30 minute city to address the fact people of Western Sydney are three times more likely to suffer from diabetes than their inner-city counterparts."

"The emerging equity issue Sydney needs to address is people's proximity to walkable places. By giving priority to walkable places as the new missing middle of Sydney's density

done well discussion, the added value of improved health, happiness and productivity, means everyone benefits.”

The Stockland Liveability Index measures the liveability of 40 communities nationally and is informative in evaluating the effectiveness of ‘City Deals’ and other government-led initiatives that aim to drive healthier, more productive and more accessible places for people across Australia. It provides key insights for cities, together with case studies highlighting the very real impact liveability has on a range of social and economic factors.

Aside from the personal and community toll, PwC (2015) estimates obesity and its related health impacts will cost the Australian economy more than \$87 billion over the next decade. Already, today some 63 per cent of Australians aged over 18 years are overweight or obese\*.

Mark Steinert continued: “The obesity statistics present a significant challenge facing the liveability of Australian cities. Liveability and walkability are core commitments that Stockland has embraced in our communities across the country, and has become central to public policy discussions about how cities should be planned and built in the future.

“Our research shows us that if we work with government and other key stakeholders to fast-track schools, parks, childcare, cafés and shops, we can have a profound impact on the liveability of our communities and the health of residents. The social imperatives for doing so is compelling and is supported by equally clear commercial ones.

“The Federal Government’s Smart Cities Plan, as well as State planning policies including the recently-released Greater Sydney Commission District Plans, reflect the importance of liveability measures.

“The unique perspective offered by our Liveability Index is the voices of more than 2,500 residents – from the ground up, sharing their experiences of what makes a community work well.”

The Stockland Liveability Index provides three key lessons for cities:

- 1. Provide opportunities for community interaction:**
  - Parks, cafés, walkways, schools, children’s playgrounds, cycleways
  - Build in technology, to connect communities from the outset and enhance customer experience
  - Create links with the natural environment
  - Community programs, like parents’ groups and exercise classes, for community connection and physical exercise.
- 2. Introduce well-designed neighbourhoods:**
  - Smart design, with places that are walkable
  - Carefully plan all new homes to be close to childcare, schools, retail, parks and playgrounds
  - Access to employment, transport and health facilities.
- 3. Deliver infrastructure early, where possible:**
  - Fast tracking key infrastructure such as playgrounds, schools, public transport, parks,
  - outdoor exercise stations
  - Proven to generate high levels of resident satisfaction and community pride.

The Index also includes case studies highlighting the very real impact liveability has on a range of social and economic factors.

Stockland's overall Liveability score for 2017 was 83 per cent. This is up eight percentage points from our 2012/13 score. Stockland residents continue to score above the Australian Average for Personal Wellbeing as developed by Deakin University and reported by Australian Unity. The current Australian average is 76.7%, while the Stockland average resident PWI score for 2017 is 79%. The Liveability Index has been conducted since 2011.

The Liveability Index is available at <https://www.stockland.com.au/residential/discover-our-communities/sustainability-and-well-being/liveability>

The panel discussion on liveability will be moderated by Committee for Sydney CEO Dr Tim Williams this evening. A recording of the discussion will be available at [www.sydney.org.au](http://www.sydney.org.au)

## ENDS

## Notes to editors

\*ABS data 2014-15

### About Professor Chris Leinberger

Professor Christopher B. Leinberger is a land use strategist, teacher, developer, researcher and author, balancing business realities with social and environmental concerns. Mr Leinberger is currently the Charles Bendit Distinguished Scholar and Research Professor, George Washington University School of Business; a Nonresident Senior Fellow at Brookings Institution in Washington DC; and Founding Partner of Arcadia Land Company, a new urbanism and transit-oriented development firm.

#### About the Stockland Liveability Index

- Survey of over 2,500 residents nationwide, across 40 communities across Australia
- Latest research undertaken between January and March 2017
- Conducted in partnership with leading research specialists, Colmar Brunton, since 2011.

#### For cities to be liveable, Stockland has identified the four most critical factors as being:

- **Connected** to work, shops and community hubs ideally within 30 minutes of home.
- **Healthy** in providing walkable neighbourhoods and great outdoor places that encourage people to get active.
- **Smart** with great access to high quality education at every stage of life, and clear pathways to jobs of the future.
- **Affordable** with a variety of housing options for different life stages, ages and budgets.

#### Overall result

- Stockland's National Liveability Index Score for 2017 is 83% (up 8 points from 2012/2013).
- The most important drivers of liveability for residents are community perceptions (39%), followed by community design (23%).
- These factors include a sense of pride in where they live, opportunities to meet new people, proximity and quality of parks and open spaces.

#### Quality of life

- Personal wellbeing is higher than the Australian average for Stockland residents
  - Stockland residents have an average Personal Wellbeing Index Score of 79%
  - This is above the 2016 Australian average of 76.7%, as measured by the Deakin University and Australian Unity.
- 74% of residents say their standard of living has improved since moving into a Stockland community
- 63% feel safer since moving into a Stockland community.

#### Health & wellbeing

- 60% of residents feel healthier since moving into a Stockland community

- 63% report doing more exercise since moving into a Stockland community
- Residents spend 4 hours a week enjoying parks, cycleways and walkways.

#### **Community connections**

- 66% made new friends in the community.
- 75% feel like they are part of a community.
- 74% feel there are enough opportunities in their local area to meet new people.

#### **About Stockland**

Stockland (ASX: SGP) was founded in 1952 and has grown to become Australia's largest diversified property group – owning, developing and managing a large portfolio of shopping centres, residential communities, retirement living villages, office and industrial assets. Stockland was recognised by the S&P Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI) as the global real estate sector leader for 2016-17, demonstrating world leadership across the areas of stakeholder engagement, customer relationship management, supply chain management, biodiversity and climate change strategy. Stockland has been identified as a global leader for its actions and strategies in response to climate change and has been awarded a position on the Climate A List by CDP, the international not-for-profit that drives sustainable economies. Stockland has also been recognised as the Regional Sector Leader for Listed, Australian, Diversified Property Companies in the 2016 GRESB Report. Stockland has also been recognised as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality by the Australian Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) for last three consecutive years.

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#### **About the Committee for Sydney**

The Committee for Sydney is an independent think tank and champion for the whole of Sydney, providing thought leadership beyond the electoral cycle. Our aim is the enhancement of the economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions that make Sydney a competitive and liveable global city. Our members include major companies, universities, not-for-profits, strategically significant local governments and state government departments and key cultural, sporting and marketing bodies. We represent no one sector or interest but we share one passion: Sydney and the role it plays as Australia's global city. We seek to bring all parts of the city together so that Sydney can 'collaborate to compete' more effectively. Given Sydney's economic importance to Australia, the Committee's agenda matters not just for Sydneysiders, but for the nation.

[www.sydney.org.au](http://www.sydney.org.au)

#### **About RobertsDay**

For over 20 years, in concert with Professor Chris Leinberger and other leading international practitioners in the field of contemporary community design and development, Roberts Day has championed a return to timeless and transit based; compact, connected, mixed use, walkable urban neighbourhoods.