

**RESIDENTIAL SATISFACTION IN THE CHANGING URBAN
FORM IN ADELAIDE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF
MAWSON LAKES AND CRAIGBURN FARM, SOUTH
AUSTRALIA**

by

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ABSTRACT

Higher dwelling densities in low density cities such as Adelaide are being widely promoted by planners, policy-makers and academics to reduce travel time, increase accessibility and consolidate space within the existing urban area. This is largely in response to the negative impacts of ‘urban sprawl’ in suburban, car oriented cities in Australia and the United States. Mawson Lakes, in Adelaide, South Australia, has had a lot of marketing hype as the place to ‘live, work and play’, and the diverse housing options offered come in stark contrast to typical suburban housing developments constructed in the past. This research explored residents’ level of satisfaction with this new urbanist development style, and drew comparisons to the similarly timed, suburban Blackwood Park development in the suburb of Craighburn Farm, South Australia. This study finds that higher density housing in Mawson Lakes delivered reduced levels of dwelling satisfaction, particularly in the areas of privacy, open space and value for money when compared with larger, detached homes in both developments. However, with respect to neighbourhood factors, this study finds that Mawson Lakes delivers greater levels of neighbourhood satisfaction, particularly in the areas of proximity to work, public transport services, shopping, and restaurants and cafés. This comes despite higher levels of residential dis-satisfaction in Mawson lakes, specifically in relation to concerns surrounding noise, pollution and safety.

This project is significant because changes toward a focus of new urbanist development requires adjustments in beliefs and perceptions and will only be sustainable if higher density developments are places where the people of Adelaide want to live. Considering the strong focus toward increasing densities within the 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, this project provides some insight into how changes to development influence subjective perceptions of Residential Satisfaction. In particular, this project demonstrates that while higher dwelling densities are not generally associated with the dream home that the people of Adelaide seek to achieve towards the end of their housing career; the improved accessibility associated with higher density establishes some positive outcomes in relation to neighbourhood satisfaction, despite greater awareness of the sources of dis-satisfaction.

DECLARATION

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint -award of this degree. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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