



Stephen Cass

Role: Assistant Development Manager, Defence Housing Australia

Age: 29

Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts (Urban and Regional Planning) Curtin, Masters of Project Management, ECU, Graduate Certificate in Property, University of Newcastle



Brief Biography: Since 2012, I have been employed within the Perth property development industry where I have gained extensive experience as a Project Manager and Assistant Development Manager working on the planning and construction of a number of projects. My current position as an Assistant Development Manager with Defence Housing Australia (DHA) sees me involved with the front end feasibility assessment of a project, obtaining relevant approvals, overseeing the construction and then finally delivery and settlement of the finished housing development. Although the role can be challenging at times, there is a great sense of achievement when a project is completed, especially if on budget and on time. Away from work, I enjoy spending time with my wife and three boys, I also enjoy CrossFit and am working towards being a part time Coach at my local box (gym).

Q: What challenges do you see the property industry facing in the next 5 years?

A: One of the challenges I see facing the property industry currently and in the near future is the economic conditions in WA. With a history of boom and bust, property cycles in Perth are exposed to extreme fluctuations. I am hopeful that Perth has reached a critical population mass whereby the economy can expand on its economic diversity, lessening the impacts of the resource cycles. With this will come a more normalised property market that grows at a more sustainable rate. In 2017, we are still feeling the after effects of the last resource boom, with the average property price still declining (although this is now at a reduced pace). While this is providing more affordable housing choice for homebuyers, the development industry has significantly slowed to ensure the market is not being further oversupplied, resulting in slow job growth in the property development sector.

Q: Within the urban development industry what is the most significant project that you have worked on/been part of within your career to date?

A: The refurbishment of 10 heritage cottages in Fremantle along Queen Victoria Street was a project that was full of challenges, but at the end of the day provided a great sense of achievement. When DHA acquired the site, the 10 cottages were home to squatters and other undesirables and in a state of disrepair. The development was granted approval to refurbish the existing cottages and build 6 new dwellings on the site in order to make the project viable. As a Defence Housing project, each of the 10 heritage cottages were named in honour of 10 servicemen that served during WW1. Following completion, a small ceremony was held, inviting the descendants of the servicemen to celebrate the renewed homes.

Q: Within the urban development industry what influence does your role have on the future of our state (Building design, new estates, etc.)?

A: My role encompasses the development of property for residential use, both land subdivision and apartments. The future of Perth and WA will see the development industry adapt to changing housing needs, creating a wide spectrum of housing diversity, not just your standard 450m2 lot or 80m2 apartment with a pool and gym.