

Insight into Perth's towering apartment landscape

ANNIE MILLS

The sheer elegance of the state's many apartment developments can at times make it seem like their creation is an effortless work of artistry. But, when you lift the curtain, you will find a lot of work lies underneath every polished surface. The first part of the process is choosing the location. "For Edge Visionary Living, this often means identifying unique sites with captivating waterfront views or opportunities to offer something truly unparalleled," Edge Managing Director Gavin Hawkins said. "Key considerations include proximity to essential conveniences such as shops, pharmacies and restaurants."

For Willing Founding Director Tim Willing, defining who will want to live there is just as important as the complex's location. "It informs everything, from apartment layouts to amenity inclusions and material choices," he said. "People are buying into a lifestyle and they project this years into the future – they're thinking about the space they want now and in the future. "From a design perspective, it's crucial to get both the practical and aspirational elements right."

Once developers know who will be buying their apartments and what they desire, the designers can start their part of the process. Mr Willing said top of the list was getting the right layout – designing homes with floor plans which felt generous, intuitive and adaptable. "Buyers are looking for well-proportioned interiors making smart use of every square metre," he said. "It's equally about how spaces flow, as much it is about the square metreage – where natural light falls, how furniture will sit and where you can find moments of privacy."

Another important part of the early stages is choosing the facilities within the complex, which residents will be able to enjoy while living there. "Modern apartments offer access to premium amenities that extend your living space and enhance your lifestyle," Mr Hawkins said. "Buyers are increasingly conscious of wellness, often seeking features like gyms, saunas and spaces which promote a healthy lifestyle."

Once the initial groundwork has been laid out, it is time to add some paint to the canvas. "Buyers today are incredibly design-savvy," Mr Willing said. "They know what constitutes value for money, and they're comparing developments down to the smallest inclusions. "If they're paying a premium, they expect it to be evident from the moment they walk in the door. "This means stone benchtops, integrated high-end appliances, premium tapware, timber flooring, feature lighting and even extras like underfloor heating."

This part of the process also involves leaving some room for customisability to allow buyers to personalise their home's colour scheme, materials and more. Mr Willing said the ability to make these changes had to be factored in from the beginning of the design process. "We work closely with award-winning interior designers to curate a selection of schemes complementing the overall vision of the project," Mr Willing said. "These aren't arbitrary options – they're thoughtfully crafted to reflect the identity and architectural language of the building. "Every tone, texture and finish is selected to ensure that no matter which path a buyer chooses, it still feels cohesive with the development's story."



Go in with eyes wide open for a purchase with no regrets

KAYLEE CRANLEY

When viewing a home you potentially want to purchase, it is important to check all the boxes to avoid overlooking warning signs, which may cost you later. "A thorough pre-purchase inspection not only protects the buyer but also supports sellers in demonstrating the true value of their home," IdealRealtyWA Director and Licensee Roy Li said. "It's not about fault finding, it is about ensuring everyone enters the agreement with clarity and confidence."

Mr Li said key internal features for a pre-inspection checklist included the structural integrity of walls, ceilings, floors, signs of dampness or water damage and functionality of electrical and plumbing systems. "It's also important to assess the condition of fixtures and fittings such as lights, taps, cabinetry and appliances," he said. "Additionally, heating and cooling systems should be tested, as these are often high-value components of a property."

Externally, Mr Li said buyers should examine the condition of the roof, including gutters and downpipes, foundations and any signs of movement or cracking. "Attention should be given to fencing, driveways, patios and balconies," he said. "Drainage and site slope are also crucial, as poor water runoff can lead to long-term issues."

Mr Li said passing over these areas could lead to unexpected repair costs, safety risks or even complications with insurance or lending approvals. According to WA Building Inspections Founder Russell McCarthy, it is crucial to get intimate with home inspections. "Check things like doors and windows to see if they open well – a jamming window or door could mean the structure might be defective," he said. "Look at walls and ceilings for cracking or sagging in the ceilings too. Ceilings may not be a major structural defect but it can be a nightmare if they come down unexpectedly and it can be expensive to replace."



Mr McCarthy said mould was a silent red flag in homes and it was never just a cosmetic issue. "If you spot mould during a property inspection, it's critical to investigate further," he said. "Left unchecked, mould can cause serious damage to the building and to your health. Keep an eye out for darkened patches, stains or shadowing."

Termites are another hidden threat and one of the most destructive. "While properties with subfloor spaces are often more vulnerable, no home is truly immune," Mr McCarthy said. "Termites will consume almost any material containing cellulose, not just structural timber but also ceiling linings, cabinets, skirtings, doorframes, carpet trims and even furniture."

Mr McCarthy said infestations often occurred in places too small or inaccessible to inspect properly like behind furniture or even hidden deep inside the timber itself.

"A good inspection will not only note whether termites are present, it will also identify risk factors, such as conducive conditions and evidence of past treatments," he said. "It will also recommend systems to help protect the home from future infestations."

Mr McCarthy's top tip to buyers was to request the inclusion of clauses which might enable further investigations and options upon the results of a full inspection, including major and minor findings, when drafting an offer. "While adding this clause may slightly weaken the competitiveness of your offer, it gives you vital flexibility, allowing you to walk away or renegotiate if any defect – major or minor – is uncovered during your building and pest inspection in WA," he said. "Of course, you should always seek advice from a property lawyer or settlement agent in relation to specific clauses and conditions and the associated legal outcomes."