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Developers face needs of empty nesters

NORTHERN DISTRICT

Location and size key concerns for baby boomers downsizing

Shayne Collier

IT has been two weeks since Gernot and Stella Prochaska moved into their new apartment in North Ryde, and there are still a few issues to iron out.

“Our house in St Ives was three to four times larger than this, with a huge garden,” Mr Prochaska said.

“We lived there for 17 years and we had to get rid of two thirds of our furniture.”

The Prochaskas are slowly getting used to the idea of smaller rooms and, therefore, less space.

After their three children left home several years ago, they found themselves rattling around in a big house with a garden and swimming pool that no one used.

Their search for an off-the-plan apartment started in St Leonards. “Too expensive and too urbanised,” Mrs Prochaska said.

Finally they settled on the Centrale complex in North Ryde.

Access to public transport played a major role in their decision to buy one of the last

remaining three-bedroom apartments in the four-building complex.

At Centrale, they could hardly be any closer to the railway station.

Looking out of the living

room window, the atrium-stye rooftop of North Ryde station is in plain sight, below their third-floor abode.

Mrs Prochaska has counted the 20 steps she takes to get to the station once she has exited the lift on the ground floor of her building.

“This is urban living,” she said.

Earlier that day, she travelled eight-minutes by train to

Chatswood using her Seniors Card. During peak hour, that same trip by car would take about 30 minutes — factoring in the stressful task of finding a car space in the major retail precinct.

The Prochaskas are typical of a growing band of downsizers who want to be able to lock up and leave home to travel for long periods without a care in the world.

“Compared with house and garden, we just lock the door here and say goodbye,” Mr Prochaska said.

“At St Ives, we had to ask someone to look after the house and check the pool.”

Frasers Property sales and marketing director Dino Carulli said the Prochaskas would reap the extra benefits of their new lifestyle.

The development has a residents-only podium level with

a built-in barbecue. It is also connected via a shared piazza to the Ryde Garden complex.

The two developments will make use of a retail precinct that will include restaurants with al fresco dining.

The final two towers in Centrale are due for completion at the end of the month. Only four apartments remain for sale in the 380 apartment complex.



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Gernot and Stella Prochaska downsized to a three-bedroom apartment in the Centrale development.





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Alex Laguzza, pictured with partner Mariam Ghazi, has just bought his first home at the Stellar development (inset) in Ryde. Picture: Darren Leigh Roberts