

HD **Apartments an attractive investment**

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Property players are upping the ante to promote WA as a safe-haven investment for **Chinese**.

Western Australia is increasingly on the radar of **Chinese property** investors, with **commercial** agents and developers hoping to replicate the success of their Sydney and Melbourne counterparts in sourcing significant capital from this cashed-up cohort.

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Urban infill development specialist Devwest considers itself as somewhat of a trailblazer in the Perth **property** market, having travelled to **China** for more than 15 years to attract investment.

That long-term strategy has been paying off, according to Devwest executive director Damon Ferguson.

"Probably around 50 per cent of our capital comes from **China**," Mr Ferguson told Business News.

"There's definitely very strong demand for our projects from **Chinese purchasers**."

Mr Ferguson said **Chinese** investors were typically interested in **apartment** projects, either as a pure investment, or as a home for their offspring studying at one of Perth's tertiary institutions.

The biggest challenge, Devwest managing director Tony Hatt said, was supplanting Sydney and Melbourne in the minds of **Chinese** investors.

"Those are the places that they know, but I think a lot more of them are becoming aware of Western Australia and the power of the WA economy," he said.

Mr Hatt said part of Devwest's strategy was the use of comprehensive promotional material highlighting Perth's natural attributes - weather, parklands, beaches and a thriving hospitality scene.

However, Mr Hatt said building lasting relationships was the key to attract **Chinese** investors.

"**China**'s not a place that you can go to tomorrow and walk out with a bag full of money," he said,

"It takes years and years of relationship building."

Mr Hatt said the **company**'s approach didn't stop at finding appropriate **property** investments for **Chinese** clients, with Devwest providing much more than an asset portfolio.

"There are other things we help them with, especially when they move their whole family out," Mr Hatt told Business News.

"We help them **buy** a car, **buy** a house, they want their kids to go to the right school, they want to know what restaurant to go to, so we help them on all of that side - it's not just the investment side.

"It's a big responsibility on that side, but that's how word of mouth goes around."

Altegra **Property Group** managing director Tony Brooks shared Mr Hatt's bullish outlook for **Chinese** investment in WA **property** assets.

Mr Brooks, who was about to **board** a flight to **Hong Kong** when contacted by Business News, said he expected the **Chinese** appetite for Perth **property** only to increase as word gets out regarding the strength of the WA economy.

"We're increasingly doing more **transactions** and attracting investment in **commercial** assets," he said.

"They're interested in fully-leased assets, and a combination of office-industrial, and they've also got an interest in **residential** to broaden their investment base."

Mr Brooks said the **company**'s high-service business model was particularly appreciated in **China**.

"We tend to target high-net-worth individuals and work strategically to get good outcomes for them," he said.

"They like to know that they are being cared for and looked after and they're being placed into good assets."

Blackburne **Property Group** managing director Paul Blackburne was equally confident regarding the prospects of luring increased **Chinese** investment to Perth.

Mr Blackburne said about 5 per cent of the **company**'s apartments were being **sold** to **Chinese** buyers, and he wanted to increase that percentage to 25 per cent within two years.

The other aspect of the market is **Chinese** developers wanting a slice of the pie, Mr Blackburne said.

"There wouldn't be a month that goes by without a **Chinese** developer coming to our office wanting to joint venture," he said.

"These are big billion dollar companies, not hundred million dollar companies.

"Big **Chinese** developers understand that the Perth **apartment** market is a good place to be."

RE austr : Australia | china : China | sydney : Sydney | waustr : Western Australia | apacz : Asia Pacific |
asiaz : Asia | ausnz : Australia/Oceania | bric : BRIC Countries | chinaz : Greater China | devgcoz :
Emerging Market Countries | dvpcoz : Developing Economies | easiaz : Eastern Asia | nswals : New
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